THE FOLIA

MANUEL PONCE AND HIS VARIATIONS

BY

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Thank you to my family and friends for enduring me and for not asking, "how is your thesis coming along?"
ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is two-fold: Firstly to present the argument that the Variations on the Folia de Espana, by the Mexican composer Manuel Ponce (1882-1948) were composed as a result of collaboration between himself and Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia (1893-1987). This will be shown through an examination of letters from Segovia to Ponce and by linking the variations to other works commissioned by Segovia at the time. Secondly to present a detailed analytical study of the work and to provide suggestions with a view to performance of the piece.

The study documents the evolution of the folia as a musical form, presents a biographical history of the composer, illustrating Segovia’s influence with written documentation from Segovia to Ponce, and addresses issues of performance practice. Factors concerning the harmonic practice during Ponce’s time, Ponce’s own compositional style, the formal structure of the work, the use of rhythmic and melodic motifs, and general performance practice aspects of the period are outlined in the analysis.
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INTRODUCTION

During the early part of the twentieth century, a renaissance in the music of the classic guitar emerged in Spain. Due to the efforts of the great Spanish classical guitarist, Andrés Segovia (1893-1987), composers such as Manuel de Falla (1876-1946), Joaquin Rodrigo (1901-1998), Joaquin Turina (1882-1949) and Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968) began composing works for the instrument, many of which were commissioned by Segovia. One of the most prolific composers to respond to Segovia's call, was the Mexican composer and musicologist, Manuel Maria Ponce (1882-1948).

Two factors set Ponce aside from his contemporaries. Firstly, the volume of works he composed for the guitar, numbering over 80. These range from simple transcriptions of Mexican folk songs to original neo-baroque and neo-classical suites, as well as demanding sonatas and a concerto for guitar and orchestra. This is significant when one considers that he did not play the guitar. Secondly, his guitar music is unique in both style and character due to influences of his Mexican cultural background and his European musical education.

**Aim**

The primary aim of this thesis is to reveal how Segovia influenced Ponce in the compositional process of this work via correspondences concerning the folia variations. In order to clarify the 'Ponce from the Segovia' an analysis will illustrate stylistic traits and characteristics consistent with Ponce's 'second style' period. Performance practice notes will accompany each section of the work illustrating both 'modern day' and 'period' practices. The variations and fugue on the folia theme has been chosen to illustrate this
argument as it still stands as one of the most substantial solo compositions written for the classical guitar.

**Organisation of study**

Following this introduction, Chapter 1 deals with the evolution of the folia. As Richard Hudson (1982) notes:

A musical form exists in history as an evolving idea. Its course of evolution is determined by the cumulative effect of innumerable composers deciding how a composition will be like and how it will be different from previous examples of the form. A composer, in turn, acts in response to the broad evolving musical attitudes of his age and his own country. A form therefore mirrors concurrently evolving concepts of melody, rhythm, harmony style, and structure, as well as evolving musical instruments and the evolving techniques of playing them. It reflects changing attitudes toward text and other non-musical elements and toward the roles that music plays within the society. The mysterious process of evolution, although seeming to be guided sometimes by chance or by trivial circumstances, usually traces a far simpler path than is perceived by any individual composer. Therefore it is often only after a form has run its course that one can, by surveying its total history finally formulate a comprehensive definition.¹

Chapter 2 presents a biographical background of Ponce with special reference to the importance of his meeting with Andrés Segovia. Chapter 3 documents the correspondence between Segovia and Ponce illustrating Segovia's involvement with the folia variations and other pieces. Finally, Chapter 4 presents an analysis and suggests performance practice strategies for the entire work.
CHAPTER ONE

The Folia

It is important at the outset to acknowledge the research and writings of Richard Hudson, a leading authority not only on the folia, but also on a variety of other baroque dance forms. Much of the following information included here has come from the many articles and books he has written on the subject.

The evolution of the Folia.

The folia (in literal translation meaning 'mad or empty headed') originated from Portugal and featured greatly in popular guitar music of both Spain and Italy during the early 17th century. In its original form the folia was quick and lively song and dance in triple-meter and the guitar was used in accompaniment. Developed along with the sarabande, chaconne and passacaglia, the folia obtained popularity as a serious musical form during the baroque period. For the purpose of this study the folia will be examined as a basis for musical variations, and not as an accompaniment for dance.

In the early 1600s, the newly developed five-course guitar gained considerable popularity in both Spain and Italy. It was used as an accompaniment for singing and dancing. Elaborate techniques of rasgueado (a flamenco 'strumming' technique) and chordal style developed, and the ensuing methods of notation proved to be intricate and somewhat confusing. Due to the lack of bass line and melody in such techniques...

the dominating characteristic of a form [was] its distinctive succession of chords. Furthermore the various harmonic frameworks that identify the guitar forms seem to be related within a larger concept of modality... The heart of the concept of modality

* A guitar consisting of 5 'doubled' strings. I.e. 10 strings in all. Re-entrant tuning was used.
seems to lie in various central chord progressions. Since these progressions imply no particular rhythm, meter, or phrase structure, they actually constitute what might be called “chord rows.”

The first written account of the folia melody was given by Francisco de Salinas appearing in *De musica libri septem* (Salamanca, 1577). However, “folia texts appeared in plays of Gil Vincente written from around 1503-1529.”

*Figure 1.*

**Vulgares quas Lusitani Follias vocant**

Francisco Salinas, 1577

In 1606 the first set of variations on the folia appeared in *Libro primo d'intavolatura di chittarone* (Venice 1604) of Johannes Hieronymus Kapsberger. The folia started from a modest beginning as a musical framework for songs, dances and variations. It was simple in structure: binary form, the first half being punctuated by chord V and the second half ending on the tonic chord. The harmonic progression and melodic structure lent itself to endless variation.
The Spanish & Italian Folias.

The Spanish varied the music in the early style through adding extra chords to embellish the standard chord progression. This was prompted by the development of rasgueado techniques. It was the Italians however, who subjected the folia to significant rhythmic, melodic and harmonic change, resulting in the later style folia. It is also important to note that the “folia in Spain was danced and sung and played. In Italy the folia, like the zarabanda and ciaconna, appears to be a dance without song.”

During the baroque period, an interest in polyphonic exploration and more melodically delineated writing occurred. As a result, the “distinctive chord progressions became melodic-bass lines. Furthermore the same Baroque concept acted upon the guitar itself, and the playing of selected notes (punteado) on specific courses joined or in some cases superseded altogether the strummed rasgueado chords.”

According to Hudson, the evolution of the folia can be divided into two periods: 1577-1674 when the folia was popular mainly in Spain and Italy, and was fast and lively; 1672-1750 when the form was popular mainly in France and England and was slow and dignified in character. (Hudson does not qualify his reason for the apparent two-year overlap between 1672-74.)

The folia gained popularity in France towards the latter half of the 17th century. The significance of this regarding its evolution is immeasurable, as the following statement attests:

In 1672 a French folia appeared that displayed a substantial alteration of the traditional structure. As an almost fixed melodic and harmonic framework, this new folia became immensely popular in France and England for sets of instrumental variations. All four forms were subjected in France to a severe slowing of tempo, and all four [referring to the chaconne, sarabande and passacaglia] were finally
characterised by majestic triple rhythm in which the dotted second-beat received a heavy accent.\(^6\)

This later French development was to be given its most famous utterance when Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713) composed a set of variations on the folia theme. The structure of the folia has not changed since baroque times. Interestingly, the folia, unlike the sarabande and chaconne, did not attain popularity in Germany, and as a result was never utilised in any of the dance suites that proved to be so popular there.

The following table as devised by Hudson\(^7\), clearly illustrates the characteristic differences between both types of folia, and in so doing, effectively traces the historical evolution of the form.

**Table 1. Differences between the Two Folias.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>The Earlier Folia</th>
<th>The Later Folia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Spain &amp; Italy.</td>
<td>Mainly in France &amp; England.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Disposed of in four 4-measure phrases.</td>
<td>Consists of two 8-measure sections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Often has 2 standard ritornelli.</td>
<td>No internal repetition beyond the parallelism of the 2 halves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The first accent is on the V chord.</td>
<td>First accent is on the i chord, thus shifting the entire structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm</td>
<td>Usually has 2 beats of anacrusis.</td>
<td>Usually no anacrusis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tempo fast &amp; lively.</td>
<td>Tempo slow &amp; dignified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2(^{nd}) beat accents often caused by chord changes (ordinarily in any measure except 4, 8, 12 or 16).</td>
<td>Accents created by dotted 2(^{nd}) beats of melody, especially in odd-numbered measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chords may shift from the duration shown in the framework.</td>
<td>Each framework chord usually occupies one full measure (except in m. 15).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alternation between 2 different meters; cross rhythms between the melody and the chordal accompaniment or between stroke rhythm and chordal rhythm.  

### Harmony

May use a major or minor tonic chord or mix them within a single statement.  

Favours G minor, but may occur in any other major or minor key.  

Does not include III in the framework, but may add it as an inserted chord. Frequently adds new chords (IV, II, or III) to framework. (This is the chief method of variation).  

The framework chord-scheme was also used in many other forms during and preceding this period.  

Uses a minor tonic chord.  

Almost always in D minor.  

Almost always includes III in both halves.  

Seldom adds new chords.  

The framework chord-scheme was unique to this format this time in history.  

### Melody

The melodic framework is based on the tone series 3-2-3-4-(5)-4-3-2 (5 is required when III is inserted).  

Wide variation, both in pitch & rhythm, of the framework melody.  

Repetition of tones may occur, but does not become a fixed characteristic.  

The melodic framework moves a 3rd lower than that of the earlier folia.  

Almost a fixed melody in France & England. In a set of variations the main element varied is the melody which usually remains very close to the framework tones.  

Each tone of the framework is often consistently repeated 2 or 3 times within its measure.  

The Ponce variations are composed utilising the (now standard) later style characteristics.  

However, this study will now focus on the biographical details of Manuel Ponce, his relationship with Segovia, and then the variations themselves.
The musical output of Manuel Maria Ponce was vast and varied. He composed many orchestral and instrumental works, utilising the beauty of his own native music and that of European cultures. Born in Fresnillo, Zacatecas (Mexico) on December 8, 1882 and dying in Mexico City on April 24, 1948 from uremic poisoning at the age of 66, Ponce's music, particularly in his later years, reflected the ethnicity of Mexican folk music, yet incorporated "French impressionist methods and neo-classical counterpoint." Although he is not a well-known figure in the broad field of composition, he is one of the most prolific composers to write for the classical guitar. However, if it were not for the influence of Andrés Segovia, Ponce would not have contributed so much to the guitar repertoire.

