

## Twice exiled: Josep Valls (1904-1999) and his art songs in the context of the Spanish Republican Exile

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This article focuses on a little-known corpus of works by a little-known composer: the twenty-two Catalan-language art songs that Josep Valls (1904-1999) composed and revised between 1924 and 1945. Valls was one of several composers who were forced to take exile from Spain during the Franco regime. While the works of some of these exiles have gone back to the concert platform and have been recorded or published commercially in the last decade or so,<sup>1</sup> the same cannot be said of the output of Valls, whose works remain unrecorded. Similarly, they have not received any performances at major venues or by major ensembles, soloists or orchestras, and they have not been published or re-published in modern times (with the exception of his song cycle *Idil·lis*, published by Nausicaa Edicions Musicals in 2011, which will be discussed in this article). Scholarly attention has also been scarce, with the exception of a temporary display put together at the *Biblioteca de Catalunya* in Barcelona, where Valls's personal archive is held. The display featured some of his scores, photographs, letters and personal documents, and a virtual version remains available online.<sup>2</sup>

This article argues that the lack of attention afforded to Valls stems, at least in part, from the uniqueness of his background and his trajectory in exile, which do not fit easily within commonly held historiographical assumptions about the Spanish Republican exile. These assumptions, indeed, have tended to privilege certain groups of exiled composers over others; they also fail to acknowledge how diverse the exiles' trajectories and backgrounds were (ideologically, professionally, and artistically) and how differently they engaged with issues of modernity and national identity. In this chapter, I will first outline some the shortcomings of the existing musicological accounts of the Spanish Republican exile. I will then proceed to sketch Valls's early career (1924-1945), which unfolded in three chapters: first in Paris and Le Havre (1924-1936) as a young composer who had fled Spain to escape military conscription but still tried to keep in touch with Catalan music life, next in Anvers and Barcelona (1936-1939) as a diplomat and then a soldier supporting the Second Republic and taking part in musical propaganda activities, then finally in Le Havre again (1939-1945) as he resigned himself to a prolonged exile and attempted to re-establish contact with other Catalan exiled composers. Valls's biographical details will be contextualized within debates in the musical scene of his time gravitating primarily around issues of modernity and national identity. Finally, I discuss Valls's songs, focusing on what his experimentation with extended tonality as well as his engagement with Catalan traditional music reveal about his understanding of musical modernity, further contextualizing his thinking and practice within those of his contemporaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Some musicians who have recorded CDs solely or mostly dedicated to the music of the exiles include: Trio Arbós, conductor José Luis Temes, guitarist Samuel Diz, singer Anna Tonna, pianists Jorge Robaina, Paula Ríos and Aurelio Viribay, conductor José Luis Temes. Significant efforts have been made as well by the *Fundación Juan March* in Madrid, who in November 2017 organized a series of four concerts under the name "Bacarisse y el exilio."

<sup>2</sup> The display's micro-site can still be visited at *Biblioteca de Catalunya*, "Josep Valls, el retorn," (Josep Valls: The comeback) available at <https://www.bnc.cat/Exposicions/Josep-Valls-el-retorn/Continguts-de-l-exposicio> (last accessed: June 2019).

## Music in the Spanish Republican exile: the changing faces of musical modernity

In this section, I argue that the predominant narrative of the Spanish Republican exile in music historiography has been one of truncated progress towards a certain ideal of modernity, and that this makes it difficult to accommodate the trajectories of composers who either cannot be understood in terms of progress or do not fit the specific ideal of modernity posited here. My discussion is significantly influenced by Mari Paz Balibrea's analyses of the literary historiography of the Spanish Republican exile.<sup>3</sup> Balibrea argues that the Spanish Republican exile poses problems to narratives of Spanish literature in terms of both space and time,<sup>4</sup> because the nation is conceptualised as both a spatial and a temporal unit: it is not only delimited by its territorial boundaries, but also by homogeneous, linear progression within the nation toward a hegemonic ideal of modernity.<sup>5</sup> Balibrea writes that traditional historiography of Spanish twentieth-century literature understands this progression as a struggle against the anti-modernity embodied by the Franco regime, culminating in the triumph of parliamentary monarchy in 1975 after Franco's death.<sup>6</sup> Exile, however, puts this ideal conception of the nation at risk: indeed, the exiles' cultural production far away from the cultural centres of the nation often opens up ideals and understandings of modernity that deviate from those regarded as hegemonic in the nation itself.<sup>7</sup> The task of the literary historian, Balibrea argues, is to uncover and disentangle the very diverse modernity projects that the exiles carried out, with a view to problematize the dominant narrative.

