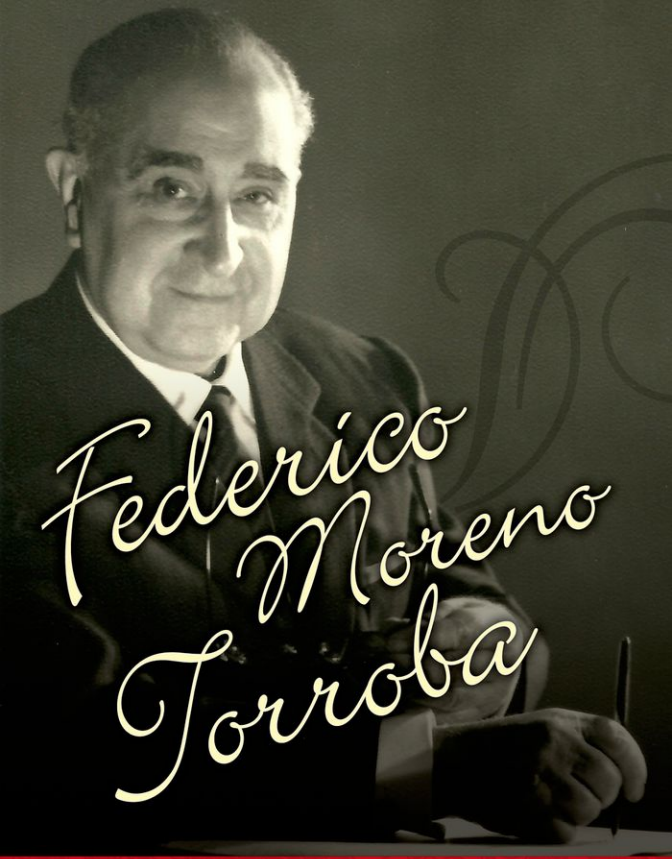

Federico Moreno Torroba

A Musical Life in Three Acts

WALTER AARON CLARK & WILLIAM CRAIG KRAUSE

Federico Moreno Torroba

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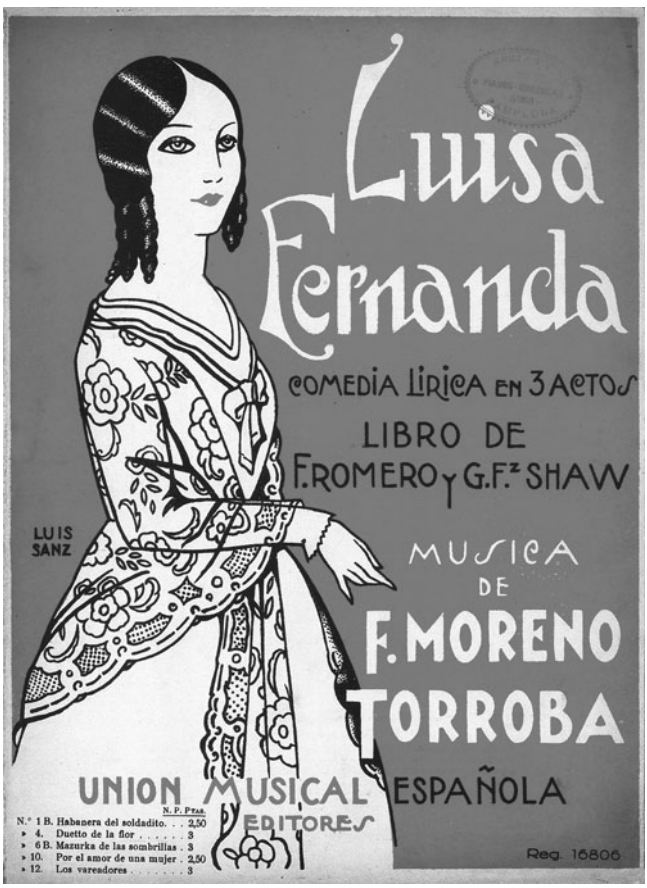
Published in the United States of America by
Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Clark, Walter Aaron. Krause, William Craig.
Federico Moreno Torroba : a musical life in three acts /
Walter Aaron Clark, William Craig Krause.
p. cm.—(Currents in Latin American and Iberian music)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-19-531370-3 (hardcover : alk. paper)
1. Moreno Torroba, Federico, 1891–1982. 2. Composers—Spain—Biography.
3. Moreno Torroba, Federico, 1891–1982—Criticism and interpretation.
I. Clark, Walter, 1952– Krause, William, 1953– II. Title.
ML410.M7776C53 2012
780.92—dc23[B] 2012019913

Publication of this book was supported in part by the John Daverio Endowment
of the American Musicological Society.

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2
Printed on acid-free paper

For Judith Cline and Carlin Miguel Krause



Cover art for the vocal score of Torroba's 1932 masterpiece *Luisa Fernanda*. Courtesy of Unión Musical Ediciones

FOREWORD

Federico Moreno Torroba As We Knew Him

It was a morning at the Hotel Suecia in Madrid. Our family was in the lobby after having breakfast when the great composer walked in looking for us. Upon meeting him, he ordered some tapas, and we immediately sealed a friendship that is eternal. It seemed surrealistic to us that the great genius of immortal melodies was embodied in such a friendly, totally personable, unassuming, humble man.