The early years.
Manuel was the twelfth child of Don Felipe Ponce and Maria de Jesus Cuellar. His mother was anxious to have Manuel learn music from an early age and as a result he "learnt the notes of music before the letters of the alphabet." He received his first piano lesson and sol-fa lessons from his sister Josefina at the age of four. There are contradictory references as to when Ponce actually wrote his first composition. Otero (1983) states that Ponce caught small pox when he was 5 "and during his convalescence he composed his first work, the Dance of the Small Pox" (p. 7). But Nystel (1991) indicates that Ponce "composed his first work at the age of nine, a piano piece entitled The March of the Measles (inspired by a bout with that disease)." Nystel has obtained this information from page 232 of Robert Stevenson's book, Music in Mexico. In a third reference, Nicolas Slonimsky (1946) writes that Ponce "made first attempts to compose at the age of seven, when he wrote a little piece entitled La Marcha..."
del Sarampion" (p. 244). Somehow Slonimsky manages to get Ponce's birth date and subsequent 'age' entries thereafter wrong by 4 years, which when adjusted means that Ponce wrote his first piece at the age of three? There is also conflicting information regarding the Cathedral at which Ponce sang and played the organ between the ages of twelve and fifteen. Otero writes that Ponce achieved the “coveted post of titular organist” at the “church of San Diego” (p. 9), while Nystel suggests it was the “San Miguel Cathedral” (p.2), in his home town of Aguascalientes. As it turned out, the Archbishop of Mexico shortly thereafter banned the use of any music other than Gregorian chant, consequently terminating the need for an organist.

From Age 18.

In 1900 at the age of 18, Ponce moved to Mexico where he “lived with and learnt piano from Vincente Manas. He also took piano lessons from the Italian Maestro, Vincente Gabrielli, and this experience inspired Ponce to broaden his horizons.”3 He entered the National Conservatorium of Mexico at the age of 19, only to find the teaching methods practised were unsuited to him. Disenchanted, he returned to teach at the local music school in Aguascalientes.

Three years later, in 1905, Ponce left for Italy, settling in Bologna and enrolling in the Liceo Musicale. There he studied composition with Luigi Torchi, and later with Dall'Olio after being refused the privilege of studying with Enrico Bossi. It was repeated by Stevenson (1952) that Bossi told Ponce: “Your style is too old-fashioned. Your music would have been up-to-date in 1830, but not in 1905. You have talent, but have been improperly trained.”4

Not to be discouraged Ponce traveled to Berlin in 1906 and enrolled in the Stern Conservatory to study piano with Martin Krause, a former pupil of Liszt's. Whilst in Germany he experienced the fierce nationalistic pride of the German people. The
traditions of Wagner, Beethoven, and the innate parochial interest in Germanic folk songs became apparent to him. This inspired Ponce to research and utilise his own native 'Mestizo' (Indian and Spanish) folk music traditions from Mexico as a basis for his own compositions.

By 1907 Ponce could no longer afford to stay in Europe due to his meagre finances, so he returned to Mexico. At that time works by Ravel, Debussy and Falla were enjoying great popularity throughout Europe, but were unknown in Mexico. Ponce wittingly carved his career upon performing and teaching these new works. Amongst his pupils were Carlos Chavez (1899-1978), the prominent Mexican nationalistic composer and teacher.

In 1908, Ponce was appointed as professor of piano and music history at the National Conservatorium where he had once studied. Eager to utilise the newfound ideas and knowledge gained during his travels, he began composing works for all types of media and genres with enterprise and dedication.

Corazon Otero states:

These ideas [referring to the integration of folk characteristics with ‘serious’ music] became profoundly engraved in his spirit, as a result of his stay in Europe and a deep study of its folklore. He worked hard to bring his ideas to a successful result. How he fought against the prejudices that existed against everything that signified 'popular' or 'indigenous'! How many forecasts of failure were made by his colleagues when Ponce announced that he would play a Mexican Rhapsody in a concert! He was not spared irony or cruel phrases.5

However, the year 1912 proved to be a milestone in Ponce's life. On July 7, a recital of his own compositions was given, premiering his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra written in 1911. Estrellita a composition that brought fame throughout the world for Ponce was composed and eventually published in an album of songs in February of 1914.
Unfortunately due to a “technical oversight in the copyright arrangement, *Estrellita* has been widely reprinted without any payment to the composer.”

The concert music of Mexico from the 18th century until after the First World War lacked cultural identity as it was a contrived mixture of various European influences. Therefore, during these years (1907-1914) Ponce founded a piano academy and initiated the Mexican nationalistic school. He concentrated on composing works incorporating both nationalistic themes and the harmonic characteristics and subtleties of Mexican music. His first lecture, entitled “Music and the Mexican Song”, dealt with the issues of “raising national musical consciousness, and a new evaluation of folklore.” It provided a new point of view for the ‘intellectuals’ to debate, but due to his musical education, he could not be freed from the elements and influences of ‘traditional’ European harmonic practice.

In 1915 he traveled to Havana where he composed a Sonata for cello and piano, exhibiting characteristics of Cuban music. In 1916 he headed for New York and gave a recital of his own compositions. In 1917 (back in Mexico) he was appointed Professor of Musical Folklore at the National Conservatorium, and married the contralto Clementina (Clema) Maurel.

In 1923 Ponce met Andrés Segovia in Mexico City and wrote a review of the latter's recital. When asked by Segovia to write for the guitar Ponce seized the opportunity. His first composition was *Intermezzo: (Allegretto in tempo di Serenata)* which was eventually absorbed into the third movement of the *Sonata Mexicana*. Ponce also sent Segovia an arrangement (for guitar) of a piano piece entitled *La Valentina* (a traditional Mexican tune) which became the third piece of a collection entitled *Tres canciones populares*.
Mexicanas. Segovia wrote of the public acceptance and acclaim of Ponce's Sonata (Mexicana):

On the occasion of having played your beautiful Sonata in Madrid to the applause of the public, assent of the critics, and effusive admiration of the musicians. I am sending you proof of all three things: the public has asked me for it again, the critics praised it without pedantry or reservations, and as an example of the pleasure of musicians, I will cite to you that of de Falla, before whom I played the andante and the finale, without revealing the name of the author, and he was truly enchanted. His contentment did not diminish when he learned it was you and when I added that you felt great admiration for him.  

Despite his success Ponce felt the need to advance his knowledge and study the latest musical innovations and trends occurring in Europe. He set out for Paris with his wife Clema on May 25, 1925. In Paris, he became strongly acquainted with Segovia and began to compose regularly for the guitar, receiving encouragement and guidance from him. Despite not being able to play the instrument, Ponce developed a great affinity for the guitar and laboured to enrich his understanding of its technical and musical capabilities.

Ponce composed diligently over the next few years, producing guitar arrangements of his songs Estrellita and Por ti mi Corazon, and writing the Prelude in B minor, which calls for the use of a Capo tasto on the second fret. There is however, no technical need for the use of a capo in this piece, one may assume it was suggested purely for aesthetic reasons. Ponce also composed the Prelude for guitar and harpsichord, which was recorded by Segovia, with Edith Weissman playing harpsichord.

In 1926 Ponce composed the Theme, Varie et Finale, based upon an original theme, and in 1927 he produced two Spanish songs; Alborada, and Cancion Gallega, along with Sonata III. Ponce also embarked upon the publication of La Gaceta Muusical (with Mariano Brull), a Spanish music journal published in France. Segovia gave assistance to this venture.
by collecting and producing articles for the journal, and referring Ponce to important composers, reviewers and musicians, as well as the publisher Schott.

In 1928 Ponce enrolled at the Ecole Normale de Musique in Paris, to study composition with Paul Dukas. Heitor Villa-lobos, (the Brazilian composer who wrote a number of popular works for the guitar), and Joaquin Rodrigo (the composer of the Concierto de Aranjuez, and various other pieces for solo guitar) were also in his class. It was also during this year that Ponce produced one of his most beautiful works, the Sonata Romantica in four movements. The piece, written as a hommage to Schubert, is subitled Hommage a Fr. Schubert qui aimant la guitare.

The music of the Impressionists and Ponce's experiences in Europe had a profound effect on him and he absorbed Impressionistic idiosyncrasies into his own compositional style. Ponce was greatly taken by Dukas' ideas of free thematic composition and set about utilising them for his own interests. Ponce's... “nationalistic concern was reflected in greater autonomy of popular elements within an overall neo-Romantic, Impressionist, and neo-Classic style... His harmonic language began to show a greater use of chromaticism and tonal instability combined with profuse counterpoint.”

Having been accused by Bossi in 1905 of writing in an 1830 style, “Ponce in the 1930s was an Avant-garde.”

Paul Dukas told Ponce: “You are no pupil; you are an illustrious musician who does me the honour of listening to me.”

Ponce graduated from the Ecole Normale de Musique in 1932 and returned to Mexico in 1933. As Segovia continued to travel and perform throughout the world, Ponce's music began to enjoy great popularity. Although Segovia passed Ponce's works on to

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* A mechanical device strapped around the neck/fret board, aiding transposition.
Schott for publication, Ponce continued to struggle financially. To make matters worse, Ponce was often ill with what would eventually cause his death. However, he continued to compose (not just for guitar), to study and compile notes on Mexican folklore and the indigenous music of his country.

Having planted the seed in the 1920s, Segovia eventually inspired Ponce to compose a concerto for guitar and orchestra. This did not happen however until 1941, when Segovia premiered the Concierto del Sur, (Southern concerto) to great public acceptance and critical acclaim in Montevideo, Uruguay. Ponce had been reluctant to write for guitar and orchestra, as he doubted his ability to maintain an even balance between the two. He had reservations about the guitar's lack of volume. However, Segovia was adamant regarding Ponce's ability, and consistently encouraged and pressed Manuel to finish what had been started all those years ago.