In the realm of music history, the idea of exile as truncated progress emerged already under Francoism, while the hegemony of a specific ideal of modernity only did so in the early years of democracy. Under Francoism, Spanish music history was first conceptualized in terms of progress towards modernity by Federico Sopena in his *Historia de la música española contemporánea* (1958). Sopena's contribution, however, was not entirely original, but instead drew upon Adolfo Salazar's *La música contemporánea en España* (1930); in his preface, Sopena indeed presented his own work as a sequel to Salazar's.<sup>8</sup> Sopena's narrative gravitates around major figures he credits with having accelerated the progress of Spanish music towards modernity (Manuel de Falla, Ernesto Halffter and, finally, Joaquín Rodrigo). Within this

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<sup>3</sup> Mari Paz Balibrea, "El paradigma exilio," in *Nuevo texto crítico* 29 (2002-03), pp. 17-39; Mari Paz Balibrea, "Rethinking Spanish Republican Exile. An introduction," in *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2005), pp. 3-24; Mari Paz Balibrea, "Max Aub y el espacio/tiempo de la nación," in Manuel Aznar Soler, ed., *Escritores, editoriales y revistas del exilio republicano de 1939* (Sevilla: Renacimiento, 2006), pp. 163-169; Mari Paz Balibrea, "Hacia una historiografía del exilio republicano cultural: retos y propuestas," in *Iberoamericana* 47 (2012), pp. 87-99.

<sup>4</sup> Balibrea, "Hacia una historiografía del exilio," p. 87.

<sup>5</sup> Balibrea, "Hacia una historiografía del exilio," p. 97; Balibrea, "Rethinking Spanish Republican Exile," p. 7; Balibrea, "Max Aub," p. 163.

<sup>6</sup> Balibrea, "El paradigma exilio," p. 29.

<sup>7</sup> Balibrea, "El paradigma exilio," p. 22; Balibrea, "Hacia una historiografía," pp. 98-99.

<sup>8</sup> Federico Sopena, *Historia de la música española contemporánea* (Madrid: Rialp, 1958), p. 13. The fact that Sopena—possibly the most influential music critic and administrator under the Franco regime, active throughout its entire duration—explicitly acknowledged not only the left-wing exile Salazar, but also other exiled musicians (which I will discuss later) does not mean that Sopena was being rebellious or risking punishment or censorship. For a discussion of Sopena's ideological background, see Eva Moreda Rodríguez, *Music and exile in Francoist Spain* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 17.

premise, Sopenña focuses only on the exiles active in Madrid before the war,<sup>9</sup> whom he presented as a failed generation: Sopenña acknowledged that they played an important role in revitalizing musical life throughout the 1920s and 1930s,<sup>10</sup> but had "lost their roots and their ability to convey their message" precisely at the time they were starting to reach creative maturity,<sup>11</sup> presumably because they had been forced to go into exile, although Sopenña does not explicitly make this connection.

The narrative of Spanish music as progress becomes even more obvious in Manuel Valls's *La música española después de Manuel de Falla* (1962) and Tomás Marco's *La música de la España contemporánea* and *Música española de vanguardia* (both 1970), as well as in two further books by Manuel Valls (no relation to Josep Valls), *La música catalana contemporània* (1960) and *Història de la música catalana* (1969), with the caveat that these do not take Spain as the national framework, but rather the Catalan-speaking areas. Particularly in Marco's books, musical modernity is no longer identified with Joaquín Rodrigo, as was the case in Sopenña's history, but rather with atonality and integration with European avant-garde currents. Like Sopenña, Manuel Valls and Marco did not exclude the exiles from their history, but the focus, especially in the latter, is very clearly on the exiles deemed to have contributed to Spain's progress towards musical modernity—for example, Roberto Gerhard, a student of Schoenberg's and a respected name in the serialist music scene from the mid-1950s onwards.<sup>12</sup>