He soon took out a small pad and wrote down all of the ideas, thoughts, and wishes each of us had. He wanted to know and understand all of us. The result of this unforgettable meeting was the tremendously fruitful collaboration we were to have until the end of his life. Everything he wrote in that little pad became part of a masterpiece, as the readers will find out in this biography. The great composer wrote for each of us individually, and for the quartet he wrote many works that crowned his later years with glory.

In a perfect parallel with our musical collaboration was an intimate friendship of our two families. Torroba, with his daughter Mariana and his son Fede, would visit us for extended periods in our Del Mar, California, house. As well, we spent long stays in his Madrid home and his summer residence in Santesteban.

Torroba was the embodiment of the spirit of Spain. He was deeply touched by all that was around him and, through his gigantic poetic soul and his profound knowledge of his craft, he was constantly transforming his everyday experiences into music that glorified Spain and humanity. Torroba lived for the beauty of the moment and always exhibited a balance between his sweet, beautiful, loving spirit and his magnificent mind. He was a problem-solver, giving himself completely to the task at hand with the goal of bringing comfort and joy to all. And with his presence he brought harmony, happiness, and peace.

Celín, Pepe, and Ángel Romero

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ACT III: 1960–1982

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination, *pratītyasamutpāda*, states that the history of our universe cannot be traced back to an Aristotelian (or Thomist) "uncaused cause." Rather, everything results from the interaction of preexisting forces, and there is no ultimate, autonomous source of all. In the Buddhist view, then, there can be no creator spirit—or any immaculately conceived books, for that matter. Although we are not Buddhists and cannot vouch for the cosmic truth of *pratītyasamutpāda*, we are certain that every biography, in particular, requires contributions from a small army of people—family, friends, scholars, publishers, librarians, archivists—stretching out in time and space. And every biographer knows from repeated personal experience that without that small army, no amount of individual insight or inspiration can prevail in producing much of lasting value. We therefore freely and cheerfully admit the dependence of this book's origination on the many people and organizations cited below, who gave so generously of their time and materials to make the first-ever biography of Federico Moreno Torroba possible. To all of them we offer a sincere "mil gracias."

Indispensable assistance came from the composer's son, Federico Moreno-Torroba Larregla. He has made the family archive in Navarra available and has provided counsel, guidance, personal recollections, and encouragement, as well as contacts with important people and copyright permission to use scores and photos in his collection. Without his help, we could never have written this book and would not even have tried. Several other individuals played important roles in this research. Guitarist Pepe Romero provided information about Torroba's music, photographs in his collection, and served as an early liaison between the authors and Torroba's family. In addition to Pepe, Celín and Ángel Romero had many useful and fascinating anecdotes to offer about the composer; moreover, we are extremely grateful for the eloquent Foreword all three brothers contributed. A friend and colleague of Torroba's for over twenty years, Santos Martín Pancorbo, was very helpful in clarifying issues of detail and context. Mrs. Andrés Segovia, widow of the guitarist, shared quotations from letters between her late husband and Torroba, while Alberto López Poveda, archivist for the Segovia estate, initially

supplied important biographical information to Bill and later generously assisted guitarist Javier Riba in securing additional documentation at the Museo Andrés Segovia, in Linares, Spain. We also benefited from correspondence with the maestro's son, Carlos Segovia. Additional useful input came from guitarists David Grimes and Angelo Gilardino.

Interviews with musicologists Juan José Carerras, Tomás Marco, and Emilio Casares were very productive. Another Spanish musicologist, Leopoldo Neri, generously shared his groundbreaking research on guitarist Regino Sainz de la Maza with us. Antoni Pizà, director of the Foundation for Iberian Music at CUNY Graduate Center, also gave us valuable suggestions. We offer profuse thanks to Alfonso Pérez, a Mexican musicologist who was working on his doctorate at the Complutense in Madrid at the same time we were researching this book, for his selfless investigations on the authors' behalf, especially into matters of genealogy. We are very grateful for support and encouragement from our university colleagues past and present, including Michael Beckerman, whose insights inform several passages in this book.

We extend gratitude to our colleagues in Buenos Aires, musicologist Carlos Manso, Luciano Marra de la Fuente, Adriana María Costa of the Teatro Colón, and guitarist Irma Costanzo, for their help with gaining access to archival and other biographical materials and for permission to use photos from their collections. Special thanks are in order to José María Grillo Torres and Ricardo Formica of the Center for Cross Cultural Studies, Seville, for their guidance as we delved into questions concerning cultural life under Franco. We thank Claudia Flores de Franko and Ada Lis Jimena for their assistance in transcribing, and in some cases deciphering, garbled recorded interviews, as well as music theorist Barbara Mackin for her insights in musical analysis and Jay Batzner for typesetting musical examples.