Ponce spent the remaining years of his life composing, studying and teaching Mexican folklore before his death in 1948. Segovia paid tribute to Ponce's contribution to the guitar repertoire:

From the time that I first became acquainted with Ponce in Mexico in 1923, until the physical pain of his final illness stifled his will to create, he composed more than eighty works for the guitar; large or small, they are all of them pure and beautiful, because he did not have the cunning to write while turning his face, like the sunflower, toward worldly success... He wrote because he felt impelled to convert his impressions of the world and of life into musical form, without caring a straw for the applause of one group or the rewards offered by the other. 12

In the next chapter the specific background, inspiration and motivation that created the folia variations and fugue will be presented through an examination of the Segovia-Ponce letters.
CHAPTER THREE

Correspondence: The Segovia-Ponce letters

The following letters from Segovia to Ponce are of paramount importance for two reasons. Primarily, they enable the reader to follow Ponce's rapid progress in composing the variations, illustrating Segovia's influence upon what Ponce wrote. On a deeper level however, there greater overall purpose becomes apparent when one realises Segovia's true intent, being to elevate the reputation of the classical guitar to a serious concert instrument. In the 1977 television documentary The Song of the Guitar, Segovia recalls:

The prevailing idea during my youth about the guitar was not to consider it apt for music, but only to accompany songs and dancers in the popular amusements with wine and girls.... The hardest task that I assigned to myself was to enrich the repertoire of the guitar, rather scarce at the time... I spent more than 4 years building my technique on the guitar and I found myself with a sufficient number of pieces to phase my concert career. However, with that little repertoire I could warm the attention of the public, critics, and musicians, and to attract toward the guitar and me well known Spanish composers.¹

This being the case, Segovia's prime directive became apparent. He strove with extreme purpose [adding force to the renaissance already started by great guitarists such as Emilio Pujol (1886-1980), Miguel Llobet (1878-1938), and Francisco Tarrega (1852-1909)] to elevate the guitar from that of a 'salon' instrument used only in accompaniment, to a serious classical instrument accepted upon the concert platforms of the world. He set about transcribing music from the renaissance, baroque and classical periods, as well as performing pieces originally written for the guitar by various composers such as Fernando Sor (1778-1839), Mauro Giuliani (1781-1829) and Dioniso Aguado (1784-1849). Segovia knew however, that the surest way to achieve his goal was through the commissioning of new repertoire from respected contemporary composers. Therefore, he
approached Spanish composers such as Manuel de Falla, Frederico Moreno Torroba and Joaquin Turina asking for 'serious' works for the guitar. As his reputation grew his travels abroad allowed him to approach newly found allies willing to compose for the guitar. Manuel Ponce was to become the most fruitful of those to respond to Segovia's call, knowingly enabling Segovia to achieve his goal.

With his goal now set and the way to achieve it clearly defined, Segovia made certain that the pieces he commissioned were 'suitable'. As he commissioned works from non-guitarists Segovia was in a position to oversee the creative process, making certain that what was being written was playable. In so doing Segovia could not resist offering 'constructive criticism'. As will be seen in the letters, Segovia influenced Ponce enormously in the compositional process quite often dictating the style, form and structure etc. the piece was going to take. As Eliot Fisk, a one time student and compatriot of Segovia writes:

Segovia's participation was not limited to the modification of detail-inversion of chords, changes of octave, occasional suppression of notes (especially when doubled by the orchestra in the concerto). Sometimes, as in Bach or Weiss, the basic idea was his*. On still other occasions, as in the tremolo variation of the Folias or the cadenza of the concerto, Segovia practically dreamed that which Ponce, with serendipitous sensitivity and mastery, was later able to translate into pitches and rhythm.2

As a result of this collaboration Ponce and Segovia became very close friends, attested by comments written in the surviving letters. These (enlightening) letters show that Segovia held Ponce in high esteem and felt great affection for him. Ponce was Segovia's favourite contemporary composer and he made no secret of this. Furthermore, they illustrate Segovia's powers of persuasion and ability to get what he wanted.

* Segovia on more than one occasion asked Ponce to write in the style of J.S. Bach, S.L. Weiss and D. Scarlatti in order to play a joke on the eminent violinist Fritz Kreisler.
This first excerpt from a letter written in December 1929 contains Segovia’s initial request for Ponce to compose the variations on the Folia de Espana.

I want you to write some brilliant variations for me on the theme of the Folias de Espana, in D minor, and which I am sending you a copy of from a Berlin manuscript. In a style that borders between the Italian classicism of the 18th century and the dawning of German romanticism. I ask you this on my knees... If you do not want to sign your name to it, we will assign it to Giuliani, from whom there are many things yet to discover, and from whom they have just given me the manuscript in Moscow. I want this piece to be the greatest piece of that period, the pendant [i.e., counterpart] of those of Corelli for violin on the same theme. Start writing variations and send them to me, and try to see that they contain all the technical resources of the guitar, for example variations with simultaneous three-note chords [published as variation 4 & 9], in octaves [published as var. 15], in arpeggios [published as var. 7], rapid successions that ascend to the high b and then fall to the low D, suspensions in noble polyphonic motion [published as var. 3], repeated notes [published as var. 18], a grand cantabile that makes the beauty of the theme stand out, seen through the ingenious weave of the variation, and a return to the theme, to finish with large chords, after going through all the noble musical cunning of which you are capable, to distract the listener from the definitive proximity to the theme ...! In all, twelve or fourteen variations, a work for a whole section of the program, which will not be long because of the contrast of each variation with what precedes and follows it. The theme is charming. Have them play the ones by Corelli on the Gramophone, if you do not remember them, and you will see how it is a great sin that this theme, which oldest version is the Berlin manuscript for lute, Spanish, moreover, to the core is, exiled from the guitar, or feebly treated by Sor, which is worse. You already know that this petition of mine is an old one. Go back to those first days of your stay in Paris. Remember? Three or four years ago, and actually a violin performance of the Corelli variations, profoundly stirred my desire to play some variations of equal or superior importance, written by you. Do not refuse me now, and ask in exchange for whatever sacrifice: except that of renouncing the variations...! If you start on the work, continue sending me the parts that you are composing.!

... Andrés 3

The passion with which Segovia wrote must have made the task of composing a new folia for the guitar almost irresistible to Ponce and one wonders if indeed Ponce felt honoured to be chosen to undertake such a task. In this first excerpt Segovia outlines the style of certain variations he wanted Ponce to write. As one may see from the ‘bracket’ references in the above text, many of the suggestions Segovia made were finally published. From this excerpt one can already see that Segovia had a great deal of influence in the compositional process from the outset.
From a study of the score, though, it is apparent that Ponce did not oblige Segovia in his request to compose in a style that borders between 'Italian classicism' and 'German romanticism'. His use of chromaticism, major 7th and Neapolitan harmonies, and suspensions throughout the variations, are something of a trademark of his style from 1925-1933.

Another example of Segovia’s influence is apparent in relation to Sonata Clasica (c.1928) written as homage to the Spanish guitarist composer Fernando Sor.

...Do not neglect to send me the Sonata if you have finished it before the 26th, because I can read it in one day and bring it later to Paris with the small changes that would have to be made [in relation to technical practicalities]. If the andante is ready send it. And if not try to complete the whole work for the 26th, so that if the sea is not too rough, I can work on it aboard ship.

I forgot to tell you that perhaps a minuet before the final rondo would not be inappropriate. Notice that the sonata you have there has four movements. And another one that has been written in C major, that you do not know,—perhaps you have heard it from me once or twice—four movements also. Your sonata on Sor should follow the same example.

However I do not wish to carry my demand to an extreme by asking you to have the minuet prepared by the 26th, unless you take advantage of a gust of inspiration that takes the form of a final and irreplaceable minuet..!

May Orpheus protect us!

I am dying to play it and see it in print...! Do not be afraid of Mooser or those of his ilk. If he speaks ill of you, Sor himself blesses you, and the spirit of the guitar smiles upon you, gratefully.

Adios. A hug for you,

Andrés (December 1927)

It is interesting to note how in the beginning of this excerpt Segovia suggests that a minuet “would not be inappropriate” and by the end of the letter he has not only assumed Ponce will write it but wants it for the 26th. Notice also the subtle way he inspires Ponce with the phrase “I am dying to play it and see it in print...!” already intimating that he will have it published before it is even conceived. One final point of interest is how Segovia encourages Ponce to not be afraid of Alois Mooser, an influential Swiss critic working for
“La Suisse” (Geneva), but placates him with a reference to Sor and the “spirit of the guitar”.

Returning to the folia variations. A letter sent from Segovia to Ponce in January 1930 reads “...it occurs to me, if you think it is a good idea that you write me some measures for an introduction to the theme, or begin the work simply with the theme. You decide...” it is evident from the 1930 recording that Ponce initially chose to leave the theme in its authentic baroque style. (This is probably how it appears in the Berlin manuscript, as sent by Segovia to Ponce.) Direct comparison of both themes (See figures 2 & 3 in chapter 4) illustrates the obvious differences. Also evident from this first letter is Segovia’s continuing commitment to his “crusade” of encouraging new works for the guitar, and in this case to “reclaim the folia for the instrument.” Ponce must have set to work immediately on this task, as various letters, all in the December of 1929, tell of Segovia’s delight upon receiving some of the variations.

Dear Manuel: The three variations that have just arrived are admirable. You have moved me...! The first three are very good and most of all I like the second of the group. But these last three are quite superior to their companions. The major one is a delight, of a delicate and deep musicality, and a quiet passion that is manifested in all the notes that create suspensions and resolutions of the chords [published as var. 9, Andantino]. The variation that precedes it is Chaconnesque, that is, as beautiful as any of those of the Bach Chaconne. [Segovia is possibly referring here to what was eventually published as var. 2, Allegretto mosso] And 6, (Presto) a bit Russian in the beautiful circle of fifths, a truly splendid result, as rhythm and movement. [Published as var. 10, prestissimo] ...Returning to the variations what do you think about calling them ‘Diferencias,’ like in earlier times? Another thing. Do you think it would be better to have something other than a fugue for a finale, so that the audience does not cool-off? Unless you are already working on it, in which case I do not want to get you off track...

Andrés

Segovia’s reference to variation number 6 sounding “a bit Russian” possibly refers to the overall character of the variation. Certainly it could not imply that the circle of 5ths is a Russian peculiarity. Ponce was asked on more than one occasion by Segovia to compose a
"brilliant" finale. This was due to Segovia's trepidation that the work might... "not be appreciated by a less sophisticated public." As proof of this a further request written 3 years later in November 1932 reads "...it is necessary for you to insert a short ending to the Spanish variation of the Folias because the fugue prolongs the work too much. In order not too make it too long I always have to sacrifice many variations and that is a shame..." 