Of the above-mentioned music histories, Josep Valls is only named in passing in *La música catalana contemporània*, as one of several composers grouped under the name "Generation of 1920." This generation, according to Manuel Valls, consisted of those composers who started their careers in Barcelona during the 1920s with the intent of renovating Catalan music, but did not necessarily share aesthetic ideals or regard themselves as a group. Roberto Gerhard is also included in this generation and discussed at greater length than Josep Valls or indeed any other composer.<sup>13</sup> One potential reason for Josep Valls's minimal presence in these histories might simply be the difficulties that those writing in Spain often met in gathering information about composers working elsewhere, particularly if they did not have an international profile. With Valls having very limited presence in French concert life, it would have been difficult for critics and historians working in Spain to get hold of any reviews, recordings, or published scores.

Even though, as is obvious from the above, the exiles were not completely absent from Spanish music historiography under Francoism, interest in re-discovering their lives and works and in considering exile as a specific historiographical category increased after Franco's death—at a time when some of the exiles had died or were approaching their old age. Emilio Casares first made the case in 1986 for bringing back to light the music of the exiles to both

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<sup>9</sup> Sopenña, as was common under Francoist centralism, clearly saw Madrid as the centre of Spanish musical life (not just in the present, but historically); nevertheless, another reason for him to focus on Madrid is that, being based in the capital himself throughout the 1950s, he likely did not have many reliable sources of information about Catalan composers who had gone into exile.

<sup>10</sup> Sopenña, *Historia de la música*, 195-7.

<sup>11</sup> Sopenña, *Historia de la música*, 198.

<sup>12</sup> Tomás Marco, *Música española de vanguardia* (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1970), pp. 29–30, 46–47.

<sup>13</sup> Manuel Valls, *La música catalana contemporània* (Barcelona: Selecta, 1960), p. 139.

Spanish academia and the broader public.<sup>14</sup> Casares published a further article on the topic the following year, writing that:<sup>15</sup>

We still need shed light on an enormous amount of works that have never been played or have not been played after their premiere; to catalogue the work of most composers (even though it might seem unbelievable that this has not been done already) and to properly analyse it; finally, to write and publish monographs about the most illustrious creatives.

In the last thirty years, Spanish musicology has indeed made significant advances in terms of bringing back to public awareness the lives, works and archives of many Spanish composers,<sup>16</sup> even though the fundamental work described by Casares is far from complete, due to the difficulties in locating and accessing the personal archives and the music of some of the exiled composers.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, though, further theoretical reflection on the historiographical foundations of musical exile and how they might have been affected by these successive discoveries is still scarce. Moreover, following on from Casares's pioneering research on exile, this body of scholarship has often been impacted by a second, related issue: the fact that modernity is strongly identified with one particular modernity project, i.e. the one pursued by the so-called *Generación del 27*. The label itself—which has been widespread since the 1980s, in a clear parallel with the literary generation of the same name,<sup>18</sup> is not unproblematic. The literary *Generación del 27* (which includes Federico García Lorca and future Nobel prize winner Vicente Aleixandre) constituted themselves formally as such in 1927,<sup>19</sup> but the same cannot be said of the musical *Generación del 27*, which is a much looser collection of composers and, sometimes, performers. Indeed, various Spanish musicologists have proposed various definitions of what the

<sup>14</sup> Emilio Casares Rodicio, "Música y músicos de la Generación del 27," in Emilio Casares Rodicio, ed., *La música en la Generación del 27. Homenaje a Lorca 1915-1939* (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura: 1986), pp. 20-34.

<sup>15</sup> Emilio Casares Rodicio, "La música española hasta 1939, o la restauración musical," in Emilio Casares Rodicio, Ismael Fernández de la Cuesta and José López Calo, eds., *España en la Música de Occidente*, vol. 2 (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 1987), pp. 261-322; see p. 363.

