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Isaac Albéniz and the construction of a Spanish sound: a study of *Iberia*.

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by

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ABSTRACT

Isaac Albéniz and the construction of a Spanish sound: a study of *Iberia*.

by

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The Spanish composer and pianist Isaac Albéniz (1860- 1909) is best known for his piano music, evocative of various locales within Spain such as Sevilla, Málaga, and Granada. Many of these pieces, including the virtuosic pieces that comprise his late magnum opus for piano, *Iberia*, draw inspiration from the Spanish region of Andalusia and its folklore, particularly flamenco. Due to *Iberia*'s success, Albéniz's name and Spanish music in general have been associated with Andalusian folk idioms thereby making him and his *Iberia* an essential part of the development of Spanish nationalism. Although Albéniz was the author of several operas, zarzuelas, and other orchestral works, he is principally remembered for his early nationalistic piano compositions and *Iberia*.

This document will discuss how the particular stylistic elements in *Iberia* came to be and the favorable conditions that made these pieces successfully received, particularly in France. The document will also explore the complex Spanish musical landscape during the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, as well as Spanish dependence on foreign influences and foreign approval and how these forces

shaped Albéniz's career and style. Albéniz's music, especially in *Iberia*, was affected by his time living in France and his exposure to foreign trends, particularly to an exoticized image of Spain, seen as an Oriental nation, full of exotic folk traditions. This document will also argue that Albéniz was not merely a passive agent influenced by the development of these trends but a very active part of the musical and social scene at the time and that he therefore significantly influenced the trajectory of Spanish music.

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Introduction

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909) is one of Spain's most celebrated composers. Together with Enrique Granados (1867-1916) and Manuel de Falla (1876-1946), the three composers became the representatives of a new resurgence of Spanish music, in the case of Granados and Albéniz, particularly relevant for the piano. Granados's *Goyescas* and Albéniz's *Iberia* have come to embody and symbolize the elevation of Spanish piano music to new heights and accepted as part of the European classical canon by pianists and audiences.

There are numerous accounts of Albéniz's life and career, the first of which was written by Antonio Guerra y Alarcón when Albéniz was only 26 years old. These accounts have often been romanticized, and many apocryphal stories have circulated unchecked for decades. Albéniz himself often contributed to the creation of these stories, many of which have only quite recently been debunked upon being properly researched by Walter Aaron Clark. Clark's authoritative biography of Albéniz, questions long-believed stories such as Albéniz's supposed studies with Franz Liszt or his adventures as a stowaway to the Americas, offering the most complete and reliable information on Albéniz to date as well as an entertaining narration of Albéniz's life and musical achievements.

Albéniz was born in Camprodón, Catalonia, very close to the border with France. Due to his father's job as a customs official in the revenue department, the family often moved.[1] He commenced his piano studies in Barcelona with Narciso Olivares before continuing in Madrid at the Real Conservatorio.[2] Albéniz proved to be a precocious student

[1] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 20.

[2] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 23-25.

and in 1869 he composed and published his first piece, a *Marcha militar* for piano.[3] Soon after that, between 1872 and 1875, the young Albéniz was giving concerts around Spain.[4] According to Clark, during the summer and autumn of 1875, Albéniz performed in the Greater Antilles. This was probably not because he ran away from home as a stowaway, as some biographies claim, but because of his father's relocation to Havana in April of 1875.[5]

In 1876, back in Europe, the family decided to send Albéniz to study in Leipzig, where he stayed enrolled in the Hochschule for only a couple of months. The reasons for the short stay, Clark speculates, could have had to do with the difficulties understanding German or most probably, running out of money.[6] Although it is doubtful that he ever met Liszt, while studying in Leipzig Albéniz did receive instruction from Louis Maas and Salomon Jadassohn, two former pupils of Liszt.[7]

Back in Spain, Albéniz received support from the secretary of King Alfonso XII, Count Guillermo Morphy and Ferriz who was a musician himself. Albéniz was able to attend the Conservatoire Royal in Brussels after receiving a grant from the Spanish king. He studied in Brussels for three years, as a student of Louis Brassin, himself a student of Ignaz Moscheles.[8]

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[3] Clark, 26.

[4] Clark, 27-30.

[5] Clark, 31-33.

[6] Clark, 35.

[7] Clark, 34-35.

[8] Clark, 36-37.

After years of study and performing abroad, Albéniz was by now a well-traveled, cosmopolitan young man. It was in the summer of 1880 that he traveled to Budapest and the supposed meeting with Liszt, recorded in Albéniz's diary, took place. But as Clark points out, Liszt's correspondence indicates that the composer was not in Budapest at the time but in Weimar.[9] After another performance tour to Havana in December of 1880, Albéniz returned to Spain, toured the peninsula, and married Rosina Jordana Lagarriga in 1883.[10] That year another important event took place: Albéniz met the Catalan composer and musicologist Felipe Pedrell (1841-1922), whom Albéniz credited as having given him the "first initiation in the difficult art of transcendental composition" and "the difficult handling of orchestral colours [and] the elements of culture and aesthetics that time, experience, and study have been developing in my mind."[11]

Albéniz's enormous talent as a concert pianist is often remarked upon and he had a successful career as a performer, often playing his own compositions. In 1889 he was invited to perform in the *Salle Érard* in Paris, to great success, in front of an audience that included Claude Debussy, Maurice Ravel, Gabriel Fauré, and Paul Dukas. Later that year Albéniz's debut in London took place, as well as a tour of England the next year. After the warm welcome, Albéniz decided to remain in London for some time.[12] While in London, Albéniz continued performing and composing for the piano, but also music for the stage. In 1893 Albéniz met and entered a financial agreement with Francis Money-Coutts (1852-

[9] Clark, 43.

[10] Clark, 45-46.

[11] Clark, 55.

[12] Clark, 77.

1923), a wealthy solicitor but also poet and librettist.[13] This agreement is often regarded as detrimental for Albéniz who was "forced" to write music for Money-Coutts' mediocre libretti. But it gave financial stability to Albéniz at a time when he had numerous family responsibilities and the composer seemed to have been honestly fond of the aristocrat Money-Coutts.[14]

In 1894 Albéniz relocated to Paris and spent the rest of his life between the French capital, the south of the country when his health declined, and Spain. In Paris, he had the opportunity to learn from and become close friends with some of the greatest musicians of the turn of the century. It was also in France where he composed *Iberia*, his most celebrated piece, and became an influential figure. France became fundamental not only for Albéniz but also for many other Spanish composers. Spanish musicians living in Paris were key to the development of Spanish music but at the same time, Spanish music was becoming dependent on French approval and subject to a process of exoticization and orientalization. In this Parisian context, Albéniz' own preference for "Andalusian" music would prove very successful. The reasons for these circumstances, Albéniz's role in it as well as *Iberia*'s significance in this context will be discussed in the following document.

Albéniz's music is usually seen and performed as one of the quintessential representatives of Spanishness in classical music. His easier piano pieces are often performed in the form of guitar transcription, an instrument closely associated with Spain and particularly with Andalusian identity. His collection *Iberia* has also remained popular despite its great technical demands on the performer as well as sometimes on the listener.

[13] Clark, 102.

[14] Clark, 102-104.

This document tries to shed some light on the historical contexts of the composition of *Iberia*, how its success was a result of the social and cultural conditions in Spain and France and offer guidance to pianists performing these pieces as well as anyone interested in knowing the circumstances that facilitated the creation of such a particular genre of music beyond its celebrated "Spanishness". The analysis of the pieces is not intended to offer a thorough theoretical analysis which can be found in other sources but an explanation of what the listeners and performers might find in each piece of Iberia, illuminated by the historical and biographical information of *fin-de-siècle* Europe and by taking a closer look at the career and the figure of Isaac Albéniz.

CHAPTER 1

Building a National Musical Identity and Conscience

Isaac Albéniz (1860-1909) remains today one of the best-known Spanish composers for piano and is regarded as one of the leading Spanish composers of the nineteenth century. His piano music has earned a place in the repertoire on account of its quintessential Spanishness, embodying the "soul of Spain." Albéniz's musical output culminated with the creation of *Iberia*, a collection of twelve virtuosic pieces for piano, many of which are evocative of locations in the south of Spain such as Málaga, Jerez, or Almería. Due to *Iberia*'s popularity and enthusiastic reception, Albéniz's name has been associated with the use of Andalusian folk idioms and with a brand of nationalistic music sometimes referred to as *españolismo*. Even though his compositions encompass other genres such as operas, zarzuelas, and piano sonatas, it is his "Spanish" pieces for piano that are immediately associated with his name.

Most of Albéniz's career occurred around the turn of the century, his most successful period being at the end of his life while residing in France. To understand Albéniz's creative output, and its reception and influence, it is necessary to contextualize him – both as a musician and a Spaniard – in *fin-de-siècle* Europe and to properly understand the conditions he faced both in Spain, where he spent crucial formative years, and in the social and artistic circles he frequented in France, where he found the most recognition from peers and audiences. As a cosmopolitan musician, Albéniz had to contend with what it meant to be a Spanish composer both at home and abroad while Spain struggled to define its national

identity. Albéniz's role was not passive but one of significant protagonism that helped shape Spain's perceived cultural identity.

The nationalization of music in Spain

During the nineteenth century, many European countries underwent the process of building their national identities. Spain also had to confront the pressing issue of nation-building and develop its own national identity. The loss of Spain's overseas colonies, the subsequent loss of imperial power and status, and its position in Europe as a peripheral nation made its situation distinct from the central European countries. Spanish intellectuals were striving to build an image of Spain as a modern nation, equal to its European neighbors in social progress and culture, while simultaneously finding qualities that made it distinctive and unify Spain's inhabitants behind the concept of a Spanish nation.

There are several ways in which to look at the processes that help create the concept of a nation. As Xavier Andreu Miralles points out, it is already "commonplace" to imagine a nation in relation to a series of "others" with respect to which it differs from others and defines itself against.[15] The role of literature, music, and the arts in general as a platform and a way of disseminating these historical processes is fundamental when trying to understand these processes. Miralles offers an analysis, through the lens of the literary sources, of the circumstances that helped build and disseminate an image of Spain which was not always what the Spanish intellectuals may have wished for the nation they were hoping to build, and of how Spain reacted against or sometimes contributed to these processes. In order to

[15] Xavier Andreu Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España: Mito Romántico e Identidad Nacional.* (Barcelona: Taurus Historia, 2016), 18-19.

build this modern image of Spain, some Spanish intellectuals strived to counter certain foreign portrayals of Spain that had become ubiquitous in literature, art, and music. Foreign publications, including French novels, such as those by François-René de Chateaubriand (1768-1848), and the English travel guides of Richard Ford (1796-1858) popularized an Orientalist image of Spain, and often depicted an exoticized Spain, portraying it as a backward, almost barbaric place, trapped in the past, closer to a quasi-Oriental nation rather than a European one. By the third decade of the nineteenth century, this exotic image of Spain was vividly present in European culture and would remain so for a long time, bringing long-term consequences for Spanish culture and society.

During the nineteenth century, Spanish intellectuals were keenly aware of the need to contend with this exoticization of the country while at the same time trying to build a new Spanish liberal state. In particular, the idea that art was the expression of the national spirit was widespread. Consequently, Spanish artists and intellectuals felt the need to prove their nation's art as something worthy of a modern nation and thereby ameliorate the widely held stereotype of Spain as a primitive, backward nation.

Spanish intellectuals, such as Mariano José de Larra (1809-1837), believed it especially important not to let foreign romantic authors define Spain's identity for them. Regardless of whether or not they happened to agree with some of the views and perceptions of Spain written abroad, intellectuals like Larra felt that foreigners couldn't understand and portray the true nature of Spain. Intermixed with this belief were resentment and regret that foreigners were the first to rediscover and place value on national artistic and literary treasures.[16]

[16] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España*, 118.

Music was an integral part of the nation-building processes of the nineteenth century and Spain was no exception to the nationalization of music during this century. Spanish society, at the time less culturally developed than other European nations, underwent many changes that affected musical life. Cities such as Bilbao and Barcelona had been steadily growing throughout the nineteenth century and eventually became economic leaders while Madrid struggled to keep up. The importance of Barcelona as an economic and cultural center would lead to the creation of vibrant cultural movements such as the Catalan *Renaixença* and Catalan Modernism. As a result, musicians such as Isaac Albéniz, Manuel de Falla, and Felipe Pedrell became intimate with some of these movements and shared their philosophies.

The cultural elites of the *Renaixença* and Modernism movements were not the only social circles to influence the music scene in Spain. The economic boom of cities also increased the number of workers, resulting in a stronger middle and professional class. As in the rest of Europe, there was a larger part of the population with increasing leisure time that demanded entertainment. Musical venues such as *cafés cantantes* flourished and allowed different social classes to access various milieus and forms of entertainment and were particularly important in the development of flamenco. These establishments grew by popular demand and had a strong impact abroad, helping to make their music be seen as the authentic popular music of Spanish people.

Despite the increasing economic and social power of cities like Barcelona, Madrid was still the capital of the country and the seat of the Royal court. Politicians in Madrid and landowners of Andalusia still had control over many aspects of society, and tensions between the different regions of Spain were increasingly present in Spanish politics. Thus,

the fact remained that all major musical performances took place in Madrid where the court and aristocracy held sway on cultural matters, being as they were patrons of high culture and sponsored the ballet, symphony, and opera. Composers who wished to have a successful career in Spain still had to take Madrid and its audiences into consideration. These audiences generally accepted the trends from France, Italy, Germany, and Russia.[17] In other European countries such as Germany or Italy, nationalistic movements received ample state support in order to pursue the creation of national music. However, in Spain, music of a nationalistic significance developed late. Music production in Spain had declined since the great Renaissance period of Tomás Luis de Victoria (1548- 1611), Felix Antonio de Cabezón (1510-1566), and Francisco de Salinas (1513-1590), and Spain was heavily dependent on music, musicians, and styles imported from countries such as Italy. During the eighteenth century, musicians working at the court of the Bourbon kings had been foreigners such as Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) or Luigi Boccherini (1743-1805), and, until the third decade of the nineteenth century, this had not been perceived as a problem by Spanish intellectuals nor politicians. Only when nationalism and the identification of national culture with national identity started to develop did the influence and presence of foreign music begin to be perceived by Spanish intellectuals as a painful reminder of inferiority and fueled an urge to "restore" the glory of Spanish music.[18]

Albéniz himself, as Walter A. Clark points out, often voiced a "derogation of things Italian", and harshly criticized popular opera composers such as Pietro Mascagni (1863-

[17] Sandie Holguín. "Music and Spanish Nationalism," -in *Metaphors of Spain: Representations of Spanish National Identity in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Javier Moreno-Luzón and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017), 220.

[18] José Álvarez Junco, *Mater Dolorosa.* (Madrid: Taurus Historia, 2007), 258.

1945).[19] But as Clark observes, Albéniz's anti-Italian stance was a reflection of the general feeling and resentment Spanish musicians felt regarding the dominance that Italian music and musicians held in Spain during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Despite the anti-Italian sentiment, Albéniz's music and many others were still significantly influenced by Italian music.[20]

Regardless of the preference for all things Italian, during the 1830s things had started to gradually change. Spanish songs had become increasingly more popular and often performed, both abroad and in Spain, alongside Italian and French music. According to Celsa Alonso, it was around this time that the identification of certain forms of popular music in Spain took place.[21] Particularly successful genres were *seguidillas* and *tiranas* which after finding international approval soon also won over the Spanish aristocracy back home. During the nineteenth century, *seguidillas-boleras* (boleros), *polos*, and *tiranas* were often sung in the salons (without the more suggestive dance). These songs became more and more popular and began to be commercialized, often sold as *aries nacionales*.[22] The idea of a national music present in the folklore of the nation that had to be restored was being assimilated by composers who would incorporate this material and "elevate" this music in their compositions.

[19] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 182.

[20] Clark, 182.

[21] Celsa Alonso, "La transición a un nuevo siglo" in *Historia de la música en España e Hispanoamerica*.Volume 5, ed. Juan José Carreras (Madrid 2018), 358.

[22] Alonso, "La transición a un nuevo siglo," 360.

The National Question: the creation of a national lyric genre

A number of composers believed that the solution to the dependency on foreign music and the search for a Spanish musical identity was the creation of a national genre of opera. In many parts of Europe, opera was associated with national identity and Spanish musicians felt it disgraceful not to have their own operatic tradition, thereby ending the longtime dependency on Italian operas. Juan José Carreras observes that this need for an "authentic Spanish" genre free from foreign influence had the undesired side effect of devaluing music previously produced in Spain. This other "inauthentic" music was generally considered a simulacrum of Italian music and thus labeled a betrayal of a supposed "Spanishness."[23]

Several composers such as Francisco Asenjo Barbieri (1823-1894), Mariano Soriano Fuertes (1817-1880), Joaquín Gaztambide (1822-1870), Hilarión Eslava (1807-1878), Felipe Pedrell and Tomás Bretón (1850-1923), dedicated their efforts to achieving the ambitious goal of creating a national opera, which had become a matter of national importance. Despite their endeavors, the path forward was not immediately clear nor an easy one. According to a music critic writing in 1873 the "national essence" had to be found in the "elements that constitute our way of being and our own nationality" in "our own history, our language, our theatrical tradition, our traditions and manners, our songs and popular dances and our national anthems."[24]

[23] Juan José Carreras, "El siglo XIX musical" in *Historia de la música en España e Hispanoamerica*.Volume 5, ed. Juan José Carreras (Madrid 2018), 39.

[24] Junco, *Mater Dolorosa,* 260.

Political reasons were behind some of these efforts. The desire to get rid of foreign influences, and thereby revive the past glories of Spain and revindicate its value – particularly the creations of the *Siglo de Oro* (Golden Age) – was driven by political forces, usually conservative, the complaints about foreign influence often being tinged with xenophobic feelings. Carol Hess, whose research on Manuel de Falla sheds light on a period decisive for Spanish artists, between the loss of the last Spanish colonies in 1898 and the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), points out that another relevant factor in the Spanish cultural scene was "cultural pessimism" which became even more pronounced after 1898. This, Hess tells us, was "intimately linked to Spain's habitual uncertainty over the proper relationship between foreign influences and national ("racial") identity.[25]

Another pressing issue was language: since Italian was the default language for opera, operas by Spanish composers were routinely translated for performances even in Spanish theatres such as *El Gran Teatre del Liceu.* Composers who worked to create a new national opera genre asserted the use of the Spanish language as suitable for the lyric genre and published several articles arguing for the use of Spanish in operas such as Sinibaldo de Mas' *Sistema musical de la lengua castellana* or José Rius' *Ópera Española: Ventajas que la lengua castellana ofrece para el melodrama*. For critics like Antonio Peña y Goñi the "salvation" of Spanish music was dependent on the creation of a Spanish genre of music that would be unique and untransferable, and thereby belong completely and exclusively to Spanish composers.

[25] Carol A. Hess, *Manuel de Falla and modernism in Spain*, 1898-1936. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 5.

Albéniz's own contributions to the operatic genre were diverse and of varying unsatisfactory degrees of success. According to Clark, Albéniz's great ambition was to compose for the stage, but he never found the success he desired, facing a cold – when not hostile – reception from Spanish critics and audiences. [26] A close look at the reception of his stage works gives a good idea of the state of operatic culture in Spain. Only after several unsuccessful attempts at achieving critical acclaim through his stage works, he dedicated all his efforts to the creation of piano works, *Iberia* being the biggest success.

The first of Albéniz's operatic works was *The Magic Opal*, a comic opera in two acts. It premiered in London in 1893 to mixed reviews with some critics complaining about the poor, overly complicated libretto while praising Albéniz's music. On the other hand, George Bernard Shaw lamented that Albéniz couldn't write well for the singers citing "his double disability as a pianist and a foreigner."[27] Albéniz's attempts at non-Spanish subject matters – and therefore not playing to his supposed innate strengths – would become a common complaint from music critics. The English run of the opera was moderately successful, encouraging the composer to bring the opera to Spain. *Magic Opal* was translated and premiered in 1894 in Madrid as *La sortija* alongside Albéniz's zarzuela *San Antonio de la Florida* at the Teatro Apolo, considered at the time the "cathedral" of the zarzuela. Albéniz made several attempts at writing zarzuelas, a genre that might have brought him success in Spain, but his zarzuelas were also harshly criticized due to all the expectations regarding a genre that was often considered the real Spanish lyric tradition.

[26] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 48.

[27] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 92.

Critics and audiences took any deviation from this tradition as an offense. Regarding Albéniz's operetta, the critics and the audience were unenthusiastic about *La sortija* at best and were at times openly hostile. Although they complained about the libretto and the music, Clark finds in the criticism of the writer "Pipi" the real cause of such hostility. The critic "Pipi" claimed that "Albéniz and Sierra (author of the text of the zarzuela) are too foreignized."[28] Clark believes that they were being punished and rejected for breaking the established mold, with critics resenting Albéniz's "cosmopolitanism, seriousness, and musical erudition."[29] *La sortija* closed after three nights and a disappointed Albéniz moved on.

His next opera, *Henry Clifford* premiered in Barcelona in the spring of 1895 in Italian, as was the custom in *El Gran Teatro del Liceu*. It was the first operatic collaboration between the composer and the English banker/writer Francis Money-Coutts. The financial agreement between the composer and Money-Coutts, sometimes referred to as a Faustian Pact, was seen by some as detrimental, forcing Albéniz to write music to mediocre libretti inadequate for his temperament and skills. Clark cites Edgar Istel's comments in *The Musical Quarterly* in 1929 harshly criticizing the agreement between Money-Coutts and Albéniz:

"Now Albéniz was obliged to inter all plans for operas in the Spanish style for which he was specifically adapted . . . in order to prostitute his art as the splenetic Englishman's slave. Even worse is what Arbós told me: that Albéniz, against the counsel of his wife, who advised him to break his diabolic pact with the English banker, thought—so blind was he—

[28] Clark, 123.

[29] Clark, 123.

that his real gift was for serious opera composition, and clung to this fallacy almost to the end of his days."[30]

Unlike *The Magic Opal*, *Henry Clifford* is a serious, large-scale work that required significant skills from the composer and kept Albéniz busy from 1893 to 1895. Despite his best efforts, the opera was not a success; both subject and libretto were harshly criticized. Critics believed financial reasons had driven the creation of the opera and found it too removed from Albéniz's sympathies. Clark points to the reviews of the time, with Gauthier describing it as "too Nordic" for Albéniz's temperament and lamenting its heaviness.[31] Once more, due to his former fame as a pianist, his operatic compositional skills were doubted. Despite Albéniz's declared disdain for Italian music, Clark points to the influence of Verdi in *Henry Clifford*, on the historical subject matter but also in the emotional directness of the music and the largely accompanimental role of the orchestra.[32]

The first relative success for Albéniz came with the comic opera *Pepita Jiménez*, based on a novel by Juan Valera (1824-1905). It premiered in Barcelona in 1896 at the *Gran Teatre del Liceu* and was performed in Italian despite the use of a Spanish text source. The reception was warmer than for Albéniz's previous operas, and the composer successfully had it presented again in Prague and Brussels. The reviews in Prague appreciated Albéniz's Spanish color, praising that "in the place of banal and artificial exoticism... he has substituted a color more discreet but more truthful, which marvelously evokes the places,

[30] Walter Aaron Clark, "Isaac Albéniz's Faustian Pact: A Study in Patronage." *The Musical Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (1992): 467, http://www.jstor.org/stable/742472.

[31] Clark, 129.

[32] Clark, 129.

customs, and distinctive characters of Spain."[33] Clark also points to the Italian influence in Albéniz's work, particularly that of Puccini and Mascagni, despite his supposed rejection of Italian influences.[34]

Pepita Jiménez is representative of Albéniz's musical cosmopolitan tendencies: the influence of Puccini and Mascagni, of French romanticism, and an English libretto based on a Spanish story made, again, for a hodgepodge of musical elements that make Albéniz's operas difficult to place within the operatic tradition. Despite his ambition and desire to present his operas in Spain, Albéniz's stage career was never particularly successful, and his stage works have never earned a place in the canon. During his lifetime he was seen as too foreign in his own country and generally criticized for attempting subject matter that was not Spanish enough, sometimes incurring the suspicion of the authorities due to his liberal politics and foreign connections. Nevertheless, Clark sees *Pepita Jiménez* as one of Albéniz's finest and most important works, where it is possible to find for the first time the national style and technical sophistication that is usually associated with Iberia as well as a valuable contribution to "the genesis of national opera in Spain."[35]

Albéniz's last attempt at opera was the most ambitious of all, a Wagnerian-style Arthurian trilogy that Money-Coutts hoped would be to England what the ring cycle had been to Germany.[36] Only *Merlin* (1904), the first of the planned trilogy, was completed and

[33] Walter Aaron Clark. "«CAVALLERIA IBERICA» REASSESSED: CRITICAL RECEPTION OF ISAAC ALBÉNIZ'S OPERA 'PEPITA JIMÉNEZ.'" *Revista de Musicología* 16, no. 6 (1993): 43, https://doi.org/10.2307/20796932.

[34] Clark, "«CAVALLERIA IBERICA» REASSESSED," 169.

[35] Clark, "«CAVALLERIA IBERICA» REASSESSED," 45.

[36] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 179.

Albéniz didn't live to see it premiered. According to Clark, this opera came to be seen as an aberration in Albéniz's oeuvre, a waste of his time and talents, forced on to him by the financial arrangement made between the composer and Money-Coutts.[37] But, in reality, Albéniz was an enthusiastic admirer of Wagner who attended performances of his operas in different European locations during his travels. Clark also perceives the influence of Wagner "in his use of leading motives and their presentation and development almost exclusively in the orchestra. It is also apparent in his avoidance of simultaneous singing and his treatment of the voices, i.e. in the emphasis on clarity of declamation and renunciation of fioritura."[38]

Albéniz's Wagnerian opera and his admiration for the composer may be understood under the light of Wagnerism in Spain and how this movement fit into the agenda of composers trying to create a national lyric genre. Some Spanish composers, such as Tomás Bretón and Felipe Pedrell, believed that the answer was to follow the Wagnerian principles that dominated the rest of Europe. Although, once more, Spain lagged in embracing Wagner, some composers, particularly in Catalonia, were receptive to Wagner's music and ideas.

In Madrid, Wagner's reception was less enthusiastic. The first performances of Wagner excerpts were organized by the *Sociedad de Conciertos* of Madrid and took place while Spain was trying to establish a symphonic culture. The truth was that Spanish audiences had not been exposed to an extensive symphonic culture in the same way that German music-goers had been. Thus, Spanish audiences generally found Wagner's music difficult to comprehend and its reception was often unsuccessful. Besides these difficulties,

[37] Clark, 179-80.

[38] Clark, 182.

Wagner was seen as just another foreigner who would impede Spanish composers from developing their own national style.

Probably the most prominent Spanish Wagnerite, often referred to as "The Wagner of Tortosa",[39] was Felipe Pedrell (1841-1922), an influential musicologist, composer, teacher, and prominent figure in Spanish music circles. He was also one of the leading intellectuals attempting to find a solution to the creation of a national musical genre and mentor to a generation of Spanish musicians including, not only Albéniz, but also composers Manuel de Falla, Enrique Granados, and Joaquin Turina. Today, Pedrell's compositions are rarely performed but he is nevertheless often considered the father of Spanish musical nationalism; his contributions to Spanish Wagnerism and the creation of a national lyric genre come hand in hand. Pedrell wrote a number of pro-Wagner articles where he connected musical tradition with nationality, arguing that the solution to a national genre lay within the "inexhaustible source of the popular songs, hidden by mannerisms and conventional style."[40]

This philosophy is present in Pedrell's Wagnerian trilogy *Els Pirineus* which he had hoped would be the foundation of a nationalist school of opera composition.[41] *Els Pirineus*, with its Wagnerist tendencies, is closely aligned with the aesthetics of the *Renaixença,* a Catalan cultural movement also influenced by Wagnerism; the libretto itself was written in

[39] Carol A. Hess, *Manuel de Falla and modernism in Spain*, 1898-1936. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 6.

[40] Teresa Cascudo, "Identidades nacionales en el drama lírico: Chapí, Bretón y Pedrell" in Historia *de la música en España e Hispanoamerica*.Volume 5 ed. Juan José Carreras (Madrid 2018), 568.

[41] Clinton D.Young, "The Southern Slope of Montsalvat: How Spanish Wagnerism Became Catalan." *19th-Century Music* 41, no. 1 (2017): 44, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26348902.

Catalan by the poet Victor Balaguer (1824-1901), an important member of the *Renaixença*. The *Renaixença* aimed to revive the Catalan language, its vernacular literature, and culture by romanticizing the past and the traditions of the Catalan region. An important part of that revival was the *Jocs Florals* (first celebrated in 1859), inspired by a medieval contest between troubadours that had taken place originally in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to promote the Occitan language and style. This interest in medievalism was seen as the Mediterranean parallel to Wagner's interest in the Middle Ages. Albéniz's own aesthetic and philosophy were close to the spirit of the *Renaixença*. According to Clark "Albéniz's pan-Hispanic nationalism was indebted to the *Renaixença* philosophy as articulated by (Felipe) Pedrell."[42]

Els Pirineus is particularly relevant, not only for Wagnerites but for Spanish musical nationalism in general. Pedrell included as a prologue to the score of *Els Pirineus* the manifesto *Por nuestra música* (1891) where he explained what he believed was necessary in order to create a "national school of music." *Por nuestra música* proposes to overcome the "pintoresquismo" of the popular genre of the zarzuela to reach "real nationalism" inspired by popular music and thereby elevate the Spanish tradition to the category of high art. Clinton D. Young sees Pedrell's *Por nuestra música* as "focused on arguing that folk songs (*canto popular*) should be the basis of nationalist opera, as folk songs represent the authentic 'voice of the people' (*voz de los pueblos*)."[43] Pedrell believed that folk songs formed the legitimate foundation for national music and that Spanish music had to symbolically

[42] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 48.

[43] Young, "The Southern Slope of Montsalvat," 44.

appropriate the physiognomy, the language, and the peculiar accent of the people.[44] According to Young, in the second half of the book, Pedrell analyzes the score to *Els Pirineus* in an attempt to demonstrate how the music came from folk song"[45]. According to Carol Hess, Pedrell's manifesto articulates his thoughts on national music by using the words of the eighteenth-century Spanish theorist Padre Antonio Eximeno, who claimed that "each people should construct its musical system on the basis of its national song."[46] Hess observes that with these arguments, Pedrell is placing the nationalist agenda in a Wagnerian context. This is further illustrated by Pedrell's belief that even if folk music must provide the particular Spanish accent, modern lyric drama offered the safety of formal conventions known by the cultivated public (those include the Wagnerian leitmotif, the dominance of the vocal part, the importance of the text).[47] Pedrell, like many other Spanish musicians and critics, blamed the obsession with Italian song for the decay of Spanish music and believed that Spanish song had to be, like the German lied, based on popular song.

According to Samuel Llano, in his book *Whose Spain?* which analyzes the different ways in which French critics exoticized Spanish music, these ideas were defended and spread both in Spain and France thanks to Rafael Mitjana (1869-1921), a diplomat and musician disciple of Pedrell as well as a student of Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921). Mitjana contributed to the dissemination of Pedrell's ideas including his thoughts on the composer and his contribution to opera in his book *¡Para música vamos!* and in his entry on

[44] Cascudo, "Identidades nacionales en el drama lírico: Chapí, Bretón y Pedrell," 581.

[45] Young, "The Southern Slope of Montsalvat," 44.

[46] Hess, *Manuel de Falla and modernism in Spain*, 6.

[47] Cascudo, 581.

