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What is soniquete?

How can it be defined?

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This thesis examines the vaguely defined, yet very fundamental, aspect of flamenco called Soniquete. It specifically accounts for playing flamenco guitar with this core aspect. Through the analysis of two video performances of master flamenco guitarists with great Soniquete, a set of requisites for Soniquete is developed and provided. This document can be thought of as a manual for Soniquete for a budding flamenco guitarist who realizes the significance of this element, and who is seeking out methods for obtaining it in his/her own playing.

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Introduction

The word soniquete is built into flamenco terminology. In baile (dance) classes, instructors will tell students to pay attention to the “soniquete” of a footwork pattern. Similarly, the performers of an energizing, rhythmic, and enjoyable *fin de fiesta* (see glossary) are said to have good soniquete. But what exactly is soniquete? How can it be defined and, furthermore, taught?

Amongst flamencos the term is tacitly understood. As a flamenco guitar student, I am particularly interested in how soniquete can be identified and learned by flamenco guitarists. In this thesis I propose to do just that; to define soniquete via identification of its parts, as well as provide tips for starting to incorporate soniquete in one’s own playing.

The structure of this thesis is as follows: I will provide detailed analyses of two videos in which selected players are featured. I will then highlight the similarities between both players. In the third chapter, I will create a definition/list of prerequisites for soniquete, making direct references to the highlighted observations in the analyses. Lastly, I will provide suggestions for the flamenco guitar student on how they, too, can take steps toward playing with soniquete.

I have chosen this topic because after meeting many flamenco guitar students, it has become apparent to me that many of them, both in Spain and abroad, seem to only understand the meaning of soniquete on a surface level, or not at all. Worse yet, there are guitarists who appear not to value soniquete. In my opinion, soniquete is absolutely fundamental to good flamenco. There is very little written on the subject, and I hope that with this thesis, I can shed some light into the wonderful world of soniquete.

Chapter 1: Glossary of Terms

Although this thesis is designed for the student of flamenco guitar, for other potential readers, and for the sake of general clarity, I include a glossary of terms. The terms are listed in such a way that broader themes are introduced first. For instance, the term *palo* is introduced before *Bulerias*, because *Bulerias* is a *palo*.

The Flamenco Mode

The flamenco mode is the progression of chords that would emerge if one were to construct chords from the Phrygian scale, with one alteration. This alteration is made to the first of these chords. As opposed to the chord being minor, it is instead a major chord¹ (or major flat nine). Traditionally in flamenco, only the first three or four chords are used. The second degree holds dominant function.

Compas

Compas is the term used in flamenco for rhythm and meter. The different compases fall into two general archetypes, 4/4 or 2/4, and 12/8. The latter encompasses additive meter and, consequently, tends to be much more difficult for beginners. It requires more attention to keep track of where you are in the compas. Failing to keep track of where you are in the compas is called going “out of compas,” or *fuera (de compas)* in Spanish.

The element of additive meter works as such: different flamenco forms have accents on different beats. One cannot simply divide twelve by four and count to three four times, as the accented beats will not necessarily be even. On the contrary, it is quite common for a 12-beat compas to

1

Normally, if one were to construct chords from the Phrygian scale, the first chord would be minor. For example, in E Phrygian: E-G-B-D. This is a minor chord, as the interval between E and G is a minor third.

be divided in two halves, where each half has a different subdivision of beats. Two times three, then three times two, for example. When someone is said to have good compas, it means that person has a good sense of rhythm, and is unlikely to lose track of where the accents fall in the compas.

For a more detailed look at a specific compas, see *Bulerias*.