<sup>16</sup> Examples from the last thirty years include: Susana Asensio, "Eduardo Martínez Torner y la Junta para Ampliación de Estudios en España," in *Arbor*, Vol. 187, No. 751 (2011), pp. 857-874; Xosé Aviñoa, *Jaume Pahissa. Un estudi bibliogràfic i crític* (Barcelona: Biblioteca de Catalunya, 1996); Consuelo Carredano, ed., *Adolfo Salazar. Epistolario 1912-1958* (Madrid: Residencia de Estudiantes, 2008); Consuelo Carredano, "Hasta los verdes maizales de México: Rodolfo Halffter y *Don Lindo de Almería*," in *Anales del Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas*, Vol. 30, No. 93 (2008), pp. 69-101; Xoán Manuel Carreira, "Jesús Bal y Gay, Lugo, 23-VI-1905. Madrid, 11-III-1993," in *Revista de Musicología* 17 (1994), pp. 477-480; María Victoria García Martínez, *El regreso de Óscar Esplá a Alicante en 1950* (Alicante: Instituto Alicantino de Cultura Juan Gil-Albert, 2010); Christiane Heine, "Salvador Bacarisse (1898–1963) en el centenario de su nacimiento," in *Cuadernos de música iberoamericana* 5 (1998), pp. 43-75; Eva Moreda Rodríguez, "Francoism and the Republican exiles: the case of the composer Julián Bautista (1901–61)," *twentieth-century music*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2011), pp. 153-173; Jorge de Persia, *Julián Bautista* (Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional de España, 2005); Leticia Sánchez de Andrés, "Roberto Gerhard's Ballets: Music, Ideology and Passion," in Monty Adkins and Michael Russ, eds., *The Roberto Gerhard Companion* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 79-105; Carlos Villanueva, ed., *Jesús Bal y Gay. Tientos y silencios* (Madrid: Residencia de Estudiantes/Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> For example, it was only in the last three years that significant work on Rosa García Ascot and Simón Tapia Colman could be conducted, with their archives becoming available to researchers. The archive of composer Baltasar Samper was only transferred to his native Majorca in 2018, having been previously stored in Mexico at the premises of the *Orfeo Catalá de Mèxic*, with limited access for researchers. For other composers (María Rodrigo, Manuel Lazareno, Vicente Salas Viu, Leopoldo Cardona) it is believed that their personal archives have been lost or never existed.

<sup>18</sup> For example, in Casares Rodicio, "Música y músicos de la Generación del 27."

<sup>19</sup> They met to celebrate the tricentenary of Spanish baroque poet Luis de Góngora.

musical *Generación del 27* was and who was included in it.<sup>20</sup> Generally speaking, though, the term has come to signify primarily those composers aspiring to renovate Spanish music active in Madrid during the 1920s and up to the beginning of the Civil War in 1936. Of these composers, a significant number, though not all, supported the Second Republic and then went into exile after Franco's victory. From Casares Rodicio onwards, the core of the *Generación del 27* has often been identified with the so-called *Grupo de los Ocho*: a loose association of composers born between the years 1895 and 1906 who gave their first joint concert at the *Residencia de Estudiantes*, a well-known politically progressive student and cultural centre, in 1930. Five out of eight members of the *Grupo* went into exile.<sup>21</sup> The *Generación del 27* has also tended to include other composers active in the environment of the *Grupo* and/or the *Residencia*,<sup>22</sup> or those who broadly shared similar political and social backgrounds and artistic ideals:<sup>23</sup> they were close to the Madrid-based bourgeois liberal and reformist left, and followed Falla, Stravinsky and/or French impressionism in their attempt to renovate Spanish music, rather than German neo-romanticism or the Second Viennese School. Not all composers active in this environment went into exile after the Civil War, but a significant number of them did, while others retreated from public life.<sup>24</sup> Therefore, it is entirely reasonable that, in retrospect, it was this particular group of composers that was believed to have constituted the biggest loss to Spanish music in its progress towards modernity.

However, focusing on this group of composers has often meant neglecting others who engaged with modernity in different ways than the *Generación del 27* did.<sup>25</sup> These include composers from Catalan and Catalan-speaking areas, such as Baltasar Samper, Leopoldo Cardona, Jaume Pahissa, Narcís Costa i Horts, Roberto Gerhard, and Valls himself.<sup>26</sup> These composers typically engaged with the question of how their own Catalan identity related to Spanish identity and music history, and this tended to result in a set of responses to the issue of modernity that are sufficiently distinct from those in the *Generación del 27*.