Spanish music in the *Encyclopédie du Conservatoire* by Lavignac and La Laurencie. Mitjana wrote that with *Els Pirineus* "the true Spanish opera was born" and maintained that Pedrell was indeed the father of Spanish nationalism.[48]

Pedrell's ideas were a key influence on several composers, such as Albéniz and Falla, who would become representative of nationalistic music and incorporated Spanish folk music into their creations. *Por nuestra música* and *Els Pirineus* were not Pedrell's only contributions to the nationalistic endeavors of Spanish music. He also systematized and published an important collection of Spanish folk music (*Cancionero musical popular Español,* 1918-22). Although it is a remarkable contribution, he was not the first person to look to the countryside to try to define and recover the Spanish musical tradition. Before Pedrell, Antonio Machado Álvarez, better known by his alias Demófilo, (1848-1893) became one of the founders of folklore studies in Spain. Demófilo collected and disseminated folk tales and songs from around Spain with a particular interest in Andalusia. Demófilo tracked down the lyrics to Andalusian songs and published them, imbuing them with intellectual value for the first time and thereby opening the path for subsequent studies and usage of these songs.[49] William Washabaugh, in his explorations of the relationship between the genre of flamenco music and Spanish identity, sees Demófilo's efforts as an attempt to steer Spanish audiences away from other high art forms that were popular as well as from the successful artistic commercialization of the music performed in venues such as

[48] Samuel Llano, *Whose Spain? Negotiating "Spanish Music" in Paris, 1908-1929.* (New York: Oxford University Press 2013), 83.

[49] Sandie Holguín. "Music and Spanish Nationalism," -in *Metaphors of Spain: Representations of Spanish National Identity in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Javier Moreno-Luzón and Xosé M. Núñez Seixas (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2017), 222.

cafés cantantes. Demófilo believed the real artistic value would be found in the "everyday regional experiences of Spanish commoners." In 1881 Demófilo founded the Andalusian Folklore Society (*El Folk-Lore Andaluz*), modeled after the Folklore Society established three years earlier in London. In the same year, Demófilo also published a book that collected flamenco songs, *Coleccion de cantes flamencos* (1881). For Demófilo, the Romani flamenco performers of Andalusia were, according to Washabaugh, community poets (*poetas del pueblo*) who could give voice to the soul of Spanish culture. Perhaps, Washabaugh points out, Demófilo saw them with their marginal position in society, as the vehicles that could provide the primitive and 'natural' themes of human existence.[50]

Both Pedrell and Demófilo believed in the importance of the folk traditions of Spain in order to find the authentic identity of the nation. However, Pedrell's research of Spanish music was not limited to the folk traditions of Spain but also considered Spanish liturgical and classical traditions in an attempt to revive past glories of Spain's musical past. These efforts resulted in the publication of eight volumes consisting of a collection of *Hispaniae scholar musica sacra* which included works by Antonio de Cabezón, Tomás Luis de Victoria, Cristóbal de Morales, and other sixteenth-century Spanish polyphonists, in addition to a compilation of keyboard works by Spanish organists. He inspired composers such as Granados, Albéniz, and Falla with the idea that Spanish music was coming out of centuries of darkness and emerging from a historical injustice in need of reparation. The new composers of Spanish music would need to elevate Spanish music and thereby reclaim Spain's "rightful position" amongst the rest of Europe, ending the feelings of inferiority

[50] William Washabaugh, *Flamenco Music and National Identity in Spain* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Pub., 2012), 55.

common amongst Spanish intellectuals. Thanks to Pedrell's exploration and revindication of the glories of Spain's musical past and insistence on national music incorporating Spanish folk music into both modern opera and symphonic music he became one of the most influential figures in the process of folklorization in Spain and a precursor of modern Spanish musicology which helped shape the new generation of Spanish music composers.[51]

Despite all these intellectual efforts, Spanish opera didn't find the success musicians like Pedrell or Bretón had hoped for. The fact was that behind the aesthetic concerns and the demands for an exclusively Spanish genre, there was also the more practical concern of money.[52] Spanish musicians needed protection for their music and thus wanted state support that would promote them and place limitations on the performance of foreign music. However, these attempts at protection clashed with commercial interests and the public's taste for certain forms of entertainment and preference for Italian productions. Despite all attempts to create a national opera, the genre never succeeded to the same degree as their Italian or French counterparts.

The "authentic" Spanish genre: zarzuela

Having rejected these attempts at creating a Spanish operatic genre, audiences favored the zarzuela, considered by some the authentic Spanish lyric genre. Several circumstances helped popularize the genre. Unlike other European nations which traditionally had strong state sponsorship for the musical arts, Spanish music suffered neglect from the court and aristocracy. Even if forms of opera and ballet were supported by

[51] Teresa Cascudo, "Identidades nacionales en el drama lírico: Chapí, Bretón y Pedrell," 581.

[52] Junco, *Mater Dolorosa,* 260.

the elites (Isabel II favored Italian opera and the Teatro Real, founded in 1850, also favored foreign productions such as operas from Rossini, Verdi, and Meyerbeer), the state didn't finance or support them at the same level as other countries. As a consequence, Spain lacked orchestral infrastructure: the first semi-permanent orchestra, the *Sociedad de Conciertos de Madrid*, was founded in Madrid in 1866, by Francisco Asenjo Barbieri, Federico Chueca, and Joaquín Gaztambide, with Beethoven's Ninth Symphony being premiered as late as 1882.[53] Chamber music remained scarce, and salon music was generally favored. Albéniz himself started his career writing salon music in Madrid.

Due to the vacuum left by the Spanish state, popular forms of national music filled the space, with success determined by the marketplace and support of the new audiences that grew during the nineteenth century. These circumstances helped popularize the zarzuela genre, transforming it into its modern form by the mid-nineteenth century. It quickly became the popular Spanish alternative to Italian opera, often described as *opera cómica nacional* (national comic opera) and seen as the real Spanish popular lyric genre, thereby providing a more accessible genre instead of solely belonging to the intellectual and cultural elites.

According to Carol Hess, "zarzuela can be considered the musical manifestation of *costumbrismo*, a literary movement that sought to preserve Spanish traditions (*costumbres*) in the face of sweeping modernization and undifferentiated mass culture,"[54] and ran counter to the Wagnerian trend dominating Europe at the time.[55] Indeed, despite the widespread influence of Wagner, the popularity of zarzuela in Spain couldn't be denied and several

[53] Young "The Southern Slope of Montsalvat," 34.

[54] Hess, *Manuel de Falla and modernism in Spain, 1898-1936,* 22.

[55] Hess, 23.

composers eager to support the creation of Spanish opera such as Albéniz and Pedrell wrote several zarzuelas.

Zarzuela was responsible for establishing a number of musical and non-musical traditions and stereotypes. The genre consisted usually of short set pieces with music often borrowed from traditional Spanish folk dances and songs, and typically included a chorus that represented "the Spanish people." By the end of the nineteenth century, the music and the settings were often focused on Andalusia and Madrid. According to Miralles, the *majos* and *majas*[56] from Madrid and the characters from Andalusia are affirmed as the authentic Spanish characters.[57] The music regularly used mannerisms and idioms associated with Andalusian culture.

The lyrics and themes often had Spanish nationalistic impulses. The identification of this Spanish song with the national, the popular, and more specifically with the Andalusian culture became stronger in the 1830s.[58] The zarzuela *El novio y el concierto* (1839) of Basilio Basili (1804-1895) with a libretto of Manuel Bretón de Los Herreros (1796-1873) exemplifies and contrasts the qualities of Spanish songs with Italian through the story of two singers. Laura, one of the singers, is virtuous and specializes in Spanish songs, and Remigia, the opera singer, is indolent and vain. Virtuous Laura is recognized as superior, and she eventually marries the hero. Another important aspect that redeems the image of Spain as defined by foreign artists is that, in this kind of Spanish play, the virtue of the Spanish

[56] *Majo* and *maja* refer to the male and female members of the working classes of Madrid, dressed in characteristic Spanish dress and often portrayed by Francisco Goya.

[57] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España,* 289.

[58] Miralles, 291.

woman is defended.[59] It is also very important that in this case, Spanish dance and music are liberated from the immorality some foreign writers had attributed to it and are now transformed into a symbol of a nation's happy character.[60] Zarzuelas also increased the association of Romani characters with Spain; these were portrayed as the protagonists of some extremely popular comic operas such as *El Tío Caniyitas* of Mariano Soriano Fuertes (1817-1880) which premiered in 1849. This particular zarzuela was attacked by Spanish critics who considered the subject and the morals of the story reprehensible.[61] The nationalistic themes of zarzuela frequently centered around Madrid, reflecting the increasing centralization taking place in Spanish politics.

Albéniz was aware of the fact that the zarzuela genre provided a route towards success with Spanish audiences, as well as a viable economic career; in fact, his first important compositions were not for the piano but for the genre of the zarzuela. He wrote five zarzuelas of which only two survive, *San Antonio de la Florida* and *La Real Hembra.* However, his zarzuelas didn't fare any better with critics than his operas, and he was accused by critics in Madrid of being "*demasiado extranjerizado* or "too foreignized."[62] Zarzuela was considered the most authentic Spanish genre[63] by many, and Albéniz's attempts at modernizing the music and elevating the quality were met with open hostility. Failing to satisfy both critics and audiences with his attempts at zarzuela and opera, an

[59] Miralles, 289.

[60] Miralles, 291.

[61] Miralles, 283.

[62] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 288.

[63] Often referred to as "castizo."

exasperated Albéniz felt he couldn't advance his career nor Spanish music in Spain and decided to continue his efforts abroad.

Despite the popularity it enjoyed, zarzuela was regarded by intellectuals as a low-brow genre, not worthy of representing a great Spanish nation. Composers insisted on the importance of creating a national opera and accused zarzuelas of closely resembling Italian music.

Cafés cantantes and flamenco

While zarzuela was enjoying this period of popularity, another form of entertainment was also garnering favor from Spanish audiences. *Cafés cantantes* became popular at the beginning of the nineteenth century, particularly in Andalusia and Madrid, and were eventually substituted by *tablaos* flamencos during the twentieth century. *Cafés cantantes* often featured flamenco performers and were the vehicle by which many of these artists achieved popularity. The cafés contributed enormously to the development of flamenco.

Cafés were not only a venue for music performances, but often served drinks and were a place for social gathering. Some of the *cafés cantantes* and *cafés conciertos* also had the reputation of being places that encouraged vices and anti-social behavior. In spite of this sordid reputation, the popularity of the music of the *cafés cantantes,* as with the genre of the zarzuela, helped consolidate Andalusian identity as the authentic Spanish identity in the minds of foreigners, with Romani flamenco performers sometimes seen as the authentic Spanish musicians.

Social tensions were reflected in the reactions to the commercial success of these venues and the music performed in them. These establishments were disliked by Spanish

social reformers and the Catholic church, who accused them of being places of vice and lowlifes and that flamenco represented the decline of Spanish morality and the nation. These complaints were frequently due to racial prejudice against the Romani people who often performed in these cafes. The Romani people had long been persecuted by the Spanish state and the term *gitano* ("gypsy") was often employed also for people of the lower classes and delinquents.[64] The polemics surrounding these establishments were exacerbated by the crisis that would engulf Spanish society. The generation of intellectuals that emerged from the crisis of '98 would protest against everything Andalusian, particularly anything linked to Romani culture such as flamenco. The writers Emilia Pardo Bazán, Pío Baroja, and Miguel de Unamuno complained about the Spanish mania for flamenco. Instead of focusing on progress, they believed Spain was obsessed with this form of entertainment that reflected Spain's lack of culture, laziness, vulgarity, frivolity, and immorality. They defended a Celtic and Visigoth view of Spain that would bring them closer to Europe and as far as possible from the Moorish legacy of Spain.

National Crisis of 1898

At the end of a decisive century for the nation, the defeat in the Spanish-American war in 1898 marked a turning point for Spain's identity. According to Carol Hess, Spain's defeat and the resultant crisis was a consequence of an "españolismo" attitude that "dismissed the United States as 'a nation of vulgar meat vendors'" while the clergy

[64] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España* 300.

trumpeted the enterprise as one more skirmish in an ongoing "holy crusade."[65] With this attitude, Spain plunged into a conflict with only one possible outcome.

The reaction of several intellectuals to this crisis, mainly belonging to the literary movement, brought them together into what would become known as the Generation '98. Writers such as Miguel de Unamuno, Pio Baroja, and Antonio Machado thought Spanish society needed to be redefined after losing the last remnant of the Empire. Some believed the solution was to look at modern industrialized Europe for inspiration and answers. For part of Spanish society, the only way to restore the supposed past glory was to recover Spanish traditions, taking a more isolationist stance. The third path shared by many intellectuals was to adopt some of the modernizing characteristics of Europe and combine them with Spanish traditions to create a new modern nation.[66] Albéniz himself was deeply affected by the crisis affecting the country. In a letter to his sister Clementina, he spoke about his feelings regarding the situation.

I do not have to tell you the state of nervousness in which I find myself because of the numerous calamities that are befalling our unfortunate country. What remedy does it have? We have not corrected ourselves, nor will we ever. Ill-intentioned chauvinism blinds us in such a way that our faults appear to us virtues and our crass ignorance, inspired science. Send me your news, but do not tell me one word about anything else going on there, as I have decided to ignore what is happening and what will happen in Spain.[67]

[65] Hess, *Manuel de Falla and modernism in Spain, 1898-1936,* 14.

[66] Holguin, "Music and Spanish Nationalism," 222-223.

[67] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 191.

These feelings were recorded again in his diary in February 1899

One of the things that most saddens me when I reflect on the character that predominates in Spain is the petulant ignorance in which we live.[68]

Sandie Holguín points to some negative attitudes towards popular Spanish genres brought about by the crisis of '98. Those who believed in the need to regenerate the country took issue with the zarzuela and the flamenco for ideological and moral reasons. They blamed zarzuela for the decline of Spanish cultural life and complained about the stereotypes and the nationalistic lyrics associated with the genre, as well as its vacuous plots and musical arrangements. By 1909 the zarzuela had lost the widespread popularity it once had.[69]

According to Holguín, flamenco was attacked both by conservatives and progressives. Progressives attacked all the things they associated with flamenco, referred to as *flamenquismo*, such as bullfighting, flamenco dress, torero dress, and slang. In general, Holguín observes, the complaint against flamenco and zarzuela was that they had no redeeming social value and functioned exclusively as a commercial enterprise.[70]

Manuel de Falla and the poet Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), both Andalusians and friends who admired each other, tried to change this negative perception, particularly by focusing on *cante jondo* (deep song), a genre of flamenco which they believed was the most ancient and primitive, the most "authentic" form of flamenco. Falla published an essay, *El*

[68] Clark, 193.

[69] Holguín. "Music and Spanish Nationalism," 219–38.

[70] Holguín, 219-38.

"cante jondo" (cante primitivo andaluz) and collaborated with Lorca to organize in 1922 in Granada a Contest of cante jondo (*Concurso de cante jondo*).

Jonathan Holt Shannon in his book *Performing al-Andalus* reflects on flamenco as a particular aspect of Andalusian musical identity. Andalusian identity is a complex, modern concept in which flamenco often plays a significant part. According to Shannon, Falla "believed that flamenco was being contaminated by urban popular song" and saw the Contest as a way of bringing new life to flamenco and protecting it from becoming solely a commercial enterprise.[71] Carol Hess, Falla's scholar, affirms that Falla and the other organizers of the Contest wish "to hear the 'admirable sobriety' of classical cantaores shows the extent to which the contest was, in effect, a classicizing gesture."[72] Shannon understands that "this classicization would go far in promoting flamenco not only as a legitimate art form but as a national one – for the budding Andalusian nation (as an expression of andalucismo, Andalusian nationalism) and, in the Franco period, for the Spanish nation as a whole."[73] To this day, flamenco is quickly associated with Spain as a whole by many, despite the nation's musical variety and with what is often referred to as "sunny picture-postcard Spain."

The poet Federico García Lorca contributed significantly to promote flamenco and intertwine it with Andalusian identity. According to Shannon, Lorca also, like his romantic forebears, pursued the idea of the Arab and Romani roots of flamenco.[74] Shannon sees that

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[71] Jonathan Holt Shannon, *Performing al-Andalus: Music and Nostalgia across the Mediterranean* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana Univ. Press, 2015), 129.

[72] Hess, *Manuel de Falla and modernism in Spain*, 6.

[73] Shannon, *Performing al-Andalus*, 129.

[74] Shannon, *Performing al-Andalus*, 129.

although it is more common to find associations both in scholarly and popular circles between flamenco and Romani culture, associations with Moorish and Arab cultures are often claimed, another "child of Ziryab", the fabled Moorish poet and musician who lived in Cordoba in the ninth century.[75]

Shannon sees the interest in *cante jondo* and the flamenco discourse, from Manuel de Falla and Felipe Pedrell to contemporary groups such as Paco de Lucía or the Spanish group Ziryab-Calò invoking the name of Ziryab, as "a powerful way for orienting relations between North African and Middle Eastern ("Oriental") musics, on the one hand, and flamenco, on the other."[76] The arguments for this connection go from the supposed origin of the word flamenco, which almost certainly is of Flemish origin, to structural similarities between Arab and "Oriental" music and flamenco, seeing it as part of the Arab-Andalusian traditions due to things such as additive rhythms, modal tonality, ornamentation, as well as a "passionate and sad performance aesthetic."[77] For Shannon, "the flamenco discourse rhetorically invokes both *gitanos* and *moros* to bolster exoticism and authenticity, the twin currencies of world music."[78]

The unclear path forward

Spain was at a complicated crossroads in redefining itself as a nation, culturally diverse, subject to different social pressures and to the anxieties of the different intellectual

[75] Shannon, 143.

[76] Shannon, 143.

[77] Shannon, 144-145.

[78] Shannon, 145.

currents as well as lacking in some respects in which European culture was more advanced. Musically, there was not a clear flourishing high culture for music in Spain, and what's more, the country lacked an orchestral tradition. Coupled with the general lack of state support for domestic musicians, most of Spain's music consumption had been for a while imported from other countries such as France or Italy. The economically successful genres were often seen as lacking artistic and social value, unworthy of fulfilling the role of "national music." Albéniz and his contemporaries tried to address these problems, providing what they believed were the best solutions with more or less success. Albéniz's approach was European oriented, cosmopolitan, and particularly close to the musical French currents; he believed that Spanish composers ought "to make Spanish music with a universal accent."[79] His music was considered by colleagues such as Rodrigo as "the incorporation of Spain, or better said, the reincorporation of Spain into the European musical world."[80]

Spanish composers who followed this route and opened themselves to the rest of Europe had other challenges to face such as trying to negotiate Spanish sensibilities while also dealing with an exoticization of Spain. These composers had to find their own way of making successful Spanish music with a distinctive voice that would satisfy both Spanish and foreign tastes and sensibilities. To this day, their most celebrated compositions are focused on Moorish-Andalusian themes and while celebrated in France, in Spain they were often accused of being *afrancesados* (frenchified), too foreignized, unable to understand the Spanish sensibilities. Perhaps, as Unamuno predicted, "Spain is yet to be discovered, and

[79] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 290.

[80] Clark, 290.

only Europeanized Spaniards will discover her."[81] Albéniz was at the musical center of all these forces, finding at the same time a personal solution to the aesthetic needs and trends of a fascinating time.

[81] "España esta por descubrir y solo la descubriran los españoles europeizados" in Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo, *En torno al casticismo*. (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe argentina, s.a., 1943), 141.

CHAPTER 2

The Exoticization of Spain and The Construction of the Spanish Romantic Myth in the Nineteenth Century

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the efforts of Spanish intellectuals to shape Spain's image and identity as a progressive European nation clashed with foreign perceptions of the country. In particular, a romanticized, exotic image of Spain was ever-present in both French literature and music, and the exportation of French culture exerted a strong influence on its southern neighbor's reputation and nation-building efforts for decades.

The Orientalization of nineteenth-century Spain

Early nineteenth-century Europe developed an intense interest in the south of Spain, particularly fascinated with the southern region of Andalusia, and the exoticization of Spain was further spurred by the re-discovery of its Moorish past. As a result, both Spain's past and present were colored by stereotypes, pigeonholing Spanish culture as part of the Orient. This phenomenon would shape not only the work of Western artists in their depictions of Spain but would also have a strong influence on Spanish artists such as Albéniz and Falla.

Interest in Spain was kindled by travel literature and books. Before the nineteenth century, Europeans traveling around the continent on what was known as the Grand Tour often didn't include Spain; writers such as Voltaire considered Spain the least explored

country in Europe and the least worth-knowing part of the continent.[82] During the nineteenth century, this perception of Spain changed significantly.

The romantic myth surrounding Spain was also a product of its political relationships with the central European countries. No longer a powerful Empire, Spain and other southern European countries served the role of "other" by which central European nations defined themselves in contradistinction.[83] Southern Europe assumed the role of an "internal other", as opposed to the Middle East, the "external other."[84] According to Xavier A. Miralles, qualities often attributed to the Middle East were given to Spain as an "internal other" in order to complete this identification.[85] Miralles offers a relevant analysis of the construction of Spanish identity in the nineteenth century by focusing on the romantic literature which serves the purpose of illustrating the influences and forces that shaped the Spanish identity and the social perceptions at the time. In particular, Spain's position, often seen by foreigners as a bridge between Orient and Occident, is given detailed analysis.

Southern Europeans were often denigrated as people incapable of reason, progress, and freedom. Spain was disparaged as a nation of people seduced by uncontrollable passions, under the yoke of catholic superstition and despotic politicians, a necessary evil to avoid the country descending into anarchy and chaos.[86] The populations of Spain and Italy were compared to the inhabitants of Turkey and Persia, and their constituents' character was

[82] Xavier Andreu Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España: Mito Romántico e Identidad Nacional.* (Barcelona: Taurus Historia, 2016), 72-73.

[83] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España* ,70.

[84] Miralles, 21.

[85] Miralles, 70.

[86] Miralles, 70.

seen as inevitably affected by the hot climate typical of the south.[87] This comparison helped France, Germany, and England to position themselves as the real Europe and see Southern Europe as an example of undesirable traits in modern society.[88]

The discovery of the exotic Andalusi past of Spain, particularly with the translation of *The Wars of Granada* of Ginés Pérez de Hita (1544-1619) into French in 1809, stimulated the fascination with Moorish Spain: the legends of the Abencerrages and the subject of Moorish Spain flourished in the arts. Not all of Spain received the same level of attention: most travelers to Spain would briefly visit the Basque country and Madrid before quickly moving on to Granada, Córdoba, or Seville. The perceived contrast between a "European looking" north and the more "Oriental" south created a European/Oriental duality causing writers such as Théophile Gautier to declare that crossing Madrid one would feel it was almost as being already in Algeria.[89] According to Miralles' insight into the development of Spain's identity as a nation, the Orientalized descriptions of Spain and its people were a way of questioning whether the country actually belonged to Europe and if Spain was capable of the modernity that Europe represented. Spain was repeatedly painted as both passionate and violent, a prisoner of its own past, and a nation halfway between North and South, Orient and Occident.[90] For nineteenth-century travelers, Spain was a "romantic country", a way to visit a non-European exotic country without actually leaving Europe, and for people at home

[87] Miralles, 70.

[88] Miralles, 70.

[89] Miralles, 90.

[90] Miralles, 90.

a window into an exotic land through numerous novels, travel literature, poems, and of course, music.

Although Andalusia in particular was of travel interest, no other location received the level of attention as that of the Palace of the Alhambra, with its exquisite Islamic architecture inspiring numerous Spanish and foreign artists. Granada had been the last bastion of the Moors in the peninsula and the Alhambra came to symbolize Spain's Moorish past. Writers, painters, and musicians all found inspiration in the palace of the Alhambra, the summer palace of the *Generalife*, and its surroundings. This cultural tourism started a phenomenon, known as *Alhambrismo*, present in Spanish and foreign literature, art, and music. As we will see, Albéniz contributed significantly to spreading this phenomenon and influenced other artists, and he was not the first or the last artist to be fascinated with Granada and its locations.

Alhambrism and Exoticization of Spain in French literature: Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Gautier and Dumas

The writer François-René de Chateaubriand visited the Alhambra as early as 1807 and was struck by the beauty of the palace and fortress. Believing it to be as relevant to Arab civilization as the Parthenon was to Greek civilization, he took a cast of the Alhambra back to France with him.[91] During his time in Granada, he also found inspiration to write his novel, *Les Aventures du dernier Abéncerage* (written in 1807 and published in 1826). The novel, inspired by the legends of the Abencerrages, a noble Moorish family of fifteenth-century Granada, narrates the forbidden love story between a Moor and a Christian. The last

[91] Miralles, 82.

member of the Abencerrages, Aben-Hamet, now in exile, secretly comes back to Granada and falls in love with Blanca, a descendant of the national hero of Spain, Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid.[92] According to James Parakilas' analysis of the exoticization of Spanish music during this period, Chateaubriand contributes to this exoticization by describing the music and the dance that Blanca performs for Aben-Hamet in a way that suggests the influence of the Moors has pervaded Spanish culture. Her dancing skills "surpass the most accomplished Gypsy women" and the dance she performs is a *Zambra*, an "expressive dance that the Spaniards borrowed from the Moors" using castanets and singing as she dances to guitar accompaniment.[93] This comparison also coincides with Michael Christoforidis's remarks regarding the way in which Gypsies are often presented as the Moors's progeny or exotic substitutes in representations of exotic Spain.[94] According to Miralles, Chateaubriand's book broke the barriers between Spain's past and present and installed in the reader's imagination a direct and continuous link between Moorish and present Spain. Miralles also attributes a large part of the responsibility for the romantic "*hispanofilia*" to the book's success in France.[95]

Spain's Moorish past influenced not only Chateaubriand but also some of the most successful French writers of the nineteenth century. In 1828, Victor Hugo published his "Spanish cycle" poems in his collection *Les Orientales*. The subject matter, like

[92] Parakilas, James Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul" in *The Exotic in Western Music,* ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 145.

[93] Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul", 145.

[94] Michael Christoforidis, *Manuel de Falla and Visions of Spanish Music* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), 47.

[95] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España,* 82-83.

Chateaubriand's novel, is Spain's Moorish past, Granada and the Alhambra as well as the relationships between Moors and Spanish Christians. Victor Hugo's poems paint the image of a nation he sees as half European, half African with statements such as "l'Espagne est à demi africaine!" (Spain is half-African) [96] and that "even if Granada is now catholic, 'l'Arabie est son aïeule.'"[97] (Arabia is her ancestor).

In 1840 Théophile Gautier wrote *Voyage in Espagne* after traveling to Spain, inspired by the writings of Mérrimée, Chateaubriand's novel, the stories of Washington Irving, and particularly Victor Hugo's *Les Orientales.*[98] According to Miralles, in Gautier's vastly popular travel chronicles, Moorish and Arab characteristics of Spanish architecture are described even in cities of northern Spain such as Irun, where Moorish influence hadn't really been significant.[99] Romantic travelers, such as Gautier, having fantasized about a country they hadn't even seen, were disappointed when reality didn't match their expectations, preferring the country they had created in their minds.[100] He regrets any signs of progress and modernity, fearing they are robbing the nation of its supposed "authenticity", and he prefers the popular classes, less exposed to progress and, therefore more "authentic."[101] According to Gautier, Spain was not made for European traditions, and finds it regrettable that Spain has ceased to be Moorish. He describes Spanish society as one

[96] Miralles, 83.

[97] Richard B.Grant, "Sequence and Theme in Victor Hugo's Les Orientales." PMLA 94, no. 5 (1979): 899, https://doi.org/10.2307/461972.

[98] Richard B.Grant, "Sequence and Theme in Victor Hugo's Les Orientales," 894.

[99] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España,* 87.

[100] Miralles, 87.

[101] Miralles, 87-89.

where pleasure is more important than work ethic, making the *fiesta*, guitar, and *castañuelas* into symbols of a society only interested in pleasure and leisure.[102] As we will see, these symbols would associate Spanish music and musicians with a certain indolence of character and improvisatory skills.

Other depictions of Spain in French literature were more openly hostile such as Alexandre Dumas in *De Paris à Cadix (1847)* where he seems to be more displeased than fascinated by what he perceives as the barbarism and immorality of Spain. Spain is feminized, compared to a fallen woman, taken by the "dissolute, evil Arabs".[103]

Exoticization of Spain in America, England, and Germany

This phenomenon was particularly relevant in France because as Spain's neighbor, the proximity made it more accessible as well as more necessary to keep Spain in a subaltern role. However, the fascination with Moorish Spain extended to other countries, including across the ocean. After traveling to Spain in 1826, Washington Irving published three years later a chronicle of the conquest of Granada. In 1832, captivated by the subject and location, Irving also published *The Alhambra: A Series of Tales and Sketches of the Moors and Spaniards* where he, like his French counterparts, is enthralled by Granada and the Alhambra. According to Miralles, Irving's accounts of his visits to Andalusia reflect a confusion between present and past, describing scenes and street incidents that wouldn't be

[102] Miralles, 89- 91.

[103] Miralles, 106.

out of place in *One Thousand and One Nights*, finding inspiration to write literature that had "that Arab perfume that impregnates everything in Spain."[104]

English readers were familiar with Spain through the writings of Richard Ford. In 1845 he published the two volumes of the travel book *The Hand-Book for Travellers in Spain and Readers at Home.* According to Miralles, in these narrations, the oriental character of the country and its people is intensified.[105] Ford sets a parallel between the pilgrims doing the *Camino de Santiago* (the Way of St. James) and the Muslims going to Mecca, reflecting views of Spanish Catholicism as based on superstition, ceremony, and fanaticism, born of pagan rites and Muslim practices.[106] Spaniards are described as lazy, inconstant, proud, ignorant, dirty, unpredictable, violent, jealous, cruel, and stupid in an increasingly negative portrayal.[107]

For German writers, Spain's Moorish past was also a fundamental part of Spanish contemporary identity. Some of them, such as the Schlegel brothers, were ardent defenders of the Golden Age of Spanish literature and translated and promoted these works. Influential writers such as August W. Schlegel claimed that Spanish genius was born from the mix of Visigoth culture and the Islamic world and others such as Friedrich Bouterwek believed that the oriental character made Spanish literature singular.[108]

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[104] Miralles, 84.

[105] Miralles, 107-8.

[106] Miralles, 108.

[107] Miralles, 108-109.

[108] Miralles, 82-83.

Exoticizing Spain by revisiting its Moorish past and transferring those qualities to Spain's present inhabitants was common in foreign literature, but it was not exclusively done by foreigners. While some Spanish intellectuals rejected these characterizations, there were still Spanish authors happy to contribute to the exoticization of Spain. According to Miralles, this was the case with the strategic appropriation of the orientalization of Spain and the legacy of the Andalusi past during the last decades of the century.[109] Some, such as the Jesuit Juan Andrés, claimed that al-Andalus was in fact the cradle of European literature. This claim was not made in order to claim superiority of the oriental culture but rather to highlight the Spanish capacity to elevate this influence and in that way Spain could contest France's claim of being the cradle of European civilization.[110]

Exotic Spanish tropes in Music

Before musicians like Claude Debussy were inspired by the Moorish literature of Washington Irving and other descriptions of Granada, Spanish themes were already present in French music. Luigi Cherubini's opera *Les Abencèrages, ou L'etendard de Grenade* premiered in Paris in 1813. Based on the novel *Gonzalve de Cordoue* by Jean-Pierre Claris de Florian, the story centers around the Moorish legends of Granada and the Abencerrages. According to Parakilas, even though the story centers around Moorish characters, there is nothing Moorish about the music.[111] Nevertheless, the opera positioned the palace of the Alhambra and "oriental" Spain on the Parisian stage and at the forefront of audiences'

[109] Miralles, 75.

[110] Miralles, 75.