Palo

Flamenco is divided into different forms, called palos. On his website www.flamencopolis.com, flamencologist Faustino Nuñez categorizes these by their musical origin. There is a huge number of different palos, and this number fluctuates, as new palos emerge, and old ones are lost. Some are very similar to one another, sharing compas or tonality. Others are entirely different. Some forms are determined by a specific verse, sung in what otherwise sounds like another palo. Many forms have signature licks (short phrases of music). Some forms are played with no compas (meter). These are referred to as *libre* (free) forms. The four main categories in Nuñez's system are: the palos derived from Solea, the palos derived from Seguiriya, the palos derived from Fandango, and the palos derived from Tango. The palos in the same category often share meter, tonality, or lyrics. An interesting thing to note for the purpose of this study is that each palo has a distinct character, theme, or 'personality.'

Bulerias

A palo derived from the Solea, the Buleria is a lively form, and these days usually the chosen palo for the *fin de fiesta* (see next page). It is traditionally played in the flamenco mode, in the key of A, something flamencos refer to as *por medio* (which means in the middle). A capo can be used to transpose this to a different key to accommodate a singer, or simply for ease of playing.

The compas of Bulerias appears at first to be in 12/8 meter. The accentuated beats are the third, sixth, eighth, tenth, and twelfth beats. However, as opposed to starting on beat one, the cycle

is generally thought of as starting on beat twelve. Making the rhythmical cycle look as follows (accentuated beats are **underlined and in bold**):

12 1 2 **3** 4 5 **6** 7 **8** 9 **10** 11

However, upon a closer look, this 12-beat cycle is superimposed on a 6/8 rhythm. It is perfectly acceptable for a performer to add what is called an “extra-six,” or a “half-compas” (also known as a *media* in Spanish) after a cycle. It is important to be able to do this when accompanying a singer, as the singer can decide to hold a tone for longer, requiring the accompanist to wait a half-compas before resolving.

And so, Bulerias can be thought of as being in 6/8, or even 3/4 time, depending on whether the moment requires a subdivision of three (**one** two three, **four** five six), or two (**one** and **two** and **three** and). This does not mean one can disregard the 12-beat cycle, because certain things only happen at certain points in the cycle. For example, on beat three, you usually change to the second degree from the tonic. The *remate* typically happens leading up to, and on beat ten.

Remate

A remate is an emphatic closing of the compas. In 12/8 compases, remates usually happen leading up to, and on the tenth beat.

Falseta

A falseta is a short musical idea in a flamenco palo. Traditionally, the flamenco guitarist was an accompanist, and these short compositions were performed in his moment to shine. When the singer had finished a *letra* (verse), the guitarist would play a falseta, giving the singer room to breathe. Even a solo piece would, generally, just be a collection of falsetas. In more modern times,

guitarists have started to think more of their pieces in their entirety; however, you can still often hear that a piece is a collection of different musical ideas.

If a guitarist has enough falsetas in a palo, he can choose to play one that feels suitable in the moment. They can be thought of as pieces of a puzzle, that can be played in whatever order feels appropriate when improvising.

Fin de fiesta

Fin de fiesta translates into “end of party.” It usually refers to a lively, festive piece performed at the end of a flamenco show, typically in Bulerias or Tangos.

Terms (used in this thesis) describing guitar techniques:

Golpe

A golpe is a rhythmical tap on the wood of the guitar. It is often used to mark accentuated beats.

Picado

Picado is a guitar technique for playing scales rapidly. It is done by alternating two fingers, usually the index and middle fingers, using rest strokes (where the finger rests on the next string after playing a note).

Rasgueado

Rasgueado is an umbrella term for rapid strumming techniques used by flamenco guitarists. There are many different rasgueados, and it is a very personal technique; many guitarists play it in their own unique way.

Pulgar

Pulgar means thumb in Spanish. It is also a technique for flamenco guitarists, where one plays with the (right hand) thumb. A flamenco guitarist will generally use pulgar with rest strokes, whereas a classical guitarist normally uses free strokes. Flamenco guitarists generally use pulgar far more than classical guitarists.

Chapter 2: Analyses

The following contains two analyses of performances by flamenco guitarists who, in my opinion, possess a great sense of soniquete. These players are Moraito Chico II and Diego del Gastor. Videos of these performances can be found on the CD that accompanies this thesis, and on YouTube.