Organizations worthy of mention include the Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales, especially Emilio Casares Rodicio, director of ICCMU, and María Luz González Peña, director of the Centro de Documentación y Archivo. Many of the composer's manuscripts are located at the Sociedad General de Autores y Editores, as well as most of his publications, and we are indebted to the staff there, especially Antonio Gil, for their research assistance and copyright permission. The Unión Musical Ediciones (formerly Unión Musical Española), which published and retains rights to Torroba's zarzuela scores, also merits thanks for copyright permissions, as does the Museo de Historia in Madrid for permission to publish photos in their archive. We are grateful to the Archivo Ernesto Halffter, especially the composer's son Manuel Halffter, who manages the archive and provided photographs of Torroba and his father for our use. We shall not forget to thank the Iglesia Parroquia San José in Madrid, especially Pedro Pablo Colino, for timely archival support; the Archivo Militar in Segovia, especially José Ignacio Vázquez Montón, for their customarily gracious and highly efficient assistance; Jesús Cañadilla, groundskeeper at the sacramental San Justo, for guidance in locating the composer's grave; and the ever-professional staffs at the Biblioteca

Nacional, Hemeroteca Municipal, Archivo de la Administración in Alcalá de Henares, and library of the Real Conservatorio in Madrid for their unfailing assistance.

Naturally, we are thankful to Oxford University Press, especially music editor Suzanne Ryan, for agreeing to publish this book and waiting patiently for its completion. Funding for our research came from several sources, particularly the Program for Cultural Cooperation between United States Universities and Spain's Ministry of Culture, as well as our respective institutions (Bill's and Walter's): Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia, and the University of California, Riverside. Most welcome was the publication subvention provided by the John Daverio Endowment of the American Musicological Society.

Special gratitude is reserved for musicologist Hugh Macdonald, who said upon Bill's completion of his dissertation in 1993, "Bill, this really ought to be a book someday." Now it is. Of course, without steady support and encouragement from our families, it would still not be. Bill's late mother, Anna Stregger, provided inspiration throughout his career, while his wife, Judith Cline, and son, Carlin Miguel, and Walter's wife, Nancy, and son, Robert, have contributed more than they know to the successful completion of this work.

Murrieta, California
Roanoke, Virginia
2012

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LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

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ABOUT THE COMPANION WEBSITE

www.oup.com/us/federicomorenotorroba

Oxford has created a password-protected Web site to accompany *Federico Moreno Torroba: A Musical Life in Three Acts*. This Web site presents a groundbreaking documentary exploring Torroba's relationship with the guitar through interviews with and performances by leading musicologists and guitarists. It features the authors of this book, Walter Aaron Clark and William Craig Krause, as well as the legendary guitarist Pepe Romero and the gifted young virtuosa Ana Vidovic. Produced by Stephen and Sheila Halpern (SMHmusicllc.com), it is the perfect complement to the biography and will be enjoyed by lovers of this composer's music and of the classical guitar.

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Federico Moreno Torroba

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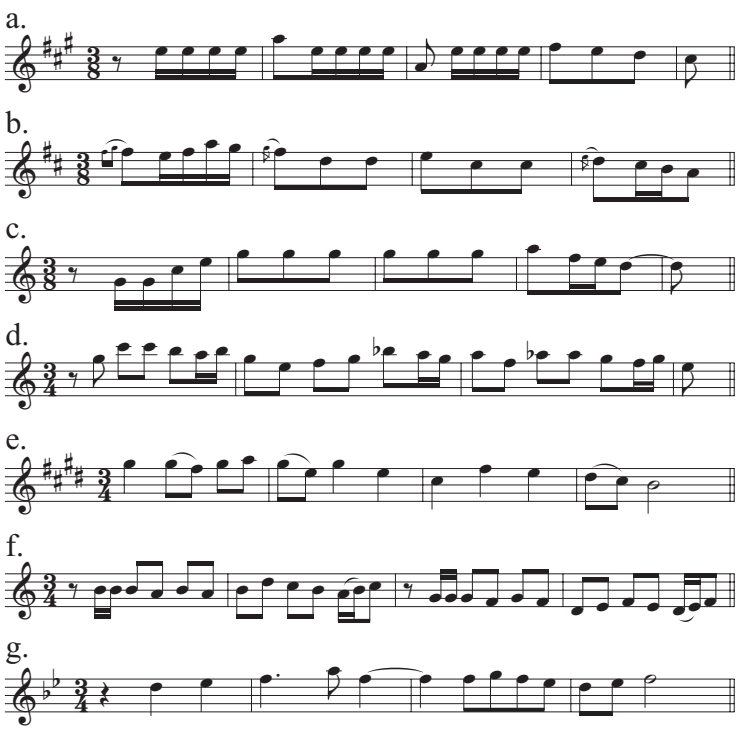
Introduction

"The Eternal Tradition"

Introduction:1a–g: Seven melodies



What do all these themes have in common?[1] For one thing, they were all composed in the 1900s, which is remarkable insofar as that was the century that witnessed the rise of atonality and ametricality in Western art music. These melodies,

[1] The melodies in order come from the *Sonatina*, 3rd mvmt. (1923), *Luisa Fernanda*, Act III (1932), *La Caramba*, Act I (1942), *Sonata-Fantasía*, 2nd mvmt. (1953), *Castillos de España*, "Turegano" (1968), *Concierto ibérico*, 1st mvmt. (1976), and a *seguidillas* melody that Torroba sketched on his deathbed (1982). Much will be said of these works in subsequent chapters.

all taken from that same classical repertoire, are resolutely tonal and metric. Moreover, though something in their modality and rhythmic character suggests an origin in folk music, not a single one of them is a quotation or even paraphrase of a preexisting or recognizable tune. That is to say that they comprise fundamentally folkloric elements in melody and rhythm, but these coalesce into lyric statements yielding no precise account of their origin. In short, they are utterly characteristic yet completely original at the same time.