[111] Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul," 146.

imagination. According to Parakilas, Cherubini's opera offers many musical stereotypes of the Spanish including a bolero and a set of variations on the centuries-old Folies d'Espagne, and in particular the guitar is also used, the first time in the Paris ballet in a century.[112] Thus, the opera linked these Spanish stereotypes with Spain's Moorish past, intertwining the two identities together. According to Parakilas and in accordance with the popular exotic image of Spain predominant in the nineteenth century, the guitar that had been previously associated with a Spanish aristocrat serenading a lady was now associated with dancing Andalusian Gypsies, once more used as a proxy for past exotic dwellers of the peninsula.[113] Andalusian Gypsies in turn came to symbolize the entirety of Andalusia, which would also eventually become the dominating Spanish culture abroad.

Parakilas points to several other stereotypes regarding Spanish music present in France at the beginning of the century. The trope of the smuggler, or bandit, would be associated forever with Spain after being popularized by the tenor Manuel García, father of the famous mezzo-soprano Pauline Viardot-García.[114] In 1809 his song "Yo que soy contrabandista" from the opera *El Poeta calculista* became a hit and made the Spanish smuggler into a symbol of resistance to political authority. It also inspired Liszt's "Rondeau fantastique sur un thème Espagnol" ("El contrabandista") of 1837.[115]

The Spanish dancer also became a symbol of Spain, and, unlike its French ballet counterpart, was not necessarily seen as a disciplined performer. Spanish dance was

[112] Parakilas, 146.

[113] Parakilas, 146.

[114] Parakilas, 141.

[115] Parakilas, 141.

perceived as sensual and passionate, often sexualized and exoticized.[116] The Bolero was known to French audiences since the beginning of the 19th century, introduced in the opéra comique *Le Calife de Bagdad*.[117]

These stereotypes became even more widespread with Prosper Mérimée's *Carmen* (1845), whose popularity grew thanks to Georges Bizet's opera based on the book and was instrumental in popularizing the perception of Spain as an oriental nation and in propagating musical stereotypes. Before publishing *Carmen*, Mérimée had already published in the *Revue de Paris* accounts of his travels to Madrid and Andalusia in the 1830s.[118] According to Miralles, *Carmen* incorporated all the stereotypes regarding Spain, the European South, and the Romani, and thereby consolidated them and gave them universal popularity.[119] All the stereotypes of Spanish music are also present in the opera: guitars, gypsies, bandits, Spanish dances, and boleros. Miralles also points out how the book and the opera made Carmen the quintessential Romani woman, a symbol of Spain linked forever to Andalusia as the epitome of the oriental nation imagined by the Romantics; "Spain had become an oriental beauty with black eyes capable of seducing with her passionate gaze."[120]

The two protagonists of *Carmen* are Don José and Carmen herself. José is a northerner from the Basque country, a *cristiano viejo* (an "old Christian" without any Moor or Jewish ancestors). He is represented as a European Spaniard with blond hair and blue

[116] Parakilas, 142-143.

[117] Parakilas, 143.

[118] Miralles, *El Descubrimiento de España*, 96.

[119] Miralles, 97.

[120] Miralles, 12.

eyes. As Miralles points out, unlike the specificity of Don José's origins, Carmen's origins are more ambiguous.[121] The writer identifies Carmen and the Orient with the feminine, something that must be controlled as opposed to the masculine, Christian north. The contrast between the old Christian Spain untouched by the Arabs and the south is highlighted. According to Miralles, José and his hardworking, disciplined character are associated with medieval and Christian Spain, but it is the oriental and passionate character of Carmen that ends up dominating Spain.[122]

Although *Carmen*'s enduring popularity makes it an important example, it was not the only opera inspired by Spain. Between 1820 and 1850 more than fifty operas or comic operas with a subject matter related to Spain were premiered or produced in Paris.[123]

Spanish musicians in Paris

The consolidation of all these Spanish stereotypes, as well as the steady flow of Spanish immigrants to the French capital, meant that by the end of the nineteenth century, Spain had a strong presence in French cultural life. Michael Christoforidis illustrates this ubiquity of Spanish musicians with the words of the French musicologist and composer Julien Tiersot (1857-1936) who complained that Spanish music was everywhere in Paris, particularly at the time of the Universal Exposition of 1889, with Paris hosting "bullfights to right and left; Spanish choral societies here, Spanish soirées there; at the Cirque d'hiver

[121] Miralles, 105.

[122] Miralles, 105-106.

[123] Prot, Frédéric. "El Colorido Espanol: Captacion y Asimilacion de La Gramatica Musical Espanola En La Francia Romantica," in In *La Cultura Española En La Europa Romántica*, ed. José Checa Beltrán (Madrid: Visor Libros, 2015), 82.

Spanish fiestas, orchestra, dance, estudiantina; at the Exposition the gypsies from Granada."[124]

Spanish musicians had been coming to Paris in growing numbers since the reign (1852-70) of Napoleon III whose wife Eugenia de Montijo was Spanish. In particular, the flow of immigration of Spanish musicians, hoping to achieve success in Paris, was very high. The *espagnolade* (Parisian Hispanic music), which many times reduced Spanish culture to bullfighting and flamenco, had become even more popular since Bizet's opera *Carmen*.[125] Zarzuelas such as Federico Chueca's *La Gran Via* found success in Paris in 1896. This was probably also because the zarzuela catered to the audience's interest in Spanish dances as it features habaneras and pasodobles as well as other stylized European dances.[126] Paris also saw a higher number of Romani performing the new flamenco styles which helped popularize the guitar.[127]

Due to Spain's position both as a European insider and outsider, the peripheral nature of the country but also the constant presence of Spanish musicians in Paris, the French exoticization of Spain was a unique case of exoticization. Spain was not a distant land, where the artist's imagination could be projected but a very present force in French culture. Jonathan Bellman points out that exotic "does not mean merely distant (indeed,

[124] Michael Christoforidis. "'Invasion of the Barbarians:' Spanish Composers and Challenges to Exoticism in Belle-Époque Paris." *Context* no. 29 (2005): 111, https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/invasion-barbarians-spanish-composers-challenges/docview/200099502/se-2.

[125] Christoforidis, "'Invasion of the Barbarians:' Spanish Composers and Challenges to Exoticism in Belle-Époque Paris," 111.

[126] Christoforidis, 112.

[127] Christoforidis, 112.

distance is not even a necessary prerequisite). The suggestion of strangeness is the overriding factor: not only does the music *sound* different from 'our' music but it also suggests a specifically alien culture or ethos (…) It is about drama, effect, and evocation." [128] As Bellman points out, this acknowledgment of difference implies a comparison and judgment of those differences.[129]

At the beginning of the new century, the role of Spanish music and Spanish musicians in France started to change. The political landscape meant that Spain was not only useful as an internal "other" but also as a possible ally against other European powers. A particularly relevant figure emerged from the newly-founded Hispanic studies who would be essential to understanding how Albéniz as well as other Spanish musicians in France were perceived. This was Henri Collet (1885-1951), the French composer, music critic, and author of *Albéniz et Granados*.

Henri Collet's role in shaping perceptions of Spanish music in France

At the turn of the century, at the time when Albéniz's musical life in Paris was taking off and the different books of Albéniz's *Iberia* were starting to be published, France's political situation in Europe shifted the discourses regarding Spain and its culture. This was due to France's anxieties over Germany's influence on French culture, universities, and political tensions as well as Spain's diminishing power that made it even less of a threat to France's European dominance and relegated Spain even further to the European

[128] Jonathan Bellman, *The Exotic in Western Music* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), xii-xiii.

[129] Jonathan Bellman, *The Exotic in Western Music*, xii.

periphery.[130] This shift in the discourse was reflected in the way Spanish culture was represented and talked about in French circles.[131] Samuel Llano in his analysis of the cultural relationships between Spain and France, argues that, due to political tensions in Europe, the role Spain had previously played as an internal other had to somehow be spun into a new role as an ally against other European powers, particularly Germany.[132] With WWI around the corner, France had to turn the formerly exoticized peripheral country into a possible ally and part of the "Latin race" alliance that had acquired anti-German meaning. But Samuel Llano points out, even though French intellectuals portrayed Spain as an allied, Latin, and anti-German culture, reinforcing the anti-Teutonic character, they still relied on strategies of marginalization present in most nineteenth-century exotic stereotypes.[133] In France's fight against Germany for cultural supremacy the country still needed to assert French culture as superior. As Llano points out, these two interests, i.e. the possible use of Spain as an anti-German ally but also the desire to keep French culture as the superior and hegemonic force, brought a number of contradictions in the construction of Spanish identity.[134]

At the same time intellectual interest in Spain had been increasing in France, culminating with the foundation of the first chair in Hispanic studies in Bordeaux in 1898,

[130] Samuel Llano, *Whose Spain? Negotiating "Spanish Music" in Paris, 1908-1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4.

[131] Llano, *Whose Spain?*, 8.

[132] Llano, 5.

[133] Llano, 6.

[134] Llano, 6.

the Bulletin Hispanique in 1899, and the first higher degree in Hispanic studies.[135] These institutions would be fundamental in producing specialists in Hispanic culture and history imbuing the discipline with a new scholarly authority. Henri Collet himself studied at Bordeaux and was one of the most influential figures shaping French opinions on Spanish music at the beginning of the twentieth century. Known for having supported *Les Six* at the beginning of their careers, he researched Spanish music, was close with Spanish musicians in Paris, and even studied with Albéniz's mentor, Felipe Pedrell, and with Manuel de Falla.[136] Collet was also interested in Spanish musical traditions and collected many polyphonic chants and folk melodies from Castilian monastery archives during his travels in Spain. Fiercely anti-German, Collet was also convinced of Spanish musicians' dislike of French music, and he tried to stir Spanish musicians away from the influence of German composers, particularly Wagner, and pitted the qualities of German and Spanish music against each other.[137]

His book on Albéniz and his obituary of the composer are full of enthusiastic descriptions of his music, appreciating not only his music but also his personality. Although Collet was an admirer of Albéniz, Collet's own agenda can be seen through the praise he gives to Albéniz's music. Llano sees the descriptions of Albéniz's compositions as full of inner tension between his desire to attack German culture with a need to reinforce the dominating position of French culture and music.[138] According to Llano, Collet also uses the

[135] Llano, 6.

[136] Llano, 6.

[137] Llano, 7.

[138] Llano, 6.

Mediterranean shared identity of Spanish and French musicians, a Latin connection that positions both countries as the antithesis of German aesthetics. In order to support this anti-German stance, Collet quotes Nietzsche's defense of Bizet's *Carmen* as the "epitome of Mediterranean culture" and his rejection of Wagner's aesthetic; "With *Carmen*, we take a break from the humid North, from all the Wagnerian haze."[139] According to Llano, for them, *Carmen* symbolizes the return to nature, health, joy, youth, and virtue.[140]

Collet tried to minimize Albéniz's German influences and reminded his readers of Albéniz's debt to French music. According to Llano, Collet manipulates the obituary and its praise of Albéniz to give it anti-German content.[141] Albéniz's time at the Leipzig Conservatoire is minimized. Collet tells us that at Leipzig, Albéniz "acquired enough mastery to begin confronting high composition while preserving that freedom of attitude, that charming negligence and that spontaneity by which Spain remains impervious to Teutonic pedantry."[142] Such use of Albéniz as anti-German propaganda doesn't completely align with Albéniz's own life: his operas, his love for Wagner, his studies in Leipzig, and his relationship with d'Indy's Schola Cantorum, his "non-Spanish" compositions, do not indicate a dislike for German culture and the German romantic canon.[143]

Collet also makes sure to underline France's support for Spanish musicians and portrays Spain as a neglectful "motherland" incapable of recognizing Albéniz's talent,

[139] Llano, 15.

[140] Llano, 15.

[141] Llano, 11.

[142] Llano, 11.

[143] Llano, 11.

something difficult to deny considering that Albéniz did have difficulties achieving recognition and economic success in Spain. But for Llano, Collet portrays Spain as a satellite of France and Paris as the Mecca for the talented musicians that make it out of Spain, the "artistic refugees."[144] This establishes a power structure where France is the dominant cultural force, the center, and Spain, the periphery.[145] Collet's descriptions of Albéniz's music as "ours", "impressionism that often sounds more like Debussy or Fauré rather than Spanish, and music that "a Spaniard would surely laugh about", and describing his success as "Parisian", are rightly seen by Llano as an attempt on Collet's part to appropriate Albéniz's success as a French success.[146] For Collet, only France was able to recognize and nurture the composer's raw talent.[147]

In Collet's book, *Albéniz et Granados* (1926) descriptions of Albéniz's personality and talent seem often enthusiastic, offering an equally fervent account of Albéniz's fantastic life.[148] He admires the improvisatory character of Albéniz's music and seems to favor his earlier nationalistic music, believing his later compositions would never receive the same acclaim but also criticizing his "non-Spanish music" most severely.[149] He highlights at every chance Albéniz's instinct and his dislike for following rules, even using Pedrell's own

[144] Llano, 12.

[145] Llano, 12.

[146] Llano, 12.

[147] Llano, 12-13.

[148] As it was frequent at the time, this account is often not based on facts but unreliable information even from Albéniz himself.

[149] Henri Collet, *Albéniz y Granados*, trans. Pedro E. F. Labrousse. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor-S.R.L., 1943), 31.

memories of his time as Albéniz's teacher.[150] Llano sees Collet's descriptions of Albéniz's bohemian and nomad qualities, his "autodidactic individualism", as something more pernicious rather than simple praise, believing this to be a use of the tropes of "gypsy freedom" and "noble savage", which stereotypes the Spanish musician as gifted through instinct over intellect, knowledge, and technique thus casting Spanish culture as a subaltern.[151]

Collet's analysis of Albéniz's music repeatedly highlights any connection to Spain's Moorish influences and describes his art as improvisatory in nature, emotional, and unconstrained in contrast to German music.[152] He posits connections between the music from Andalusia and Moorish music and Albéniz's own words "Soy un moro"[153] (I am a Moor). Despite the fact that Albéniz had no roots in the south, but rather in Catalonia and the Basque country, he himself played into this stereotype. Perhaps also from the composer came the misunderstandings regarding the supposed Arab origin of his last name even though there is no evidence of this, and only the Basque dictionary contains the word.[154] It seems as if his contemporaries, such as the famous Catalan pianist, Ricard Viñes, believed its origin to be Arab. Clark offers a poem written by Viñes as an indication of this:

Your name, in Arabic, architect means,

[150] Collet, *Albéniz y Granados,* 34.

[151] Llano, 26.

[152] Llano, 25.

[153] Collet, 67.

[154] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic,* 17.

and well for the exquisiteness of your art.[155]

According to Llano, these descriptions in the hands of French critics mean that Spanish music is celebrated but only after being assigned a lower position in that modernity; Collet is making Albéniz exotic and Oriental, but still part of the Latin alliance with France. The racist stereotypes and noble savage trope used by Collet to describe Albéniz affected how the composer was seen for a long time.[156] Llano quotes the French philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch's descriptions of Albéniz in *La présence Lointaine* (1983) as "nonchalance, which rather is an Oriental laziness, an African indolence," and affirms that Albéniz "is not an erudite but contents himself with being Spain, with recreating naively, existentially, joyfully, the songs and the voice of Spain."[157] Once more, the public is presented with descriptions of Albéniz as a gifted musician overwhelmed by his natural instincts, and improvisatory skills and deeply influenced by his supposed Moorish roots.

Not only the words of French critics reflect these prejudices and stereotypes for Albéniz. Certain reviews of Albéniz's piano virtuoso career also come to mind. The reviews of his piano concerts were usually enthusiastic, but they generally reflected certain expectations of how a Spanish pianist must behave. Clark cites a *Pall Mall Gazette* (27 February 1891) article describing the character of Spanish musicians: "There is always something emotional about a Spanish musician which is more serious than Italian and more wild than French passion…(Spaniards are) a people implacable alike in love and war, and

[155] *Tu nombre, en arabe, arquitecto reza, Y bien por las de tu arte exquisiteces.* Translation to English by Clark in *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic,* 17.

[156] Llano, 30.

[157] Llano, 32.

ready to languish at one moment and stab the next."[158] These expectations of Spanish musicians were noticed by French composers too, some even guilty, like Chabrier, of similar prejudices. It was not the case with all of them. Clark tells us of Francis Poulenc's opinion that whenever a Spanish pianist performed in Paris, there would always be someone who would accuse them of being "cold" and his interpretation "lifeless"; the Spanish musician was expected to be demonstrative, romantic, and lively.[159]

However, according to Clark, Albéniz "would not pander to those who expected him alternately to languish and stab. In fact, his stage presence was pleasant but somewhat reserved."[160] He and his fellow Spanish musicians were aware of these prejudices and what was expected of them, but Albéniz remained faithful to his personality and his artistic convictions.

Folklorization of Spanish music

The descriptions and analysis of Albéniz's music, including but not limited to Collet's, also reinforce the idea of Spain's folklore as being the main valuable contribution of Spain to musical culture. Spanish music, similarly to Russian music, was seen as full of distinct, exotic folklore. It was this folklore and this "difference" that would allow Spanish musicians to claim a place in the international music scene.[161] According to Llano, this distinction views Spain and Russia through the trope of cultural "difference" and when

[158] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 80.

[159] Clark, 182.

[160] Clark, 80.

[161] Llano, 41.

Henri Collet defends this "difference" he is giving French music the quality of "universalism."[162]

Most French critics, including Collet, tried to folklorize Spanish music. Llano also sees Collet's emphasis on Spanish folklore and popular music as an attempt to reduce Spain to subaltern notions of class.[163] From this point of view, the only way for Spain to win the approval of central European nations was to build their identity on the elements those nations perceived as different and resist foreign influences that might contaminate this "difference."

The consequence for Spanish composers in Paris at the time was a patronizing attitude from their peers. As Llano points out, even when appreciating and celebrating these composers, "Spanish music" seemed to be a French discovery whose qualities had to be taught to the Spanish composers themselves.[164] In the eyes of people like Collet, France and its musicians are the only reason why this branch of internationally successful nationalist Spanish music exists in the first place. Collet blames this on the poor cultural conditions in Spain and the consequent economically motivated exile of Spanish composers in Paris. France, and more specifically Paris, was the ticket for Spanish composers to access the European cultural scene and international recognition thereby making Spanish musicians reliant on French approval.

Albéniz eventually found his own path to navigate the complex situation he faced as a musician still active in Spanish circles but living in France where critical acclaim might

[162] Llano, 35.

[163] Llano, 41.

[164] Llano, 13.

prove decisive to his career. The next chapter tries to illuminate how Albéniz shaped his career according to these forces.

CHAPTER 3

Albéniz and *Fin-de-siècle* France

While the exoticization of Spain and its culture was taking place, Spanish musicians in France were not merely passive objects of exoticization. Musicians such as Albéniz, Manuel de Falla, Joaquín Turina, Ricard Viñes, and painters, such as Santiago Rusiñol, were very much active agents in the development of Spanish nationalistic music.

At the turn of the century, a fair deal of the popular "Spanish music" – at this point ever omnipresent in salons, the *Exposition Universelle*, operas, etc. – had not been written by Spanish composers, sometimes not even by French ones. Although there were French composers writing "Spanish" pieces inspired by the Moorish past of Spain, another source of "Spanish music" was popular in the French musical scene - Russia. The "Spanish music" of Russian composers such as Mikhail Glinka and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov became very well-received in France. Indeed, Russia was also considered exotic, full of folklore, and French audiences found the musical connection between the two faraway lands, Russia and Spain, to be something quite natural. Some Spanish musicians, such as Falla, were eager to support this artistic connection between two peripheral nations and pointed out supposed similarities between both countries such as modal links to church music.[165] Roy Howat, when discussing the influence and presence of Spanish and Russian music in France, also mentions the traditional use of

[165] Roy Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music: Debussy, Ravel, Faure, Chabrier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 117.

drones and a certain emotional full-bloodedness as supposed connections between the two cultures.[166]

However, Spanish musicians were not always passive objects of exoticization. Against the backdrop of the arrival of more Spanish artists to Paris during the *fin-de-siècle* period, Albéniz stands out as a ubiquitous figure in the artistic circles of Paris, representing a constant presence and influence on both French and Spanish artists. His importance in the Spanish-French *fin-de-siècle* relationships considerably influenced the popularization of Andalusian-inspired Spanish music within French intellectual circles. Albéniz also served as a mentor, often offering support and giving career advice to other Spanish musicians arriving in Paris such as Manuel de Falla and Joaquín Turina, both of whom also embraced the Andalusian inspiration. He had a remarkably close friendship with numerous French composers and other artists, sometimes acting as a middleman with institutions in Spain in order to promote French musicians in Spain. In the case of some musicians, such as Chausson and Turina, he went as far as financially supporting the publication of their music.

Albéniz's introduction to Belgium and France: Les XX

Albéniz started his career at a very young age as a piano prodigy touring around the world and was known primarily as a pianist-composer. At the age of sixteen, he attended the Conservatory of Leipzig for a brief period, from May until June 1876. After abandoning his studies in Leipzig, he enrolled in October of the same year in the

[166] Howat, 126.

Conservatoire Royal in Brussels after obtaining a grant from the King of Spain.[167] After studying for three years in Brussels, Albéniz stayed connected to the Brussels music world and artistic circles, coming back in 1880 to give a concert for former students of the Conservatoire.[168] According to Begoña López's investigation into Albéniz's relationship with the French and Belgian cultural scene, it was through the group known as *Les XX* and one of its founders, Octavio Maus, that Albéniz would enter some of those circles. *Les XX*, a Belgian avant-garde group founded by Octave Maus and active from 1884 until 1893, organized exhibitions, conferences, showed the work of artists such as Monet, Gauguin, and Pissarro, discussed new ideas in art, and premiered new music. Other artists associated with *Les XX* were Auguste Rodin, Albéniz's friend Darío de Regoyos, J.M. Whistler, Arthur de Greef, Octavio Maus, and musicians such as Vincent d'Indy, Eugène Ysaÿe, Gabriel Fauré, Claude Debussy, Albert Roussel, Paul Dukas, and Ernest Chausson.[169] Some of them would soon become close friends with Albéniz. Albéniz participated in the concerts of the group in 1884 together with one of the founding members, the Spanish painter Darío de Regoyos and with the violinist and composer Enrique Fernández Arbós.[170]

[167] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 34-37.

[168] Begoña López, «Nuevas Aportaciones a Deux Morceaux De Prose De Pierre Loti, De Isaac Albéniz». *Anuario Musical*, n.º 57 (Diciembre 2002):242, https://doi.org/10.3989/anuariomusical.2002.57.90.

[169] López, 243.

[170] López, 243.

Albéniz's Parisian debut

Although having already made an entrance in Belgium, it was not until the 25th of May of 1889 that Albéniz performed for the first time in Paris giving a concert in the *Salle Érard.* Before his Parisian debut he had been living in Madrid and both his compositions for piano as well as his concert career had been successful. The Paris concert took place in the same year as the *Exposition Universelle* of 1889, which brought Spain to the heart of France. That year Parisian artists were exposed to everything Spanish, including flamenco performers from Andalusia. Debussy, Ravel, Fauré, and Dukas attended Albéniz's Parisian debut and heard the Spanish composer perform his own compositions including the *Concierto Fantástico*.[171] Edouard Colonne's orchestra also performed his *Escenas Sinfónicas Catalanas*.[172] According to Clark, Albéniz's piano playing and his compositions, particularly *Torre Bermeja* (from *12 piezas características* op. 92), were a revelation for the musicians present at the concert, particularly the way he was able to reproduce the characteristic sound of the Spanish guitar on the piano.[173]

Albéniz at the Schola Cantorum

After a very successful first introduction to the Parisian music world, a few years passed, during which Albéniz toured, lived in London, and wrote music for operas and zarzuelas in an attempt to make a name for himself in the stage world without real

[171] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 75.

[172] Clark, 75.

[173] Clark, 75.

success. According to Clark's research Albéniz must have moved to Paris sometime before August 1894 and quickly entered the artistic circles of Paris.[174] After being introduced by Ernest Chausson and his wife to Parisian musical society Albéniz also started attending aristocratic salons such as the home of the Princesse de Polignac where, in 1908, the premiere of the third book of *Iberia* took place.[175] It was through their mutual friend Chausson that Albéniz met Charles Bordes, the founder and director of the Schola Cantorum, as well as Fauré, Dukas, and d'Indy.[176]

Albéniz remained close friends with Chausson until the latter's early death in 1899. Chausson had helped Albéniz's career by introducing him to numerous influential people, and Albéniz returned the favor by making the publication of Chausson's *Poème* possible. Albéniz made arrangements with Breitkopf & Härtel and paid "a substantial amount" of his own money because the publisher wasn't willing to assume the financial risk.[177] Chausson never found out about Albéniz's generous gesture.[178]

After becoming friends with Bordes, Albéniz soon established a relationship with members of the Schola Cantorum. Collet, not fond of the Schola nor its love for Wagner and German repertoire, recounted "with a tone of resignation" Albéniz's connection to the Schola Cantorum.[179] According to Llano, Collet lamented the influence of the Schola

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[174] Clark, 109.

[175] Clark, 111.

[176] Samuel Llano, *Whose Spain? Negotiating "Spanish Music" in Paris, 1908-1929* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 26.

[177] Clark, 164.

[178] Clark, 164.

[179] Llano, 27.

on the "rhapsodist Albéniz" and claimed that the result of the relationship with the musicians from the Schola resulted in overburdening his music.[180] These opinions reflect Collet's increasing dislike of German influences which would only increase with the outbreak of WWI. Albéniz's involvement with the Schola Cantorum was significant: he studied composition with d'Indy from October 1896 and taught piano at the Schola from 1897 to 1900. It was through his relationship with this institution that he also met other French composers such as Erik Satie and Déodat de Séverac. The German musicologist Edgar Istel also laments Albéniz's involvement with the Schola and the influence it had on the Spanish composer's music:

"*Instead of singing his little song beneath the eternally smiling sun of Spain, freely and happily, with no concern for academic demands, he spun himself into the grey Parisian mists of his studio, working, studying, brooding, discussing, and seeking to win the approbation of that Schola Cantorum into which an Albéniz really did not fit at all because he was far too unacademic and vital."*[181]

Istel, like Collet, seems to believe that Albéniz's "natural Spanish instincts" were tainted by the academic rigidity of the Schola and its teachings.

Spanish musicians in Paris at the turn of the century, although helping each other, are still sometimes seen as either showing an adherence either to the Schola Cantorum or the Conservatoire, often played as rivals. These supposed enmities between French institutions, involving composers such as Debussy, Faure, and d'Indy, were part of a

[180] Llano, 27.

[181] Edgar Istel, and Frederick H. Martens. "Isaac Albéniz." *The Musical Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1929): 143, http://www.jstor.org/stable/738310.

national debate regarding the identity of French music which became more vital during WWI.[182] Albéniz, who was a close friend of d'Indy and Dukas and would remain close to the Schola Cantorum, also established a deep friendship with musicians associated with the Conservatoire such as Fauré. In fact, Albéniz, despite having studied and taught at the Schola, advised Manuel de Falla to study at the Conservatoire and even assisted in the auditions of the Conservatoire, by invitation of Fauré. The fact that Albéniz was invited to assist with the entrance examinations at the Conservatoire was testimony to the respect and close friendship between him and Fauré, also evident in the letters between the musicians. Fauré was not a Parisian, such as Debussy, but a southerner from Ariège, not far from Catalonia. Scholars analyzing the influences on French music, such as Roy Howat, ascribe the affinity between Albéniz and Fauré to the fact that they were both from neighboring regions and might have "a degree of shared folk culture and dialect quite distinct from touristy flamenco Spain."[183] Fauré's origins and what was often referred to as his "olive complexion" were also often remarked upon by people in the capital, and his southern origins as the source of some affinity to Arab culture.[184] But the fact is that when it came to his own compositions, Fauré was not interested in Orientalism and the branch of Spanish music that Albéniz's music is steeped in. (Perhaps only *Le pas espagnol* from *Dolly* slightly touches on Spanish music.) According to the authors of *Fauré, Orientalism, and Le Voile Du Bonheur*, this might be

[182] Glenn Watkins, *Proof through the Night: Music and the Great War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 94.

[183] Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music*, 129.

[184] Howat, 129.

a result of Fauré's identity as a '"man of the Midi," a Southerner, who does not see the Mediterranean South as "other."[185] According to the authors, these scruples do not prove that Fauré was uninterested in the Orient but that he was uncomfortable writing trite, conventional, or parodic musical representations of foreign cultures (referred to as "turbanized music" by Fauré).[186]

The Schola Cantorum and the Conservatoire were not the only French institutions that Albéniz was a part of. The Spanish composer also took part in the concerts of the *Société Nationale de musique* of which d'Indy was president.[187] The fact was that both the Schola Cantorum and the Conservatoire, as well as the musicians associated with them, were particularly receptive to his brand of nationalism and immediately welcomed him and his piano music.

According to Clark, Albéniz endeared himself to everyone in Paris, and to illustrate this he cites George Jean-Aubry's recollections of Albéniz:

He who met Albéniz, were it but once, would remember it to his dying day. At first, his effusiveness could surprise, yes even displease, but soon one felt that a living fire inspired all his gestures, and the great soul of the man dominated his outward frame, and to astonishment would succeed an affection which nothing could alter [188]

[185] Carlo Caballero, and Leslee Smucker. "Fauré, Orientalism, and Le Voile Du Bonheur." Chapter. In *Fauré Studies*, edited by Carlo Caballero and Stephen Rumph,. Cambridge Composer Studies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021: 203, doi:10.1017/9781108692267.010.

[186] Caballero and Smucker, 195.

[187] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 112.

[188] Clark, 112.

This affection for the composer was felt not only by French artists but also by other Spanish composers trying to succeed in Paris. They found in Albéniz a mentor and ally in the French capital, always ready to offer advice and introduce them to the circles of French composers in Paris. The letters of other musicians such as Falla and Turina are proof of the extent to which they felt grateful to the composer. For example, Albéniz helped Falla's financial situation by securing him stipends from the royal family in Spain; furthermore, Albéniz also partially covered the cost of publishing Turina's Quintet.[189] Some pianists such as Joaquín Malats (1872-1912) would return Albéniz's favors by performing his pieces in concert.[190] The list of artists that Albéniz helped is lengthy. He aided musicians like Sarasate, Arbós, Granados, and Casals, and painters such as Santiago Rusiñol, Ramon Casas, and Ignacio Zuloaga all benefited from their friendship with Albéniz.[191]

According to Laura Sanz García's view of Albéniz and the spread of Spanish culture in France, Albéniz's early and sudden death at 48 years old might have highlighted the appreciation that some French composers had for him and his music.[192] One of the last collective acts of friendship from fellow composers came from his friends Dukas, d'Indy, Debussy, and Édouard Lalo, who proposed the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor for Albéniz, which he received only weeks before he died due to his

[189] Clark, 253.

[190] Laura Sanz García. 2010. «Isaac Albéniz Y La difusión De La Cultura española En París, a través Del género Epistolar». *Anuario Musical*, n.º 65 (diciembre 2010):116, https://doi.org/10.3989/anuariomusical.2010.65.114.

[191] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 111.

[192] Sanz García, 117.

friends rushing the process so it would arrive before his demise.[193] His friendship with Dukas had in fact been a profound one, not only between the composers themselves but also with Albéniz's whole family. Dukas had been Albéniz's teacher as well, particularly in matters of orchestration, but the influence doesn't seem to have gone in the other direction. Although Dukas didn't generally write "Spanish" music like Chabrier, Debussy, or Ravel, Pilar Serrano Betored's analysis of influences in Dukas's music does see a possible hidden homage to Albéniz in one of the French composer's pieces written soon after Albéniz's death, *Vocalise alla gitana*, written in 1909.[194]

Their friendship was not only a matter of shared musical interest. During the last period of Albéniz's life, Dukas visited Albéniz every day and remained a family friend after the death of the composer.[195] He assisted with the premiere of *Pepita Jiménez* in Paris in 1923 as well as attempting to finish the composition of Albéniz's *Navarra* - eventually finished by Déodat de Séverac.