Moraito Analysis:

My first analysis is on a performance by Moraito at the Dutch flamenco Biennale of October 2008. A video of the performance is available on YouTube under the title *Moraito por Bulerias okt'08*, with the description “live at the Dutch flamenco-biennale during the concert of Diego Carrasco.” The URL address of this video is listed in my bibliography. The video is also included on the CD. The palo performed is Bulerias, in the key of B. Unfortunately, the quality of the video is not very good. However, the performance itself is a great example of Moraito's soniquete.

Moraito plays harmonically simple, understandable material. His musical ideas are clear and easy to follow. By “harmonically simple” I mean that he, generally, only uses variations of the first, second², and third degree chords from the flamenco mode. With this in mind, it is not harmonic complexities that make his playing and his music captivating. Instead, what makes his playing interesting is his rhythm. His groove. His *soniquete*.

Moraito is comfortable, and not restricted by the compas (of Bulerias). His level of comfort with the compas allows him to do surprising things within it, while never veering “out of compas,” or losing a sense of the rhythmic pattern. As mentioned in the glossary, Bulerias accents typically fall on the third, sixth, eighth, tenth and twelfth counts of the rhythmic cycle. Moraito, on the other hand, is able to play with our expectations of where the accents will be, by marking beats not nor-

2 In the flamenco mode, the second degree holds dominant function, as opposed to in major and minor modes, where the fifth degree is the dominant.

mally accentuated. This creates an exciting rhythmical contrast between the actual beats he marks, and the beats where we, as flamencos, expect the accents to fall. For example, at 0:52 and also at 4:14 he closes the compas on the ninth beat as opposed to the typical tenth (as mentioned in the glossary, remates traditionally contain an emphatic accent/closing of a phrase on the tenth beat of the cycle). We know, however, that Moraito is still well aware of the traditional accent on the tenth beat because he does not shift the accent on every remate. He continues to use the traditional tenth beat to close at 0:43 and 2:52, for example.

The connection to the tradition can always be heard. He never veers too far from the roots. This is very important, because hearing the connection to the root of the palo is what makes the variations so exciting. He does not oversaturate his playing with variations, either. This ensures the variations he does make are always exciting.

His soniquete is a result of how the material 'sits' in the rhythm. Instead of marking the accentuated third beat sharply, he frequently lets the (dominant) chord 'roll' into the third beat, the last note played marking the actual accent. You can hear an example of this at 0:37. In the repetition of the phrase beginning at 1:40, he places the final note half a beat sooner, bending the string upwards to change the pitch slightly, accentuating this note. This adds a lot of energy and drive to the falseta.

Additionally, Moraito plays at a relatively slow speed compared to a lot of players, which makes you feel the weight and groove of the rhythm. He also plays with a lot of dynamics. For example, at 3:35 he builds up towards a remate, and then closes with increased energy and volume.

You can clearly see he is enjoying himself. He is almost dancing, feeling the compas with his whole body, letting himself be excited by the rhythm. I believe this excitement is the source of his playfulness, his flair, his creativity, and thus, his soniquete.

There are myriad individual examples throughout the performance; however, the above should suffice in providing an overview of Moraito's dynamic energy. Even his basic compas is

very exciting to listen to.

Diego del Gastor analysis:

My second analysis is on Diego del Gastor, accompanying Fernanda de Utrera. Given the age Diego appears to be in the video, I presume this performance was recorded sometime in the late sixties. It is very fortunate that clips like these are now on YouTube for everyone to see. In contrast to Moraito's performance at the 2008 Dutch Biënnale, in this video Diego is accompanying and, thereby, has more of a supportive role. However, there are still plenty of moments where we get to see his playfulness. This performance is available on YouTube under the title *Diego del Gastor & Fernanda de Utrera | Buleria*. The URL address of this video is listed in my bibliography. The video is also included on the CD. The palo performed is Bulerias, in the key of C.