A further group of composers that does not completely fit the *Generación del 27* model includes those composers coming from working or lower-middle class backgrounds. These do not necessarily constitute a uniform group,<sup>27</sup> but in many cases, their ideological allegiances to communism, anarchism or socialism, or their formative and professional experiences—often

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<sup>20</sup> Abad Nebot, Francisco, "Las ideas y las expresiones "Edad de Plata" y "Generación del 27", y otras empleadas en la época," in María Nagore, Leticia Sánchez de Andrés, Elena Torres, eds., *Música y cultura en la Edad de Plata 1915-1939* (Madrid: ICCMU, 2009) pp. 27-38.

<sup>21</sup> The *Grupo de los Ocho* included Julián Bautista, Salvador Bacarisse, Rodolfo Halffter, Rosa García Ascot, Gustavo Pittaluga (all of whom went into exile), as well as Ernesto Halffter, Juan José Mantecón and Fernando Remacha.

<sup>22</sup> Such as Jesús Bal y Gay, Eduardo Martínez Torner, Enrique Casal Chapí, Vicente Salas Viu and Adolfo Salazar, all of whom went into exile.

<sup>23</sup> Such as Óscar Esplá and María Rodrigo (both exiles).

<sup>24</sup> Those who withdrew from public life include Fernando Remacha and Evaristo Fernández Blanco.

<sup>25</sup> Of course, not all members of the so-called *Generación del 27* as outlined above shared the same modernity project at all points in time; in the above, however, I have tried to identify the traits that united them for significant parts of their careers.

<sup>26</sup> On the other hand, Óscar Esplá, while a native of Alicante in the Catalan-speaking region of Valencia, developed most of his career in Madrid during the 1920s and 1930s, so he appears closer to the *Generación del 27* than to the above-mentioned composers. Gerhard has also been sometimes included as part of the *Generación del 27*, probably because of his notoriety; a recent example is Tomás Marco, *Escuchar la música de los siglos XX y XXI* (Madrid: Fundación BBVA, 2017), p. 23.

<sup>27</sup> Adolfo Salazar, for example, while often expressing elitist views, came from a lower-middle class family and had to take up paid work while still a teenager after his father's death.

involving auto-didacticism, or work as orchestral, ensemble or popular musicians rather than as professional composers or teachers<sup>28</sup>—influenced their modernity projects in ways that are not always acknowledged. Valls, as the son of a servant and a domestic seamstress,<sup>29</sup> and a composer who received very little, if any, formal training, can also be regarded to have commonalities with this group of exiled musicians.

### **Josep Valls: a biography**

This section reconstructs Valls's biography from his move to Barcelona to Paris in 1924 fleeing military service, to the years following the Second World War up to the late 1940s, when he finally settled for the long term in the French city of Le Havre while trying to establish a network of contacts with other Catalan exiles. As Valls has not yet been the subject of scholarly study, a first aim of this section is to establish, based on previously unexplored correspondence and personal documents held at the *Biblioteca de Catalunya*, the main milestones of Valls's early-to-mid life and career. At the same time, I critically contextualize this information by drawing attention to aspects of Valls's life and career that do not fully fit within the central role that the *Generación del 27* is given in current scholarship on music and exile. While some of these aspects are related to the two broader themes I outlined at the end of the previous section (national identity and class), I suggest that it would be reductive to consider Valls, or indeed any other exiled composer, simply under the light of such categories. Instead, Valls's approach to modernity must be studied in its own terms and engage with his creative output (as I do in the last section of this paper), while not losing sight of broader categories.

Valls's early musical training was, by his own admission, lacking.<sup>30</sup> As a child, he and his two brothers sang with the *Orfeó Català*, a prestigious choral society in Barcelona and a key institution of the Catalan cultural nationalist movement. From years seventeen to twenty he studied music theory, harmony and violoncello at the *Escola Municipal de Música in Barcelona* (Municipal Music School), whose educational programmes he later described as "superficial" and "mediocre," choosing to further his training through self-directed study.<sup>31</sup> In September 1924, Valls crossed the border with the intention to temporarily settle in France. His reason for doing so was to avoid military conscription in the Spanish army, to which he, as a Catalan nationalist, was radically opposed.<sup>32</sup> Valls's ambition was to make a living as a professional classical musician, but he did not hesitate to pursue opportunities in jazz and popular music too,

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<sup>28</sup> Examples here include Simón Tapia Colman, who worked as a jazz musician during the 1920s and 1930s, fought with the anarchists during the Spanish Civil War and then went on to work as an orchestral musician in Mexico before becoming recognized as a composer; and Rafael Oropesa, a wind band conductor and composer exiled in Mexico and member of the Communist Party.