In fact, their most salient commonality is that they were all written by the same composer; however, they span a period of over sixty years, each representing a different decade in the composer's prodigious output, from the 1920s to the 1980s. This makes the consistency among them nothing short of astonishing. In a century that prized artistic innovation, change, and "progress," often disdaining tradition in the process, these apparently innocuous but in reality artfully constructed themes stand out in their stubborn resistance to the new aesthetic currents that swirled around their genesis.

The creator of these melodies, a Castilian by the name of Federico Moreno Torroba (henceforth referred to simply as Torroba), enjoyed one of the greatest advantages a composer can hope for: he lived a long time. Born in 1891, the year in which Johannes Brahms composed his Clarinet Quintet in B Minor, op. 115, Torroba died a year before the 1983 premiere of Philip Glass's opera *Akhnaten*. His life thus spanned some of the most important developments in music—late Romanticism, Impressionism, Expressionism, Serialism, Neoclassicism, and Minimalism—as well as some of the most tumultuous decades in human history, characterized by unprecedented violence and destruction in tribal, civil, and world wars, with their attendant terror, aerial, and atomic bombings. Fascism, Capitalism, Socialism, Communism, and Anarchism—not to mention Catholicism, Protestantism, Existentialism, Atheism, and Nihilism—all competed for influence and control, their competition fueled by immemorial ethnic and racial feuds, national rivalries, mytho-history, pseudo-science, superstition, propaganda, and, on occasion, apparent mass hysteria. Tragically, Torroba's native Spain became the arena in which much of this ideological contest played out. As Antony Beevor aptly noted, "The incompatibility of 'Eternal Spain' with these new political movements developed into the clash which later tore the country apart."[2]

And yet, Torroba himself was, by all accounts, an amiable, gentle, kind, and generous man, one devoted to his family and possessing a charmingly self-deprecating sense of humor. Guitarist Pepe Romero was a close friend of the composer and states that "it was incredibly comfortable to be around him. He was very nonjudgmental, and I was never nervous to play anything for him. But he was also hardworking and serious. He didn't talk a lot, but he was very observant. He occa-

[2] Antony Beevor, *The Battle for Spain: The Spanish Civil War 1936–1939*, rev. ed. (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 9.

sionally took a drink but never got drunk."[3] Ángel Romero confirmed that Torroba was not a talker, though when he spoke, the things he had to say "were like jewels." Moreover, he was "like a father, a grandfather, or an uncle—or the one you wanted to have."[4]

Catholic and loyal to the Spanish crown, Torroba nonetheless kept his distance from politics and political movements, never publicly declaring his opposition to or support for any ruler or regime, whether a constitutional monarchy, republic, or right-wing dictatorship. In fact, he wanted nothing so much as the peace and freedom to compose music, to commit to paper the resistless stream of lyric inspiration that flowed steadily from him, whether at the keyboard or the breakfast table. He was one of the dominant figures in Spanish music of the twentieth century, a composer best known for his zarzuelas (Spanish operettas) and guitar works but who was also active as an impresario and conductor and who played a crucial role in cultural administration as president of the Sociedad General de Autores de España (General Society of Spanish Authors) and director of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando).

Still, the fact remains that nationalist ferment and the philosophical roots of Torroba's music were intermingled in complex, at times ambiguous, but nonetheless undeniable ways. Though he was by no means a religious fanatic or political reactionary, no biographer could be excused for neglecting to interrogate the political posture of a person so closely situated to the *Sturm und Drang* of his own time and place. As George Orwell observed in his 1946 essay *Why I Write*, being apolitical in the name of art is in itself a political stance. Nonetheless, our interrogation will disappoint those looking to attach a precise political label to Torroba: it will lead neither to black nor white but rather to various shades of ideological gray.

Just as we refuse to attach political labels to Torroba, neither is it our purpose to determine the validity of earlier philosophical concepts regarding history, tradition, nation, and race that are interwoven with his art. Our age is quite different from the one in which Torroba came to maturity, for, after bitter experience, we have rightly come to disparage the notion that any country or group of people can or should be essentialized. After all, once you have reduced a polity or population to its imagined essence, exalting, exploiting, or even eradicating it is temptingly easy to justify. But neither can we dismiss the notion of such national or racial essences in our study of Torroba. Their actual existence is ultimately not the issue. What matters is that Torroba and other influential people *believed* that they were real and acted in decisive and enduring ways on those beliefs. That Spaniards are essentially different from all other peoples is beyond our ability to prove or disprove, though DNA research suggests that whatever genomic variations may exist between Spaniards and other

[3] Interview with Walter Clark, January 6, 2011.