The way Diego plays Bulerias is different from most guitarists today. The constant "tap tap, tap tap" (produced by tapping the wood of the guitar), in addition to marking the accents is not as common anymore. However, this is how Bulerias was played at the time. Looking at it from a contemporary perspective, Diego's playing can be considered to be very traditional, or in other words, "old-school." This is by no means a bad thing. Diego's playing is very individual, and has become a school of its own within flamenco.

Both Diego's personality and playing are very eccentric, and something I find quite charming. He definitely has a kind of soniquete. He plays with the repetition of notes and phrases, often just repeating a phrase until he reaches the right place in the compas for a remate. This can make his material sound humorous, even, and he absolutely has humour as a performer. A lot of his material is simple and short. Often times he simply repeats the same phrase on different strings. This guitaristic approach to improvising lets him extend a phrase almost indefinitely before closing. You can tell much of his material has been composed this way. 1:10 provides a good example of how Diego uses repetition.

Another characteristic of Diego's playing is that he marks the accentuated third beat of the compas with a rasgueado. Sometimes he makes a variation where he cuts this rasgueado short, creating a sharp break with increased volume. A cool little rhythmical variation, demonstrating that what you do does not have to be elaborate. Often the opposite is true: apply some dynamics and you can instantly change the feel of a passage (see Chapter Four for more tips). For an example of how Diego uses the rasgueado to create a sharp break, see 2:15.

Compared to some of his contemporaries, the tempo at which Diego plays is relatively slow. This makes the Buleria feel less frantic, and makes the variations more noticeable. Moreover, Diego is clearly enjoying himself. Master of defying expectations, the ending of the falseta beginning at 4:00, is probably the best example of soniquete I can give you. Just when it feels like the falseta is about to end, at 4:16, Diego breaks out what must be one of the most interesting, or "coolest," variations I have ever heard in flamenco. Not only is the variation "cool" in itself, Diego looks like he is about to burst with excitement, feeling it fill every part of his body. This, in turn, conveys the excitement to the audience. These few seconds of video provide a great example of soniquete. This video, and particularly those aforementioned few seconds, are worthy of a dictionary/encyclopedia definition of the word *soniquete*.

Parallels between the Two Players:

Moraito and Diego have very different playing styles. There has been a vast rhythmical development between the time of Diego del Gastor and the time of Moraito Chico II, contributed to in part by Moraito himself, and by others, such as the great Paco de Lucia. There are, however certain things Moraito and Diego have in common. One aspect they have in common is their energy. It is in their energy and their other commonalities where we find the indicators of soniquete. These commonalities include:

- They both play material with few deviations from the traditional harmony. The harmonic “simplicity” of their material allows us to more easily experience the rhythmic energy and intricacy. In other words, both players use simple music (in harmony and melody), but the attitude with which they play it is very interesting.
- Both players play at a tempo generally slower than their contemporaries.
- Both players make interesting rhythmic breaks.
- Both players have a strong sense of compas; they are both able to make interesting rhythmic variations, without losing sense of where in the compas they are.
- Both players use dynamics to emphasize certain phrases; they both have an intention for their creative phrasings.
- Both players have a playful approach to the improvisation of phrases.
- Both players are clearly excited and enjoying the moment, moving with the rhythm in enjoyment of the music.

Chapter 3: Definitions and Prerequisites

Duende

In order to properly define soniquete, I feel it is first necessary to give a basic definition of duende.