<sup>29</sup> Josep Valls, "Nota biogràfica adreçada a Josep Carner," Biblioteca de Catalunya, Fons Josep Valls, reference number M-JVall-173bis.

<sup>30</sup> Valls, "Nota biogràfica adreçada a Josep Carner."

<sup>31</sup> Valls, "Nota biogràfica adreçada a Josep Carner."

<sup>32</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 21 October 1924, Biblioteca de Catalunya (BC), Fons Josep Valls (FJV), Jva1225. The Valls archive has not been fully catalogued: as a norm, individual letters do not have their own reference number, but rather letters from the same individual are grouped under the same reference.

as these were more plentiful,<sup>33</sup> soon acquiring a network of Catalan contacts in Paris.<sup>34</sup> In September 1925, he enrolled at the Schola Cantorum with a view to sitting exams in cello and piano,<sup>35</sup> but was seemingly not happy with the teaching he received.<sup>36</sup> While Valls's two earliest songs were dated July 1924, before he fled Barcelona, he did not complete any new songs in the initial years of his stay in Paris; nevertheless, he continued studying scores on his own—overwhelmingly from the classical canon.<sup>37</sup> A 1938 Hinrichausen catalogue promoting Valls's recently published works claimed that Valls had moved to Paris to study under Vincent d'Indy,<sup>38</sup> but there is no mention of d'Indy in Valls's letters from these years, suggesting that contact between the two composers might have been sporadic and superficial.

By 1927, Valls had made the decision to dedicate himself to composition in earnest, and he wrote to his brothers about his plans to enroll at the Conservatoire in Paris while taking up the cello again and learning the organ and, potentially, the saxophone in order to be able support himself while composing.<sup>39</sup> Throughout these years, Valls also tried to keep in touch with Catalan musical life through his brothers. They indeed sent him updates about the *Orfeo* environment and informed Josep of composition competitions that he might be interested in entering.<sup>40</sup> Valls's brothers also periodically identified potential performance opportunities for his songs, but their tone was, more often than not, pessimistic, suggesting that, even though Josep was clearly determined not to sever ties with Catalan musical life, his lack of solid contacts in the field might be a hindrance.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, in addition to some of Valls's songs,<sup>42</sup> his orchestral suite was played at Barcelona's *Teatre Principal* in May 1930 thanks to his family's efforts.<sup>43</sup>

Late 1930 brought a decisive development to Valls's life: Josep Carner, a Catalan poet and diplomat whom Valls had met in Paris and some of whose poems he had set to music, offered Valls a job under his supervision at the consulate of Le Havre. This provided Valls with a more secure financial position that he had enjoyed as a freelance musician, but it also meant that he could now only perform and compose in his spare time.<sup>44</sup> After some initial difficulties, though, Valls continued working on more songs and started dabbling in orchestral, large-scale works (such as the Concerto for String Quartet and the Symphony). At the same time, he continued seeking opportunities in Catalan music life by approaching the recently founded

<sup>33</sup> Letters from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 9 November 1924, 5 December 1924, 18 December 1924, BC, FJV, Jva1225.

<sup>34</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 25 January 1924, BC, FJV, Jva1225.

<sup>35</sup> Letter from Maria Valls to Josep Valls, 1 September 1925, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>36</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 25 January 1926, BC, FJV, Jva1225.

<sup>37</sup> These include Wagner's *Ring*, *Parsifal* and *Tristan and Isolde*, sonatas (presumably for piano) by Mozart, Gluck's *Alceste*, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, Pergolesi's *Stabat mater*, Handel's *Messiah* and orchestral suites, Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and unnamed sonatas, Beethoven's quartets and sonatas, Scarlatti's sonatas, Franck's *Preludes* and Schumann's piano pieces, and were sent to him by his brothers Francesc and Joan. See letter from Francesc Valls to Josep Valls, 14 March 1925, BC, FJV, Jva1223; letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 12 March 1925, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>38</sup> Hinrichsen (Publisher), Newsletter no. 4, 1938.