Déodat de Séverac was another French musician close to Albéniz both personally and musically. He studied piano with Albéniz at the Schola Cantorum, eventually becoming his assistant there in 1898; when Albéniz left Paris for health reasons they continued the relationship through letters. Originally from the Province of Languedoc, de Séverac incorporated many regionalist themes into his music. The influence of Albéniz can be perceived in many aspects of his piano music such as in the guitar

[193] Pilar Serrano-Betored, "La influencia silenciada: Paul Dukas y la música española de la Edad de Plata" (PhD thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, 2019), 138.

[194] Serrano-Betored, 169.

[195] Serrano-Betored, 175.

figurations and use of regional dances. Robert F. Waters sees Albéniz's influence in de Séverac's use of motives associated with Andalusian music, including the use of Phrygian scales and triplet cadential figures as well as programmatic references to specific villages and festivals in Catalonia in pieces such as *Cerdaña* parallel to what Albéniz did with specific festivals in Andalusia in pieces such as *El Corpus Christi in Sevilla*.[196]

Albéniz mingled with the main musical circles in France and participated in the high cultural society of Paris, attending soirées where Spanish music was performed. But even though Albéniz was present in all these different Parisian circles, he was still somehow an outsider, still subject to all the forces of exoticism. According to Sanz García, the influence of the "Spanish music" of *Carmen* was still too strong, and engendered certain expectations which were unavoidable for Spanish composers. Albéniz would be offered collaborations, such as in the case of the French dramatist Henri Cain but with clear expectations from the composer of producing music where the "picturesque, happy soul of his beautiful country" could be felt.[197]

Albéniz was not naïve and was aware of what was expected of him as well as the financial advantages of his aesthetic choices due to the enthusiasm of French audiences for the Spanish genre. Encouraging the pianist Joaquín Malats to tour abroad, Albéniz

[196] Robert Waters, *Déodat de Séverac: Musical Identity in Fin de Siècle France* (Routledge, 2017), 185.

[197] Laura Sanz García, «Isaac Albéniz Y La difusión De La Cultura española En París, a través Del género Epistolar». *Anuario Musical*, n.º 65 (2010):128. https://doi.org/10.3989/anuariomusical.2010.65.114 "se sienta el alma pintoresca, alegre de su bello pais."

mentions the possible opportunities for Malats due to the interests of French audiences in exoticism and the luring powers of this exotic music in their eyes:

"… *hay mucho deseo de oír música española, tocada por un español de tu tamaño, y por último, hay mucho dinero que ganar en Francia, en cuanto un artista reúne, como te sucede a ti, el clasicismo con la nota especial y exótica."*[198]

Despite the economic advantages of embracing this exoticism, some of Albéniz's letters and entries in his diary contain bitter remarks regarding the behavior of his French friends towards him. Clark refers to a letter from Albéniz while on a trip to Germany to his wife Rosina:

"Here in Germany my spirit has found complete fulfillment, and I hold the firm conviction that I must be appreciated by this healthy and sincere public! What horror those French aristocrats cause me…with so little real and positive genius! [199]

This was not the only occasion when Albéniz expressed these sentiments. After a meeting with the conductor Arthur Nikisch to intercede for d'Indy and Chausson he wrote in his journal,

"That's one more favor they owe me, a fact that will not prevent them from thinking it well deserved and continuing to view me as (some kind of) strange beast."[200]

Despite the apparent success he enjoyed in Paris, in another letter to Rosina in 1897 he recounts that while in Karlsruhe, after a rehearsal with cellist and composer

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[198] Sanz García, 130. "There is a great desire to listen to Spanish music, played by a great Spaniard like you, and lastly, there is a lot of money to be made in France, when an artist has, like you, the classicism with a special and exotic tone" (translation by the author).

[199] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 165-166.

[200] Clark, 166.

David Popper (1843-1913), he was convinced of "the urgent necessity of leaving Paris and its infected artistic atmosphere."[201] Even though Albéniz seemed to be accepted into Parisian artistic circles, Clark argues how he might not have felt as if he completely belonged to "the club" and quotes Paul Gilson's (a Belgian musician contemporary of Albéniz) view of the situation:

"Albéniz was, among them, a bit like an adopted son; friendly and smiling, his extravagance and wandering aesthetic were pardoned. He was loved because he apologized in a friendly way- and with humility! - for his intrusion in their cenacle, with whose gravity his capricious personality would seemingly have been incompatible."[202]

In *Vincent d'Indy and his world*, Andrew Thomson describes his view of an unfortunate aspect of Albéniz's relationship with some French composers:

"A decidedly unconventional personality, the Spanish pianist and composer Isaac Albéniz made his appearance in Chausson's salon around this time. Such was the vibrancy, simplicity, and openness underlying his fantastic appearance that the circle could overlook his tirades and vagabond artistry, and treat him rather like a mascot. While making firm friends with Bordes, Dukas, and Fauré, Albéniz particularly looked up to d'Indy with the awe and humility of a novice."[203]

Despite Albéniz's private feelings, his career was most successful at this point of his life, while living in Paris, composing under the influence of a stimulating artistic scene. According to Sanz García, the foreign critics attributed to Albéniz the

[201] Clark, 166.

[202] Clark, 166.

[203] Andrew Thomson, *Vincent d'Indy and his world*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.107-108.

reincorporation of Spain into the international arena although recognizing the popularity of his simpler nationalistic pieces rather than Iberia.[204] Thus, Sanz García argues, Albéniz's music became a reference and inspiration for French musicians trying to write Spanish music, particularly mentioning the orchestral suite *Catalonia, La Vega,* and *Iberia*.[205]

Istel credited Albéniz with giving Spain a voice in the international arena, referring to him as the "Spanish Liszt", but also considered Albéniz's substantial influence as a double-edged sword and he directly blamed Albéniz for pigeonholing all Spanish music:[206]

"The advantage is that his art, for all it is closely affiliated with the Hispanic-Arabic cultural cycle, remains one purely personal, belonging to him alone. […] The disadvantage – from the point of view of the neo-Spanish school of composers – is that Albéniz has inculcated an erroneous idea of Spanish music outside of Spain, the idea that 'natural' Spanish music is that of the folk-tunes, and that a genuine Spanish musical art is conceivable only as proceeding out of them. I believe the truth lies somewhere in the middle of the road."[207]

[204] Laura Sanz García, «Isaac Albéniz Y La difusión De La Cultura española En París, a través Del género Epistolar». *Anuario Musical*, nº 65 (2010):131, https://doi.org/10.3989/anuariomusical.2010.65.114.

[205] Sanz García, 131.

[206] Istel and Martens, "Isaac Albéniz," 117.

[207] Istel and Martens, 127.

In Sanz García's view, it was those years in Paris that built the triad Albéniz-Granados-Falla which most often represents Spanish nationalistic music.[208] One of the most profound influences Albéniz contributed to was a particular branch of Spanish-inspired music, namely Alhambrism, which he practiced enthusiastically.

Albéniz and the spreading of Alhambrism

The enthrallment with Granada, the last bastion of the Moors in Spain and home to the palace of the Alhambra had been present for most of the nineteenth century in literature, paintings, and operas such as Cherubini's *Les Abéncerages* or Massenet's *El Cid*. The series of *Exposition Universelles* had also brought the Alhambra closer to Paris with reproductions of the Alhambra, depictions of the supposed life in Andalusia and other exhibitions dedicated to Spain which could be seen by Parisians without having to travel to the real thing.

According to Michael Christoforidis' analysis of Alhambrist themes at the turn of the century, Albéniz had absorbed some of the pervading concepts of Alhambrism from the artistic circles he associated with in Granada in the early 1880s.[209] During the 1890s, once he was living in Paris, Christoforidis argues that Albéniz was fundamental in providing a link between Granadine Alhambrism and its evolution in Spain and France.[210]

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[208] Sanz García, 129.

[209] Michael Christoforidis, *Manuel de Falla and Visions of Spanish Music* (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019), 48.

[210] Christoforidis, 48.

Albéniz was inspired by the city and the palaces of the Alhambra, producing early works such as *Granada* (*Serenata)* (1885), and later pieces such as *La Vega* (1897). According to Christoforidis, in the latter, Albéniz "identified themes that would permeate *fin-de-siècle* evocations of the Alhambra: the perfume of the gardens, the weighty shadow of the cypress trees, twilight and the melancholy and nostalgia embedded in Boabdil's last sigh upon bidding farewell to Granada."[211] Christoforidis also points out that Albéniz not only wrote music inspired by the Alhambra but also spread these kinds of Alhambra topoi by promoting the music of other Spanish musicians such as Tomas Bretón's *En la Alhambra* and Ruperto Chapí's *Fantasia Morisca*.[212]

Christoforidis's analysis of Albéniz's Alhambrist works argues that while Albéniz displayed an early interest in Alhambrist themes, his approach to the topic evolved parallel to the increasing interest of foreign and local tourists in the monument.[213] Also, artists close to Albéniz, such as Santiago Rusiñol searched for new ways of representing the palace, exploring the essence of the place in order to overcome cliches associated with the Alhambra. Christoforidis sees a parallel between the evolution of Albéniz's representations of the Alhambra and Santiago Rusiñol's paintings and supports his analysis by quoting Albéniz's own reflection on his evolution on the theme:

[211] Christoforidis, 48.

[212] Christoforidis, 48.

[213] Christoforidis, 49.

"Years ago when I wrote the "Serenata Espanola" (Granada): art that was exotic, sensual and amorous attracted me at that time. Now I need something that will intoxicate me….I must move away from the path I had previously trod."[214]

This evolution can be observed in his later piece, *La Vega* (January 1897), the longest piece for solo piano that Albéniz had composed up until that date. It was meant to be the first number of a suite entitled *La Alhambra* that Albéniz never completed. The piece is named *La Vega* after the region of the province of Granada that contains the palace of the Alhambra. It is a more mature piece in Albéniz's repertoire than *Granada* and Christoforidis claims this piece is less charged with the orientalist elements that were typical of earlier Alhambrist music, instead communicating a sense of loss and nostalgia.[215] The poems that Money-Coutts wrote inspired by Albéniz's feelings towards Granada reflect this nostalgia, particularly "La Silla del Moro."

Farewell, farewell! Thy doom endears
Thy Beauty!...God is just;
Yet must I weep with woman's tears
Thy glory in the Dust!

To lose thee is to die! And yet
I cling to life, for fear
In death's confusion I forget
How fair thou art, how dear!"

So mourned Granada's latest King,
Deeming that Art was dead:

[214] Christoforidis, 49.

[215] Christoforidis, 51.

But still the flowers our footsteps ring
And still the stars our head![216]

The beginning of *La Vega* sets the melancholic mood. The hypnotic 3/8 rhythm in the left hand (sometimes shared between the hands due to its complexity) is interrupted by descending chords on the right hand. Christoforidis points at the understated guitar figurations setting a contemplative mood together with evocations of flamenco vocalization, like a *cante jondo salida* when an initial entry (the sigh "ay") is usually produced.[217] Virtuosic writing and more animated guitar figurations soon take over, but the melancholic atmosphere is never completely lost. According to Christoforidis, Albéniz might have taken a cue from Wagner (and perhaps Debussy) in employing extended harmonic pedals and a slow rate of thematic exposition to conjure landscapes.[218] Albéniz seems to have conjured the piece after the image of the region of La Vega from the palace.

I have composed…all the plain of Granada, contemplated from the Alhambra. The green plain, with its crops and its "immense billiard cloths" as Rubén (Darío) says…(Ignacio Zuloaga) tells me that I have captured the colour of the sky, which has something of the Mohammedan. I understand his enthusiasm for the colour. As you can see, I am not a painter and yet I paint, though my brushes are the keys.[219]

[216] Christoforidis, 50.

[217] Christoforidis, 51.

[218] Christoforidis, 51.

[219] Christoforidis, 52.

Influence of Alhambrism on French Composers: Debussy

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) stands out as one of the French composers most influenced by Alhambrism, and, as with Albéniz, especially relevant in his piano compositions. Debussy's admiration for Albéniz's music dates from the Spanish composer's debut in Paris in 1889. Although it is a common belief that Albéniz disliked Debussy due to Collet's statements in his biography of Albéniz, Clark's research points at Albéniz holding the French composer in high regard.[220] Christoforidis suggests that perhaps Debussy and Albéniz might have met through their common friend the poet Pierre Louÿs. Debussy interest in Spain focused on the city of Granada, which he never visited, but he experimented second-hand such as following the travels of his friend Louÿs to the region with interest.[221] Debussy also developed close friendships with other Spanish musicians such as Ricard Viñes, who was very much present in Paris' musical scene, and often premiered the works of composers such as Ravel, Manuel de Falla, and Debussy himself.

According to Christoforidis, Debussy's fascination with Granada, sometimes referred to as "Granada syndrome", owes a great deal to Albéniz and his Granada-inspired music.[222] As Christoforidis points out, Debussy's Alhambrist music was composed after he became familiar with Albéniz's music with some of it paying direct homage to the Spanish composer.[223]

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[220] Clark, 112, 198-199.

[221] Christoforidis, 54.

[222] Christoforidis, 55.

[223] Christoforidis, 53.

Debussy was also familiar with different types of Spanish music, sometimes via Parisian performances; Falla mentioned Debussy attending the nocturnal gypsy performances (portraying Andalusia in Moorish times) at the 1900 exhibition.[224] The French composer Maurice Emmanuel also remarked seeing Debussy carrying in his pocket Felipe Pedrell's collection of Spanish folk songs.[225] Despite Debussy's keen interest in the region, he never visited Granada.[226] He contented himself with fantasizing about the exotic locale, instead finding inspiration in second-hand representations of the place.

The Granada theme became a recurring obsession in Debussy's piano music. The French composer's imagination produced a number of pieces directly inspired by the Alhambra, such as *Lindaraja, La soirée dans Grenade, La serenade interrompue, La puerta del vino,* and *Iberia*. The influence of Alhambrism is evident in most of the pages of this music. The first of these pieces, *Lindaraja* (1901), for two pianos, was written after Albéniz had already composed *La Vega*, the first piece of Albéniz's planned suite *La Alhambra. Lindaraja* is the name of one of the towers of the Alhambra (*Mirador de la Daraxa*) named after a Moorish princess. Both Parakilas and Christoforidis speculate that Debussy was probably familiar with Washington Irving's *Tales of the Alhambra* (1832).[227] [228] Christoforidis believes that the piece evokes a particular tale, "The

[224] Christoforidis, 55-56.

[225] Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music,* 127.

[226] Howat, 126-127.

[227] Parakilas, 174.

[228] Christoforidis, 60.

Mysterious Chambers" in which Irving describes a nocturnal scene, a stroll through the moonlit Alhambra during a summer night while the sounds of the town faintly reach the palace such as the strumming of guitars, highly stylized in this context.[229] The nocturnal theme, the habanera, and its representations at the piano will from now on become associated with the Alhambra and by extension with Spain as a whole.

Christoforidis argues that Debussy's *Lindaraja*, influenced by Albéniz, transcends the local color typical of nineteenth-century exoticism[230] and also points at the subject of *Lindaraja* having been used by Santiago Rusiñol in his paintings and Money-Coutts in his Albéniz-inspired poems.[231]

Under Debussy's hands, the habanera underwent a number of changes. The dance had been wildly popular in France and associated with Spanish music, particularly since it had been used by Bizet in *Carmen*. According to Christoforidis, it was through the works of Chabrier, Albéniz, Bretón, Ravel, and Bizet that it had become a "nostalgic utterance."[232] Christoforidis contends that the sense of indolence pervading its rhythm was accentuated by Albéniz's compositions such as *Bajo la palmera* ("Sous le Palmier").[233]

La soirée dans Grenade shares many characteristics with *Lindaraja* such as the nocturnal atmosphere, the use of the habanera, guitar idioms, and *cante jondo*-inspired

[229] Christoforidis, 59.

[230] Christoforidis, 60.

[231] Christoforidis, 59.

[232] Christoforidis, 54.

[233] Christoforidis, 56.

melodies. According to Parakilas, Debussy creates an atmosphere in *La soirée dans Grenade* that reflects solely the view of a foreigner, a visitor who experiences the Alhambra when the "others" are nothing but a faint sound in the distance.[234]

Debussy will come back to the theme of Granada and nocturnal habaneras with *Ibéria*, the second of his orchestral *Images*. Its second section, *Les parfums de la nuit*, brings us back to the nights in the Alhambra.

According to Parakilas *La sérénade interrompue* (1910), the ninth number from *Préludes*, Book I, seems to be inspired by Albéniz, a kind of homage after his recent death.[235] Howat argues that parts of it resemble *El Polo* and *Málaga* but *La sérénade interrompue* particularly resembles *El Albaicín*, a piece Debussy really admired and had even made plans to orchestrate or to make a free transcription of it for orchestra.[236] The guitar idioms are clearly recognizable as being inspired by Albéniz's representations of Spanish guitar as well as the *cante jondo*-inspired melodies that characterize many of Albéniz's pieces. The piece is also humorous, perhaps an homage to Albéniz's character according to Parakilas, with the Spaniard's "serenade" being interrupted by a "Spanish march" composed by a French composer.[237]

In his prelude *La Puerta del Vino*, Debussy transports us once more to Granada and, of course, the composer makes use of the habanera again. *La Puerta del Vino* is an

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[234] James Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul" in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 182-3.

[235] Parakilas, 183.

[236] Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music*, 139.

[237] Parakilas, 182-3.

entrance portal of the palace, and according to Parakilas, this Alhambra-inspired piece might have had to do more with another Spanish musician, Falla.[238] Debussy was very close to Falla at the time, even helping him with *La vida breve* in 1912. Parakilas tells us that *La puerta del Vino* is supposed to have been inspired by the postcard sent by Falla of the Alhambra and the contrast between daylight and shade in the postcard.[239] Once more, Spanish characteristics such as *cante jondo*-inspired melody and the use of Phrygian mode are present.

Christoforidis argues that Debussy's "unique contribution to Alhambrism was tying it to the popular habanera."[240] Debussy's Granada-habanera relationship and the transformation of the dance was for the French composer a way of evoking the night in the gardens of the Alhambra, an image that had been part of the Spanish exotic canon for a long time. After undergoing this transformation the habanera is no longer a specific dance but a source of musical elements that create an atmosphere and an image.[241]

The influence of Albéniz in some of Debussy's music seems evident, but of course, there is another often-mentioned influence on Debussy's *Soiree dans Grenade*, Ravel's *Habanera*. In 1898 Debussy attended a concert where he had the chance to hear Ravel's *Habanera* for two pianos. Debussy was so impressed that he borrowed the manuscript and three years later he wrote his own composition for two pianos,

[238] Parakilas, 183.

[239] Parakilas, 183.

[240] Christoforidis, 54.

[241] Parakilas, 174.

Lindaraja, based on the habanera dance.[242] Parakilas agrees with the fact that Debussy borrowed and found inspiration in Ravel's *Habanera* but also argues that in the case of the first movement *Prélude à la Nuit* from the *Rhapsodie Espagnole* it was Ravel who borrowed from the atmosphere of *La soirèe dans Grenade*.[243] Ravel's *Habanera* was written originally for two pianos just like *Lindaraja* but he transcribed it for orchestra and made it the third movement of the *Rhapsodie Espagnole* which he wrote in its entirety as a two piano version in 1907. Ravel also wrote another version of the piece, in this case for voice, the *Vocalise-étude (en forme de habanera)*. Together with Debussy's piano music, Ravel's Spanish music is probably some of the most famous inspired by Spain, often labeled as even more "authentic" than the music of Spanish composers.

Ravel's relationship with Spain was more personal than Debussy's: Ravel's mother was Basque and grew up in Madrid, and Ravel himself was born in Saint Jean de Luz, on the border with Spain. Also, he had a very close friendship from an early age with the Spanish pianist Ricard Viñes. Unlike Debussy's obsession with one specific locale and music, Ravel's approach to Spanish music is eclectic. He does not always exploit the standard exotic Andalusian themes expected at the time. Ravel's piano music explores a number of Spanish musical influences: in *Alborada del Gracioso* he uses Scarlatti's technique of repeated notes and glissandi and imitations of guitar language, in *L'heure espagnole* he includes *malagueñas* and *boleros*. Other compositions include music from other regions of Spain such as the Basque folk melody in the piano concerto

[242] Stephen Walsh, *Debussy: A Painter in Sound* (New York: Vintage, a Division of Penguin Random House LLC, 2019), 130-131.

[243] Parakilas, "How Spain got a Soul," 172.

in G or the *guajira*, *zortzico*, and *jota* of the songs of *Don Quichotte à Dulcinèe*. This diversity contrasts with Debussy's insistence on one single theme. In fact, Parakilas argues that in *Pavane pour une Infante défunte* Ravel breaks the rules of Spanish exoticism by evoking the Spanish court of the Golden Age, trembling with nostalgia for a lost era.[244]

Ravel's musical relationship with Albéniz's music might nearly have been a closer one. When Ida Rubinstein asked him to write a ballet, Ravel considered orchestrating Albéniz's *Iberia* but since Fernandez Arbós owned the rights to the music he produced another Spanish-inspired music, the *Bolero*, this time going back to one of the most popular dances associated with exotic Spain.

Both Debussy's and Ravel's construction of these particular "Spanish" sounds, in some cases directly inspired by Albéniz's own creations, have enormously influenced the perception of Spanish music in the context of classical music.

In spite of all the attempts to build a particular kind of Spanish national music, the music that succeeded and has a place in today's musical canon is the music that adapted to the orientalist, exotic vision built by romanticism, particularly of the French. Many of the Spanish musicians confronted with this situation made that vision and musical representation of Spain their own, thereby making them subject to the question of "authenticity" from critics on both in Spain and abroad. Some Spanish composers, such as Bretón, saw Albéniz's closeness to the French composers as a betrayal of his

[244] Parakilas, 185.

origins, having sold out to foreign influences and taste, and warned him against their ways: "Beware of French modernists, they are all crazy."[245]

Nevertheless, Albéniz's embrace of the music of the south of Spain seemed to be an honest, heartfelt musical inclination that would strongly influence how Spanish music was perceived abroad thanks to his strong personal relationships with an extraordinary number of influential musicians who embraced his particular style. The next two chapters will look in more detail at how this is reflected in the development of his "Spanish" style, from his earlier pieces to his final complete composition, *Iberia*.

[245] Begoña Lopez-Bonastre, "Isaac Albéniz: Un Double Ancrage." Essay in *Échanges Musicaux Franco-Espagnols, Xviie - Xixe Siècles: Actes Des Rencontres de Villecroze, 15 Au 17 Octobre 1998*. Paris: Klincksieck (2000) "Guárdate de los modernistas franceses, están locos.", 335.

CHAPTER 4

Albéniz's nationalistic piano music

Albéniz's nationalistic piano music quickly became successful and appreciated by critics and audiences. In stark contrast, his non-piano music has received much less attention and praise and his stage music, orchestral works, and vocal works are rarely performed today. His opera *Merlin* was not fully staged until 2003 and has been performed only once more since then. Albéniz's non-nationalistic piano music is also very rarely played despite the fact that he wrote not only seven piano sonatas (of which only numbers 3, 4 and 5 are complete) but also other works such as the *Suites Anciennes* and *Siete estudios en tonos mayores naturales* (*Seven Studies in major keys*). Critical and audience preference for the nationalistic aspects of Albéniz's music, particularly Andalusian-inspired music, is the cause for much of his other repertoire being overlooked. This sometimes creates an image of Albéniz as a piano composer who transitioned from writing nationalistic salon music to sophisticated nationalistic music due to the influence of French musicians. But Albéniz's repertoire is actually more diverse. He wrote several piano sonatas in the 1880s before moving to France that show his understanding of classical forms and his capacity to write without resorting to the folklore of Spain. The sonatas fit within the tradition of the romantic piano sonata featuring bravura movements where the influence of romantic composers such as Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, and even Weber is evident. They are passionate, sometimes virtuosic, and always highly expressive pieces, without traces of the Spanish nationalism

that made Albéniz famous. Clark believes that these works reveal Albéniz's firm grasp of formal organization.[246] The *Suites Anciennes* are simpler and easier pieces, filled with baroque period dance movements such as the Gavotte, Minuet, Sarabande, and Chaconne. They contain no hint of the Andalusian influence present in Albéniz's nationalistic pieces. Unfortunately, this other side of Albéniz's music is very rarely performed and is virtually unknown to most of the public.

Usually, scholars divide Albéniz's music into three periods or styles.[247] The first period includes the early piano works and some zarzuelas. The scholar Paul Mast who, analyzes Albéniz's nationalistic output from a theorist approach, considers *Cantos de España op. 232* (composed in 1891 and published in1892) to be borderline between Albéniz's first and second periods.[248] The second period is dominated by Albéniz's desire to succeed as a stage composer in Spain and abroad. His first attempts at operas such as *The Magic Opal, Pepita Jiménez,* and the zarzuela *San Antonio de la Florida* are usually classified under Albéniz's middle period. These pieces are very rarely performed. Mast considers the piano piece *La Vega* (1897) to be the transitional piece between Albéniz's second and third "manners".[249] *La Vega* is seen as a change in Albéniz's style, influenced by his time in France and the different musical circles he

[246] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 63.

[247] According to Clark, Albéniz and his editors carelessly assigned opus numbers, and these have little to no validity as chronological indicators. Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: A Guide to Research*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1998, 25.

[248] Paul B. Mast, "Style and Structure in Iberia by Isaac Albéniz," PhD Diss., (Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, 1974), 55.

[249] Mast, 56.

frequented. The piece is still "nationalistic" music, inspired by a Spanish topic, but now considered as being elevated to a higher musical sphere by the new compositional techniques Albéniz incorporated. It also marks the return of Albéniz to the piano, regarded by many as his natural element. *La Vega* also foreshadows his later mature style, culminating in *Iberia*.

Albéniz's last compositional period was dominated by piano music, largely by *Iberia*. He also completed two song cycles, *To Nellie* (1896) and *Quatre Mélodies* (1908). Albéniz's major achievement during this time is, of course, *Iberia* but he also wrote other piano pieces such as the Satie-inspired *Yvonne en visite* (1905) and the unfinished *Navarra* and *Azulejos.* Unlike *Navarra* and *Azulejos, Yvonne en visite* it is not inspired by Spain but influenced by his relationship with the Schola Cantorum. It includes humorous annotations in the style of Satie, describing the performance of a young pianist, Yvonne Guidé, forced to perform by her mother, who threatens her with ten days of Hanon exercises.[250] It was part of *the Album pour enfants petits et grands,* a collection by musicians at the Schola Cantorum.

Albéniz's Early Nationalistic Music

During the 1880s Albéniz was living in Spain, performing and teaching. During this period, he wrote many piano pieces that can be defined as salon music: mazurkas, waltzes, romances, polkas, serenades. According to Clark, these pieces "were suitable for amateur use and served the dual purpose of bringing in income and spreading his

[250] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic,* 195-96.

name."[251] While some of them have not kept a place in the pianistic repertoire, it was during this time that Albéniz also wrote some of his most popular pieces, often performed as transcriptions for guitar. Albéniz's piano writing lends itself naturally to the guitar, which was often the source of inspiration for the composer. To this period belong nationalistic pieces such as *Danzas Españolas, Recuerdos de Viaje, Suite Española*, and *Cantos de España.* The pieces in these collections are often dismissed as simple salon music, a more primitive form of Albéniz's later style in *Iberia*.[252] Clark sees Albéniz's earlier nationalistic piano music as "idealized vignettes for popular consumption" and describes them as the musical parallel to c*ostumbrismo*.[253] *Costumbrismo,* such as in the novels of Benito Pérez Galdós, was an artistic movement that wished to portray local everyday life, manners, and customs. Albéniz himself believed that these pieces were successful at portraying the essence of the "real Spain." Several pieces in this collection such as *Sevilla* or *Asturias* ultimately became some of his most popular compositions.

The music in these piano collections reflect Albéniz's Hispanic inspiration, including places in the American continent with which he was familiar, such as Cuba. But as it became evident in *Iberia* two decades later, they also show Albéniz's particular interest, even before moving to France, in the musical languages of an idealized Andalusia. Although Albéniz was not a southerner, but a Catalan with Basque origins, he felt an intense longing for the Spanish south which he had visited frequently during

[251] Clark, 62.

[252] Clark, 4.

[253] Clark, 63-64.

his concert tours. He idealized and fantasized about an orientalized south, according to Clark, expressing a nostalgia for "a Spain that no longer exists, or never really existed at all."[254]

Although Albéniz's earlier nationalistic piano music is in fact very different from the more complex, sophisticated *Iberia*, they still share a number of characteristics with his later work. Paul Mast in his dissertation "Style and Structure in 'Iberia' by Isaac Albéniz" points at a number of musical traits already present in Albéniz's earlier piano works that will also be key features of *Iberia*. Some of these belong to the stereotypes often associated with Spain such as the use of rhythms of Spanish dances, the use of the Phrygian mode for entire works (frequently given a major final triad, which may sound ambiguous like the dominant of a minor key to some listeners), the use of coloristic Phrygian inflections in non-modal contexts, the presence of characteristically "Spanish" ornamentation, and guitar-style textures. They also included the construction of melodies based on melodic iterance, extended pedal sonorities, use of the descending minor tetrachord both as a melodic framework and as a bass line, extended pedal tone sonorities, and some parallel movement of chords.[255] These pieces, from their use of folk-like languages to the guitar-sounding textures fitted the expectations French audiences had of a Spanish composer at the time.

[254] Clark, 290.

[255] Mast, "Style and Structure in Iberia", 376-8.

Suite Española op. 47

All these characteristics can be observed in one of Albéniz's most popular collections for piano, the *Suite Española op. 47*. These pieces are much simpler, less virtuosic than anything he wrote in *Iberia* and therefore have been often included in young pianists's repertoire in Spain. Written in 1886, the suite is usually published with eight numbers, many of them inspired by Andalusia. Albéniz also included music from the soon-to-be former colony of Cuba and other parts of the country such as his native Catalonia, Castille, and Asturias. Only four of the pieces, *Granada, Catalunya, Cuba,* and *Sevilla* were originally part of the Suite although Albéniz's intention was to include eight numbers. The other pieces, initially included in other collections, were added by the publisher after Albéniz's death.[256]

The form in these pieces is simpler than in *Iberia,* with most of them being in ternary form and making use of dance rhythms drawn from various regions in Spain. Additionally, the importance of the guitar idioms in Albéniz's writing can be observed in most of these compositions. Albéniz was admired by French audiences for his guitar-like textures and idioms at the piano, as we know from the reviews of his first performance in Paris of *Torre Bermeja* (from his *12 piezas características* op. 92). This sort of writing can be found in most of his nationalistic repertoire.

The first piece, *Granada (Serenata)*[257], starts with a display of guitar idioms, calm guitar-like arpeggiated figuration in the right hand over a simple melody in the left hand. It makes for a more intimate performance than anything in the exuberant *Iberia*.

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[256] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 97.

[257] Already discussed in the previous chapter under Alhambrismo.