[4] Interview with Walter Clark, September 20, 2011.

members of our species, they are in any case infinitesimal to the point of insignificance. Indeed, one suspects that genetic variation *within* the Iberian Peninsula is greater than that between Iberia and many other regions of the world.[5]

Be that as it may, the music that arose from a belief in the essential differences between Spaniards and everyone else—the uniqueness, though not necessarily superiority, of Spanish culture—is anything but inconsiderable. Both the music and the beliefs that animated it merit serious consideration, for Torroba was a leading musical exponent in the twentieth century of the view, first articulated by philosopher Miguel de Unamuno (1864–1936) in 1895, that there was an "eternal tradition," a timeless, immutable essence of the Spanish people that emanated from their folklore and daily life.[6] This is what Torroba consistently sought to capture in his compositions. He is the logical and most attractive focus of any study seeking to explore Unamuno's theory of an "eternal tradition" relative to Spanish music. That is not our only purpose here, to be sure, but it is an important purpose just the same (see Act II, Scene ii, for an in-depth treatment of this subject).

So, why is this biography the first ever to be written of Torroba? Why are serious scholarly publications devoted to this man and his music so few in number?[7] Almost all the information in this book specific to Torroba was gleaned instead from oral history, contemporary periodicals, and materials in the family archive, not secondary sources of an academic provenance. And why is this volume appearing fully thirty years after Torroba died? Is this an idea whose time is long overdue in coming, or simply a bad idea?

When I mentioned to a fellow musicologist, an eminent and learned Hispanist, a few years ago that Bill and I were working on this book, his immediate and almost breathless reaction was, "*Torroba*? Wasn't he that . . . ?" I knew the words he

[5] For corroboration of these observations, see the American Anthropological Association's statement on race at http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/AAA-Statement-on-Race.cfm (accessed August 1, 2010). Anthropologist Yolanda Moses describes race in definitive terms: "Most people think biological race is real. [It is] not. Human variation is real. And the social construction of race is real. Anthropologists and other biological scientists will tell you there is only one biological race, because we are all the same species, *Homo sapiens sapiens*." See "Riverside Metropolitan Museum Welcomes RACE Exhibit June 3," *Black Voice News* (online edition), June 2, 2010.

[6] Miguel de Unamuno, *En torno al casticismo,* ed. Jean-Claude Rabaté (Madrid: Cátedra, 2005), in the chapter entitled "La tradición eterna."

[7] The principal published sources on Torroba's life are: Roger Alier and Xosé Aviñoa, *El libro de la zarzuela* (Madrid: Ediciones Damien, 1982); Higínio Anglés, *Diccionario de la música* (Madrid: Ediciones Labor, 1954); Antonio Olano, ed., *Homenaje a Federico Moreno Torroba* (Madrid: Sociedad General de Autores de España, 1982); Enrique Pardo Canalis, "Necrologia del Excmo. Sr. D. Federico Moreno Torroba," *Boletín de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando* (Madrid: Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, 1982); and an excellent entry by Javier Suárez-Pajares on him in the *Diccionario de la zarzuela: España e Hispanoamérica*, ed. Emilio Casares Rodicio (Madrid: ICCMU, 2002). Periodicals such as *El País, ABC,* and *Cambio 16* published lengthy obituaries. Interviews given by Torroba throughout his life are also informative.

intended but hesitated to say: "composer associated with the Franco regime?" This is certainly part of the problem. It appears that Torroba was and continues to be viewed by some—imprecisely but persistently—as having been a fellow traveler with Franco. Pepe Romero, for one, contemptuously dismisses this notion: "He was the furthest thing from a fascist that you can imagine."[8] His brother Ángel wholeheartedly agrees, saying that "it is wrong to pass judgment on Torroba and others in the past."

Indeed, many eminent composers and artists made their peace with the Franco regime and flourished in Spain during the dictatorship, including not only Joaquín Rodrigo and Joaquín Turina, but also such stalwarts of the artistic avant-garde as Salvador Dalí and Joan Miró.[9] As Jorge Luis Marzo observed, during the depths of the dictatorship, in the 1940s and 50s, "many artists collaborated with prominent political and cultural figures of the regime in order to gain resources, visibility, and international projection."[10] Yet their reputations have not suffered. So, why tar and feather Torroba?

Perhaps it is because he was Catholic and a monarchist. But millions of his fellow Spaniards were the same, and that did not automatically make them suspect. Like many of them, Torroba was religiously and politically moderate and simply made the best he could of a potentially dangerous situation. Perhaps it is because of the conservative character of his nationalist aesthetic, which was anchored in nineteenth-century Romanticism. But his musical style remained unchanged throughout several different regimes, as we demonstrated at the outset here; it was in no way *intended by him* as a response to or affirmation of Francoism, though it may inadvertently have served that purpose at times. Perhaps it is because he moved with such ease in official circles, occupying prominent cultural posts that he could not have held without Franco's approval. But this aspect of his career can just as easily be explained by his innate capacity for administration and his affable temperament, which allowed him to get along well with colleagues of widely varying dispositions.

Let us be clear from the outset: Torroba *was* a conservative traditionalist, and some of his musical activities in the years during and immediately after the Civil War merit close scrutiny. But he was not a fascist composer, much less Franco's *Kapellmeister*. In fact, there is another explanation for the neglect to which he has been consigned that has not so much to do with politics as with class, if one may separate the two. Torroba was unapologetically bourgeois, and he cultivated a

[8] Interview with Walter Clark, January 6, 2011.