Segovia recorded the work on the 6th and 7th of October 1930, two years before it was published. He played the theme, ten variations, and the fugue, with the theme recorded in its traditional (baroque) harmonisation. Segovia also presented the variations in a different order from the eventual publication as illustrated in table 2. It is interesting to note that all the recordings since the 1930 version now include, as standard, the modern harmonisation of the theme, ignoring the 'baroque' version of the 1930 recording.

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1930 Recording</th>
<th>1932 Publication</th>
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<tr>
<td>Variation 1</td>
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<td>Variation 12</td>
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<td>Variation 10</td>
<td>Variation 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fuga</td>
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The remaining eight variations (previously unrecorded) obviously took some time to complete as the date on the previous letter (Nov. '32) shows. Ponce would compose the remaining variations as the need arose.

It is with regard to the theme that one finds irrefutable proof of Segovia’s influence in this work. This being that it was Segovia who wrote the theme as it appears in the 1932 Schott publication and not Ponce.* The 1930 recording has the theme in its original baroque harmonisation (perhaps illustrating Ponce's original intention). With this in mind, Segovia writes:

...I am very pleased with the variations you have sent me, and still more with the plan of the prelude, variations and fugue on the Folias. If the theme is not agreeable to you, change it to your taste, you always do what is best. But continue working on it and do all the formulas that you have noted for me, which we will later eliminate by mutual agreement those that do not go well ...

9

The 'formulas' as noted for Segovia were probably draft sketches of the intended overall style for the variation, possibly relating to specific guitar techniques. E.g. tremolo, rapid arpeggios etc. The phrase “if the theme is not agreeable to you” is perplexing however. The folia theme has remained unchanged for over 200 years, so how could it possibly be disagreeable to Ponce? The only logical conclusion of course is that Segovia was referring to his own harmonisation.

Regarding changes to the musical figurations (perhaps devised by Ponce at the piano) within the variations, Segovia’s input was essential as he informed Ponce of the technical limitations of the guitar. On the 22nd of December Segovia writes...

Dear Manuel: I am studying the variations with delirious enthusiasm. I have abandoned the old-fashioned music of the Manen Sonata, the cheap little piece of

---

* Personal conversation with Australian guitarist, John Williams, in 1995.
Turina, and other things to fully dedicate myself to your splendid work, to see if I will have it prepared, at least for the second New York concert.

Of the last four variations, which are splendid, the first two are almost at a point where they can be heard. The 3rd or, following the numerical order, the 9th, presents an insurmountable difficulty of execution: the chords superimposed on a rapid melodic line. Couldn’t you include linearly in the melodic outline the notes that give each chord its character? Or make use of an arpeggio that follows the rhythm of the variation? As I suppose you have a copy, I am not sending you this.

Among these five that you mentioned to me, include three or four instrumental ones, similar to 4, which comes out admirably on the guitar (I take it a little slower than what you have indicated and it gains in intensity: play it like that and you will see). What will perhaps be left out is the third (at the end I will make you a little index so you are not confused). I do not know what to think about what you tell me concerning the finale. In Berlin, London, Paris etc. I will play the Work as you have conceived it, that is Preludio*, Theme and Variations, and Fugue. But as I wish this to be a work of great success before a less sophisticated public, perhaps it would not be too much, if it is not an abuse to ask you for a supplemental effort, to write a short and brilliant finale for me. I asked you before for those instrumental variations with the same ending (among which you should not forget a very melodic one to play in harmonics, with a light accompaniment of a bass and another note). But above this opinion of mine is your view.

I have an enormous desire to read the Prelude and Fugue. And I am waiting with impatience for the arrival of tomorrow’s mail...

Andrés.
22.Dec. XX

...this is the variation that comes out with difficulty because of the chords.***

On the other hand Segovia's advice was not always dealing with guitar technique. In the following letter he discussed much broader musical issues.

(End of December, 1929)

My dear Manuel: I am delighted with the fugue. The whole work is the best that the guitar has, far ahead of the others, and after this work, the most worthy is your sonata to Schubert. It is impossible to tell you by letter how delighted I am!

I work day and night. The fugue fits perfectly on the guitar. There is no need to modify anything, nor change one note ... 11

...Let us talk now about the variations that you have sent me. The one I like most is the canon. [Published as variation 13, Sostenuto.] The other one, in 6/8 with three-note chords, [possibly published as var. 14, Allegro non troppo.] for which I waited

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* In the end the prelude was not included in the Schott publication.
impatiently, and the modification to the one with the octaves [possibly published as var. 15, Allegro moderato energico.] are inferior in my judgment, to all the ones you have done until now.

A harmonic imagination so poetic and rich as you have, should find a way to overcome what you have written, as well in the one with the three-note chords, which sound marvelously on the guitar (and which lends itself, dropping a note here and picking up another there, to pass through very fine modulations that seem like a dusting of modulations) as in the phrase that you have added to the one with octaves, where it finds itself in great imbalance, and in which it curiously drops again to pick up happily upon moving to the Da Capo. I do not even like the one with the harmonics as much as those that precede it.

If you have the time and the inclination, write, then, two other complete variations to substitute for the one with three-note chords and the one with harmonics [possibly published as var. 20, Andante.], and put a finer chisel on the one with octaves. Okay? Are you not angry with me for telling you this?

This all comes from the fact that I am very enthusiastic about your work, and I want you to bring it off in a way worthy of your talent. These three variations are essential because they represent different technical aspects of the instrument, and I do not want it to be only this aspect that is seen in these variations, but, above all, that your imagination is as free and fertile within this technical formula which is imposed as in those which it chooses. Believe me if you take the time and finish them as I wish, this work will be a chaconne for the guitar, sufficient to raise the reputation of an instrument, as low as it has been, to the stature of the most noble ones, and not for a passing age, but from here on.

And since I am making some observations I do not want to let this one go by: What do you think if we leave the prelude that you have sent me to be played with the fugue, on those occasions in which it does not include between the two, the theme and variations, and we incorporate, instead, for the unity of the work the other one which you wrote on the old Castillian theme? I am referring to this:

```
\begin{music}
\score\newcommand{\s}{\staff}{\newcommand{\f}{\frac}{\newcommand{\e}{\empty}}}
def 1/4 2/4 0/2 1/2 -->
def 0/2 1/2 2/2 3/2
\end{music}
```

Just as it is, or if you want, adding a second idea to it, that would be as Spanish as the first. You decide. I do not think the notion is illogical.... 12

Neither the Prelude nor the piece incorporating the old Castillian theme was included in the final publication. In a letter dated May 11 1931 Segovia writes...

...it is necessary, absolutely necessary, that you dedicate all of tomorrow in composing one more variation in tremolo, in minor, very melodic, in triple meter, better long than short, and not very complicated, so I can study it from now until the concert. Something similar to this sketch:
and with an interesting bass line. It is absolutely necessary. I have tried inserting this
technical device between two variations and it has an admirable effect. It can thus
help the success of the work. Work on it and if it comes out, bring it to me, as fast as
you can.

Adios. Until later,

A hug,

Andrés.

May 11. XXXI 13

Not only do these letters illustrate the collaboration between Segovia and Ponce in regard
to the compositional process of this work but also they portray Segovia’s incredible ability
to entice, definitely inspire, and politely demand from Ponce work of the highest quality.
From Ponce’s point of view it must have been advantageous to respond to Segovia’s
requests, as Segovia was the pre-eminent guitarist-performer of the day. It is however
most important to reinforce that Segovia was truly a great friend and admirer of Manuel
Ponce. He consistently sent money, as he knew Ponce lived a frugal existence, whilst also
helping Ponce on a professional level, not only with regard to the publication of his
works, but by also speaking highly of him to leading composers, critics and patrons.

In conclusion, this final excerpt from a letter written in July 1930 portrays Segovia’s
feelings, as he is afraid that he has upset Ponce by pushing him too hard.

Dear Manuel: I am afraid that my wish that you make some changes in the
manuscript of the tremolo has displeased you, contrary to your custom. If that is the
case, you have no reason to be displeased, by just not making them. You already
know the enormous affection, with which I play and care for your works, and the
great admiration I feel for you. If I make some observation, it is from an instrumental
point of view, never artistic and with the best intentions in the world.
That is what it has been in this case. The tremolo was already copied, fingered and
learned, when, after having sent it to Schott, to print it, it seemed to me that the
reprise of the folk song accompanied only with A, D, A, D, came out a bit
monotonous, and it occurred to me that if you modified it in the way in which I asked you, perhaps it would come out more brilliantly...\textsuperscript{14}

This previous letter concludes the references relevant to the final outcome of the Folia. A stylistic analysis of both themes, 20 variations and the fugue with suggested performance practice notes follows, taking into account how Segovia's harmonisation of the theme, his editing, and fingering have influenced the overall effect of this work in performance.
CHAPTER FOUR

Variations sur >> Folia de Espana << et Fugue:

Analysis and Performance Notes

If one is to present a relevant and functional analysis of this work it is important to set parameters beforehand. The following chapter presents a general overview of the work aimed at presenting either the enthusiast or would-be performer the ‘procedures’ of the work at a glance. To do this logically each variation ‘overview’ has 2 parts: **Analysis** which focuses on overarching factors such as form, harmonic structure, and compositional style; **Performance Notes** which consider technical ‘application’ factors (e.g. fingering) and illustrates both modern day and period practices relevant to the performance of this work. Additional comments that perhaps do not fit into either of the above categories are also supplied for some of the variations. In order to give the analysis relevant context however, a brief overview follows outlining Ponce’s development as a composer.

David Nystel (1991) in his article *Harmonic Practice in the Guitar Music of Manuel Ponce* suggests that Ponce’s guitar works can be divided into three “style periods”. “The guitar works written before 1925, the works written during Ponce’s stay in Paris from 1925 to 1933, and the works written after his return to Mexico in 1933.”