<sup>39</sup> Letters from Francesc Valls to Josep Valls, 20 September 1927 and undated 1927, BC, FJV, Jva1223; letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 28 March 1927, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>40</sup> Letters from Francesc Valls to Josep Valls, 13 December 1925, 7 April 1926, 4 June 1926, BC, FJV, Jva1223.

<sup>41</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 27 January 1925, 19 June 1926, 22 September 1931, 16 May 1932, BC, FJV, Jva1230; letters from Francesc Valls to Josep Valls, 17 March 1927, 18 April 1928, BC, FJV, Jva1223.

<sup>42</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 7 February 1925, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>43</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 10 May 1930, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>44</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 16 December 1930, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

Catalan section of the International Society for Contemporary Music<sup>45</sup> and by joining the composers' group Compositors Independents.<sup>46</sup> However, not being physically present in Catalonia was a disadvantage for him. What these attempts and his previous ones indicate, though, is that Valls very likely had the intention of returning to Catalonia as soon as possible,<sup>47</sup> and that he still saw himself as part of the Catalan music scene, even in exile. There is, indeed, no evidence of him having dedicated the same amount of energy to join composers' associations in France.

Valls had his first significant breakthrough as a composer in 1931, when his Concerto for Orchestra obtained the Edward Garrett McCollin Memorial Fund Prize from the Musical Society Fund of Philadelphia. Even though this initially excited some interest in Barcelona, Valls struggled to secure a performance there:<sup>48</sup> it was not until 1935 that he could see the work performed in his native city. It is likely that it was the Concerto which brought Valls to the attention of Otto Mayer, a German refugee who had recently arrived in Barcelona and quickly managed to establish himself as a leading music critic. Mayer and Valls started to correspond. Mayer was enthusiastic about Valls's symphonic music (there is no evidence, on the other hand, that he was familiar with Valls's songs at this stage)<sup>49</sup> and claimed that Valls was, together with Ernesto Halffter, the only Spanish composer of the younger generations to truly follow Falla's ideals of musical nationalism.<sup>50</sup> Mayer also recommended Valls's works to the International Society for Contemporary Music and the BBC,<sup>51</sup> and also to leading Madrid critic Adolfo Salazar.<sup>52</sup> He also sent Valls's Concerto to prestigious quartets in Europe who might be interested in performing it.<sup>53</sup>

Valls's life circumstances changed with the beginning of the Civil War in July 1936. In January 1937, Josep Carner, his mentor and supervisor at the Le Havre consulate, was given a new diplomatic post in Anvers (Belgium), and Valls followed him, being appointed vice-consul.<sup>54</sup> He still composed actively in his spare time, and, when the diplomatic service made it known in June 1937 that Carner and Valls might be posted to Paris, Valls expressed his discontentment to his wife, fearing that a job in Paris would be more demanding and leave him less time for composition.<sup>55</sup> While in Anvers Valls also stayed in touch with Otto Mayer, who was now actively programming and commissioning music by Catalan composers as head of Music within the Culture department of the *Generalitat de Catalunya*. Mayer suggested that Valls should write children's songs as well as accessible piano pieces that could be published through the *Generalitat*. Around the same time, Valls started corresponding with Roberto Gerhard, who worked at the *Generalitat* with Mayer, and with Conxita Badia, a soprano who

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<sup>45</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 27 August 1931, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>46</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 22 September 1931 and 4 May 1932, BC, FJV, Jva1230.

<sup>47</sup> This is also supported by the fact that his brothers frequently sent him updates on conscription rules and regulations in Spain, presumably so that Valls could determine when it might be safe for him to return to Spanish territory (he would have otherwise risked being imprisoned).

<sup>48</sup> Letter from Francesc Valls to Josep Valls, 28 March 1934, BC, FJV, Jva1223.

<sup>49</sup> Letters from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 1 August, 1 September, 6 September 1935, BC, FJV, Jva1250.

<sup>50</sup> Letter from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 6 September 1935, BC, FJV, Jva1250.