[9] Juan Pablo Fusi, *Un siglo de España, la cultura* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, Ediciones de Historia, 1999), 108, notes that Dalí got a free pass because he was Catholic and occasionally painted religious works, such as *El Cristo de San Juan de la Cruz* of 1951.

[10] Jorge Luis Marzo, *Art modern i franquisme: els orígens conservadors de l'avantguarda i de la política artística a l'estat espanyol (Arte moderno y franquismo: Los orígenes conservadores de la vanguardia y de la política artística en España)* (Girona : Fundació Espais d'Art Contemporani, 2007), 102.

style of music that he intended to be marketable, to please the audience, at a time when the avant-garde strove mightily to stick its collective thumb in the eye of that same bourgeois public (which nonetheless continued to support it, and ask for more!).[11] He specialized in composing pleasing guitar miniatures and zarzuela, forms of entertainment that required considerable craft, skill, and, yes, genius to bring forth, but which cultural elites disdained as inferior to symphony and opera—specifically, to German music. His stylistic disconnection from Expressionism, Impressionism, and Neoclassicism, i.e., from Schoenberg, Debussy, and Stravinsky, set him outside the parameters of the aesthetic debate that dominated Spanish music in the 1920s and 30s, between rival camps loyal either to Austro-German or Franco-Russian schools.[12] From a traditional musicological point of view, then, this has condemned him to a marginal position. Since Spanish music itself generally occupies the "suburbs" of musicological discourse, Torroba exists on the margin of a margin. This is no secret to Spaniards themselves.

Indeed, one must never underestimate the Spanish capacity for self-deprecation in regards to their classical music and those who composed it. The eminent Spanish musicologist Antonio Martín Moreno perceives a collective "inferiority complex" in regards to classical music.[13] The view prevails among even the musically literate populace that Spain has never produced composers to compare with its geniuses in art and literature, e.g., Goya and Cervantes, or to rival composers like Beethoven and Wagner. As Carol Hess notes, this is part of a pattern over the centuries, one in which Spain's ambivalent feelings about foreign influence took the form of "envy or defensiveness."[14]

Because Torroba was so overt in his promotion of the "eternal tradition" and remained wedded to an anachronistic nationalist aesthetic until his dying day, he made a conspicuous target for those who thought Spain's only hope as a musical presence in Europe was to imitate what France, Italy, and especially Germany were doing, e.g., to embrace the postwar avant-garde: atonality, serialism, and electronic music. Of course, Torroba would have none of this whatsoever. He did not even think that electronic music was actually, well, music![15] His son, Federico, Jr., artic-

[11] "The idea that the *avant-garde* and the bourgeoisie were natural enemies is one of the least useful myths of modernism," observed Robert Hughes in his *The Shock of the New* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996), 373.

[12] For an in-depth treatment of these trends in Spanish music between the two world wars, see Emilio Casares Rodicio, "La música española hasta 1939, o la restauración musical," in *España en la música de Occidente: Actas del Congreso Internacional celebrado en Salamanca 29 de octubre—5 de noviembre de 1985*, 2 vols., ed. Emilio Casares Rodicio, Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta, and José López-Calo (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1987), 261–321.

[13] Conversation with Walter Clark, August 19, 2010.

[14] Carol A. Hess, *Manuel de Falla and Modernism in Spain, 1898–1936* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 5.

[15] See Torroba's own remarks in Augusto Valera, "Federico Moreno Torroba: 'Luisa Fernanda,'" *El Noticiero Universal*, June 8, 1972, 21. "Electronic music is something that has nothing to do with

ulated Torroba's relationship with atonality in unmistakable terms: "It loses all its nationalism and thus its personality. Without a national identity, it could be from any country."[16] Is it necessarily a bad thing for music not to have a "national identity"? Of course not, but for a nationalist composer, it is the kiss of artistic death. This attitude is what led Luis de Pablo (1930–), leader of the Spanish avant-garde, to offer a rather qualified eulogy of the composer upon his death:

> The music of maestro Moreno-Torroba is the opposite of my own, of what I strive to create. It is the incarnation of a musical Spain from which I feel completely alienated. But that does not prevent me from lamenting his death, and from afar, I feel respect for him as a musical figure.[17]

In short, Spain's internal political struggles between nationalists and internationalists, between *españolistas* and *modernistas*, have migrated into the realm of musical historiography, and Torroba has gotten lost in the scrum.[18]

However, experience teaches that scholarly neglect in relation to Spanish music is more general. Walter's recent biographies of Albéniz and Granados, two respected major composers of enduring and renowned masterworks, were the first to appear in the English language, and remain among the few in any language.[19] We continue to lack a single monograph in English on any zarzuela composer (except the present volume), or even on a figure as eminent as Joaquín Turina.