In broad terms Nystel categorises Ponce’s first style period as works composed imitating European musical practices but applied to Mexican content (e.g. traditional folk tunes etc.) The *Sonata Mexicana, Tres Canciones Populares* (2 arrangements of popular tunes and one original work for guitar) *Estrellita* and the b minor *Prelude* do all indeed correspond with Nystel’s supposition. Ponce’s second style period is mainly categorised by
the works he wrote when in Paris. In these pieces the influence of his study under Paul Dukas and his experiences there become apparent in his now “original” music. Works that were composed at this time form the main bulk of his guitar output. Some of them are Theme, Varie et Finale, Sonata III, Sonata Romantica and the 24 Preludes. Finally, Nystel categorises Ponce’s third style period as those works written after his return to Mexico in 1933, the most significant guitar work of this period being the Concerto del sur. Other works (not written for the guitar) that fit into this period are Chapultepec (1934), Ferial (1940) and the Concerto for Violin (1943). These are deeply nationalistic in nature and are described by Dan Malmstrom as being “somewhat more dissonant than the works of earlier periods.” adding validity to Nystel’s premise.

The Folia variations display Ponce's creative ingenuity, illustrating his compositional style and harmonic practice during his “second style” period (1925-1933: the Paris years). Features of Ponce’s second style include the use of both secondary and major 7th harmonies, unexpected chromatic shifts and modulations, modal tonalities and an “increased concern with counterpoint is one of the chief characteristics of Ponce’s later style.”

As stated in the introduction, the folia variations, being the largest solo work written by Ponce incorporates many traits of his second style. In fact, theme and variations form proved to be an ideal vehicle for Ponce to demonstrate his musical inventiveness, in a free exploitation of the theme, creating as a result, some interesting 'character sketches'. John Williams (1978) noted that a technical analysis of these variations would “reveal many interesting features but give entirely the wrong impression of music which rests mainly on colour and expression.” these “interesting features” referred to by Williams are now
discussed in the following analysis and review of performance aspects as related to each variation.

Performance notes.

As previously mentioned these following sections deal mainly with the more technical aspect of ‘fingering’ as this overarches the musical concepts of voicing, rhythm, tone colour, style and timbre. Therefore, the most significant task regarding the performance and interpretation of this work is to make a critical appraisal of Segovia’s fingering with regard to its musical intents and purposes, its feasibility for individual technical idiosyncrasies and the stylistic limitations that it places. Fingering is an idiosyncratic process and should always be viewed with this in mind.

Andrés Segovia was over 6 feet tall and had very large hands and fingers, the scale length of his Ramirez/Hernandez guitar is testimony to this fact. To faithfully adhere to his fingerings is sometimes impossible for a person of smaller build. Not only is fingering individual it usually reflects the performance style of the period. Techniques such as portamento, vibrato, and what might be described as ‘overly romantic’ phrasing tendencies were highly fashionable during this period and Segovia’s abilities and tastes are evident in his chosen fingerings, effectively dating the work. A faithful adherence, especially to Segovia’s fingerings will result in an unfaithful imitation of Segovia’s performance.
Theme

Analytical and performance notes

In his 1930 recording, Segovia presents the folia theme in its original modal form (as previously mentioned in chapter 2). Performers might take a cue from this and commence with this ‘unembellished’ 17th century version as it provides a clearer reference point for the ensuing variations than does Segovia’s version of the theme, not written at the time of recording.

If one chooses to begin with the ‘original’ theme a change will occur regarding the interpretative presentation of the ‘Segovia theme’. I.e., the latter will now be regarded more in the style of a variation, in turn, changing the player’s and therefore the listener’s perspective. In playing the Segovia theme after the original theme one may find it more musically effective to play it quite ‘straight’, i.e., in a less ‘romantic’ style, focusing upon exposing the folia melody, and literal phrasing. By playing it in this manner it strangely seems to have a reverse effect, actually highlighting the accompanying harmonies and issuing a sense of harmonic clarity with regards to voicing. Perhaps this is a perfect example of the old adage, “less is more”.

Given Segovia’s skill as a composer, it is not surprising that he has convincingly written in the style of Ponce. Comparison of the two themes exhibits the extent of Segovia’s influence in this work. Furthermore, it highlights an important conceptual difference. With the original theme as a point of reference, one can easily compare and contrast the variations with the theme. The Segovia harmonisation of the theme would then perhaps be better served if presented as a variation. However, one must assume that Ponce approved of the harmonic changes, as it was consequently published in this form.

* ‘Original’ meaning the theme as presented in the 1930 recording and not Segovia’s harmonisation. This term will be used in this meaning throughout the thesis.
It should be noted that within the published edition there are inconsistencies in notation. As in much guitar, lute and keyboard music there is considerable freedom in connection with parts that appear and disappear without connecting rests. Yet Ponce notates some and leaves out others in such an inconsistent way that one begins to suspect print errors. As it has not been possible to locate the original manuscript, any idea of ‘correcting’ the notation is out of the question in this thesis. No further mention of these ambiguities will be made. Any other points will be tabled at the bottom of each variation. In the only edition (Schott), discretion regarding the use of a full or half capo* is advised, as full capo’s are almost continually suggested; yet a half capo will often suffice.

Figure 2.  

Theme: Original.

* The first finger of the left hand holds down all 6 (full) or 3 (half) of the strings across one fret. Also called a barre.
When comparing both themes the most noticeable contrast is obviously that of the rich harmonic complexity of the Segovia harmonisation. Major 7ths, widespread chromaticism, and rhythmic variation (in the form of a quaver motif) occurring from bar 9 onwards, are characteristics of Ponce's own style. However, one characteristic of the folia (sarabande and chaconne) is the implied accent that falls on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} beat, and for this reason, it might be useful in performance to play the original version before the Segovia harmonisation. Arguably the accent is more natural in the original, as it does not have the harmonic and rhythmic complexities of the full 4 note chords in the opening bars of the Segovia setting, which can cloud the natural rhythmic subtleties of the folia.

In the 2\textsuperscript{nd} bar of the Segovia theme the chord V (A major) still sounds whilst the G sharp to G natural bass is played. At this point, the use of a half capo as opposed to a full capo might be easier, although the left-hand fingering is straightforward. The dynamic
markings (in the Segovia theme) serve to highlight the musical character of this setting. However, when playing the final ritardando there might be a tendency to get softer, but the final forte denies this, therefore suggesting an even volume be maintained. The player may also like to consider whether or not the final cadence is more effective when the last chord finishes on beat 3, rather than on 2 as written.

Turning now to the variations, some of which have similar qualities. For example, variations 4 and 14 use three-note unison formation chords in rapid succession, variations 2 and 8 extensive scales and arpeggios. However, it is the consistent use of recurring rhythmic motifs and thematic material that assists in unifying the work.

Variation 1.

Analytical notes

This opening variation exposes both a triplet figure and a dotted motif, both important rhythmic characteristics, as they feature extensively in further variations, if not precisely then in derivation. Figure 4 cites these features and table 3 illustrates their use in other variations.
Variation 1. Comments.

[1] Bar 7: Bass, 2nd beat; the B is a quaver, not a crochet.
The lively rhythmic motif found in the opening bar persists until bar 13. Here the triplet figure is introduced over a quaver bass line. The motif resumes in bar 22 starting the brief coda. The bass line provides the main link to the folia theme, by loosely re-establishing the harmonic progression.

**Performance notes**

One area that may present some difficulty in the performance of this variation is that of keeping a sense of 4 beats to a bar, as opposed to only 2. One may find that there appears to be a tendency, possibly due to the *poco vivo* tempo marking, to play with a feel of 2 beats to the bar.

*Figure 5: Variation 1, alternative left hand fingering.*

In the interest of clarity, instead of using the first finger to slide 'portamento' style, from the F to the G, one may find it preferable to slur (as marked) over these two notes. In order to do this successfully however; it is necessary that the A (at the end of the triplet) be played using the open 5\(^{th}\) (A) string. This fingering can be utilised and adapted (adding in the slur over the first two notes of the triplet), for the upcoming motifs. In addition, the slur from D to E on beat 4 may also be omitted in this and future occurrences, as one might find that this also interferes with the rhythmic clarity of the phrase. From bar 13 until the end, triplet arpeggios take over, and although this section is straightforward in terms of fingering and musical markings it can be difficult to maintain a sense of tonal
clarity as the texture is rather ‘busy’. Moving the right hand a little closer to the bridge and/or plucking more directly across the string, will effectively brighten the sound up.

The following table catalogues the rhythmic motifs as derived from variation one, and illustrates them as they appear in the context of other settings.

Table 3: Index of recurring rhythmic figures derived from variation 1.
The 'bolero' rhythmic figure cited in the opening bar of variation 12 is unique, it is also used as the counter-subject rhythm in the fugue.

It may be concluded from the above table that the recurrence of literal and derivational rhythmic motif conveys an underlying sense of unification throughout the work. Of course, Ponce also employs melodic motifs. This is especially noticeable in the form of a melodic contour that is based upon the first four notes of the folia melody (see fig. 8). The frequent use of the minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval in further variations can be directly related to the first 3 notes of the folia melody. Other stylistic devices will be illustrated and discussed as they occur during analyses.
Variation 2.

Analytical notes

Not included in the above table, this variation retains the simple harmonies of the traditional folia theme, its chordal progressions unfolding through scale and arpeggio figurations.

Figure 6. Variation 2

Variation 2. Comments. [1] Bar 3: beat 1; d or d' missing in the bass.
The bass-line, heard at the beginning of each bar, links the folia progression. However in bar 3 of the score it is absent. The omission of the bass d is almost certainly a publisher's oversight. In Segovia's 1930 recording of the variations d is played on the first beat. Both John Williams and Eduardo Fernandez in their recorded performances also add in this note as d1.

Performance notes

This movement is straightforward regarding both musical and technical aspects, although the suggested right hand fingering from bars 9 to 17 is unworkable if one is to take the rhythm literally. The use of the thumb (p) is well suited to playing the accent on the notes as directed. However, p must also be used to stop the bass note of each bar on beat four, making it impossible, because the thumb then has to be in two places at once. The alternatives are to either use the index finger to accent the melody notes perhaps let the bass notes sound for longer than they're written duration.

Additional comments

Recalling the likelihood that this work was composed at the piano (see chapter 2), it is interesting to note that this variation in particular takes on a different character when played on that instrument. This is solely because the 6/4 time signature is allowed to flow without rhythmic impediment. The effect of slurring from beat 2 to 2 and a half then from beat 5 to 5 and a half in the first bar sets up an intriguing rhythmic conflict. More so when one considers the distorting effect of slurring across the beat in bar three. This fashion is continued throughout the first eight bars of this variation, and detracts from the compound rhythm effect of the allocated time signature. However, if one plays the variation at a reasonably fast allegretto, the rhythm will flow more consistently and the slurring becomes a feature of this movement. Alternatively, when this variation is played
employing ‘cross-string’ fingerings (see fig.7) an arguably more literal rendition results, highlighting the elegant simplicity of the arpeggios.