The duende, then, is a power, not a work. It is a struggle, not a thought. I have heard an old maestro of the guitar say, 'The duende is not in the throat; the duende climbs up inside you, from the soles of the feet.' Meaning this: it is not a question of ability, but of true, living style, of blood, of the most ancient culture, of spontaneous creation." [...] "everything that has black sounds in it, has duende. [i.e. emotional 'darkness']

[...] This 'mysterious power which everyone senses and no philosopher explains' is, in sum, the spirit of the earth, the same duende that scorched the heart of Nietzsche, who searched in vain for its external forms on the Rialto Bridge and in the music of Bizet, without knowing that the duende he was pursuing had leaped straight from the Greek mysteries to the dancers of Cadiz or the beheaded, Dionysian scream of Silverio's siguiriya." [...] "The duende's arrival always means a radical change in forms. It brings to old planes unknown feelings of freshness, with the quality of something newly created, like a miracle, and it produces an almost religious enthusiasm." [...] "All arts are capable of duende, but where it finds greatest range, naturally, is in music, dance, and spoken poetry, for these arts require a living body to interpret them, being forms that are born, die, and open their contours against an exact present."

-Federico Garcia Lorca, "Juego y teoria del duende"

This quote by Lorca illustrates the sentiment of duende. However, it also shows how the term is romanticized. For the purpose of explaining duende to a flamenco guitar student, I propose a

more practical definition:

Duende in a flamenco context is the understanding of flamenco forms; understanding the character of a given form, as well as its sentiment, and **being able to express this sentiment** whilst performing.

Duende is not exclusive to flamenco. It can be found in other art forms as well, not only in music. One obvious parallel can be drawn between a flamenco artist having duende, and a blues musician having the blues. One could write a book on the term duende alone. However, for the purpose of this thesis, the above definition will do.

Soniquete

With this definition in mind, one can consider soniquete to be the rhythmical part of duende. Soniquete is groove, energy, flair, and humour. Displayed within rhythmical forms of flamenco, it is a performer's command of the rhythm, as well as the ability to be playful, and even humorous, in a rhythmical context, while maintaining the character of the palo. And yet, as per Lorca's description of Duende, there is something romantic about soniquete as well: a genuine passion, or excitement for the music, something that is difficult to describe in technical terms, a "je ne sais quoi"³. The words I used to describe soniquete above are merely vessels for the transmission of this passion to the listener.

The Three Prerequisites:

To properly play with soniquete, one must first have the following attributes:

Rhythm (or compas)

Being comfortable with the compas is absolutely fundamental. You must be at a point where

3 An internationally recognized French idiom meaning "I don't know what," often pointing to something pleasant that is difficult to put one's finger on.

you subconsciously know the patterns so well that you can accentuate beats not normally accentuated, either offbeat or on the beat. You need to be able to return to the regular pattern. Meaning, you need to be able to keep track of where in the rhythmical cycle you are, and not be thrown off by surprising accents.

Knowledge

Knowledge of the palo in question is vital; you need to understand its character, so that you can invent things that still sound characteristic. Should you lack knowledge, you could still come up with something rhythmically valid. However, without the proper character, it would sound jarring to a flamenco audience. It would lack a certain excitement. It is hard to define exactly what is appropriate for or characteristic of a palo. This is, to some extent, a matter of personal opinion. However, there is a general consensus as to what is flamenco and what is not. It takes a lot of experiencing and listening to traditional (!!) flamenco to get a feel for what that consensus is.

Passion (and that certain “je ne sais quoi”)

Passion is letting yourself, as the flamenco guitarist, be excited by the moment. This requires looking at flamenco beyond technical terms and skill. It is to constantly think of how you can make something sound “cool,” and *exciting*. It is questioning how you can be playful, and how you can surprise your audience. It is allowing the excitement to fill your whole body, and radiate out to make the audience feel it too. Without passion, the inherent source of your energy will be missing.

Chapter 4: Tips for Obtaining Soniquete

This section holds tips for obtaining soniquete in one's own flamenco guitar playing. Based on the analyses I have conducted on Moraito and Diego del Gastor, and also based on trying to obtain soniquete in my own practice, I have come up with a set of tips for other guitar students, like myself, on a quest for playing with authentic sounding soniquete (hence me referring to the reader of this chapter as "you").