Thus, Torroba's case remains unusual in the amount of neglect, but not extraordinary. After all, his major accomplishment was to write some of the most popular zarzuelas of all time. He was the last of the great *zarzueleros*, and his *Luisa Fernanda* (1932) is among the most successful and celebrated works in that genre. And yet, the zarzuela is now essentially moribund and a museum piece. No one in Spain

music; it is an experience in sound. As you know, music is harmony, melody, and rhythm." Of course, electronic music is quite capable of exhibiting these parameters as well, a distinction Torroba overlooks here. He did not think much of contemporary symphonic music, either. When asked where he thought that genre was headed, he was dismissive in his response: "In my opinion, nowhere. I don't believe in what they call 'contemporary music,' and because I don't believe in it, I don't compose it. I am convinced that it is a passing fashion." See Luis Sagi-Vela, "Moreno Torroba, nonagenario, trabaja diez horas diarias," *Ya Dominical*, November 15, 1981, 23.

[16] William Craig Krause, interview with Federico Moreno Torroba, Jr., Madrid, July 18, 1988. His full name is Federico Moreno-Torroba Larregla, but we will henceforth refer to him simply as Federico, Jr.

[17] Pablo's remarks appear in "Moreno-Torroba será enterrado hoy en la sacramental de San Justo," *ABC*, September 13, 1982, 39; reprinted in *Autores: Revista de información de la S.G.A.E.*, n3 (October 1982): 32.

[18] For the most insightful examination in English of this ideological and aesthetic debate in Spain during the first decades of the twentieth century, see Hess, *Modernism*.

[19] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999/2002) and *Enrique Granados: Poet of the Piano* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006/2011).

composes zarzuelas anymore.[20] So, we might reasonably expect less than feverish interest in the composer of a genre that has literally gone the way of the horse and buggy. Beyond that, the zarzuela is an art form that has never gained much currency outside the Spanish-speaking world. It retains some popularity in Latin America and even parts of the US where there is a large Hispanic population,[21] but its repertoire, comprising hundreds of works, remains largely uncelebrated elsewhere. The lack of scholarly interest in Torroba outside of Spain can partly be explained by the simple lack of name recognition—or accomplishment recognition, as the case may be.[22] True, his guitar music is internationally renowned, but from a publisher's point of view, not to mention a musicologist's, its overall music-historical impact has been too limited to merit serious book-length investigation.

Why have not Spanish musicologists written books on him that would appeal to zarzuela aficionados in Spanish-speaking lands? The final nail in the coffin of neglect is precisely this: as will become clear in succeeding chapters, Spanish intellectuals have often taken a dim view of the zarzuela as a form of popular entertainment unworthy of serious musicological investigation. That attitude is now changing, but the net effect has been to retard our understanding of this extremely important aspect of Spanish culture and the artists who created it, artists like Federico Moreno Torroba.

When Spanish journalist Joaquim Zueras Navarro heard that two *norteamericanos* were researching this book in Navarra in 2006, he commented ruefully that it was unlikely to appear in Spanish translation, "given the scant interest that our nation shows in its composers."[23] This may initially strike one as a rather dire assessment, but it does seem to be the case that, traditionally, there has not been much of a market in Spain for scholarly books on classical music, particularly biographies—at least of Spanish composers. This view is embraced by, among

[20] As Janet Sturman, *Zarzuela: Spanish Operetta, American Stage* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 25–26, observes, "It seems that audiences need to travel to Latin America or the United States for the rare opportunity to hear a freshly composed zarzuela, such as the Argentine production of *Viva la Verbena*, by Luis Aguile, or the New York production of *Los Jibaros Progresistas* by Puerto Rican-born composer Manuel Fernández."

[21] For an excellent survey of its impact in the US, see Sturman, op. cit. *Luisa Fernanda* was revived in the US in 2004 by the Washington National Opera in DC, starring Plácido Domingo. This same production made its way to the stage of the Los Angeles Opera in 2007. Two other lovely L.A. productions, organized by Carlos Oliva and the Pacific Lyric Association, took place in 2009 and 2010. This group performed concert selections from *La chulapona* in March 2011.

[22] This was well understood by Torroba himself, who observed that "[In Spain] and South America, I am considered a lyric author; but in the rest of the world, I am better known as a composer for the guitar than for the theater." He made this disclosure in Lola Aguado, "Homenaje a Moreno Torroba," *Diario 16*, May 27, 1978. *Music Week* (Great Britain), December 6, 1980, observed that "Though not so well-known in this country as his compatriot Rodrigo, Torroba is immensely popular in Spain, with over 70 stage works."

[23] Joaquim Zueras Navarro, "Al respecto de Moreno Torroba," *OpusMusica*, n12 (February 2007). http://www.opusmusica.com/012/moreno.html.

others, Emilio Casares Rodicio, head of the Instituto Complutense de Ciencias Musicales in Madrid and certainly in a position to know.[24] A curious reverse chauvinism dictates that the biographies people will buy are of composers like Beethoven and Wagner—and then in translation from non-Spanish originals.[25] Walter was once told by an editor at a leading publishing house in Madrid that biography in general was not a literary genre in which Spaniards specialized or excelled. The editor buttressed her argument by citing the case of Ian Gibson, the Irish scholar who has written the definitive biography of Federico García Lorca.[26] Now, that editor's perception may or may not correspond to reality, but it is worth noting nonetheless. Her observation, along with those by Martín Moreno, Casares Rodicio, and Zueras Navarro, is smoke suggesting the presence of fire. That this biography of Torroba has been written by two *anglosajones estadounidenses* and published by an Anglo-American publisher is not mere coincidence.