Granada, as its name indicates, is inspired by the city of Granada, in this case Moorish Granada. The subject appeals directly to the preference of French audiences for exotic Moorish Spain, the scenario of Chateaubriand's and Irving's novels. The beginning is calm and rather atmospheric. The song-like character is the predominant feature rather than the dance-like spirit found in other pieces of the collection. Clark also highlights Albéniz's desire to capture with this music the Moorish Granada and Arabic string instruments.[258]

> *I live and write a Serenata, romantic to the point of paroxysm and sad to the point of despair, among the aroma of the flowers, the shade of the cypresses, and the snow of the Sierra. I will not compose the intoxication of a collective juerga (flamenco party). I seek now the tradition, which is a gold mine…the guzla (Arabic string instrument), the lazy dragging of fingers over the strings. And above all, a heartbreaking lament out of tune…. I want the Arabic Granada, that which is all art, which is all that seems to me beauty and emotion, and that which can say to Catalonia: Be my sister in art and my equal in beauty."*[259]

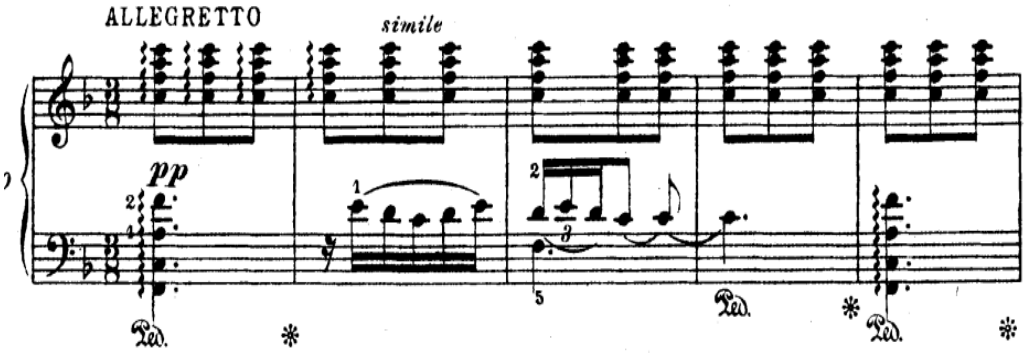
But as Clark also notes, there is not much connection to actual Moorish music: it is a product of Albéniz's imagination, the melody resembling a *jota copla*.[260] Clark sees the melodic and expressive middle section of *Granada* as the Moorish lament that Albéniz wished to portray, and interprets his use of the F harmonic minor scale and its augmented second interval (which is associated with an oriental sound) between E

[258] Clark, 65. Clark quotes Albéniz's letter to his friend Enrique Moragas.

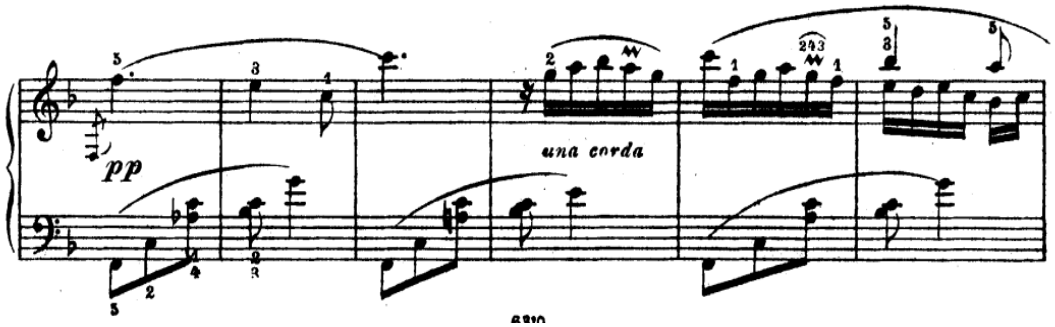
[259] Clark, 65.

[260] Clark, 66.

natural and Db as Albéniz's way of representing the modality and intonation of Middle Eastern singing.[261] Regardless of the authenticity, the melody is beautiful and poetic, full of Albéniz's nostalgia for Spain's Moorish past.



Example 1: Guitar idioms in *Granada.*



Example 2: The expressive melody in the middle section of *Granada.*

The second number of the collection, *Cataluña (Corranda)*, is one of the few pieces that Albéniz wrote inspired by his native land of Catalonia. It is based on the *corranda*, a Catalonian dance performed by two dancers and related to the French

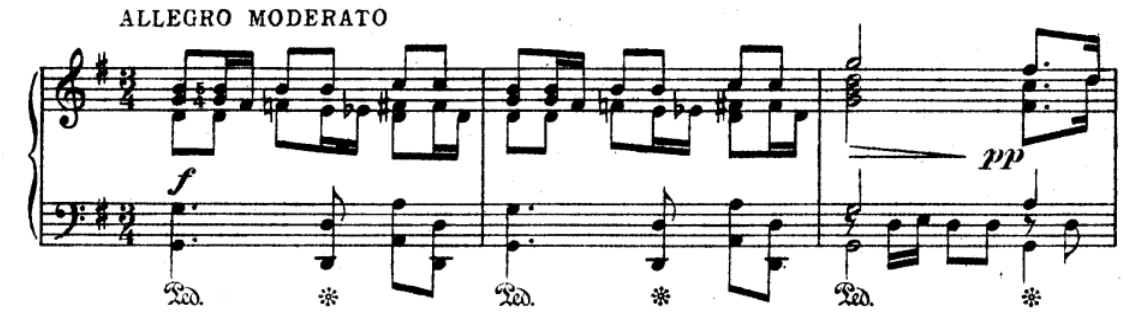
[261] Clark, 65-67.

courante and the Italian *corrente*.[262] The texture gradually becomes more complicated but never loses the guitar-like writing. Although Albéniz still uses languages inspired by Spanish regional music, it is not the livelier Andalusian dances and idioms favored by French audiences but a rather sober and elegant dance. Although still popular as part of the *Suite Española*, *Cataluña* has not achieved the level of popularity of *Sevilla* or *Granada*.

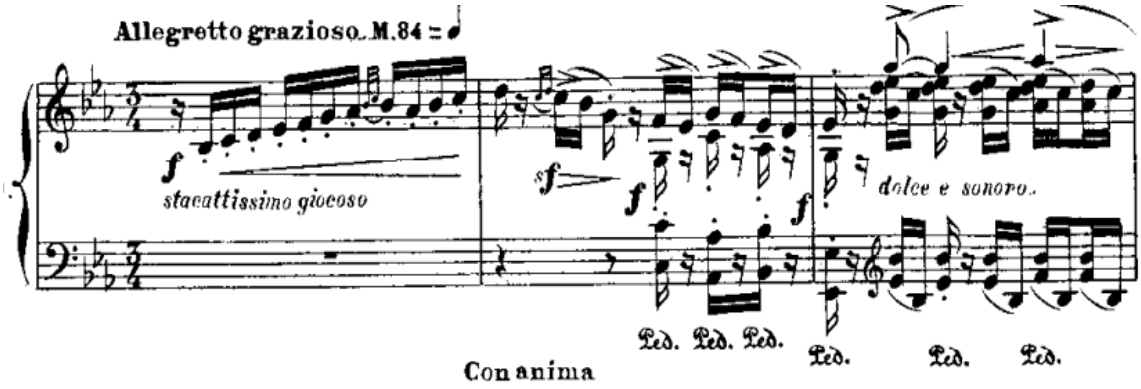
In the following three numbers, *Sevilla (Sevillanas), Cádiz (Cancion), and Asturias (Leyenda),* Albéniz goes back to the south of Spain for inspiration. *Sevilla*, as the name indicates, features *sevillanas*, a joyful dance in triple meter (but without prominent triplet rhythms)[263] performed at the *Feria de Sevilla* (Seville's fair) but also popular in other regions of Andalusia. Albéniz will also use *sevillanas* in the last piece of *Iberia*, *Eritaña*. The treatment of the rhythms of a Sevillana is very different in these two pieces. *Eritaña* displays a use of more complex textures and form that make it more difficult to perceive the characteristic rhythm as used by Albéniz, whereas *Sevilla* is more straightforward in its use of the dance rhythm. This lively piece (*Sevilla*) has become a favorite within the popular *Suite Española*.

[262] Clark, 68.

[263] Mast, 77.



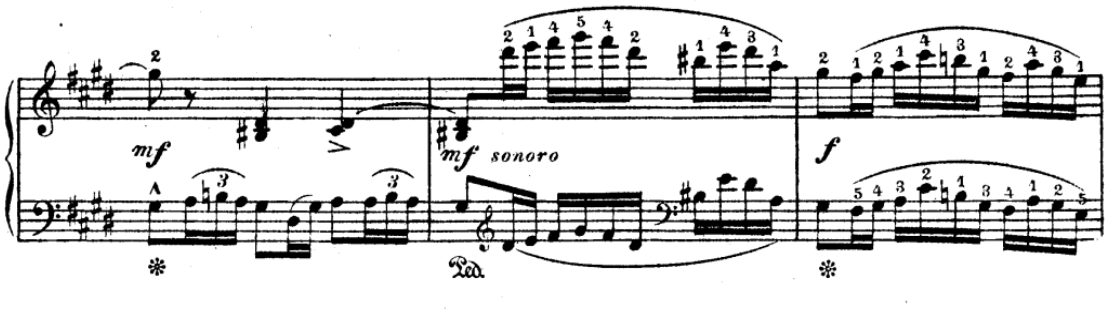
Example 3: *Sevillanas* rhythm in *Sevilla.*



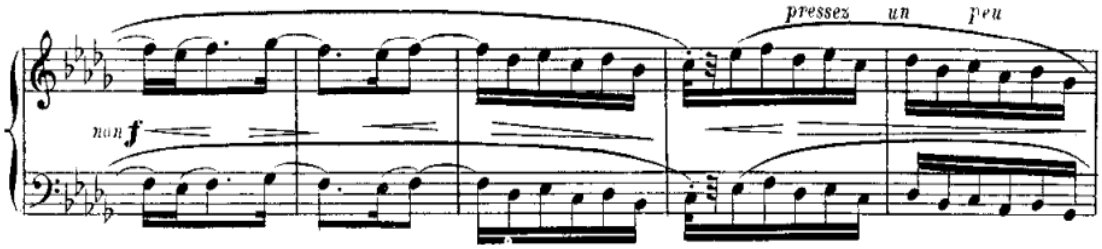
Example 4: *Sevillanas* rhythm in *Eritaña*.

In *Cádiz,* once again, guitar idioms are present throughout the piece. The contrasting middle section displays Albéniz's characteristic homophonic, parallel playing that will be an important part of other pieces such as *El Albaicín* (*Iberia,* Book III), and which Albéniz uses to represent the freedom typical of *cante jondo.* In *Iberia* Albéniz often uses languages that draw inspiration from *cante jondo*, a particular form of flamenco, something often regarded as supposedly imbuing these pieces with authenticity, as drawing from the deepest folkloric sources of Andalusia. *Cante jondo* was considered by some musicians such as Manuel de Falla as the most authentic representation of flamenco and Andalusian musical identity. Albéniz tried to capture this

very particular style, imbuing the music with a certain freedom of rhythm in imitation of the elaborate vocalizations on the syllable "ay" as sung in *cante jondo*.



Example 5: Parallel octave writing in *Cádiz.*

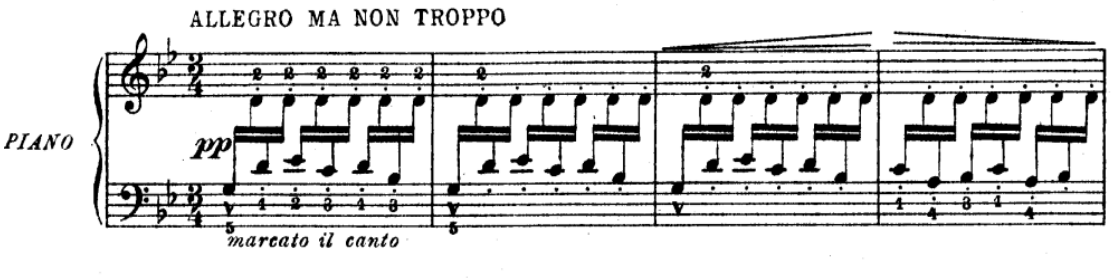


Example 6: Parallel octave writing in *El Albaicín.*

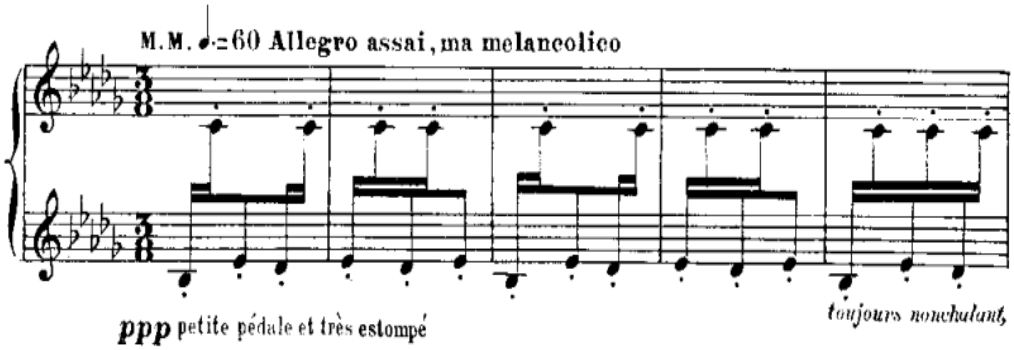
Asturias (Leyenda) is one of Albéniz's most popular pieces. It was not originally included in the *Suite Española* but as *Preludio* in *Cantos de España op. 232* (1892). The title of *Asturias* given by the editor is misleading because the music has nothing to do with the northern region of Asturias but is in fact inspired by Andalusian flamenco.[264] According to Clark, the rhythms come from *bulerías* (a dance in sharply accentuated

[264] Clark, 97.

triple meter) or *soleá por bulerías*.[265][266] As in the previous pieces, the representation of guitar idioms is prominent; in particular, the resemblance of the guitar-inspired writing at the beginning of both pieces is noticeable. It is especially misleading because it links a flamenco-inspired dance and the guitar-idioms to the region of Asturias, a good example of contributing to the conception of flamenco as the common authentic music of the whole of Spain.



Example 7: *Asturias,* bb. 1-4.



Example 8: *El Albaicín,* bb. 1-5.

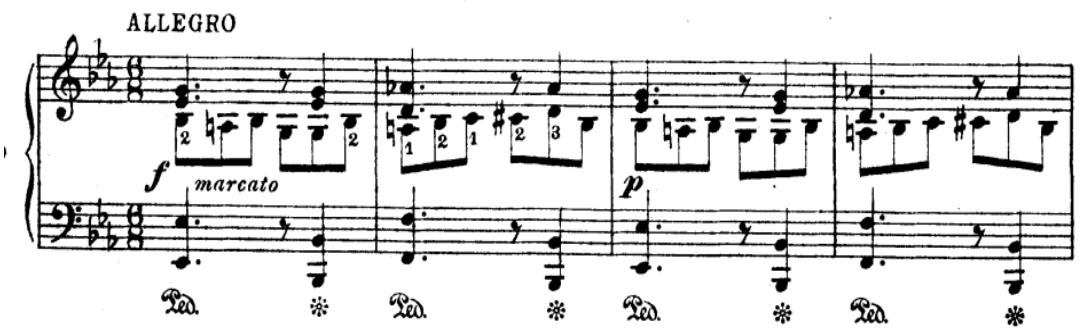
[265] Clark, 98.

[266] *Soleá* is another *palo* (or form) of flamenco.

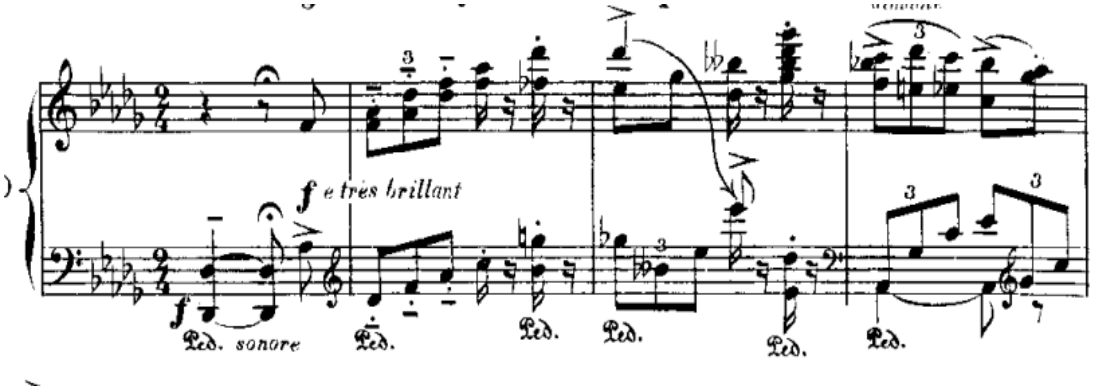
In the last three pieces, Albéniz abandons Andalusia, finding inspiration in other regions of Spain. *Aragón (Fantasía)* is inspired by a *jota aragonesa* which had been already used in very popular pieces by Liszt, Glinka, and other non-Spanish composers. *Castilla (Seguidillas)* is another lively dance, in this case a seguidilla, a dance performed in Castille and the south of Spain.[267] The Castilian version had been made popular in France through the music of Glinka in his *Second Spanish Overture*.[268] Although popular, *Castilla* and *Aragón* don't have the appeal of the Andalusian flavor that Albéniz was so valued for. In this author's experience the non-Andalusian pieces of the Suite are less often performed than *Sevilla, Granada, Asturias* and *Cádiz*.

The last piece, *Cuba (Capricho)*, is a habanera. Albéniz also used this popular dance in *Lavapiés* (*Iberia*, Book III), as well as in other Cuba-inspired pieces. The habanera was very popular not only in Spain but also in France, particularly after the success of Bizet's *Carmen*. Although it had no association with the Alhambra, it was also the dance that inspired most of Debussy's Alhambrist compositions as well as being used by Ravel. It successfully appealed to the French public's desire for Spanish exoticism through an already well-known dance.

[267] Mast, 68.
[268] Parakilas, 156.



Example 9: Habanera rhythm in *Cuba* (bb. 1-4).



Example 10: Habanera rhythm at the beginning of *Lavapiés* (bb. 1-4).

Although Albéniz believed that his earlier nationalistic pieces were not as sophisticated as the piano music he later produced he seemed to still find value in them, more "authentically Spanish", as if containing what he believed to be the essence of Spain:

I believe that the people are right when they continue to be moved by Córdoba, Mallorca, by the copla of the Sevillanas, by the serenata, and Granada. In all of them I now note that there is less musical science, less of the grand idea, but more colour, sunlight, flavour of olives. That music of youth, with its little sins and absurdities that almost point out the sentimental affectation…appears to me like the carvings in the

Alhambra, those peculiar arabesques that say nothing with their turns and shapes, but which are like the air, like the sun, like the blackbirds or like the nightingales of its gardens. They are more valuable than all else of Moorish Spain, which, though we may not like it, is the true Spain! [269]

The Path to Iberia: La Vega

La Vega, written in 1897, contains developments of Albéniz's style that were not present in his earlier nationalistic piano music. He had been living in France since 1894 and while this piece falls under the category of nationalist pieces inspired by the Alhambra, it is indeed quite different from the previous ones. While preceding pieces, such as those in *Suite española op. 47*, were relatively short works, typically lasting from two to five minutes, *La Vega* is almost fourteen minutes long. Although Albéniz had experience writing in sonata form in his non-nationalistic piano music, it was in *La Vega* that he applied it for the first time to a nationalistic piano composition.[270]

The inspiration for this piece, Granada and its palace the Alhambra, has already been discussed in the previous chapter. *La Vega* is an evolution of Albéniz's treatment of Alhambrist themes, so popular in *fin-de-siècle* France. *La Vega*, in a more sophisticated way than *Granada (Serenata)*, is also imbued with a deeply nostalgic and melancholic feeling. Clark sees the more virtuosic, fuller texture of *La Vega*, as well as the use of sonata form in a nationalistic piece, combined with folkloric languages as a clear

[269] As translated by Clark, in *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 264.

[270] Clark, 203.

premonition of *Iberia.*[271] Despite the differences there are many aspects of *La Vega* that still catered to the taste of French audiences for exotic Spanish music. One is them is the Alhambrist theme, but also the use of Spanish dances and guitar idioms. The beginning of *La Vega,* as per Clark's analysis, resembles a *petenera,* a slow and melancholic type of flamenco, while the secondary theme is a free evocation of the *jota copla*.[272] Albéniz, as in most of his nationalistic pieces, makes extensive use of sophisticated guitar idioms. Clark believes that *La Vega* was the product of Albéniz's years in Paris and his efforts at writing large-scale stage works, and sees the influence of the Franck circle in Paris "in the increasing interest in the thematic and tonal organization, in formal unity over large spaces of his musical canvas", and compares the layout of *La Vega* to the majesty of Franck's *Variations*.[273] After composing *La Vega* Albéniz stayed away for some time from piano composition, focusing on stage and orchestral music, still trying to achieve success as an opera composer. The influence of the Franck circle on Albéniz and the focus on opera is often lamented by Collet, Istel and other critics, who saw it as Albéniz betraying his "real nature", which they believed resided in the simpler, shorter earlier nationalistic music for piano.

The creation of Iberia

In the years between the composition of *La Vega* and *Iberia*, Albéniz's efforts were directed at trying to secure performances of his operas *Merlin* and *Pepita*

[271] Clark, 203.

[272] Clark, 203.

[273] Clark, 203.

Jiménez.[274] At the same time, the composer was dealing with ever-deteriorating health. Although reviews of *Pepita Jiménez* (premiered in 1896) were generally positive, the difficulties of getting his stage works represented might have driven him back to the piano.[275] *Iberia,* which Albéniz called *12 nouvelle impressions en quatre cahiers,* is a collection of twelve pieces organized in four books written during the years 1905-1908. Albéniz died in 1909 soon after completing it, making the monumental work a sort of final testament. *Iberia* is generally considered to be the best music Albéniz ever wrote.

Iberia was first published by *Edition Mutuelle* in Paris between 1906-1908. All the books were premiered by Blanche Selva, a French pianist of Spanish origin who also taught piano at the Schola Cantorum.[276] She not only premiered the individual books of the collection but also was the first to perform all four books in one concert. Although Albéniz's health was rapidly deteriorating he too performed *Almería* and *Triana* in Brussels in 1908.[277] Joaquín Malats, the great Spanish pianist and friend of Albéniz, also performed some of them during Albéniz's lifetime. Albéniz was very pleased with Malats' performance, so much so that he wrote to the Spanish pianist to let him know that from now on he was writing the rest of *Iberia* with him and his virtuosic prowess in mind.[278] The words to Malats from Albéniz, who seems to have taken inspiration from

[274] Clark, 220-223.

[275] Clark, 223.

[276] Clark, 248.

[277] Clark, 250.

[278] Letter of Albéniz to Malats, "This work, this *Iberia* of my sins, I write essentially through you and for you" as translated by Clark in *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic,* 249.

Malats' virtuosic playing to compose such demanding pieces, perhaps give a hint of the reason behind the increase in difficulty in books three and four of *Iberia*.

Iberia is a much more complex and refined work than Albéniz's previous nationalistic music for piano. Albéniz scholars such as Paul Mast and Clark define it as a synthesis of inspirations drawn from Andalusian folkloric idioms, virtuosic writing, and the new compositional techniques he had learned in Paris, influenced particularly by the Schola Cantorum circle.[279] The Spanish scholar Jacinto Torres believes that Albéniz didn't suddenly break with his previous style to create a new style in *Iberia*.[280] Torres asserts that Albéniz was already in possession of the techniques as a virtuoso pianist to compose the sort of challenging passages we find in *Iberia* and finds Albéniz's compositional procedures to be still very similar to the composer's previous output. Torres believes that Albéniz's mature style was in fact a combination of his knowledge of the romantic repertoire, his familiarity with earlier composers such as Bach and Scarlatti, as well as a better use of the tools he acquired by contact with French musicians such as d'Indy, Chausson, Fauré and Dukas, and of course his familiarity with Spanish popular music.[281] All these aspects need to be addressed when examining *Iberia.*

[279] Mast, 359.

[280] Jacinto Torres Mula, "Influencias estilísticas y fuentes temáticas en la obra de Isaac Albéniz" in *Antes de "Iberia", de Masarnau a Albéniz: Actas del Symposium FIMTE 2008,* ed. Luisa Morales, Luisa, and Walter Aaron Clark. (Garrucha, Almería: Asociación Cultural LEAL, 2009), 128.

[281] Torres Mula, "Influencias estilísticas y fuentes temáticas en la obra de Isaac Albéniz", 128.

Elements of Spanish music in Iberia

The relationship between Albéniz's music and his use of folkloric idioms has always been a main focus of any scholarship regarding the composer's music. The desire of classifying his music as more or less "authentically" Spanish is often the reason for this attention to folkloric inspiration as well as judging Albéniz's talent at reproducing, absorbing and finding inspiration for original material in the music of Spain. Mast's analysis of *Iberia* concludes that in fact, Albéniz doesn't make extensive use of actual folk material in the twelve pieces of the collection.[282] Instead, Albéniz takes another approach when it comes to the use of folk material, with the exception of his suite *Catalonia* where the composer quotes several folk melodies. The musicologist Istel also agrees with this assessment and states that

> *"In general Albéniz's relations with folkwise art are quite special in character: he has borrowed from it only rhythmic and harmonic peculiarities and scarcely any melodic ones, or these last only on that, so to say, he employs certain intervals of fioriture cherished in Arab and Gypsy music, without directly making use of Spanish, Gypsy, or Arabic folk-motives"*[283]

Mast sees Albéniz's particular relationship with folk material as an advantage as this allowed the composer more freedom and variety, instead of tying himself down to pre-existing melodies in his representations of Andalusia's atmosphere. Mast further

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[282] Paul B. Mast, "Style and Structure in Iberia by Isaac Albéniz," PhD Diss., (Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, 1974), 57.

[283] Edgar Istel, and Frederick H. Martens. "Isaac Albéniz." *The Musical Quarterly* 15, no. 1 (1929): 127, http://www.jstor.org/stable/738310.

clarifies Albéniz's use of folkloric material by situating him within the division provided by Adolfo Salazar[284] of the different ways composers might make use of folklore.[285]

1) The "elementary exploitation of folkloristic document"

2) "That which converts the commonplaces of local color into elements of style with which the composer works to create compositions in independent form more or less distant from the popular forms of its origin"

3) "The untrammeled eloquence of a language with national elements, yet inalienably the composer's"[286]

Mast agrees with Salazar's placement of Albéniz in the second category while placing the Spanish music of Debussy and late Falla into the last category. According to Mast, this classification implies a judgment that assigns superior creative powers to Falla and Debussy.[287] This judgment aligns with the fact that Albéniz is usually regarded as a nationalist musician but less evolved in his manner of treating the folk material than, say, Falla who also drew inspiration from Andalusian music. Nevertheless, the question of authenticity is still raised for both Spanish composers, and indeed, some of Falla's compositions such as *El amor brujo* o *La vida breve* are accused of being examples of "glorified and tasteful picture-postcards of the come-to-sunny Spain order."[288]

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[284] Adolfo Salazar (1890-1958), Spanish musicologist and composer.

[285] Mast," Style and Structure in Iberia", 58.

[286] Mast, 58.

[287] Mast, 58.

[288] Carol Hess, cite from Constant Lambert, 1-2.

Clark agrees with Mast's analysis of Albéniz's use of folkloric idioms. Regarding *Iberia*, Clark finds that "the density of folkloric references is unprecedented in his output, and though a piece may bear the title of a particular song or dance, Albéniz feels no constraint to confine himself to that genre. It is good to remember that, when one refers to this or that theme as a *zapateado* or *bulerias*, one means that it is a freely composed melody utilizing the essential rhythmic and melodic components of that genre. However, these references are often so stylized that it is difficult to ascribe them to any specific category of song and dance."[289]

Jacinto Torres agrees with the other scholars in seeing Albéniz's use of Spanish elements not as direct quotation but reinvented from his creativity as an artist. However, Torres does emphasize the fact that Albéniz was well-versed with sources of popular Spanish music such as *Ecos de España* or *Cantos y bailes populares de España* of José Inzenga.[290] Albéniz was familiar with this music, not only from books and scores, but from extensive first-hand experience in taverns, *patios, ventas, fondas*, and other establishments where this music was performed.[291] Torres rejects the opinion that Albéniz's nationalistic music was all inspiration, rejecting any intellectual approach and erudition, but warns about the dangers of trying to find a specific musical reference in Albéniz's music, with the exception of direct quotes such as *La Tarara* in *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla*.[292] He warns particularly against finding flamenco references due to

[289] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic,* 225.

[290] Torres Mula, 126.

[291] Torres Mula, 126.

[292] Torres Mula, 126.

the fact that the genres have evolved and changed, and the flamenco of a hundred years ago is not the same as that of today.[293]

Albéniz himself clarified his position regarding the use of folklore: "I never utilize the "raw material" in its crude state myself. You only have to listen to Pepita to perceive that. What I like is to suggest our national rhythms and infuse the spirit of our national melodies into my music."[294] Debussy also described a very similar procedure when reviewing *El Albaicín* noting that Albéniz had not reproduced popular melodies but rather had "absorbed them, listening until they have passed into his music, leaving no trace of a boundary line."[295]

The majority of the folkloric idioms that Albéniz "suggests" in *Iberia* come from flamenco, the musical tradition of Andalusia. Unlike in his previous piano music, there are no references to any other region of Spain, except in *Lavapiés*. This is surprising given the title *Iberia*, which suggests an inspiration that would encompass all the Iberian Peninsula and its musical diversity. Albéniz focuses instead on the genres associated with Andalusia and flamenco.

The origins, evolutions, and types of flamenco are complex issues, beyond the scope of this document and its circumstances in the nineteenth century have been briefly discussed in chapter 1. The origins of flamenco are not certain and have been attributed to different cultures that had and still have a presence in Spain. According to Israel J. Katz, some theories suggest that *cante flamenco* originated as Arab songs that were later

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[293] Torres Mula, "Influencias estilísticas y fuentes temáticas en la obra de Isaac Albéniz", 128.

[294] Clark, 281-2.

[295] Clark, 281.

absorbed by Flemish immigrants or by Flamenco Romani that arrived in Spain in the fifteenth century. Other theories attribute the origins to Romani immigrants who brought their own music traditions from North India and cite the similarities of Flamenco with Indian music such as the singing of *rāgas*.[296] Independent of the unclear origins of flamenco, Romani people in Spain, often persecuted, developed this art form. Its principal centers were in Andalusia: Triana, Cádiz, and Jerez de la Frontera. In the 1860s, flamenco became more popular and started dominating the musical scene in Andalusia.[297]

A particularly important subdivision of *cante flamenco* in Albéniz's output is *cante jondo* or *cante hondo*, literally "deep singing", considered by many to be the oldest of the flamenco traditions. This deeply emotional singing is the purest, most honest manifestation of the profound feelings of the *cantaor* (flamenco singer). *Cante jondo* includes song types such as *cañas*, *carceleras*, *deblas*, *livianas*, *martinetes*, *polos*, *saetas*, *serranas*, *siguiriyas*, *soleares* and *tonás*, some of them used by Albéniz in *Iberia.*[298] *Cante jondo* is more sober than other, more vivacious, flamenco dance rhythms employed by Albéniz. Inspiration from forms of *cante jondo* identified by Mast

[296] Israel J Katz. "Flamenco." *Grove Music Online.* 2001; Accessed 23 Oct. 2023. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy.library.ucsb.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000009780.

[297] Katz. "Flamenco." *Grove Music Online*.