Tip #1: Slow Down

Whether it is in a performance or your practice, remember to slow down. You may already be familiar with slowing down your practice when considering technique, but my emphasis here on slowing down is specifically for rhythm. Slow down when practising even just the basic accompaniment chord progressions of a palo, such as the basic chordal patterns of Bulerias in compas. Even if you already feel you have a good grip on the accompanying chordal progression and compas of a palo, I still strongly suggest that you slow down your practice regularly, to "check-in" on your sense of rhythm and make sure that it is always exercised. Playing slowly allows you to feel the weight of the rhythm. Things tend to groove when you play them slowly. Slowing down regularly in your practice can help you become a stronger player, and builds good soniquete. Think of your sense of rhythm as a muscle that not only needs to be strengthened, but also maintained once it has been built. Moreover, the skills you develop when practising slowly will be translatable when you are required to play at a faster tempo.

I have discussed the importance of playing slowly in one's practice, but in so far as performance is concerned, the same applies. If you listen to the recordings I analyzed of Moraito and Diego del Gastor in Chapter Two, you will note that neither of them plays at a particularly high tempo. This does not mean that they are not capable of playing speedily, only that they pull back and allow

the weight of the rhythm to sink in. The heaviness with which they play and the spaces they provide are what allows their rhythmic phrasings and intricacies to be heard and felt; and what gives their playing a savoury texture. I urge you to do the same. Although you may be tempted to play quickly during a performance in order to show off your speed, or because nerves sometimes cause us to play faster than ideal, remember that the masters of soniquete do not rush. There is a tendency, also, in particular palos, for the musicians to speed up. Keep in mind that maintaining a slower speed can help the music groove. Before a performance, take a deep breath. In your head, feel the weight of the compas, and hear the tempo with which you want to play. Feel it in your body. Relax, and go for it.

Tip #2, Choose Material that is clear (as in Easy to Understand)

By “material that is clear” I mean the following: easy to understand and comprehensible by not being too busy melodically, harmonically, or rhythmically (see Tip #5 for a further explanation of what I mean by not-too-busy rhythmically). Choosing material that is clear and easy to understand will enable the audience to follow what you are doing. It will make it extra obvious when you are making cool rhythmical variations. It will enable you to emphasize certain parts of your material with more ease. Needless to say, your material, and what you want to express with it, needs to be clear to you first, before it can be made clear to your audience.

Tip # 3: Make sure you are rhythmically strong

Precision

Being rhythmically precise, means being able to accurately land your notes and golpes exactly where you intend to. For example, closing your Buleria compas with a rasgueado ending **exactly** on the tenth beat. Your offbeats (*contratiempos*) should be equally precise. If you want to close on beat nine-and-a-half, that should be **precisely** in the middle between beat nine and beat ten. A good way to practise rhythmical precision is to practise rhythmical breaks (*remates*) or other ma-

terial you like over and over with a metronome/rhythm track. Again, do this in a slow tempo. You can start at a higher tempo (if technically possible)⁴, and slow down as you feel happy with the material at your current tempo. It is more difficult to be rhythmically precise when playing something slowly; you have more time to make mistakes. You may even experience feeling that the metronome is slowing down, or speeding up. This is your mind playing a trick on you. It happens because you are not yet precise. Keep at it! Practise until you are completely satisfied with how your material sounds.

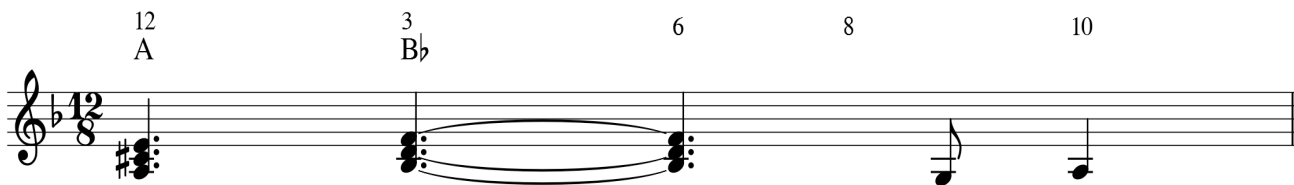
Another good tip is to have someone more experienced listen to you play and tell you if you are precise. It is often hard to realize yourself when you are not entirely accurate.