One may therefore conclude that Segovia (and presumably Ponce) devised what might be described as ‘musical hiccups’ in those places, as a way of perhaps maintaining interest and judging by the published score one must assume that Ponce was in agreement with the effect achieved by Segovia’s fingering.

Figure 7: Variation 2, bb. 1-9: Cross string fingerings.
An interesting cross-rhythm effect is introduced in bar 9, continuing until bar 14. When one studies the rise and falls of the accented notes a new melody emerges based upon intervals present in the melodic line of the folia. In bars 9, 10, 11, and 13 one can see that the contour of the accented melody is almost identical to that of the folia. This contour corresponds with the last 5 notes of the folia melody as figure 8 illustrates.

Figure 8.

Melodic contours in bars 9, 10, 11 and 13.

Contour of the folia melody bars 1-8.
Variation 3. Comments.
[1] Bar 4: The use of the 3rd finger is perhaps preferable to the 4th, as it provides a guide from the G to the A.

Variation 3.

Analytical notes
The slower tempo of variation 3, marked lento, effectively changes the moods established so far. The opening triplet motif from variation 1 features here in the bass of bar one. However, it is modified through the use of a tie from the last quaver of beat one, across to the second beat. This features strongly throughout, and is used as a form of antiphonal response. (See fig. 9) The characteristic harmonic feature of this variation is the use of
parallel 3rds and 6ths that loosely link the Folia's melodic line and the chord progression that is again easily traceable through the bass line.

**Performance notes**

Simplicity may well be the key to interpreting this variation. Of note is Ponce (or Segovia's?) use of artificial harmonies in the closing bars as they truly enhance the beauty of this tranquil movement.

**Variation 4.**

**Analytical notes**

The 4th and 14th variations bear a similarity through the sustained block chords used in "rapid succession", as quoted from Segovia's first letter regarding this work. In comparison, variation 4 at a first glance appears to be the more conservative of the two, both in rhythmic and melodic exploration, as the folia melody and progression are easily grasped. However, this is somewhat deceptive.

The incessant driving semiquaver rhythm (through the quickly alternating treble and bass) stated in bar 1 is sustained almost entirely throughout this setting, the exception being the coda (final four bars). As the folia melody and chord progression is quite obvious, the musical interest lies in the chosen harmonic structure. The beauty of this variation lies in its poignant harmony, in which appoggiaturas may form augmented chords, unexpected minor chords, secondary sevenths and so on, before resolving or moving to the next cycle of harmonic events, all underpinned by the pulsing, relentless and flowing rhythm. It is interesting to note that the use of 'Pedal bass' from bars 17-24 provides a link as it also occurs in the fugue.
**Variation 4. Comments.**


**Performance notes**

Phrasing, voicing and dynamic sensitivity are once again key focal points of this movement. There is obvious technical difficulty associated with smooth chord changes but the most difficult change occurs in bar 9. However, the last chord in bar 8 has fingering to
that in bar 9 and this convenience can be exploited. There is natural ebb and flow in this variation brought about by the persistent rhythm, an obvious danger in performance is that the bass line could overpower the melodies above it.

**Figure 11. Variation 14**

**Variation 14.**

**Analytical notes**

Variation 14 is comparable in character to variation 4 in a number of ways other than those previously mentioned. The use of appoggiatura chords, secondary sevenths,
Neapolitan sixths etc., in the chordal harmonisation is governed by the diatonic descent of the melodic line. The tempo marking, *Allegro non troppo*, also evokes a similar feel to the *Un poco agitato* marking of variation 4. The marked dynamic rise and fall, or 'swell' of the repeated chords from bar 10 onwards is both very effective and essential, as these subtle features enhance the beauty of this setting.

There is little trace of the traditional folia melody structure in this particular variation, but the intervals used to weave a new melodic line through the chord changes connote the folia melody itself.

*Figure 12: Variation 14, melodic relationship to the folia melody.*

![Figure 12](image)

1 (f-e 3rd higher)

[A tenuous link to the theme is implied in different voices of the chords.]

Interestingly the use of hemiola cross-rhythm from bars 8-15 and again from bars 22-27 is a favoured rhythmic device of Ponce's. Further examples occur in the *Theme Varie et Finale* (1926) and the *Sonatina Meridional* (1932), among others.

**Performance notes**

The atmosphere of this movement sees to rely upon the harmonic tension created by the *allegro* unison three-note chords. This may be highlighted by the effect of the dynamic markings, a subtle rise and fall in volume.
Variation 5.

Analytical notes

Ponce has taken only a fragment of the folia theme as the subject for this setting. The opening motif (the first four notes) implying the folia theme forms the antecedent upon which this pseudo-canon style variation is constructed. The consequent follows immediately in bar 2, making it apparent that this is by no means a strict canon.
Analysis of the antecedent, as shown in figure 14, reveals the correlation with the folia melody. Echoes of the theme and its harmonic progression are apparent as this variation unfolds, the phrasing helping to connect the motive with the folia.

*Figure 14.*

A recapitulation occurring from bar 25 distills the character of this variation, the last nine bars presenting a kind of ‘paraphrase’ of what has gone on before. Once again Ponce’s eloquent use of chromaticism, compound intervals, unexpected chord changes and rhythmic motif intuitively conveys the folia theme.

**Performance notes**

Imitation and contrary motion occurring between parts is obviously a feature of this movement. Clarity of voicing being as important in a canon as it is in a fugue, Segovia suggested fingering clearly delineates the canonic imitation of these parts and helps evoke the beauty of this variation. Due to the nature of the guitar, and as with any strung instrument (except for the harp), prematurely lifting left hand fingers will extinguish the notes before having sounded their full value.

**Variation 13.**

**Analytical notes**

Strict canon is the main feature of variation 13. The first four bars announce the theme, which is then, imitated one octave lower three beats later. In this contrapuntal setting Ponce has brought together both diatonic and chromatic elements in a most eloquent yet
simple way. It is one of the most ‘poetic’ of the variations, and forms a tranquil contrast to those that precede and follow it.

**Figure 15.**  
**Variation 13**

Variation 13. Comments.

[1] Bar 5: Left hand 2nd finger on e, not 1st.

Performance notes

Much the same applies to this variation as to variation 5. Awareness of canonic imitation in regards to voicing, avoidance of premature lifting, and in this particular case, observation of silence (e.g. bar 5, beat 3) is especially important in terms of effective phrasing, as outlined in the analyses. Warmth of tone and maintenance of clarity may enhance the ‘sombre’ atmosphere created in this setting.
Variation 12. Comments

Variation 12.

Analytical notes

The tonality, or more accurately, modality of variation 12 is centred around a transposed Aeolian mode scale-structure. In this movement the link to the folia theme lies in the descent from D-A representing chords V-i. As one follows the flow of the melodic line, other structural chords of the folia progression are perceivable.

This transposition is evident from the use of the note, C natural, which conforms to the Aeolian tone scale order: D, E, F, G, Bb, C, D. In this variation Ponce evokes a haunting Spanish atmosphere. The use of Aeolian modality combined with such Spanish clichés as the Bolero' rhythm, the characteristic bVII, bVI, V, i chord progression found in bars 7-11, brilliant rasgueado chords, and melodic phrases exploiting the interval of the 4th (a characteristic of the guitars tuning) help achieve this effect. One more feature in addition to the quartal nature of the opening theme is the pedal-point d.

The subject of this variation is once again a fragment of the folia theme focusing upon the interval of a fourth, D falling to A, and A rising to D as can be seen in the opening bars. Although in notation there appears to be only a tenuous link with the folia theme (the d-a melodic interval which echoes the harmonic bass, the lift from d-e in bars 2-3, and its continuation reflecting the contour of the theme), the variation nevertheless still seems to evoke the folia theme in performance.

* A Spanish dance and song in moderate triple time. This rhythm is a characteristic of the Bolero.
As the variation unfolds Ponce moves away from the theme, expanding upon his own ideas and moving almost into free-thematic improvisation, loosely based upon the previously mentioned descending chord progression. The opening theme (A) returns to bind the variation at bar 26, the beginning of the coda, and the baroque ornamentation of the final chord is like a sigh at the conclusion of the cediendo.

**Performance notes**

In comparison to other variations this movement utilises considerable dynamic contrasts. The opening instructions, *animato* and *ritmico* set the atmosphere for this brilliantly Spanish variation. It is one of the more technically demanding variations, especially at the *etouffe* arpeggio (bars 9-10), with its crescendo and diminuendo midway. The absence in the published score of a slur over the first two notes of bar 16 is puzzling, as it creates inconsistent articulation and an (unnecessary) technical difficulty. Another technical problem lies at bars 20, and 24-26 where it is difficult to achieve clarity concerning both the *rasgueado*s and the three-note chords.
Variation 10. Comments.

[1] Bar 25: M I P right hand fingering is suggested as it offers clarity of voicing.
Variation 10.

Analytical notes

This is another variation utilising the folia's Spanish heritage. The opening four bars consist of rapid triplet arpeggio figures over chords i and V. Ponce continues to build upon this theme, incorporating chords bVI and bVII, eventually modulating to new keys. All the while, the top notes incorporate the opening shape of the folia theme, as can be seen from bars 5-13. The first 4 notes of the folia theme (D-C-D-E and in response D-C-E-C) are the subject for this vibrant and colourful movement.

The opening tonic-dominant arpeggio figures return at bar 21, followed by a wild leap into the key of F minor at bar 25. The typically Spanish bVII bVI V (found in the previous variation) is exploited again at this point as alternation predominantly between chords bVII-bVI (in F minor) now occurs in the same rapid arpeggio vein. At bar 41 we are back in D minor reinforced by brilliant forte rasgueado's of the tonic chord. An unyielding pedal bass effectively 'ties down' the folia theme to chord i, which incorporated with descending perfect 5th intervals, evokes a sparse 'modal' feel. The tonic-dominant feature occurs for the final time from bars 61-65, and the tonic arpeggio pattern is effectively used in an ending that gives the impression of growing disintegration.