[298] J.B.Trend, and Israel J. Katz. "Cante hondo." *Grove Music Online.* 2001; Accessed 23 Oct. 2023. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.proxy.library.ucsb.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000004759.

in *Iberia* are *siquiriyas gitanas (El Puerto* and *El Albaicín*), *saetas* (In *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla*), *polo* (in *El Polo*), and *soleá* (in *Jerez*).[299]

Albéniz's extensive knowledge of Andalusian flamenco and assimilation of these musical languages allowed him to incorporate them in a sophisticated stylized way in the various pieces of *Iberia*. In this collection he focused on the rich variety of the music of Andalusia to find inspirations, rather than incorporating the usual *jotas*, *habaneras*, *boleros*, and *zapateados* that other foreign and Spanish composers, including Albéniz, had previously used.

Albéniz also draws significant inspiration from guitar idioms belonging to the tradition of the Spanish guitar. Techniques like *rasgueado* (strummed) and *punteado* (plucked) are very often recreated on the piano by Albéniz. Mast also points at sonorities that emphasize 4ths or 7ths, commonly produced by guitarists in Spanish folk tradition.[300] The fact that so many of Albéniz's compositions have been transcribed for the guitar and have become an important part of the guitar repertoire reflects the composer's skill at translating the idioms of the guitar to the piano.[301] There is an expectation, be it in Debussy's Spanish music, Falla or Albéniz, of finding these guitar idioms in almost any composition that claims to have a Spanish background. But according to Mast, no writer of Spanish music realized the possibilities of transferring guitar idioms to other compositions before Albéniz, Falla, and Debussy, with the

[299] Mast, "Style and Structure in Iberia", 122-127.

[300] Mast, 207.

[301] Guitars are not the only instrument to be reproduced at the piano by Albéniz; castanets can be heard in *Triana* and the rataplan military drums in *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla*.

exception of Domenico Scarlatti.[302] Scarlatti's influence also underlined the association between Spanish music and the guitar. This use of guitar idioms is one of the factors most often used to establish comparisons between Albéniz and the keyboard style of Domenico Scarlatti.

Influence of Scarlatti on Albéniz

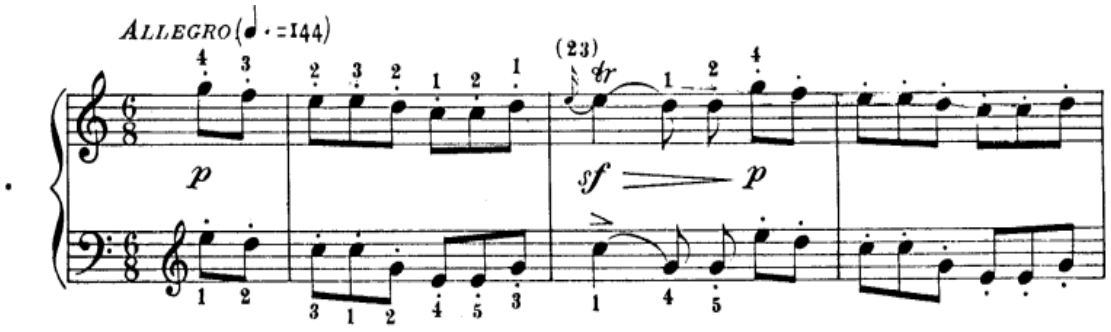
Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757) is a figure of great importance in the history of Spanish piano music. An Italian from Naples, he initially served the Portuguese crown as the music teacher of Princess Maria Magdalena Barbara, who would eventually become the Queen of Spain. Scarlatti spent almost 30 years of his life in Spain during which he produced an extensive amount of music for the keyboard. Alberto Martín Entrialgo believes that in the nineteenth century, while Spanish musicians were striving to build a national music identity, they found in the figure of Scarlatti the perfect combination of universalism and incorporation of folkloric sonorities. Falla admired Scarlatti's ability to disguise and transform the popular elements of his music through "avant-garde harmonic procedures."[303] Albéniz was very familiar with Scarlatti's music and the Neapolitan composer often figured in Albéniz's recital programs.

Every Albéniz scholar points out the similarities between Albéniz's writing and Scarlatti's in pieces such as the former's fifth sonata but also in many pieces of *Iberia.* Jacinto Torres compares the similarities in texture, rhythms, and ornamentation found at

[302] Mast, 88.

[303] Alberto Martín Entrialgo, "Borrowing from the Past: Scarlattian Phrase Structure, Type 2 Sonatas, and Phrygian Tonality in Isaac Albéniz's Works." *Music & letters* 104, no. 4 (2023): 2, https://doi.org/10.1093/ml/gcad034.

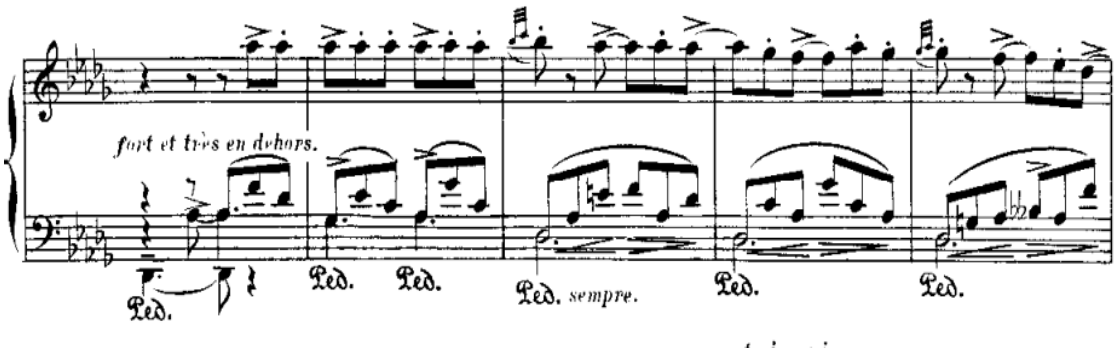
the beginning of *El Puerto* (ex. 12) and in Scarlatti's sonata K. 159 (ex. 11) but also in other pieces such as *Rondeña, Jerez, El Albaicín* and *Lavapiés*.[304] André Gauthier argued that in *Iberia* we find the influence of Scarlatti reflected specifically in Albéniz's "frankness, naturalness, transparency of the rhythmical invention, the dynamics of the dissonance, the use of hand-crossing to vary timbre and dynamics."[305] The masterful translation to the keyboard of guitar language devices such as *punteado* and *rasgueado* is mentioned by scholars such as Ralph Kirkpatrick and Gilbert Chase. Finding a connection between a revered "Spanish" composer such as Scarlatti and Albéniz also established a sort of genealogy or school of Spanish piano and imbued Albéniz with authority and legacy.



Example 11: Domenico Scarlatti, Sonata K. 159.

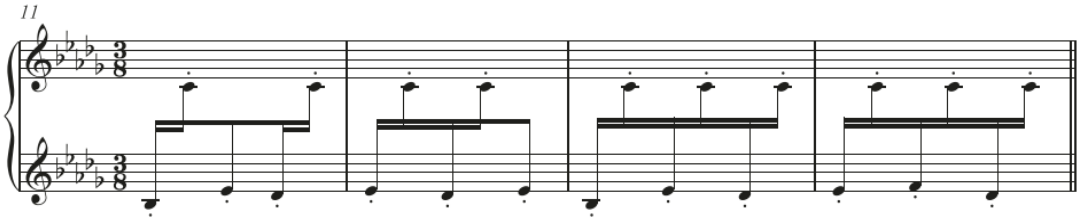
[304] Torres Mula, "Influencias estilísticas y fuentes temáticas en la obra de Isaac Albéniz", 134.

[305] Martín Entrialgo, 1.



Example 12: *El Puerto* (*Iberia*, Book I).

Sophisticated examples of these guitar languages are pointed out by Mast in pieces of *Iberia* such as *El Albaicín*. This fragment from the beginning of *El Albaicín* according to Mast "emulates the guitar technique of playing an internal pedal point on an open string with the thumb of the right hand while the other fingers circle around it on the other strings, a technique also frequently used by Scarlatti."[306]



Example 13: *El Albaicín* (*Iberia*, Book III) bb. 1-4

Other similarities between the two composers are the use of the Phrygian mode and the Andalusian cadence,[307] both associated with Spanish music.[308] Martín Entrialgo,

[306] Mast, 209.

[307] A chord progression often used in flamenco music, which in the key of A minor would be i-VII-VI-V.

[308] Martín Entrialgo, 3.

whose scholarly work focuses on the study of the use of eighteenth century practices and conventions in Albéniz's music, goes beyond the most often remarked-upon aspects to justify this comparison and looks at Albéniz's use of the Galante schemata, such as the Prinner, in some of the pieces of *Iberia* as a possible connection between the Spanish composer and Scarlatti. Martín Entrialgo believes that Albéniz's phrase construction "often replicated a typical Scarlattian phrase syntax consisting of the almost obsessive repetition of short (mostly two-bar) phrase units over a light harmonic background" and that other formal strategies employed by Scarlatti such as the use of some type of binary/sonata form (Hepokoski and Darcy's type two) could have also been a source of inspiration for Albéniz's own sonata forms in *Iberia*.[309] Albéniz's large-scale use of the Phrygian mode also has an antecedent in the sonatas of Scarlatti.[310]

The French Question in Iberia

The undeniable change in Albéniz's nationalistic style took place after Albéniz had the chance to learn from and develop friendships with some of the most important French composers at the turn of the century. As we have seen in the previous chapter, he was particularly close to the circle of musicians associated with the Schola Cantorum and with Fauré. Since Albéniz was exposed to the latest French musical trends, scholars often look at the possible influences of Impressionism in *Iberia*. The subtitle of *Nouvelles Impressions* given to *Iberia* also helped make the connection between

[309] Martín Entrialgo, 25.

[310] Martín Entrialgo, 22.

Albéniz's work and Impressionism. Even Spanish composers such as Falla contributed to this belief by remarking that Albéniz owed his inspiration to Debussy's own *Ibéria* (the second book of his orchestral *Images*), something easily disproved upon examining the dates on which these pieces were composed. Other contemporaries of Albéniz have pointed out the possible influence of French impressionism. In 1907 at a concert of the Parent String Quartet at the Salle Aeolian in Paris, the composer Joaquín Turina overheard a conversation regarding the modern compositions being presented by the quartet. One of the listeners commented on his dislike of the modern harmonies and Albéniz answered "What do you want? These things are in fashion now, and I myself am writing a series of pieces in which I employ the same procedures."[311]

Despite this testimony, Albéniz often vigorously rejected the "accusations" of influence of Impressionism in his Spanish music. When the Portuguese virtuoso pianist and dedicatee of *La Vega*, José Vianna da Motta (1868-1948), suggested in a letter to Albéniz that *Iberia* showed the influence of Impressionism and particularly Debussy, he incurred the wrath of the Spanish composer. Vianna da Motta apologized for the unintentional offense in a later letter to Albéniz.[312]

Clark believes that Albéniz's preference for direct and immediate effect makes his style different from Debussy's "symbolist penchant for allusion and implicit statement."[313] Nevertheless, Clark mentions the frequent French indications such as *très souple, très lointain, absolument atténué* as signs of influence from his French

[311] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic*, 227.

[312] Clark, 250.

[313] Clark, 250.

counterparts.[314] Looking at the actual musical procedures, Paul Mast observes that the rhythm, melodic organization, and harmonic usage are more conservative than in Debussy.[315] He also notes that many of the Impressionistic traits of *Iberia* like modality, parallel motion, secundal[316] and quartal harmonies, and added tune sonorities have their origins in Andalusian folk music, but Albéniz seems to have become more aware of these elements during his years in Paris.[317] The exception to the Andalusian origins of the musical procedures used by Albéniz is the whole-tone scale.[318] In fact, Albéniz's use of the whole tone scale declined after the French influence in *Iberia* was noticed and pointed out to Albéniz.[319]

According to Mast, Albéniz's harmonic vocabulary in *Iberia* is richer and more complex than in his previous music, from the use of whole-tone scales to a concentration of added tone sonorities, and subtonic harmonies. Harmonic juxtapositions and secundal and quartal sonorities are also frequently present in *Iberia.*[320] A particular harmonic device used by Albéniz and identified by Mast is what the latter calls an Iberian sixth, which is a combination of French and German augmented-sixth chords with a clashing semitone in the middle.[321]

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[314] Clark, 227.

[315] Mast, 367.

[316] Mast uses the term "secundal" to refer to chords made of seconds.

[317] Mast, 367-8.

[318] Mast, 368.

[319] Mast, 66.

[320] Mast, 377.

[321] Mast, 228.

Martín Entrialgo also reaches the conclusion that in books three and four Albéniz places a stronger emphasis on folkloric Spanish elements than in books one and two, and as a consequence the latter two books contain more use of modality.[322] This focus on the Spanish elements, an intentional *españolismo*, was mentioned by Albéniz in a letter to the pianist Malats:

> *Since I was lucky enough to hear your performance of Triana I can tell you that I only write for you; I have just finished under the direct influence of your marvellous interpretation, the third book of Iberia: the title of the numbers is as follows: El Albaicín, El Polo y Lavapiés; I think that in these numbers I carried españolismo (spanishness) and technical difficulty to the ultimate extreme, and I feel compelled to confirm that you are at fault for it…*[323]

The use of Sonata form in Iberia

The last important aspect of *Iberia* that sets it apart from Albéniz's earlier music is the complexity of its structures. With the exception of *La Vega*, his earlier nationalistic pieces employed ternary or binary form, simple alternations of refrain and copla.[324]

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[322] Alberto Martín Entrialgo, 'Albéniz, Malats, Iberia and the ultimate "españolismo"'. *Diagonal: An Ibero-American Music Review*, 5 (2020): 3, http://dx.doi.org/10.5070/D85147244.

[323] Martín Entrialgo, 2. Translation from Walter A. Clark.

[324] Copla being the song-like section that alternates with the refrain.

Nine of the twelve pieces of *Iberia* (all except *El Puerto, El Corpus Christi en Sevilla,* and *El Albaicín*) use some sort of sonata form. Martín Entrialgo offers two possible models for the eight pieces in sonata form which are synthesized in the following examples (with the exception of *Almería* which recapitulates in the subdominant).[325]

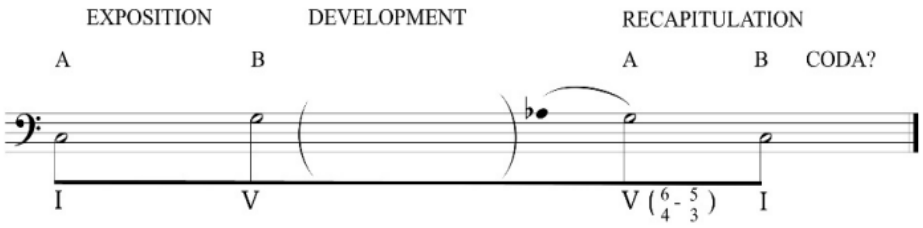

Figure 1: Martín Entrialgo's sonata form model major.[326]

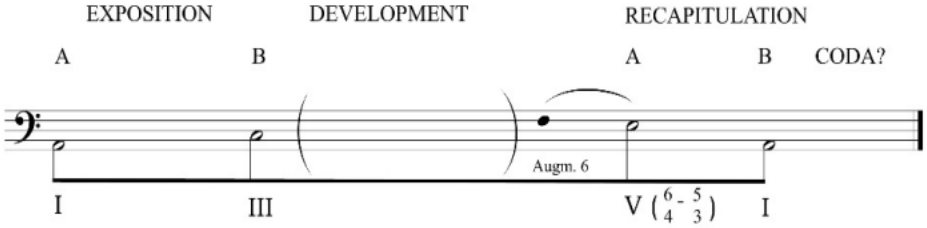

Figure 2: Martín Entrialgo's sonata form model minor.[327]

[325] Martín Entrialgo, 'Albéniz, Malats, Iberia and the ultimate "españolismo,"' 3.

[326] Martín Entrialgo, 3.

[327] Martín Entrialgo, 4.

Clark sees classicism as the third component in *Iberia*, together with the influence of romanticism and modernism, that makes it a masterpiece of Spanish repertoire.[328] Albéniz himself described his own compositional approach as "variety within logic."[329] Clark finds it problematic to define Albéniz as a purely nationalist composer due to his political positions, often critical of Spain, and mentions Albéniz's familiarity with the music of Baroque and Classical composers, as well as his studies of Middle Ages and Renaissance music in the Schola Cantorum, as important influences.[330] Clark argues that Albéniz merges his interest in sonata form, which the composer explored in his own piano sonatas, with his "españolismo" and with the compositional techniques he learned while frequenting the conservative circle of the Schola Cantorum (d'Indy, Dukas, Chausson) and Fauré, as well as absorbing the Impressionism of Debussy.[331] According to Clark, the myriad of influences – Spanish, virtuosic writing, the colorful harmonies – all became coherent thanks to the formal structure lying underneath.[332]

Despite Albéniz's sometimes hostile relationship with Spanish authorities due to his liberal beliefs, he still believed in the importance of providing Spain with its own national music, such as his mentor Pedrell did, but imbuing his music with an

[328] Walter A. Clark, "'Variety within Logic': Classicism in the Works of Isaac Albéniz." *Diagonal (Riverside, Calif.)* 1, no. 1 (2015): 105.

[329] Clark, *Portrait of a Romantic*, 225.

[330] Clark, "'Variety within Logic': Classicism in the Works of Isaac Albéniz," 110.

[331] Clark, "'Variety within Logic': Classicism in the Works of Isaac Albéniz," 112.

[332] Clark, "'Variety within Logic': Classicism in the Works of Isaac Albéniz," 112-113.

international quality that would allow it, in this case through the French market, a place in the international arena.

Influence of Liszt and virtuosic writing

One obvious aspects of *Iberia* is the often-extreme technical difficulty of its writing. Albéniz was well aware of the virtuosity of *Iberia* and on one occasion came close to destroying the manuscript, deeming it unplayable.[333] According to Clark "*Iberia* requires almost superhuman technique, and Albéniz himself was hardly capable of playing it."[334] It is important to keep in mind that by the time of *Iberia*'s writing, Albéniz's piano prowess was diminished by his poor health.

The influence of romantic composers has often been cited when discussing *Iberia*'s virtuosic writing. Nineteenth century virtuoso repertoire by composers such as Liszt and Chopin figured prominently in Albéniz's concert repertoire but also the virtuosic writing of Scarlatti filled with almost impossible leaps, hand-crossings, and repeated notes must be kept in mind as well.

Particular emphasis has been made on the relationship between Albéniz's writing and Liszt's. Despite claims made by Albéniz himself, as well as several of Albéniz's and Liszt's biographers,[335] research by Clark and Liszt scholar Alan Walker cast strong

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[333] According to Clark, Viñes and Falla one day found Albéniz extremely distraught because the night before he had come close to destroying the manuscript. Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*, 224.

[334]Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic*, 224.

[335] Derek Watson in his Liszt biography refers to Albéniz as a pupil of Liszt on three occasions in pages 73, 153, and 380 in Derek Watson, *Liszt*. London: Dent, 1989.

doubt that the two composers had ever met. Despite the fact that Albéniz had kept a written personal account of these supposed meetings, Liszt was not residing in Budapest at the time when Albéniz claimed he had met the composer in Hungary.[336] Nevertheless, Albéniz was undeniably interested in Liszt, and he had direct contact with disciples of the composer after studying in Leipzig with two former students of Liszt, Salomon Jadassohn and Louis Maas.[337]

In her dissertation, *Isaac Albéniz's "Iberia" and the influence of Franz Liszt*, Myungsook Wang directly compares the writing of both composers, not only in Albéniz's *Iberia* but also in his earlier works such as *Deseo: estudio de concierto*.[338] Similarities in technique mentioned by Wang are crossing hands, overlapping hand positions, leaps, running scales, alternating hands repeating chords, and other virtuosic devices. Wang also mentions both composers' representation of other instruments on the piano such as drums, castanets, tambourines, and bells.[339] The use of extreme register, extreme dynamics, and melodies based on iteration as well as innovative writing techniques such as superimposed triads, parallel fifths, and the utilization of three staves are also mentioned. [340] Of course, many of these similarities are common to other romantic composers and even Scarlatti, but it is undeniable that Albéniz's *Iberia* belongs

[336] Clark, 41-43.

[337] Clark, 35.

[338] Myungsook Wang. "Isaac Albéniz's "Iberia" and the Influence of Franz Liszt." City University of New York, 2004: 3, https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/isaac-albénizs-iberia-influence-franz-liszt/docview/305205396/se-2.

[339] Wang, "Isaac Albéniz's "Iberia" and the Influence of Franz Liszt."

[340] Wang, 63-66.

in the tradition of virtuosic romantic writing. Clark also points out the possibility that Albéniz might have received direct inspiration from Liszt's use of folkloric idioms as in the *Rhapsodie Espagnole* S.254 or his *Spanish Fantasie* S.253.[341]

Paul Mast also refers to a complexity of texture and piano technique present in *Iberia* which is absent from Albéniz's earlier nationalistic music. The writing is very dense and extremely detailed with layers of voices creating a complex texture. The use of key signatures with many flats makes even reading these pieces a hard task. Although textures in *Iberia* are mainly homophonic with contrapuntal processes being rare, Albéniz does often employ a contrapuntal combination of themes. Another aspect that adds interest to Albéniz's writing in *Iberia* is the rhythmic complexity of some of these pieces. He had employed hemiolas to create rhythmic interest in earlier nationalistic music but its use is more frequent in *Iberia*. The changing and superimposed rhythms are very frequent and add an additional layer of complexity.[342]

The comparisons to Liszt, even the occasional use of the title "the Spanish Liszt", also give Albéniz a space in the international arena as a romantic piano virtuoso composer while retaining a Spanish distinctive flavor that made him more attractive to international audiences.

The next chapter will try to shed light on how some of these elements are present in each of the four books of *Iberia* and the difficulties a performer may encounter when attempting to bring them all to life.

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[341] Clark, 56.

[342] Mast, "Style and Structure in Isaac Albéniz's Iberia", 366.

CHAPTER 5

Iberia

The four books of Iberia display the different ways in which Albéniz manipulated the Andalusian inspiration to create pieces with complex structures and harmonies, multi-layered textures, and sometimes almost impossible virtuosic passages. These pieces brought Albéniz far away from the more intimate performance of his earlier pieces, more suitable for guitar transcriptions. Some of them try to use the full range of the piano to capture not only the folk music of Spain but also a more complete scene, including everything that might be happening during a live performance. Their titles give us clues of what Albéniz might have had in mind when writing but the case is not always straightforward.

BOOK I (composed in December 1905)

The first book is dedicated to Madame Jeanne Chausson, the late Ernest Chausson's widow. Albéniz wrote the first book in December of 1905 while still living in Paris.[343]

Evocación

Albéniz originally named this piece *Prelude* in the manuscript. *Evocación* is different from the other pieces in *Iberia* because it is the only one that does not refer

[343] Walter Aaron Clark, *Isaac Albéniz Portrait of a Romantic*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 225.

to a particular location in Spain, a specific dance, or a festival. It is, as the title suggests, an evocation of Spain, perhaps seen by the composer from the distance of exile. Clark sees it as ambiguous on purpose, having a "strong fragrance of wistful nostalgia."[344] It is a fitting continuation after his last nationalistic piece, *La Vega*, portraying a Spain seen from far away, not lived but remembered. In this way, it falls within the category of French pieces, and of those written for a French audience, that observe Spain, past or present, from a distance such as Debussy's *La soirée dans Grenade* or Glinka's *Spanish Overture No. 2*. Through this evocation of Spain, Albéniz is unifying the character of Spain as a whole but, as for most of the collection, through the lens of Andalusian-inspired music.

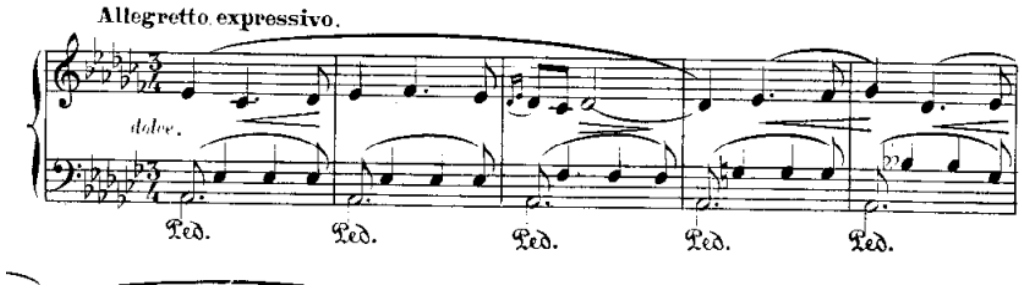
Evocación is also the least virtuosic piece of the collection, and is a calmer piece, without the extreme bravura of other pieces such as *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla, Triana,* or *Lavapiés*. Even though it is not as virtuosic, Albéniz already displays rhythmic invention and complexity.

Scholars have tried to identify the specific genres used by Albéniz despite their awareness of the difficulties involved in doing this due to the composer's free interpretation of the sources of inspiration. In *Evocación,* Clark thinks Albéniz hints at a *fandanguillo* disguised as a *jota navarra* but also that certain elements such as the triple meter combined with a minor key, descending minor tetrachord, the use of the augmented second, and certain arabesque turns of musical phrase are suggestive of a *malagueña*, a dance derived from the fandango and typical of the city of

[344] Clark, 225.

Málaga.[345] According to Clark, Albéniz retains the folk-like character due to the way the melody circles first Eb and then Ab within the narrow compass of an octave [346] (Example 14). These stylizations suggest the sounds of Spanish folklore without using a particular source. Mast maintains that the presence of the whole-tone scale, and the slow rate of harmonic change rooted in long-held pedal tones make *Evocación* the most Impressionistic-sounding piece in *Iberia*.[347]

Mast identifies the form of *Evocación* as a free adaptation of the sonata structural principle.[348] He finds all the main elements of sonata form in the piece: thematic and tonal dualism in the exposition, some development, and thematic dualism resolved to tonal unity in the return.[349]



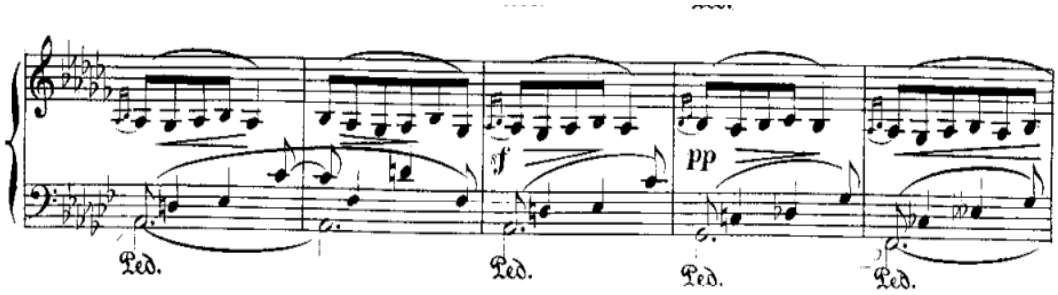
[345] Clark, 225.

[346] Clark, 226.

[347] Paul B. Mast, "Style and Structure in Iberia by Isaac Albéniz," PhD Diss., (Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, 1974), 219.

[348] Mast, 221-222.

[349] Mast, 221-222.



Example 14: *Evocación* (*Iberia,* Book I). Bb. 1-5 and 11-15.

El Puerto

In *El Puerto* Albéniz portrays a specific location in Andalusia, namely El Puerto de Santa María de Cádiz, a small port city in Cádiz. The manuscript shows the inscription *Cadix*, perhaps having thought of naming the piece that way instead.[350] The cheerful music fits the purpose of depicting a busy, lively port. Once more, identifying a specific dance might prove complicated due to Albéniz's stylization and originality. Different scholars have identified different possible sources of inspiration for rhythms within the piece. Paul Mast believes that Albéniz creates the atmosphere of the busy port by using three conflicting rhythms, *polo* (identified by Collet), *bulerías,* and *siguiriyas gitanas* (identified by Gilbert Chase).[351] Clark sees the piece as clearly in the style of a *zapateado,* a genre that is danced but not sung.[352] Pola Baytelman also believes that Albéniz used different rhythms to create this lively, rhythmically complex piece; in this particular case she

[350] Pola Baytelman. *Isaac Albéniz : Chronological List and Thematic Catalog of His Piano Works*. Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 1993, 18.

[351] Baytelman, 234.

[352] Clark. *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic*, 228.

identifies three different dances alluded to in the first sixteen bars: a *zapateado*, a *polo*, and *bulerías*.[353] According to Baytelman, a fourth dance, a *seguiriya gitana* is heard in the copla.[354] These different interpretations reflect the difficulties in identifying the sources of inspiration in *Iberia*.

El Puerto is one of the three pieces of *Iberia* that does not use sonata form. Instead, Albéniz constructs the piece in ternary form, where the middle section is developmental rather than new material (Intro-A-development-A- coda) and does not present a secondary theme as in *Evocación*. The A section has increasing modal inflections, taking us from major to Mixolydian to Phrygian, with the entire A section united by a Db tonic pedal. This tonic pedal provides a stabilizing element in the midst of all the syncopations and chromatic alterations.[355]

Many of the pieces of *Iberia* share with *El Puerto* the cheerful character achieved through lively rhythms and melodies, evoking a colorful Spain. In other pieces of *Iberia*, this is sometimes interrupted by soulful singing or evocative fragments, but not in *El Puerto*, which remains lively throughout.

"Fête-Dieu à Séville" or El Corpus Christi en Sevilla

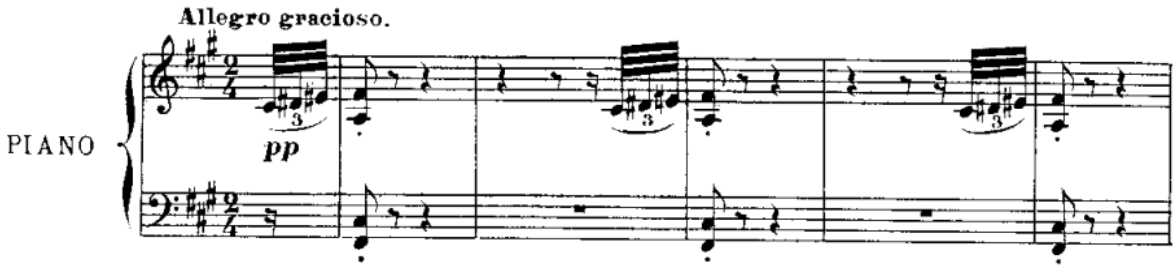
El Corpus Christi en Sevilla is the only piece in *Iberia* that can be called programmatic. The procession of Corpus Christi is one of the most sacred events for Catholics in Sevilla, lasting about twelve hours and involving thousands of people,

[353] Baytelman, 18.

[354] Baytelman, 18.

[355] Baytelman, 228.

including people playing instruments such as castanets alongside penitential flagellants. Albéniz captured in this piece the solemnity of the event and of the religious feelings as well as the processional atmosphere. The march-like theme and drum-like rataplan gesture of the beginning are the first examples of it (example 15).[356]



Example 15*: El Corpus Christi en Sevilla* (*Iberia*, Book I), rataplan gesture in bb. 1-5.

El Corpus Christi is also the only piece of *Iberia* where Albéniz quotes a popular tune, *La Tarara* (a Castilian children's nursery rhyme).[357] We don't know why Albéniz might have chosen this Castilian melody for an important religious event in Sevilla. A possible explanation is given by Nelson R. Orringer, who explores the relationship between Federico García Lorca and Manuel de Falla. In this case, Orringer discusses Lorca's own depictions of this religious festival in several poems and Lorca's probable knowledge of Albéniz's piece. In Lorca's poems, according to Orringer, "the lyric voice, ever seeking disguises for greater distance, assumes a child's viewpoint, a perspective consistent with

[356] Baytelman, 229.

[357] Baytelman, 229.