Awareness

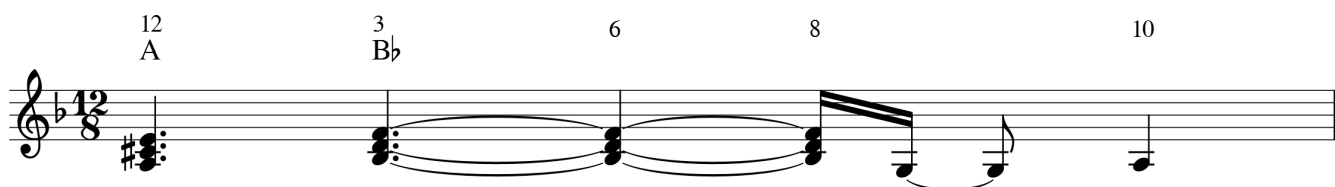
What I like to call rhythmical awareness, is the subconscious awareness of where you are in the rhythmical cycle of a given form (where you are in the compas). A performer with rhythmical awareness has a far stronger ability to adapt to what others are doing. For example, a guitarist with rhythmical awareness would be able to adapt strumming patterns to the rhythmical patterns of a dancer's footwork. He/she has an easier time understanding rhythmical aspects of material, and thus, an easier time learning new material. The rhythmically aware performer is less likely to go “out of compas,” however if this should happen, he or she is more likely to be able to recover.

In addition to practising with a metronome or rhythm track, as suggested previously, a good way to improve your rhythmical awareness is to practise “moving” your material around in the compas:

4 Keep in mind I am talking about practising rhythm here. Do not apply this to technical practice. The opposite is true for practising technique, for which you want to start slowly.



This here is a compás (one cycle⁵) of Bulerias. I have marked the accentuated beats above the staff. The compás starts with an A chord, and then goes to Bb on beat three as is traditional. Then there is a basic remate, with a G note on beat nine, and back to A on beat ten. The last two notes are played with pulgar. This remate is used by Moraito and many others. It is considered part of the tradition.



Here you see the same thing. The only exception is the remate starting earlier. The G starts on beat eight and a half, as opposed to nine. This adds a certain rhythmical drive to the remate. Moraito uses this one quite a lot. Practising alternating between the two versions with a rhythm track/metronome is a great way to improve your rhythmical awareness. Notice how the remate feels different when the accents fall in different places. This is a basic example, and a good place to start. You should practise your other rhythmical breaks/remates the same way, though not everything is equally easy to “move.” You should also try starting your material earlier, and then repeating notes, or later, and then playing it in double time to end up at the same beat. These are handy tools for developing new variations as well.

Tip # 4: Pay attention to the dynamics

Try to be aware of the volume of your material. Does it build up towards the remates? Try to think of the volume curve of a piece as a whole. Does it have parts that should be louder or softer?

⁵ Notice how in flamenco we do not think in terms of bars. The compás is cyclical, and thus, in a sense, does not have a beginning or an end.

Be mindful of the dynamics of different falsetas as well. You may want some to be softer, or louder, depending on their sentiment. Want to emphasize a specific phrase? Play it louder!

Tip # 5: Don't overdo it

Do not throw constant variations at your audience. This is what I mean by choosing material that is not too complex rhythmically. You have to return to the base compas. The variations should be just that, variations. Otherwise they will no longer excite. The same thing is true for flashy technical variations, such as a burst of picado. You need to save these for occasional moments. If you play rapid picado runs all the time, they will lose their inherent excitement.