Performance notes

The B section (bb. 5-13) of this 'ritornellic' form variation may present coordination problems between the left and right hands. In this section the chord changes are happening so quickly that one might find that the left and right hands almost trip over each other. The danger in this section is that the B flats in bars 6, 8, 10 etc., played by the thumb, is easily lost as the left hand anticipates the next arpeggio shape.
The final *pianissimo* chord i, which like so many of the others in this variation avoids the 3rd of the chord is particularly effective when played with the flesh of the thumb, in the vicinity of the nineteenth fret as it is sympathetic to the *pianissimo* dynamic marking.

**Variation 6.**

Analytical notes

Unique in comparison to the other variations of this work, variation 6 is the first to break away from the key of D minor, being in A major. The harmonic content is also more adventurous, both in the context of this work, and as written for the guitar at that time. This variation centres on the use of broken arpeggio chords incorporating the opening shape of the folia melody, apparent in the bass line.

Marked *Allegretto expressivo*, this variation achieves tender pathos through its phrases that span wide intervals (like the 7th) which ‘return’ through smaller ones (like minor 2nds). Such a comment about the technical structure of the phrasing does, of course, little justice to the poignant expression that it so generated.
Variation 6. Comments.


[2] Bar 12: The downward stem designates the use of the thumb and is not rhythmical.

The persistent use of chromaticism and modulations, constantly breaking away from the A major tonality and moving at its most remote point at bar 11, creates a very unsettled mood. Surprisingly, one is still aware of the presence of the folia progression. This variation is in ternary form with the last two-and-a-half bars forming a codetta. Ponce also
keeps the rhythmic interest alive by having tied notes across the beat, reinforcing the unsettled mood already created by the harmonies.

Performance notes

Despite the lack of many dynamic markings, the contours of the phrases suggest many more subtle rises and falls and legato connections between the notes will emphasise the rhythmic fractures of the tied melody notes. It is not unlikely that in this variation Ponce has deliberately set out to thwart the listeners 'traditional' harmonic and at times rhythmic expectations.

Variation 11.

Analytical notes

Only a small number of variations leave the D minor tonality. Such a variation is number 11, in the key of C major. Ponce creates his own melody for this variation and recalls rhythmic elements introduced in variation 1 that specifically relate to the dotted rhythm of the traditional theme. Once again the folia progression is implied rather than stated in the first section, which is made up of 4x2-bar couplets, modulating to A minor at bar 9.

While Ponce’s melody is basically diatonic, the variation seems to hark back to variation number 6 through the constantly recurring chromatic appoggiaturas (bar 10, F-E; bar 12, C-B; continuing through bars 13 to 17.) that accompany it. The opening theme is restated in C major once again in bar 17. However subtle harmonic adjustment occurs through the use of flattened 6th’s and 7th’s, effectively darkening the mood. This is then contrasted in the next phrase by naturalising these 6th and 7th degrees. At bar 24 Ponce uses a tierce de picardy on chord III, and moves most unexpectedly into the key of C minor for the final section. This variation in particular is ideal for analysing Ponce’s writing style, as its simple
subject provides a clear window through which to view. One can immediately see traits such as major 7th harmonies (bar 6), chromatic features, major-minor contrast, and finely crafted motific use.

**Figure 20. Variation 11**

**Variation 11. Comments.**

1. Bar 4: D is played with the 2nd finger.
2. Bar 6: beat 4; the dot is missing on the high D.
4. Bar 18: beat 4; Dotted crotchet rest is missing in the bass.
5. Bar 22: beat 4; the dot is missing on the high D.
7. Bar 28: beat 1; tie missing from the bass G.
Variation 7. Comments.

[1] Bar 6: beat 3.5; use the 3rd finger to play the D flat.
Variation 7.

Analytical notes

The generating principle underlying this variation relates to texture: an 'open spaced' triad followed by one in 'close' position, the second triad being unrelated to the first. This is illustrated in the opening bars.

In the opening bar chord i (D minor, lacking the 3rd) is compressed into an Eb minor triad, placing rhythmic (and harmonic) emphasis on the second beat, a feature consistent with folia characteristics. This feature continues throughout the first 8 bars, the overall shape of the melodic line being governed by the descent of a 3rd. The descending line of the variation is a very poignant statement, as it is a subtle derivation of the bVII-bVI-V-i chord progression used in this and other settings. One could perhaps consider this as a variation on a variation as it were. The Spanish flavour of this variation is confirmed from bb.9-15, acting as a bridge to the B section. Once again the minor 2nd interval features in this movement.

The four semiquavers in bar 5 form an important ornament to chord i. Ponce builds upon this, using it to rhythmically vary the subject matter of the second section, being similar in style to the first. However, for this ornament to be musically (and technically) effective, consideration might be given regarding the rhythmically strong effect of slurring from semiquaver 1-2, and the rhythmically weak effect from semiquaver 3-4. Perhaps from both a musical and technical perspective the player should decide whether or not the second slur, or indeed any slurs need be played.
Variation 8

Moderate

VanVIn

animando

C. II

cediendo

C. VII

C. III

Arm

Arm
**Variation 8.**

Analytical notes

In plain and simple arpeggios, this variation stands in contrast to the previous movement. Moderately fast ascending and descending triplet arpeggios state the folia chord progression, one chord per bar. Nevertheless there remains an affinity with the previous variation in that the peak of the opening ascending arpeggio falls by one semitone (a characteristic interval in the previous variation) to the next (descending) arpeggio, establishing a feature of this movement. The B section is slightly different from the A in that there is repetition of one note on the final triplet of each bar. Although the musical structure of this variation is relatively simple, the same may not be said for its technical execution.

**Variation 9.**

This setting provides a delightful contrast to the vigour of the previous variation. It is a gentle, lyrical movement, with harmonies that chromatically decorate regular tonal progressions, its expressiveness highlighted by the change from major to minor at bar 19-26.

In D major, Ponce exhibits chromatic shifts, suspensions, augmentations, major 7th's, diminished 7th's, and added 9th's that are based upon the chords of the folia but are not in the order of the folia progression. The I V I (D A D major) chord progression of the first 3 bars is true to the folia harmonic progression until bar 4 where Ponce uses a chord III7 (F# major 7). From this point on restless ascending and descending chord figurations grouped in two bar couplets beginning at bar 5-6 (and so forth) pick their way through, still hinting at the subtly camouflaged folia theme through their lowest notes. A d minor change occurs at bar 19 settling the mood somewhat, allowing for the folia progression to be heard in
full from bb.19-27. At bar 27 the A section returns until bar 35 where a codetta neatly brings this variation to a close.

**Variation 9**

**Variation 9. Comments.**

[1] Bar 5: the G (probably) should be a minim. If not, then a rest must be inserted on the 2nd beat. The same applies to bar 9.
Performance notes

The change to major tonality (after var. 8) is announced piano, stated by the first chord. Animando chord figurations move along implying a subtle sense both of rubato and dynamic swells that follows the contours of the arpeggios. The transition into d minor at bar 19 marks the beginning of a strikingly beautiful section, the piano marking heightening the musical effect. This section as previously mentioned exposes the folia theme in full, and calls for clarity of voicing in the bass line. In closing, the final rest in bar 36 sets up the transition to variation 10.

Figure 24.

Variation 15

Variation 15. Comments.
[1] Bar 8: the F bass should be an A.
**Variation 15.**

**Analytical notes**

Variation 14, although in the key of D minor, firmly establishes the tonality of A minor in its closing bars, effectively issuing in the arrival of variation 15. Parallel octaves are used to weave through this ternary variation song. The B section is interesting in that the theme is rhythmically diminished (compressed) into half the length (4 bars) of the A section being 8 bars long.

**Performance notes**

Although only short, this movement is very powerful and technically demanding because of the unison octaves, and rasgueado’s on the marks chords. Playing these octaves using ‘double rest strokes’ (using ‘i’ and ‘a’ fingers) almost doubles the volume output in the opening *fortissimo* passage.

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**Variation 16.**

**Analytical notes**

This is one of the more ‘technical’ variations of the work, fulfilling Segovia’s suggested criteria, i.e., ‘tremolo’ technique. By definition, tremolo is “the rapid reiteration of a single note.”

The natural ‘rocking’ effect associated with the 6/8 time signature is heightened here by the dynamic swell of the arpeggiated bass, used in accompaniment to the tremolo. Once again Ponce uses the by now familiar contour of the folia melody (see fig.8) as the subject for the tremolo. This is accompanied by an arpeggiated bass line that once again avoids the 3rd of the chord, rather opting for the 7th and/or 6th, as it weaves its way through the embellished folia progression.
Figure 25.

Variation 16

Moderato

Var. XVI

C. III.

C. IV.

C. IX

C. I.

C. II.

C. III.
Variation 16. Comments.

[1] Bar 1: the 4th finger provides for a more fluent arpeggio.
Performance notes

The two most common technical problems associated with the tremolo technique are irregularity of rhythm and lack of speed. However, this variation does not need to move along too quickly. Advantage of the natural swell of the arpeggio may be taken in regard to suitable phrasing, dynamics and rubato.

Variation 17.

Analytical notes

A rapidly descending d minor scale launches variation 17 establishing the tonality. A rising staccato scale in bar 2, leading to the A, provides for chord V in bars 3 and 4, and so forth. The folia progression is easily identified by the first note of the descending scale (as marked) and also through the bass line (also a feature of variation 2). The bVII, bVi, V, i Spanish chord progression is apparent from bar 17 onwards in the form of descending semiquaver scales written over a pedal D bass. This is punctuated by fortissimo quaver chords focusing on I and V. The coda begins at bar 27, marked by an F sharp tied over 3 bars. This establishes the major tonality. Contrasting major-minor modulations calmly argue their way to the end. Despite the occasional chromatic shifts, the descending minor scales establish a firm tonality throughout most of the variation.
Variation 17. Comments.

[1] Bar 1: a, m, i right hand fingering solves the problem of incorrect cross-over between strings.

Performance notes

The opening scale passages in contrary motion set an ‘angry’ mood for the whole variation, upper and lower voices seemingly in conflict. These ‘feudal’ contrasts, i.e. rapidly descending semiquaver scales against rising quaver figures, demand technical and dynamic (as in musical dynamics) clarity. The right hand fingering suggested will aid in overcoming the possible problem of non-coordinated crossovers when playing the descending semiquaver scales. Strong slurring on behalf of the left hand is of course very important, as the musical contrast created by the descent and rise is the main feature of this movement.

Variation 18.