Lorca's vision of Seville as a primitivist artist, a creative being naturalizing culture."[358] Lorca also transcribed *La Tarara* from oral sources.[359] Orringer sees Albéniz's depiction of the procession as a recollection from far away of an event in the past, perhaps from the point of view of a child in a similar way to Lorca's approach.[360] For Orringer, *El Corpus* "paints a festival in Seville from the standpoint of a nostalgic spectator recalling childlike impressions, if not from the viewpoint of the child himself."[361] Orringer also believes that *El Corpus* is written from a stationary point of view, with the spectator hearing the *pp* dynamic that indicates the procession approaching to the ecstasy of the climax when the religious images are nearby.[362] The music ends with the procession returning to the church as bells can be heard during the coda. This idea fits with the depiction of a Spain that exists in the imagination or in the idealized impressions of an Albéniz in exile, such as in *Evocación*.

The march is interrupted by a *saeta* which is an improvised outcry of religious ecstasy, performed during a halt of the procession. The freedom necessary for this kind of singing is achieved through the relatively slow triplets and sextuplets giving the impression of free rhythm in comparison to the strictly metrical march theme that precedes the *saeta* and continues as an accompaniment. *Molto rubato* is directed, and *fermatas* often appear between phrases.

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[358] Nelson R. Orringer, *Lorca in Tune with Falla: Literary and Musical Interludes*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 86.

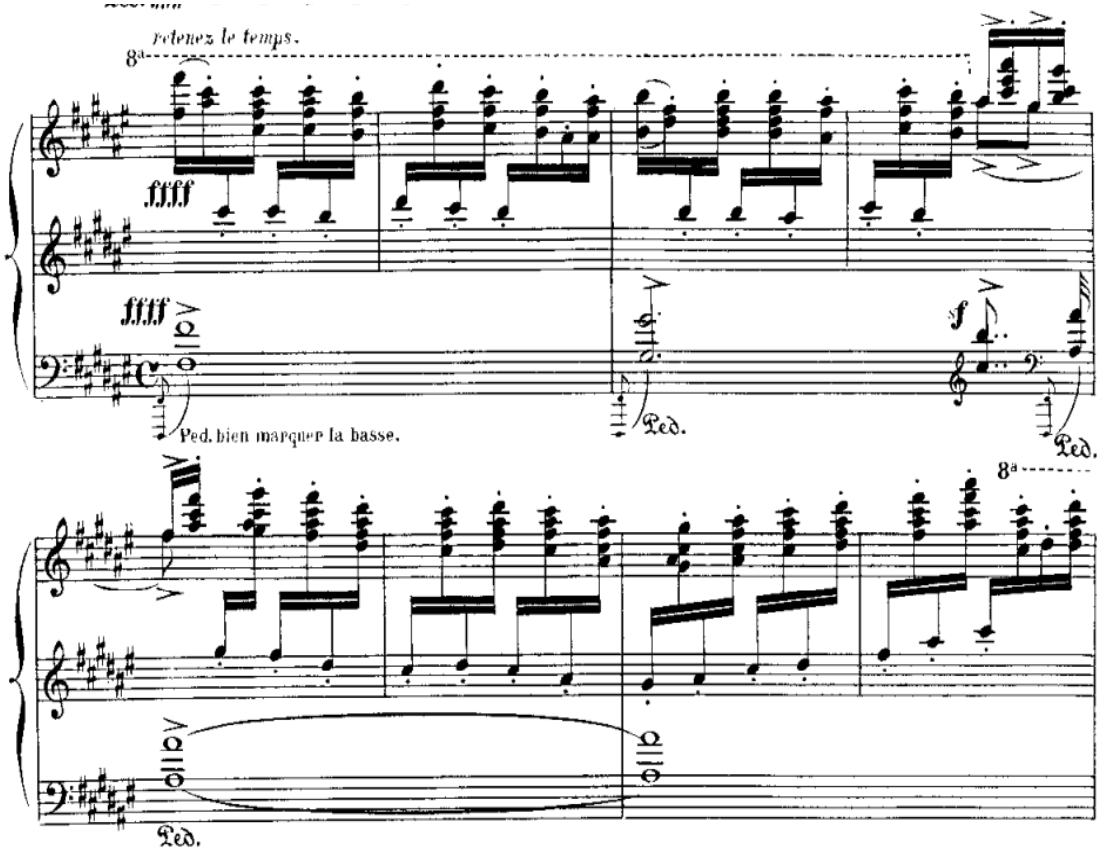
[359] Orringer, 86.

[360] Orringer, 86.

[361] Orringer, 86.

[362] Orringer, 86.

El Corpus Christi is not in sonata form but in a kind of arch structure. Pola Baytelman sees in this piece Albéniz's use of thematic transformation.[363] The technique was used by Liszt and later by musicians associated with the Schola Cantorum, such as César Frank, Vincent d'Indy, and Ernest Chausson.[364] Baytelman sees the theme from the section representing *saetas* (example 16) as clearly derived from the theme of the beginning of the piece (example 17).[365]

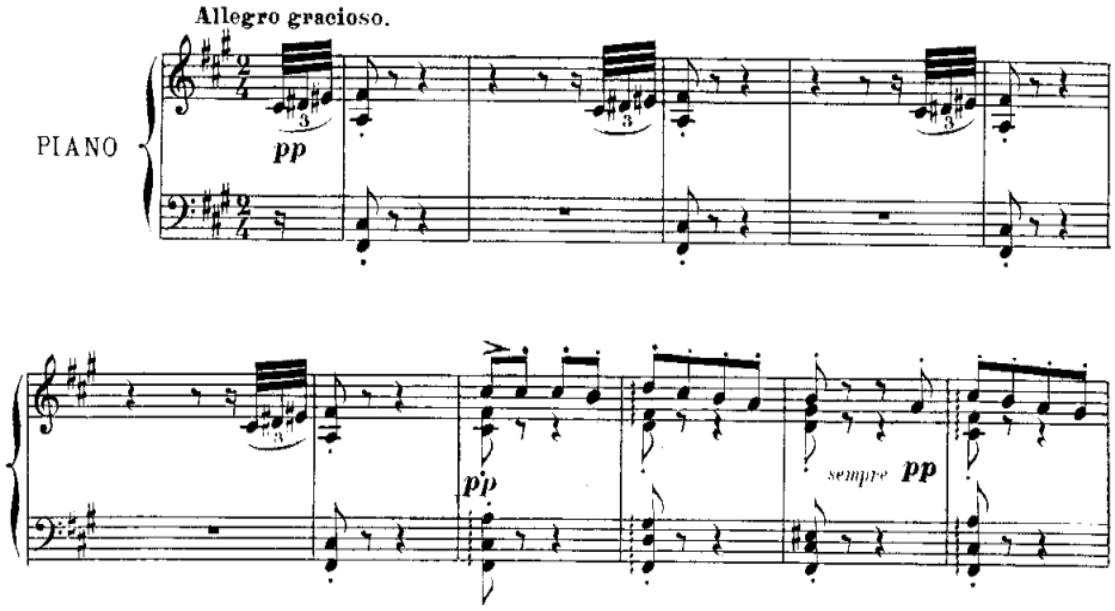


Example 16: *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla*, (*Iberia*, Book I). Bb. 99-102.

[363] Baytelman, 25.

[364] Baytelman, 24.

[365] Baytelman, 26.



Example 17: *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla,* (*Iberia,* Book I). Bb. 1-11.

Baytelman also sees the passages in *El Corpus Christi* written in three staves, such as the one in example 15, as showing the influence of Liszt.[366] It is indeed a virtuosic piece, the hardest in the collection so far, but also one of the most often played pieces of all of *Iberia*.

BOOK II (composed in 1906)

This second book was dedicated to Blanche Selva who premiered all the pieces of *Iberia.*

Rondeña

The title of this piece seems to indicate clearly that Albéniz's source of inspiration was the Andalusian city of Ronda and the flamenco genre named after the

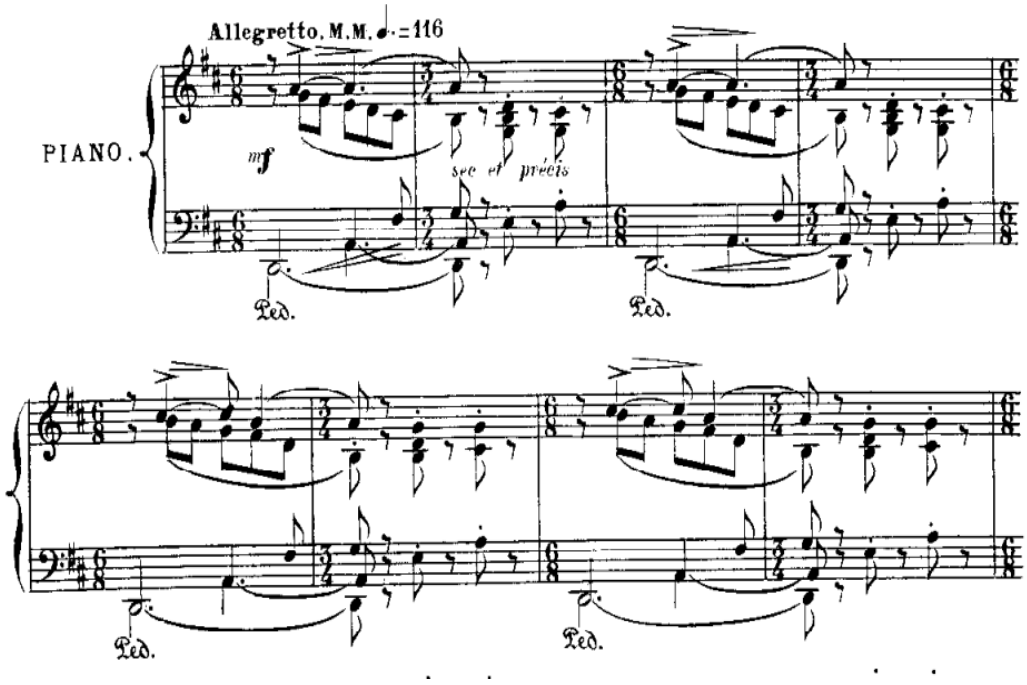
[366] Baytelman, 26.

city. However, according to Clark, Albéniz's inspiration for this piece is not clear. In a similar way to *Evocación* and *El Puerto*, Albéniz's treatment of rhythms inspired by different types of flamencos opens these pieces to several possible interpretations. Clark explains that the problem is that the music doesn't fit what nowadays is known as *rondeña*, a rather oriental-sounding guitar solo, played scordatura and filled with melisma-like slurred runs in free rhythm as developed by the guitarist Ramón Montoya (c. 1880-1949).[367] However, before this rather recent development, *rondeña* was once a dance very similar to the *malagueña*.[368] The meter and tempo might also suggest *bulerías* but once more we must remember this can just be seen as a product of Albéniz finding different sources of inspiration and stylizing them.[369] The rhythms start with a very clear alternation of 6/8 and 3/4 (which reminds Clark of *guajiras*) but it soon starts to sort of dissolve and change, evolve, and become more complex (example 18).

[367] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic*, 231.

[368] Clark, 231.

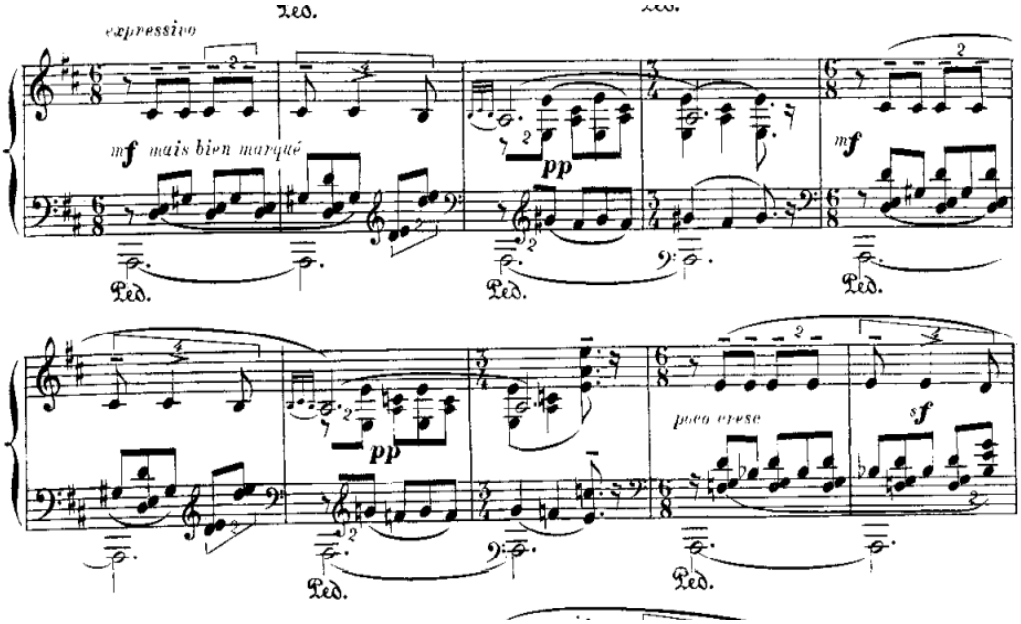
[369] Clark, 231.



Example 18: *Rondeña*, (*Iberia,* Book II). Bb. 1-8.

After the initial lively and cheerful dance-like section, the contrasting *copla* arrives. The character of this section is different: expressive, slower, almost a lament, and it can be seen again as drawing inspiration from different sources. The melodic iterance suggests inspiration from *cante jondo* but the rhythms suggest an octosyllabic *jota copla* (example 19).[370] If anything, the deep feeling of this section, the freedom of rhythm suggested by Albéniz, does invite comparisons with the emotions of *cante jondo* and contrasts greatly with the animated rhythms of the first part of the piece.

[370] Clark, 232.

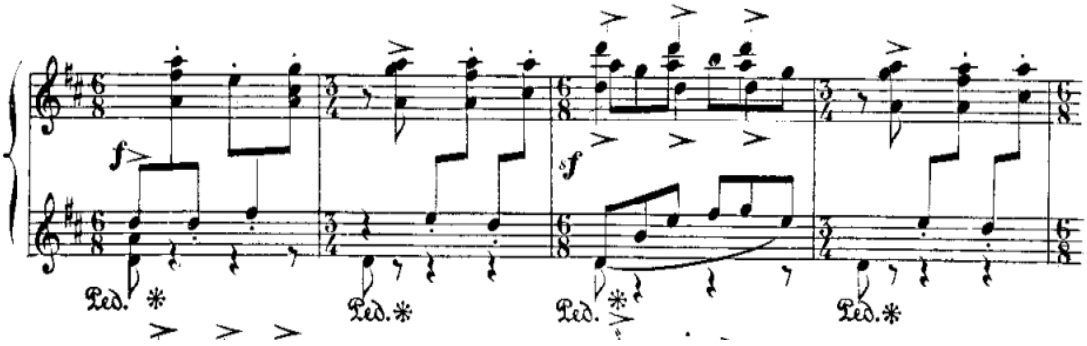


Example 19: *Rondeña*, (*Iberia,* Book II). Bb. 103-112.

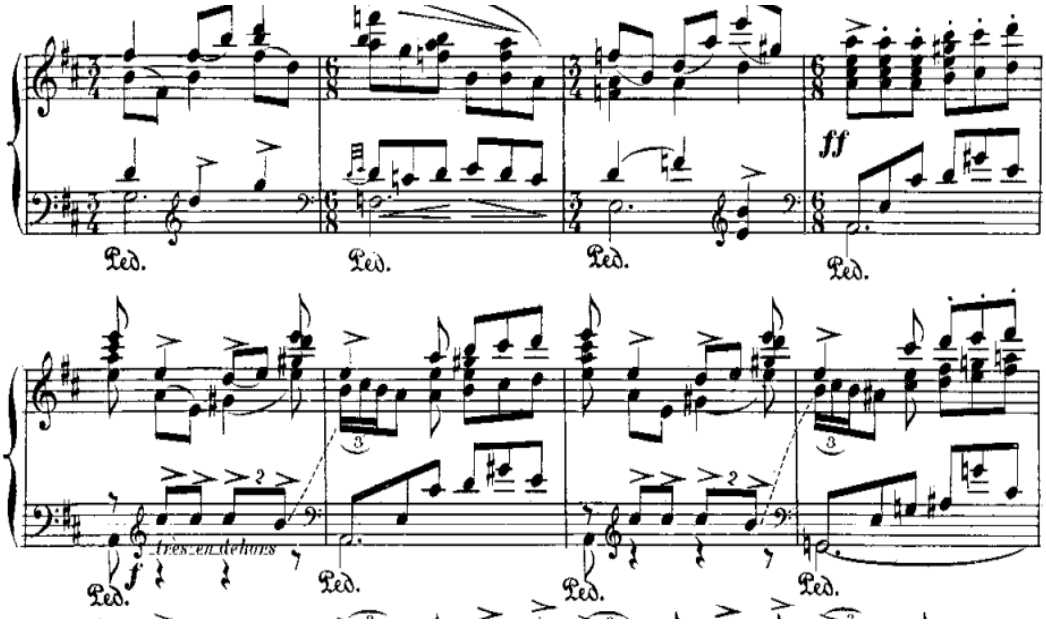
Mast sees the form of *Rondeña* as shaped by an alternation of the two main contrasting themes, A (example 20) and B (example 19).[371] The two main themes, the one presented at the beginning and the theme of the *copla* are presented in a contrapuntal combination of themes at the piece's climax (example 21). Clark reads and argues the structure of *Rondeña* as something resembling sonata form. Clark cites the principal theme group that moves through the subdominant, G major, to bring us to a contrasting area in the dominant in bar 93. He also cites the modulatory exploration of themes that creates the impression of a development section and a retransition. Clark also identifies an unusual recapitulation over a dominant pedal

[371] Mast, 255.

and a coda that includes both the character of the secondary theme and an animated restatement of the principal theme.[372]



Example 20: *Rondeña*, (*Iberia* Book II). Bb. 17-20.



Example 21*: Rondeña*, (*Iberia* Book II). Bb. 189-193.

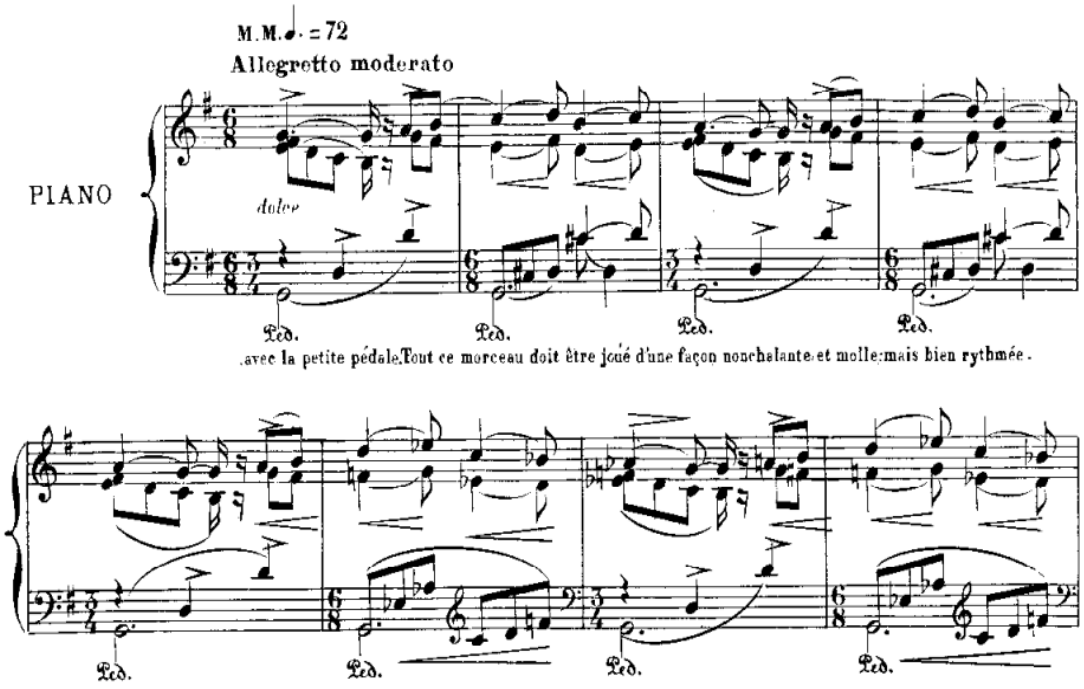
[372] Clark, 231-232.

Almería

Albéniz named this piece after another Andalusian city, Almería, a seaport where his father worked in the 1860s. The rhythms are sophisticated and difficult to voice effectively, leaving to the pianist the task of highlighting the contrasting rhythms. As in *Rondeña*, Albéniz starts by alternating 6/8 and 3/4. But as Clark points out, although the left hand alternates between the two time signatures, the right hand seems to stay in 6/8 and flow more freely (example 22). Clark believes these complex rhythms suggest Albéniz found inspiration in the genre of *siguiriyas*, "the most *jondo* of all flamenco rhythms."[373] This affirmation comes from Falla's own belief that *siguiriyas gitanas* was the genre that kept its purity from its supposed ancient origins, preserving the inherent qualities and style of the "primitive oriental people."[374]

[373] Clark, 233.

[374] Manuel de Falla, "Sobre El Cante Jondo." *Litoral*, no. 35/36 (1973): 43, http://www.jstor.org/stable/43356897.

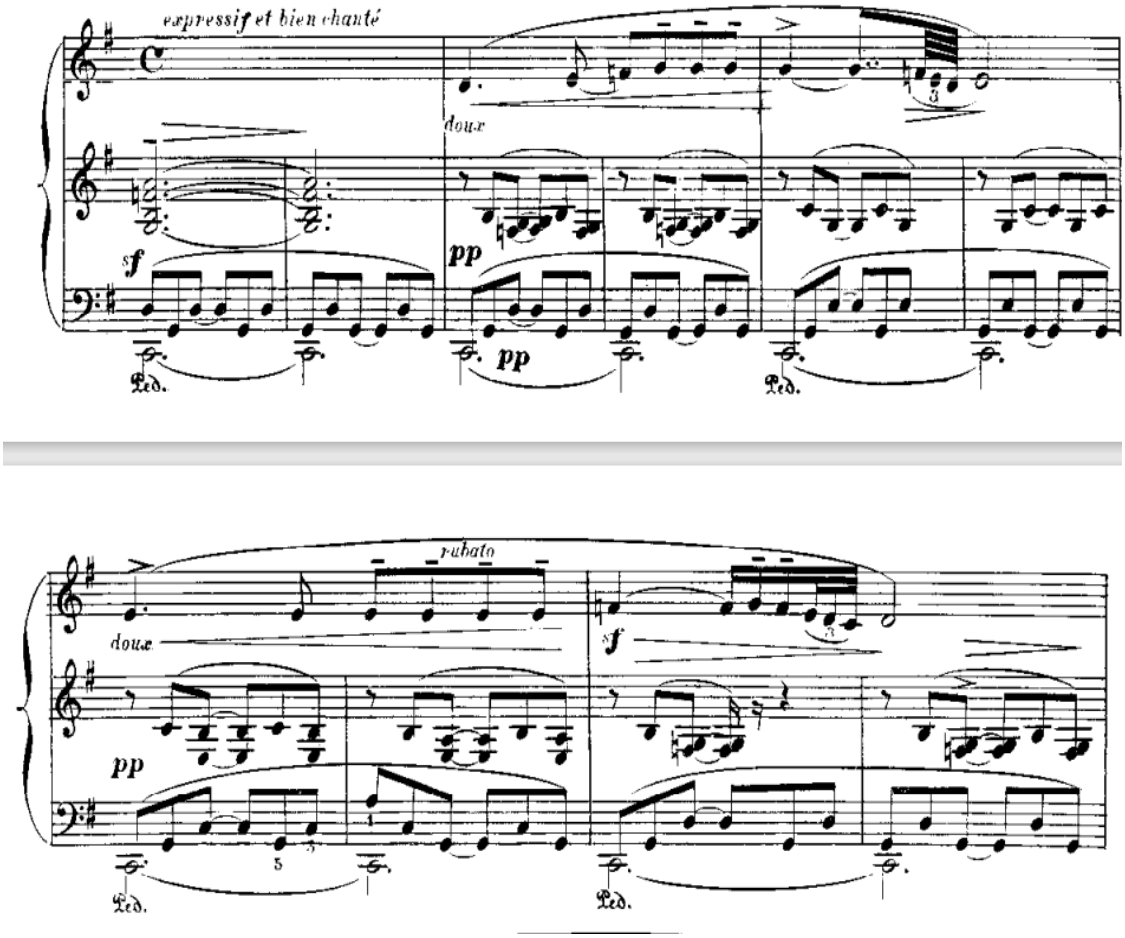


Example 22: *Almería* (*Iberia,* Book II). Bb. 1-8

Again, different scholars observe different possible sources of inspiration; Mast sees instead of *siguiriya* the rhythm of *tarantas*. Either way, Albéniz once more contrasts the dance-like theme with a more lyrical *copla*.[375] In the *copla,* Albéniz, as in *Rondeña*, uses a similar combination of *cante jondo* influence and octosyllabic *jota copla* (example 23).[376] Albéniz writes this section in three staves, as in *El Corpus Christi,* making the distinction between the melody and a guitar-like accompaniment very clear. This section of Almeria makes for an intimate, expressive moment, where the freedom and expressiveness of the *cantaor* are effectively represented.

[375] Clark, 265.

[376] Clark, 234.



Example 23: *Almería (Iberia,* Book II). Bb. 99-108

For Clark, *Almería* is clearly in sonata form.[377] Mast believes that *Almería* exemplifies a free adaptation of sonata form, identifying all the elements that allow him to see *Almería*'s form as fitting within the sonata mold, even more clearly than in *Rondeña*.[378] Even though all these elements are present, the return of the main

[377] Clark, 233.

[378] Mast, 265.

subject is not complete and heavily modified, being the biggest deviation from the sonata mold.

Almería is the longest piece in the second book of *Iberia*. It offers a contrast with the more animated *Rondeña* and particularly the virtuosic *Triana* that follows *Almería* in the second book. The long, expressive *copla* allows for a reflective and evocative moment in the second book of *Iberia*. Despite the calmer moments and the exploration of softer dynamics in this piece, it doesn't lack virtuosic passages, where Albéniz employs full chords, running scales, double notes, and risky leaps in the left hand.

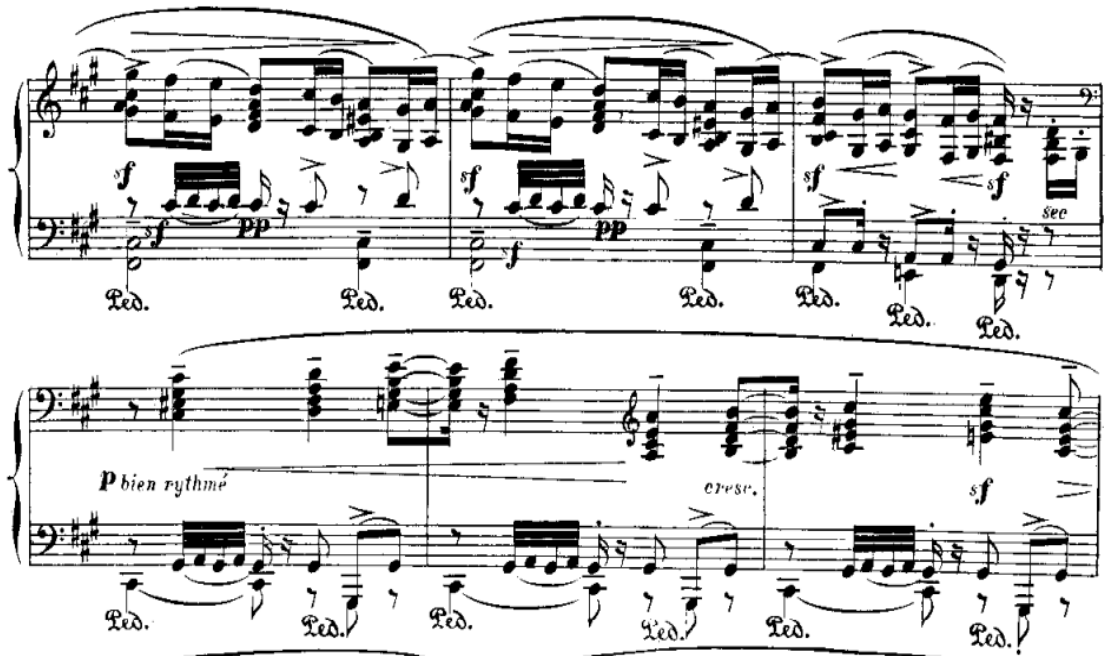
Triana

In this case, Albéniz's title refers to a particular district of Seville, Triana, that is considered one of the cradles of flamenco. As in most of *Iberia*, flamenco-inspired dances are the protagonists. Albéniz does not only use inspiration from the rhythm of these dances but also from everything else that surrounds the performance of flamenco. The piano seems to imitate guitar, castanets, *taconeo*[379], and tambourine players – all the noises of the *juerga*, a flamenco gathering. Clark refers to this as the "clamour of the juerga."[380] The castanets are easily identified in the 32nds motif found throughout the piece (example 24) and tambourines are perhaps what we hear

[379] The clicking of heels in flamenco dancing.

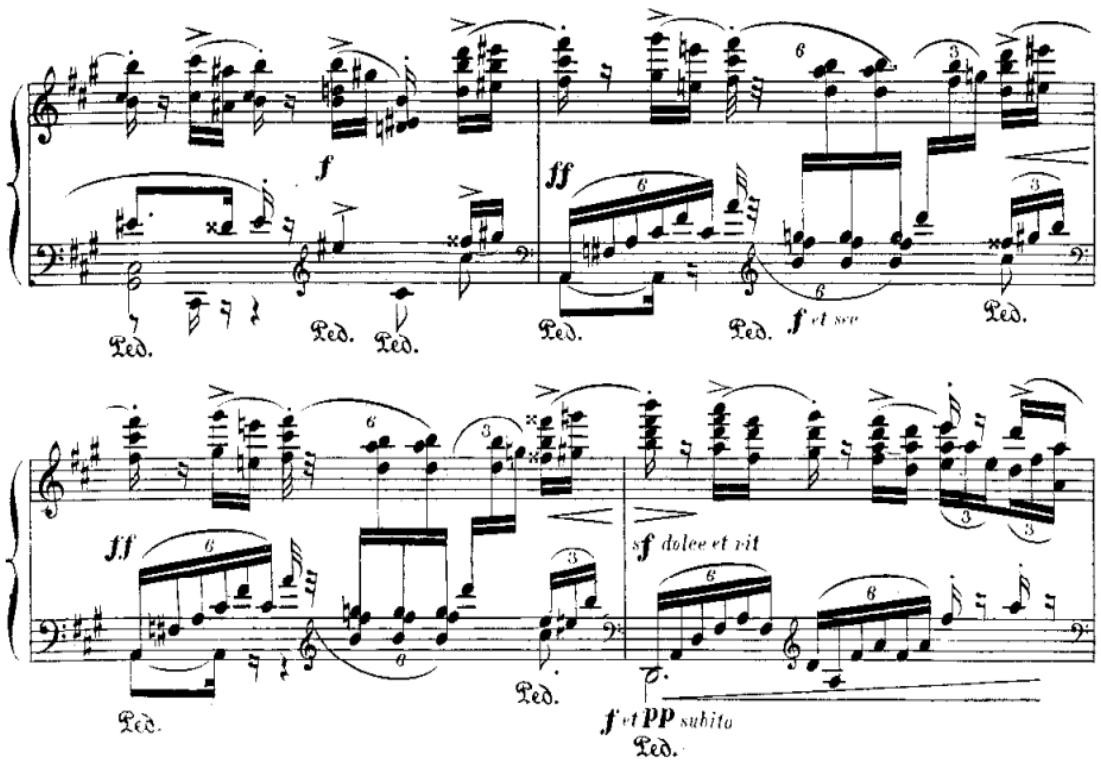
[380] Clark, 234.

in the rhythmic motif of sextuplet sixteenth notes found at the piece's climax (example 25).[381]



Example 24: *Triana*, (*Iberia*, Book II). Bb. 27-32.