Tip #6: Listen and Learn

First of all, identify players that you think have great soniquete. Then, make sure you listen to these players often and intently. Relish in their playing, enjoy it. As you listen, pay attention to the small details they include in their playing. Listen to the cool licks and remates they play and, for lack of a better word, “steal” these licks and remates. Perhaps more eloquently put, what I am encouraging is that you allow yourself to be influenced by those flamenco guitar players whose playing you admire, rather than simply the theft of musical style or compositions. For example, if you hear in a recording a remate that you find particularly captivating, groovy, and full of soniquete, listen to it over and over again. Try to deconstruct the rhythmic complexity with which it is played by counting it out. Lift it from the recording, and try it for yourself. Also, be sure to pay attention not only to the counts, but also be mindful of the dynamics, and the inflection with which the remate is played. Ask yourself what makes something an “ole” moment. Figure out the contributing elements for yourself and see if you can replicate those things accurately. Use the masters as your teachers, and their recordings as your own personal guides. After repeating these lessons many times over, you will start developing ideas of your own. Allowing yourself to follow in the footsteps of *los*

maestros grandes will eventually lead to your creativity, and in time you will be able to come up with interesting remates and phrasings, yourself.

Tip #7: Enjoy yourself!

The players analyzed in Chapter Two are clearly enjoying their own playing, and likewise, so should you. Whatever it is you are playing, find something interesting about it, or perhaps a way to make it interesting. Let yourself feel the excitement of the rhythm, as if it is about to burst from your chest. If you are enjoying the music, so will your audience.

Conclusion

As outlined in the previous chapters, to have soniquete is to think about flamenco in a specific way: rhythmically and qualitatively. Having soniquete means that one must have a strong sense of rhythm. The analysis section demonstrates that soniquete entails having such a strong command over the compas that one is able to be creative within it, with accuracy, precision, and intention, all the while never veering out of the rhythmic cycle. At the same time, and as is demonstrated by the players in the selected video performances that accompany this thesis, soniquete also requires a personal investment and quality that is difficult to break down systematically. This includes having feeling, passion, and enthusiasm. Soniquete can be worked on by taking a palo, a falseta, or even just a section of compas, and questioning, “How can I make this refreshing and exciting?” It can be cultivated through playfulness and creativity within the context of flamenco.

I suggest an approach to soniquete, and use select words such as “precision,” “compas,” “passion” and “enthusiasm” so that the flamenco guitar student has something to hook onto. Although it is an integral part of flamenco, soniquete is difficult to understand, and it is rarely verbalized in such a way that it becomes accessible to the learner. I hope what lies before this page can provide some clarity.

Appendix

Soniquete's presence in other musical genres

This appendix has been added because at my thesis proposal meeting, a panel member asked if I was going to compare flamenco's duende and soniquete to similar elements in other kinds of music. This discussion has been placed here as an appendix, as opposed to in the body of the work, because delving too deeply into it would go beyond the scope of this thesis.

Looking at my definition of soniquete from Chapter Three, soniquete is humour, groove, and rhythmical ability, as well as the understanding of the character of the palo one is playing. Translating this to a different type of music, soniquete would be flair and rhythmical ability. Soniquete could refer to the authenticity of the character of that genre of music as well.

One could go about conducting a more accurate comparison in the same way I have approached the thesis, by analyzing recordings. This proposed study, however, would require comparative analysis. For example, one could compare recordings of Moraito Chico and Diego del Gastor with those of a lead guitarist of a rock/metal band. In fact, the options one has for comparison are as broad as there are musical genres. My own, personal, interests, would make me inclined to analyze how videos of someone like Glenn Gould, interpreting J.S. Bach on the piano, would compare to soniquete. Such comparisons are definitely possible, however, as someone who has spent a lot of time thinking about, and searching for soniquete, I do believe that there is something distinctly flamenco about the term. That very something might be lost if one applies the term to another genre of music.

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A copy of the web page, the way it appeared on this date, is included on the accompanying CD.

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