Analytical notes

The perception of conflict is continued in variation 18. Once again a distinct rhythmic motif, this time in the overall form of two bar couplets, propels this variation along. In bar two the D acts as an appoggiatura to the C sharp, and in bar four as an appoggiatura to the C natural and so on, consequently strengthening the continuity of the minor 2\textsuperscript{nd} interval featured in so many of the previous settings. The folia theme is implied in these appoggiatura resolutions in bars 2, 4, 6, 8 etc.

Performance notes

The fingering, although tricky in some places for both left and right hands, serves to voice this variation effectively. Tonal colour in the form of vibratos, dynamic contrasts and a \textit{scherzando} manner evokes the mood of this variation.

An interesting harmonic feature of this variation is that the tonality of d minor is established not through the tonic chord, but through the obstinate ‘hammering’ of its
dominant (A). Constant modulations in the middle section do not allow the listener to truly settle in d minor, even up to the point of ending on chord V.

Variation 18

Variation 18. Comments.
Variation 19. Comments.


Variation 19.

Analytical and Performance notes

Common threads appearing throughout this work such as dotted rhythms, minor 2nds, chromaticism, (flattened) 6ths and 7ths and contrasting tonalities are all drawn together in
variation 19. The *Vivo e Marcato* marking, along with some wonderful portamento effects, slurs and double thumb rest strokes enable the player to really show off the guitars unique capabilities (e.g., in bar 2, and again, up one octave in bar 14.)

**Variation 20.**

This final variation features artificial harmonics. This setting delicately meanders through the folia progression, its simplicity not only providing contrast to the previous setting but it also is posturing the listener for the finale. The final written instruction being *Attaca la Fuga.*

**Figure 29. **

![Variation 20](image)

From the Baroque to the present day composers have often concluded their sets of variations with a fugue (e.g. Bach, Brahms, Britten). Thus Ponce was continuing a long tradition in the present work. Ponce did indeed excel at composing in baroque and classical 'styles', and the fugue of the present is no exception. Ponce however, does not
follow to the letter baroque/classical procedures. The fugal subject will be found on virtually any level of the scale (see fig. 31) and there are modulations that betray its later provenance. Nevertheless the spirit of the early style is ever present.

**Figure 30.**

**Fuga**

Analytical and performance notes

The folia melody and chordal progression offers interesting 'subject' possibilities, and the subject for this fugue is derived from the folia melody, and follows the by now familiar contour, as illustrated in figure 8. It consists of a three-bar theme, lengthened by an extra bar on its first appearance. The initial presentation of the fugue subject sets the mood of the work through the expressive rise and fall of the dynamic
markings. This is no 'dry-as-dust' academic fugue, but one in which the brevity of the folia theme is evoked, even though the subject is a derivation of the theme and not a literal transcription.

Capturing the 'airy' feel of one beat to a bar (instead of 3) from the outset ensures that the overall fugue does not come across to 'heavy'. A light staccato on the quavers of the E moving to the F in the third bar can effectively punctuate and phrase the theme. In bar 5 the counter-subject introduces a rhythm previously utilised in the opening bars of variation 12, which arguably may serve the purpose of unifying the entire work. This rhythmic cell is also used to great effect above a pedal bass in the final section of the fugue. For the first 25 bars, the fugue unfolds in the traditional fashion (i.e. dominant 'answer's' and 'tonic' subjects).

There are many examples throughout this fugue of Segovia's tendency to persistently slur across the beat (e.g. bars 26 and 27), this technique may not always 'work' with all performers. The musical effect of the slurs can in fact rhythmically weaken and cloud the melodic line.

Examples of where the subject is placed on different levels are set out below:

**Figure 31: fugal entries.**

bb. 21-24 (Mediant)  
Shortened entries  
bb. 29-32 (G minor)  
bb. 37-40 (b7th, C minor)  
bb. 43-45 (sub-mediant)  
bb. 56-58 (b7th, C major)
On the other hand, features such as Stretto and pedal bass are faithful to traditional baroque practice (see fig.33: bb.73-78 & 81-92).

The middle section (development) consists of episodes leading to modulations and restatements, consistent with traditional fugal development. The subject enters in full at bar 29-33 on the sub-dominant, in the key of G minor and again in bb. 37-40 in C minor.

*Figure 32: Development, bb. 25-73.*
Fugue: bb. 25-73. Comments.

1. Bars 26 & 27: slurring across the beat.
2. Bar 44: 2\textsuperscript{nd} finger, not 3\textsuperscript{rd}.
3. Bar 46: Capo III.
4. Bar 70: 3\textsuperscript{rd} finger, not 2\textsuperscript{nd}.
At bar 43 the subject returns in an abbreviated form, consisting of 6 notes, rather than 11, and this abbreviated form occurs from this point on. A return to the tonic at bar 50 in the abbreviated form confirms this. The counter subject rhythm is exploited in bar 50 as a device for modulation through various keys, until a subject statement in bar 56 in C major.

A new rhythm is introduced in bar 56 consisting of 3 quavers from beat 2 and a half until the end of the bar. This rhythm is joined by 2 notes at bar 59, and again at bars 61 and 63 when it occurs on beat 1 and a half, but with added slurring from beat 3-3 and a half. The first 4 notes of the subject are employed in bar 62 above a descending bass line and Ponce uses an ascending D minor scale starting on the dominant from bars 64-67, which then descends back to the chord V (A), creating an atmosphere of tension and release. Stretto is employed to announce the final section of the fugue. The subject is restated at fortissimo in the tonic key at bar 73, closely followed by the 2nd and 3rd voices cascading over each other in bars 74 and 75 respectively, commanding a powerful musical effect.
Fugue: bb 73-93. Comments.


[2] bb. 83-89: greater clarity is achieved when the semiquavers are played rather than slurred.

The rhythmic cell of the counter-subject returns at bar 81, juxtaposed over and incessant pedal bass A, and the subject. The subject is used in (false) stretto, implying a sense of continual forward motion, aided by the pedal bass. This effectively builds anticipation and drama throughout this section. The use of step-wise motion, building in 3rds is incorporated at bar 85 adding to the steady climax, which eventually reaches a high Bb in bar 87. The dynamic marking cresc. Molto is sympathetic and essential to this goal. The Bb, although being the highest note is not however the goal of this passage. The
immediate preceding chord is. The Bb is instrumental in providing a sense of dramatic relief as it also marks the point for the steady descent.

The descent is complete when triple fortissimo chords announce the final statement of the theme. The immediately contrasting dynamic of pianissimo (bar 95) ennobles the true beauty of this section.

Figure 34: bb. 93-end.

The coda begins in bar 95 consisting of scales and arpeggios moving towards a perfect cadence on a tierce de picardy chord I played as a rasgueado in bar 106-7.

Conclusion.

This work as previously stated still stands as one of the most significant and respected solos written for the classical guitar, incorporating all aspects of Ponce’s style from 1925-1933. Ponce’s knowledge of and remarkable affinity for the guitar’s subtle sonorities and capabilities were, and still are, unrivaled and stand as an excellent example of the benefits
gained through collaboration. Segovia, of course, succeeded in his aim to elevate the reputation of the guitar and, in so doing, became the inspiration for much of the guitar's 'traditional' repertoire as it stands today. There is no doubt that if it were not for the fortuitous meeting with Andrés Segovia in 1923 this repertoire would indeed have never been composed. From the documented evidence found in the correspondences between Segovia and Ponce one can only conclude that the works of Ponce (and other composers) did indeed come about as a result of collaboration with Segovia.

Never before has a non-guitarist contributed so much fine music to enhance this instrument's repertoire and reputation. It is a repertoire that so far shows no sign of being outmoded.
ENDNOTES

CHAPTER 1


CHAPTER 2


5. Otero, p. 11.


10. Nystel, p. 3.

11. Otero, p. 28.


CHAPTER 3


3. Alcazar, p. 50.


5. Alcazar, pp. 60-61.

6. Alcazar, p. 52.

7. Alcazar, p. 57.


10. Alcazar, pp. 57-58.

11. Alcazar, p. 58.


13. Alcazar, p. 94.


CHAPTER 4

1. Nystel, p. 4.


**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


APPENDIX A

GUITAR WORKS

(Dates of compositions are approximate. Other works believed to exist. S = Schott, P = Peer International.)

Sonata Mexicana, 1923 (P)
La Valentina, arrangement, 1924 (S)
La Paiarera and Por ti mi Corazon 1925 (S)
(i.e. 'Three mexican (folk) Songs' arranged for guitar solo)
Estrellita, arrangement. 1925 (Ricardi)
Prelude, 1925, (S). Edited for Capotasto on the second fret.
Prelude for Guitar and Harpsichord, 1926 (Unpublished)
Theme, Variations, and Finale 1926 (S)
Alborada and Cancion Gallega, 1927 (Unpublished)
Sonata 11, 1927 (S)
Sonata Romantica (Homage to Schubert), 1928 (S)
24 Preludes, 1929 (12 published by Schott; the whole 24 by Tecla Editions.)
Variations and Fugue on the Folias of Spain, 1929 (S)
Suite in A (Under the Name of Weiss) 1929. (Berben, Ricordi)
Tremolo Study, 1930 (S)
Sonata of Paganini, 1930 (Unpublished)
Sonata Clasica (Homage to Sor), 1930 (S)
Sonata for Guitar and Harpsichord, 1931 (P)
Suite Antigua (Under the name of (Alessandro Scariatti), 1931 (P)
Four Pieces, Mazurka, Waltz, Tropica, Rumba, 1932 (Unpublished)
Sonatina Meridional, 1932 (S)
Concerto of the South (for Guitar and Orchestra), 1941 (P) [Concierto del Sur]
Two Vignettes: Vespertina and Rondino, 1946 (Guitar Review)
Six Short Preludes, 1947 (P)
Variations on a Theme of Antonio de Cabezon, 1948 (Tecla)
Quartet for Guitar and Strings, 1948 (incomplete and unpublished)
Balletto (Under the name of Weiss), (Berben)

The Schott Editions are edited by Segovia. The first two and the last five items were composed in Mexico, the rest in Paris.
Variations sur »Folia de España« et Fugue

Manuel M. Ponce
Un po agitato

C.II...

C.III...

C.VI...

C.III...

Andantino

Var.V

Var.V

C.III...

C.III...

C.IV...
Allegro ma non troppo

C. III

C. VI

C. IV

C. I

Calmo

Leggero

Cediendo