In 2003, Bill invited Walter to join him in writing the first-ever book on Torroba, using as a basis and guide Bill's own groundbreaking 1993 dissertation.[27] Of course, much additional research has been necessary, because new primary and secondary sources have surfaced over the intervening years. Yet, in a very real sense, this book is Bill's. Though Walter undertook the principal responsibility for writing it, to give it a consistent authorial voice, let there be no doubt: without Bill's pioneering writings and indispensable contributions as the principal researcher for this book, our biography of Torroba would not exist. And it appears that no one else would be taking up the resulting slack, for reasons that at this point should be blindingly obvious.

A final word, concerning the organization of this book. The use of acts and scenes may at first seem a gimmick. And yet, the reader will not be long in discovering that Torroba was, first and foremost, a man of the theater, a composer possessing not only a rare lyric gift but also a real love of drama, as well as a deep understanding and appreciation of his native Castilian language and literature. And it so happens that his life and work break down rather conveniently into the three-act format so typical of the *zarzuela grande* in which he specialized, beginning and ending with the traditional introduction and finale. Each act consists of three scenes: the first lays out the general historical and music-historical context; the second delves into biographical issues; and the third explores in depth selected compositions for the stage and the guitar. One could think of these as the scenic

[24] Conversation with Walter Clark, August 18, 2010.

[25] In all fairness, and modesty, Walter notes a happy exception to this general rule: the Spanish edition of his Albéniz biography, *Isaac Albéniz: Retrato de un romántico* (Madrid: Turner, 2002), which continues to sell several years after its appearance.

[26] Ian Gibson, *Federico García Lorca: A Life* (London and Boston: Faber & Faber, 1989).

[27] William Craig Krause, "The Life and Works of Federico Moreno Torroba" (PhD diss., Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, 1993).

backdrop, dialogue narrative to advance the action, and lyric outpouring in response to that action. The historical scenes do not attempt to present a comprehensive, *Wikipedia*-style overview but rather focus on those events and developments that are crucial to understanding Torroba's world and worldview. Those already well versed in the history of Spain and Spanish music may choose to go directly to the biographical scenes.

This is the manner the authors have chosen to tell the story of Torroba's exceptionally long and productive life, and they hope it will facilitate the reader's study and appreciation of his particular humanity and genius. *¡Que así sea!*

Editorial policy: all quotations of Spanish-language source material appear in English translation only. Since the vast majority of sources for this book are in Spanish, providing the original along with the translation would take up too much space. All of these sources are in modern (mostly journalistic) prose and pose few difficulties in translation. Many of the secondary sources we relied on consist of press clippings in the family archive, in Navarra [Na]. Very often, these lack page numbers, authors, or even titles. Despite attempts to establish this information independently, a few citations remain incomplete. Because this is a jointly authored book, occasional use of the first-person personal pronoun, singular for Walter's voice and plural for both authors, is necessary in order to make clear who is speaking. That procedure will prevail for the remainder of the book. Finally, works whose titles appear in boldface on first mention are treated in greater depth in the third scene of each act.

ACT I

1891–1932

Back then, I fluttered like a mere sparrow; today, my wings long to soar like a golden eagle!

[Entonces yo volaba como un mísero pardal, ¡y hoy mis alas ambicionan vuelos de aguila caudal!]

Luisa Fernanda, Act I

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1

ACT I
Scene i
1898
The End

"I saw this" is the caption to one of the many unsettling images of barbarity in Francisco Goya's unforgettable collection of etchings entitled "Disasters of War." It depicts villagers hastily fleeing French troops, a father urging his wife and daughter to hurry along, while a priest clutches a bag full of money.[1] There would be a lot more Spanish families fleeing violence in the decades to come, but this particular war resulted from Napoleon's invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1808 and the installation of his brother, Joseph, on the Spanish throne. It would take over five years and the intervention of the British, but the Spaniards eventually threw out the hated invader. Few conflicts in human history have provided more chilling examples of man's inhumanity to man. For it presented not only the set-piece battles typical of warfare in the previous century but also the savagery of guerilla war, the remorseless struggle between partisans and regular troops that took place in the shadows of "civilized" combat and scarred the psyche of a people for generations to come.[2]

The Spain that Napoleon invaded and sought to control was essentially a Castilian empire, mired in a late-feudal socioeconomic system that was autocratic and highly centralized. Beevor colorfully describes Spain as having had "the unbending pride of

[1] The print's Spanish title is "Yo lo vi" and is plate 44 in the collection *Desastres de la Guerra: Fatales consequencias de la sangrienta guerra en España con Buonaparte. Y otros caprichos enfáticos* (Fatal consequences of the bloody war against Bonaparte in Spain. And other emphatic caprices), created between 1810 and 1815. Robert Hughes, for one, is doubtful that Goya actually witnessed this occurrence, but the image of helpless innocents fleeing death and destruction is an apt one for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Spain. See Robert Hughes, *Goya* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 272–74, for more on this print and others in the series.

[2] For an excellent overview of this war, see Gregory Fremont-Barnes, *The Napoleonic Wars: The Peninsular War 1807–1814*, series: Essential Histories, ed. Robert O'Neill (Oxford: Osprey, 2002).