[381] Mast, 212-213.



Example 25: *Triana (Iberia*, Book II). Bb. 117-120.

The principal theme is rhythmically complex. Although it is in 3/4 it is deceptive and it creates the impression of a double meter, identified by Mast as *pasodoble.* Although possibly of French origin, the *pasodoble* became associated with Spanish culture and particularly with bullfighting. Bullfighting was associated not only with Spain in general but more particularly with flamenco culture. This motif generates the material for the rest of the piece. The second principal theme is in the style of the *sevillanas*.[382] *Triana*'s virtuosic writing and almost uninterrupted

[382] Clark, 234.

lively energetic material make it a brilliant end to book two. Like *Almería, Triana* is in modified sonata form, with two easily identifiable themes.[383]

BOOK III (November- December 1906)

Albéniz wrote the third book of *Iberia* while residing in Nice during the winter of 1906.[384] The third book is dedicated to the French pianist Marguerite Hasselmans, although the manuscript bears a dedication to Joaquín Malats, Albéniz's close friend and virtuoso pianist.[385] In this book Albéniz increases the use of dissonance and the pieces become even more technically demanding.

El Albaicín

In *El Albaicín* Albéniz finds inspiration once more in Andalusia, in this case, the old Moorish district of El Albaicín in Granada, from which the Alhambra can be seen. In the manuscript, Albéniz indicates that El Albaicín is a Romani quarter of Granada.[386] This was true for a long time, but its origins were Arabic, the name Albaicín meaning "the falconer's district".[387] It is worth noting that Albéniz decided to make that connection with Romani culture in Granada rather than focus on the

[383] Mast, 273.

[384] Clark, 235.

[385] Clark, 235.

[386] Isaac Albéniz, Guillermo González, and Jacinto Torres. "Iberia." (Madrid: EMEC-EDEMS, 1998), XVI.

[387] Albéniz, González, and Torres, XXXIV

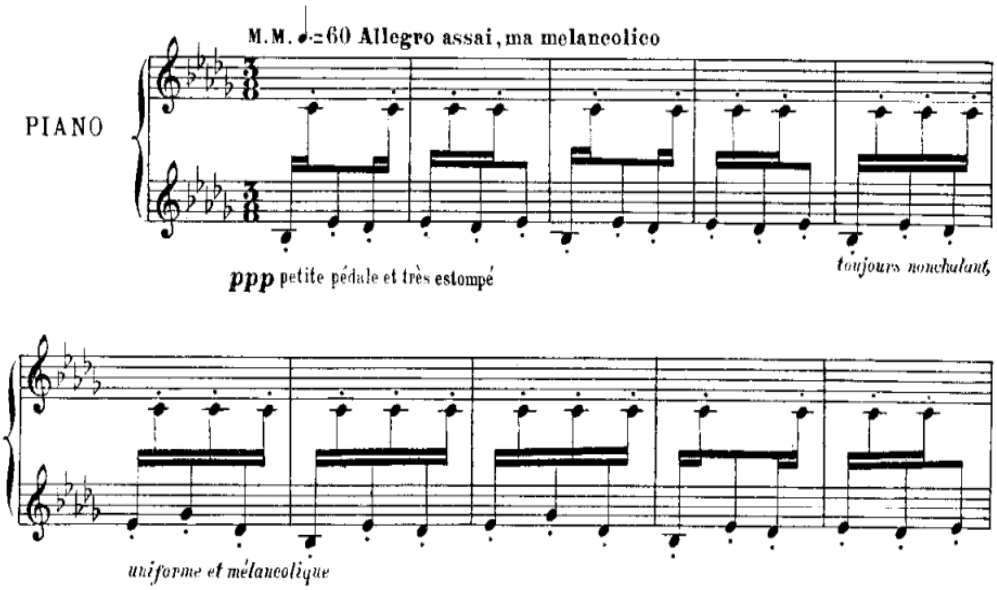
Moorish origins. It also helps to establish the often-made identification between Moorish Spain and its current Romani inhabitants.

El Albaicín is one of the three numbers of *Iberia* that is not in sonata form. Albéniz builds this piece as a four-part form alternating three times between the dance-like principal theme, highly motivic and dominated by a very characteristic rhythm, and the freer *copla*-style secondary theme.[388] Clark identifies the rhythm of the beginning as *bulerías*, very similar to the beginning of *Asturias (Prelude).* What is also similar to *Asturias* is the representation of guitar idioms, very skillfully done by imitating the technique of an internal pedal point (example 26). The beginning is marked *Très estompé* (Very faded, or faint), perhaps inspired by the kind of improvisatory beginning typical of flamenco performances.[389] Clark analyzes this rhythm as being very skillfully changed to a *malagueña* after bar 49.[390]

[388] Clark, 236.

[389] Clark, 237.

[390] Clark, 237.



Example 26: *El Albaicín*, (*Iberia*, book III). Bb. 1-10

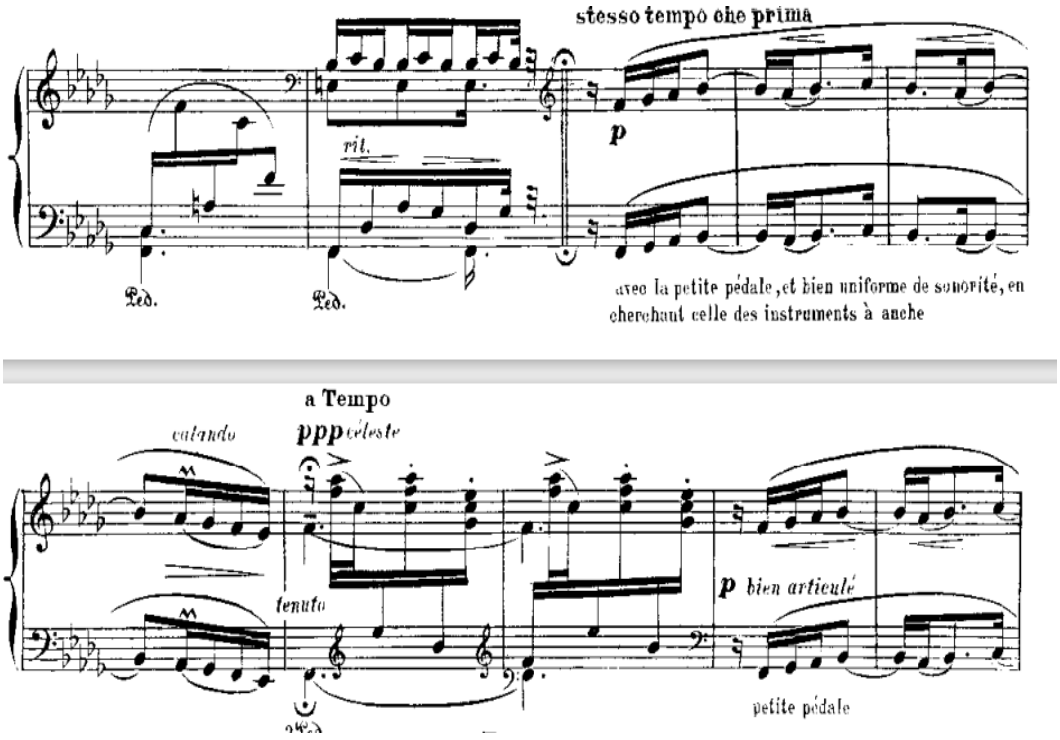
Pola Baytelman believes that Albéniz uses in *El Albaicín* the technique of thematic transformation already observed in *El Corpus Christi*.[391] In this case, the thematic transformation takes place during the *copla* section, which, Baytleman believes, seems to draw inspiration from *cante jondo*.[392] The *copla* is identified also by Paul Mast and Clark as an evocation of *cante jondo* (example 27).[393] [394]

[391] Baytelman, 24.

[392] Baytelman, 24.

[393] Mast, 288.

[394] Clark, 238.



Example 27: *El Albaicín (Iberia,* Book III). Bb. 67-76

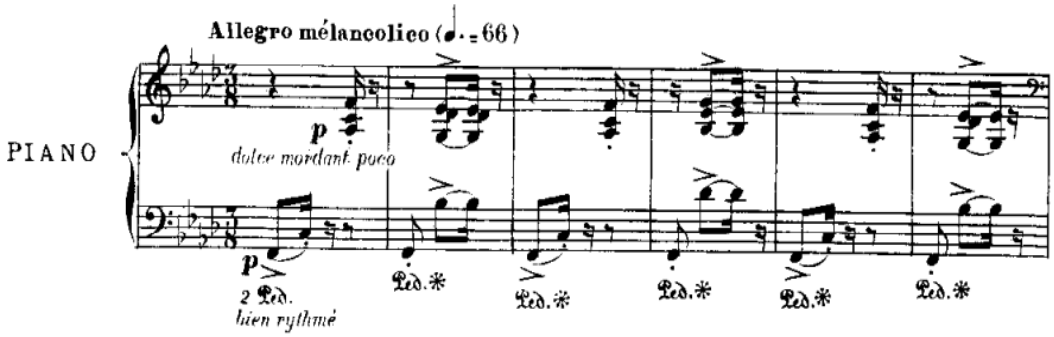
Such as in *Triana*, in this piece Albéniz finds inspiration not only in the dance rhythms of flamenco, but the piano also skillfully imitates guitars, castanets, tambourines, and singing. *El Albaicín* was one of the numbers most admired by Debussy, who had planned to orchestrate it.[395]

El Polo (Chanson et danse andalouses)

El Polo is a clear example of the dangers of trying to ascribe to a particular genre one of Albéniz's compositions. Even in this case where Albéniz names the piece after a specific flamenco genre, identifying the rhythms and the inspiration for

[395] Roy Howat, *The Art of French Piano Music: Debussy, Ravel, Faure, Chabrier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 139.

the music is not straightforward because *polo* can refer to more than one style. One of them is not a flamenco genre but a genre of art music, made popular thanks to the *polos* composed by Manuel García (1775-1832).[396] According to Clark, although Albéniz's thematic material seems to be closer to Manuel García's style, the character fits more the flamenco style.[397] The pattern, according to Clark, doesn't fit within any flamenco category that he is aware of.[398] The sigh-like rest that occurs on the downbeat of the even-numbered measures also gives it a melancholic character. The indications of *sanglotant* (sobbing) and *toujours dans l'espirit du sanglot (*always in the spirit of a sob), the sigh-like rest that occurs on the downbeat of the even-numbered measures, and the *Allegro melancolico* tempo marking all give it a forlorn character (example 28).[399]



Example 28: *El Polo,* (*Iberia* Book III). Bb. 1- 6.

[396] A famous example of this kind of polo by Manuel Garcia is 'El criado fingido', borrowed by Bizet for the entr'act before Act IV of *Carmen* (Clark, 239).

[397] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic,* 239.

[398] Clark, 239.

[399] Clark, 240.

What seems clear is what Albéniz wanted to communicate with the music. Albéniz declared in a footnote of the manuscript that he wanted to capture the "melancholy and fatalistic spirit of that Andalusian dance and song."[400]

Paul Mast analyzes the structure of *El Polo* as similar to the modified sonata form of *Evocación, Almería,* and *Triana*, which he finds by now predictable.[401]

Lavapiés

Lavapiés is different from every other piece in *Iberia* because, for the first time, Albéniz draws inspiration from a place that is not in Andalusia. Lavapiés is a popular quarter in Madrid, known for its lower-class denizens called *chulos*.[402] Albéniz portrays in the music the noisy streets of the lively neighborhood. The numerous dissonances, even more than in the previous two pieces of Book III, reflect the boisterous streets. The wrong-note technique used by Albéniz to achieve these effects is, according to Mast, humorous.[403] Albéniz makes use of these effects, as well as a "melodic disorder" through sporadic imitations, changes of register, and cross-rhythms to create a caricature of the *chulos*.[404] These characters were supposedly loud in manners and dress and would dance to the music of street organs

[400] Isaac Albéniz, Guillermo González, and Jacinto Torres. "Iberia." (Madrid: EMEC-EDEMS, 1998).

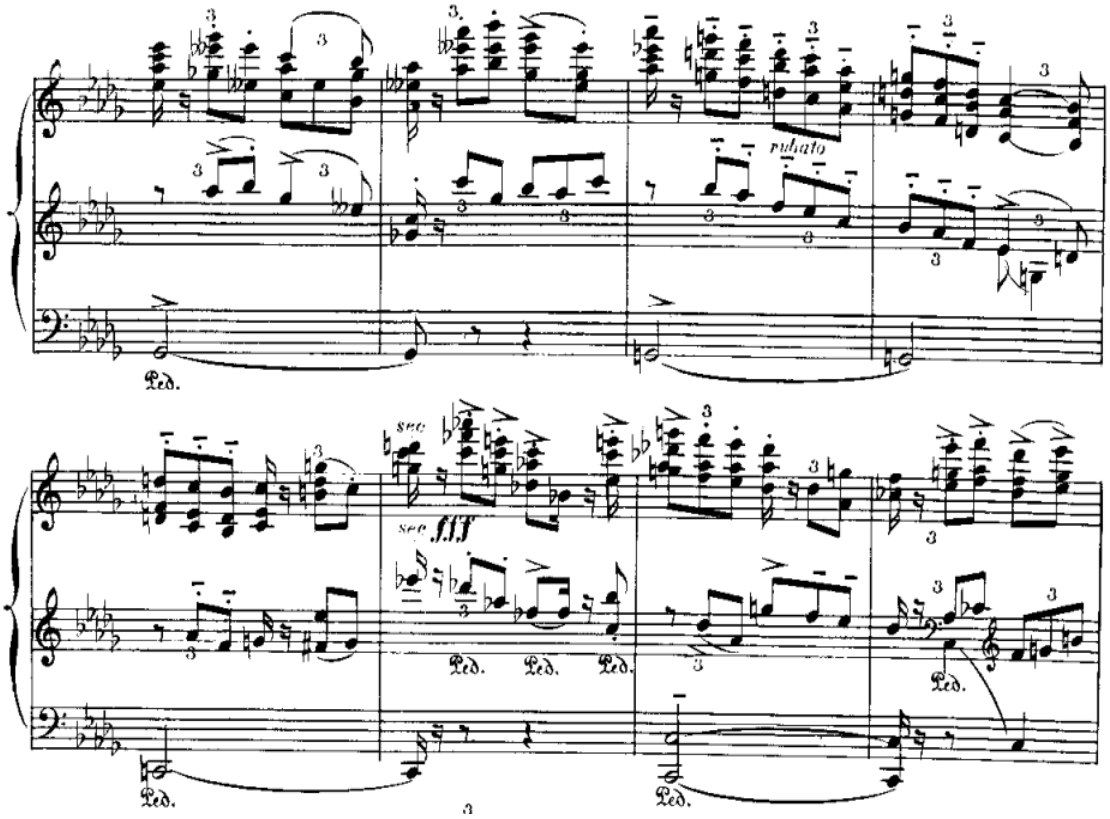
[401] Mast, 282.

[402] Clark, 241.

[403] Clark, 241.

[404] Mast, 310.

whose valves would be constantly malfunctioning.[405] The density of the writing makes this piece extremely difficult to play, and even identifying the main melody at certain times is a complicated task. As in *El Corpus Christi en Sevilla*, Albéniz often has to resort to writing in three staves (example 29).



Example 29: *Lavapiés* (*Iberia*, Book III). Bb. 48-55

For once, the dance used by Albéniz seems clear. He employs a habanera, a very popular dance in France, identified there forever with Spanish music since Bizet's *Carmen*, but also very prevalent in Madrid. According to Clark, the habanera

[405] Mast, 310.

(or Havana-style contredanse) became extremely popular in Madrid at the end of the nineteenth century, particularly with all the political turmoil surrounding the loss of Cuba in 1898.[406] The secondary theme is less lively but still in habanera rhythm. The most remarkable thing is the absence of Andalusian style, but Albéniz still employs one of the most recognizable and popular dances associated with Spain. His treatment of the habanera is in this case very different from Debussy's nocturnal evocative habaneras. It is a humorous view of present-day Spain.

Paul Mast seems even more disappointed with Albéniz's use of sonata form in this case, feeling that Albéniz "poured it into a pre-conceived, sonata-derived mold."[407]

BOOK IV (Malaga and Eritaña Summer of 1907, Jerez completed January 1908).

Dedicated to Madame Pierre Lalo, daughter-in-law of the composer Edouard Lalo.

Málaga

The first piece of this book is named after the Andalusian city of Málaga, a Mediterranean port that gives its name to the *malagueña,* a song and dance form derived from the fandango. Clark analyzes the rhythmic freedom, triple meter, and

[406] Clark, 241.

[407] Mast, 311.

modality as evocative of the *malagueña* and believes the secondary theme evokes a *jota malagueña* due to its octosyllabic rhythm and cadential flourish (example 30).[408]

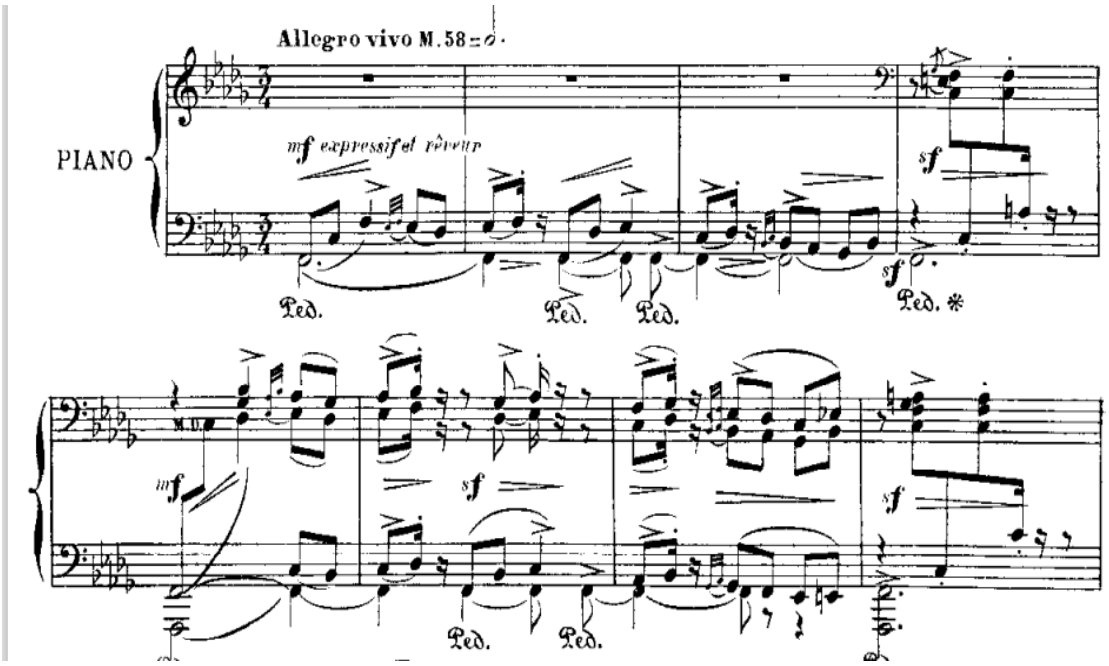
Acciaccaturas in Scarlatti-style as well as the use of dissonance are present throughout this lively piece. Albéniz often employs hemiolas to add rhythmic interest and perhaps a sense of freedom over the accompaniment. This piece is one of the shortest and like *Triana* is constantly animated, without the more contrasting lyrical copla.

Once more Albéniz makes use of sonata form.[409] Paul Mast finds the structure similar to the form Albéniz employs in the other pieces of *Iberia* which follow sonata form, except perhaps *Almería*.[410]

[408] Clark, 243-4.

[409] Clark, 243.

[410] Mast, 323.



Example 30: *Málaga* (*Iberia*, book IV) Bb. 1-8.

Jerez

Jerez, or Jerez de la Frontera, is a city of Andalusia, in the province of Cádiz known for growing the grapes that are used to make sherry (an anglified pronunciation of Jerez), and for its flamenco tradition. Clark points at the unusual absence of flats or sharps in the key signature. Many of the pieces of *Iberia* are written in keys with abundant flats or sharps making them very difficult to read.

Collet's analysis of *Jerez* identifies the rhythm as a kind of *cante jondo*, more precisely a *soleá.*[411] If Albéniz was trying to portray this genre of *cante jondo* it makes sense that this piece shows a great flexibility of rhythm and meter. Collet found this piece the most beautiful of the whole collection and compared the "sound

[411] Mast, 245.

arabesques" that Albéniz created to the decoration of Arab palaces.[412] Even if Albéniz hadn't left clear indications of Moorish inspiration, Collet was eager to make the connection between Albéniz's music and Arab music.

The form of *Jerez* is free sonata form such as in previous pieces of *Iberia*.[413] It is a rather long piece by the standard of the other movements in *Iberia*, ranging from ten to eleven minutes in various performances. It is a calmer piece than the lively *Málaga* and *Eritaña* and it functions in a similar way to *Almería* in the second book, as a contrast that balances the other two shorter, virtuosic pieces surrounding it. *Jerez* was added to *Iberia* in lieu of the incomplete *Navarra*. Albéniz believed that *Navarra*'s style was "shamelessly cheap" and would not fit in with the rest of *Iberia*.[414] The piece was eventually finished by Déodat de Séverac.

Eritaña

This piece takes its name from the famous *Venta Eritaña*, a popular inn on the outskirts of Sevilla where flamenco was often performed. The *Venta* was famous even among foreigners, receiving a visit from Arthur Rubinstein in 1915.[415] *Eritaña* received enthusiastic praise from Debussy who proclaimed that he could hear "roars

[412] Henri Collet, *Albéniz y Granados*, trans. Pedro E. F. Labrousse. (Buenos Aires: Editorial Tor-S.R.L., 1943), 133.

[413] Mast, 335.

[414] Clark, 243.

[415] Clark, 247.

of laughter and tambourines" in the music.[416] Others, such as the Countess of Castellà, felt "the revelry, the wine, the handclapping, and the strumming of guitars."[417] But there is a fundamental problem with those programmatic views. Although Albéniz did indicate in the manuscript that the composition referred to the famous *Venta,* in a more recent investigation of the manuscript by Jacinto Torres a note was found, partially cut by the editor.[418] On this note Albéniz had written "Name of the picture of a Blessed Virgin very revered by people of Seville and that…"[419] The interpretation of the inspiration for this piece could have been very different if Albéniz had kept the original inscription instead of changing the title to *Eritaña*. Torres recommends adhering to Gabriel Laplane's advice regarding the piece: "the commentators keep indulging their fondness for finding descriptive effects in these pages. But it seems to me that this search for cheap, picturesque, operetta impressions is only a way of impoverishing this sumptuous creation."[420]

Clark sees the rhythm of *sevillanas* present throughout the piece, without a contrasting *copla* section, and perceives the abundant dissonances as a representation of the shouting, clapping, and foot-stomping that would happen naturally on a live

[416] Isaac Albéniz, Guillermo González, and Jacinto Torres. "Iberia." (Madrid: EMEC-EDEMS, 1998), XXXV.

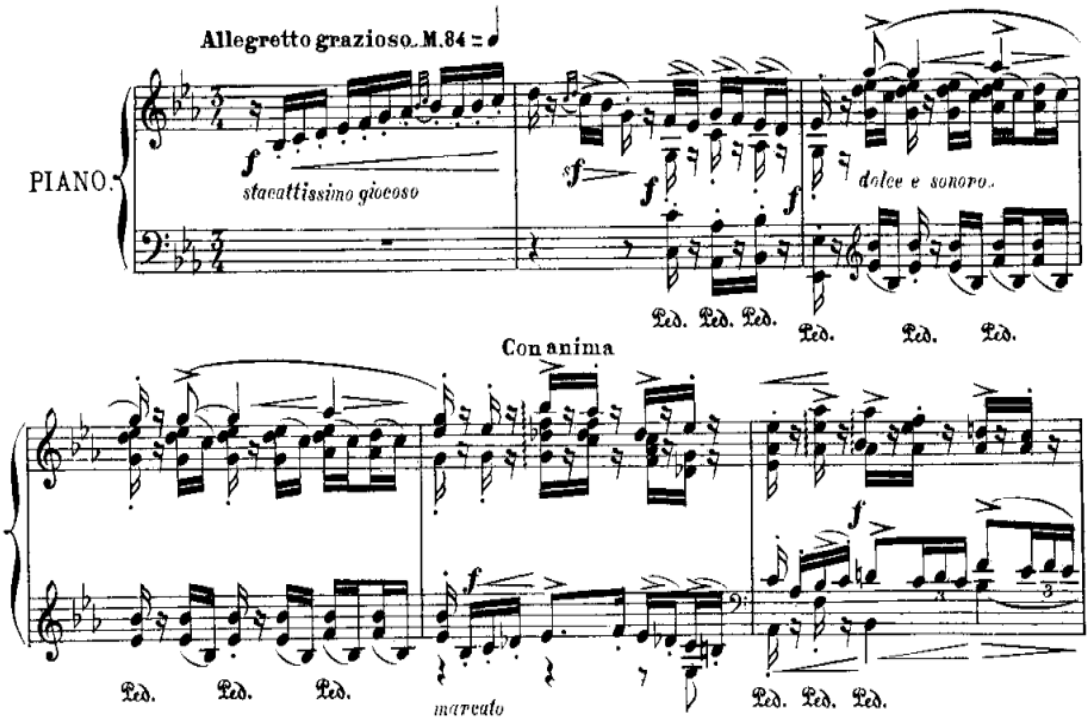
[417] Albéniz, González, and Torres, XXXV.

[418] Albéniz, González, and Torres, XXXV.

[419] Albéniz, González, and Torres, XXXV.

[420] Albéniz, González, and Torres, XXXV.

performance of *sevillanas* where the public interacts with the performance (example 31).[421]



Example 31: *Eritaña* (*Iberia*, Book IV). Bb. 1-6.

Mast sees *Eritaña* as in sonata form but a very free adaptation of it even by Albéniz standards.[422] Clark believes that the different themes are very interrelated through rhythm and that it is only the contrasting key areas that help identify the underlying sonata form structure in *Eritaña*.[423]

[421] Clark, *Isaac Albéniz: Portrait of a Romantic*, 247.

[422] Mast, 349-350.

[423] Clark, 247.

Reception of Iberia and its Influence. Conclusions.

Iberia was surprisingly well-received in Spain probably due to several unique circumstances. Albéniz's already declining health and eventually his passing at the age of 48 might have made audiences more receptive to his work.[424] The fact that *Iberia* was not a stage work, which usually provoked the most irate comments, also probably helped. Another important factor was that some numbers of *Iberia* were premiered in Spain by Joaquín Malats, at the time a very successful pianist in Spain and France,[425] and Albéniz himself thought that the smaller the part he played, the more successful his works would be in Spain.[426] Even though the correspondence between Malats and Albéniz seems to indicate that Malats had the intention of performing all of *Iberia* we don't know for certain. Malats was already gravely ill and his last public performance took place in 1910.[427]

French musicians praised *Iberia* eloquently. Oliver Messiaen placed it "in the highest category of works for the piano."[428] Pierre Boulez has called *Iberia* "the wonder of the piano, the masterpiece of Spanish music which takes its place-and perhaps the highest-among the stars of first magnitude of the king of instruments."[429]

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[424] Clark, 251.

[425] Clark, 250.

[426] García Martínez, Paula. "El Epistolario Albéniz-Malats. El Estreno de 'Iberia' En España." *Cuadernos de música iberoamericana* 17 (2018): 178. https://dx.doi.org/10.5209/CMIB

[427] García Martínez, 193.

[428] Clark, 251.

[429] Clark, 251.

Debussy also had high praise for Albéniz's work affirming that "there are few works in music to compare with *El Albaicín.*"[430]

Iberia served as a kind of testament for Albéniz whose success cemented the aesthetic choices of the Spanish composer as a faithful reflection of Spanish folk music transported to the world of art music. In *Iberia,* Albéniz went beyond the realm of salon music, and of mere quotation of folk material, and created a style of Spanish music based on the incorporation of advanced harmony and form that gave this work a more refined intellectual approach as well as musical and emotional depth.

His very personal use of an extensive range of Spanish folklore created a style that was at the same time international and succeeded in being considered as inherently Spanish. Importantly, Albéniz wanted the incorporation of Spain into the European musical world, arguing that Spanish composers had to "make Spanish music with a universal accent".[431] Albéniz's portrayal of Spain in *Iberia,* as Clark points out, also perhaps represents a romantic nostalgia for "a Spain that no longer exists, or never really existed at all."[432]

The success of Albéniz's music also relied heavily on his championing an imagined, nostalgic Andalusian identity. His aesthetic interests aligned with the French exoticization of Spain during the nineteenth century, particularly the French interest in

[430] Albéniz, Isaac. *Iberia*. Edited by Guillermo González and Jacinto Torres. 3 volumes including Facsimile, Urtext, and Performing Editions. Madrid: Editorial de Música Española Contemporánea (EMEC); Española de Ediciones Musicales Schott (EDEMS), 1998.

[431] Clark, 290.

[432] Clark, 290.

the South of Spain which Albéniz shared and embraced. The preferences of French audiences and musicians made Paris the perfect environment for Albéniz's music to thrive as well as making him a prominent figure that promoted this Andalusian identity amongst Spanish musicians in Paris such as Falla and Turina. Albéniz's career in Spain during his lifetime was never as successful in Spain as in France, since he was often seen in his own country as too foreignized, corrupting the supposed authenticity of Spanish music.

Andalusian identity is a problematic idea whose meaning is still complicated to define nowadays. In fact, the frequently used term "Andalusian music" is not found in musical compilations and texts until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[433] Jonathan Holt Shannon sustains that "the very term 'Andalusian music' is both vague and misleading" and that "indeed, Andalusian music does not exist; rather, the term references a loose category that includes the urban musics of North Africa and the Levant, Sephardic musics, flamenco, and a variety of fusions of these and other musical genres and styles."[434] Shannon maintains that this label of "Andalusian" applied to music, "arose in the shadow of colonialism as a result of the enthusiasm of Western musicologists in finding what they discerned to be survivals of the medieval European musical past in North African colonies and not as an autochthonous term linking the modern with the medieval practices."[435] Al-Andalus was most often understood and

[433] Shannon, 36.

[434] Shannon, 36.

[435] Shannon, 36.

represented, including in some of Albéniz works such as the Alhambrist music, as representing "a golden age and, with its fall, a veritable lost paradise."[436]

Shannon sees al-Andalus as fulfilling the role of a "conceptual bridge between Orient and Occident" and points out as cultural examples of this the books of Washington Irving, especially his *Tales from the Alhambra*, but also in the music of Albéniz and Falla and the works of Lorca, as well as other works from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries inspired by al-Andalus.[437]

Albéniz's use of Andalusian identity in his music served as the bridge between his identity as a Spanish composer and his success in the international music arena earned through French approval. The way in which Albéniz's music and particularly the association with Andalusian music is regarded has not changed significantly. Similar stereotypes and expectations regarding Spanish music are still encountered and associated with the music of Albéniz. I hope this document sheds some light on the background of an important part of our repertoire and on the cultural and social forces, as well as the aesthetic decisions, that influenced the creation of *Iberia,* as well as to help pianists make their own aesthetic choices regarding the interpretation of this repertoire based on that knowledge.

[436] Shannon, 30.

[437] Shannon 33.

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