<sup>51</sup> Letter from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 15 October 1935, BC, FJV, Jva1250.

<sup>52</sup> Letter from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 7 November 1935, BC, FJV, Jva1250.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 22 November 1935, 23 April 1936, BC, FJV, Jva1250.

<sup>54</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 23 January 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1199. Delille was Valls's French wife, whom he married in 1934.

<sup>55</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 28 June 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1199.



was similarly sympathetic to the cause and soon expressed an interest in Valls's songs.<sup>56</sup> Thanks to Gerhard, Valls could see his Concerto for String Orchestra performed at the festival of the ISCM in Paris in 1937.<sup>57</sup>

In July 1938, Valls had to leave Anvers and return to Barcelona, when those born in 1904 were conscripted by the Republican army.<sup>58</sup> After some weeks in the city, he was finally sent to the front, where his obligations were admittedly light: he conducted his unit's wind band and wrote military hymns.<sup>59</sup> He was also allowed to return rather frequently to Barcelona, where he met with Mayer and Gerhard, as well as others in the *Generalitat* environment.<sup>60</sup> This time, Valls's attempts to establish himself as a name within Catalan musical life were more successful, and part of the reason for that was the fact that the Catalan war government, in supporting and encouraging avant-garde music, literature and art for propaganda purposes, was now offering opportunities to composers such as Valls that had previously been more difficult to come by. Even though Mayer did not manage to find a conductor who was willing and able to learn Valls's Symphony for performance,<sup>61</sup> Gerhard had the work published through the *Generalitat*, as part of the Culture department's ambitious programme to print works by some of the most promising young Catalan composers.<sup>62</sup> It was also Gerhard who, as a member of the Catalan section of the ISCM, recommended Valls's Symphony be performed in the Warsaw festival in 1939.<sup>63</sup> During Valls's stay in Barcelona, he also managed to get a contract from publisher Hinrichsen to publish his Cello Concerto and *Melodies chinoises*,<sup>64</sup> and his Symphony was performed in the Belgian radio in late 1938, perhaps owing to Valls's newly found high profile with the *Generalitat* and his contacts.<sup>65</sup> In a letter to Carner, Valls said that he had met "all the young Madrilenian composers"<sup>66</sup> in Barcelona. We can assume Valls meant Bacarisse, Bautista, Rodolfo Halffter, and other composers who were part of the *Consejo Central de la Música*, which had been moved from Madrid to Valencia and then from Valencia to Barcelona in November 1937, following the

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<sup>56</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 2 July 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1199; letter from Conxita Badia to Josep Valls, undated (possibly 1937-1939), BC, FJV, Jva898; letter from Roberto Gerhard to Josep Valls, 24 September 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1255.

<sup>57</sup> Letters from Roberto Gerhard to Josep Valls, 14 January 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1255.

<sup>58</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 30 May 1938, BC, FJV, Jva1230; letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 20 June 1938, BC, FHV, Jva1199. As for why Valls accepted being conscripted in 1938 while he had fled Spain in 1924, it is likely that he feared that his job in the Spanish diplomatic service would be at risk if he refused conscription, hence impacting on his wife and children as well. Although Valls was committed first and foremost to the Catalan cause, it is also likely that he regarded the Spanish Republican army with sympathy for its opposition to Franco.

<sup>59</sup> Letters from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 10, 20 and 24 August, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>60</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 19 July 1938, BC, FHV, Jva1199. Valls had already been in touch with Mayer the year before when Mayer suggested that Valls compose some piano pieces, as well as songs for children, that could be published by the *Generalitat*; letters from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 29 November and 18 December 1937, 5 January 1938, BC, FJV, Jva1250. He had also been in touch with Roberto Gerhard on the same issue: letter from Roberto Gerhard to Josep Valls, 28 July 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1255.

<sup>61</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 2 July 1938, 16 September 1938, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>62</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 19 July 1938, BC, FHV, Jva1199. Plans to publish Valls's songs at this stage, however, did not come to fruition.

<sup>63</sup> Letter from Roberto Gerhard to Josep Valls, 20 December 1937, BC, FJV, Jva1255; letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 19 July 1938, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>64</sup> Letters from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 31 October, 16 November 1939, 4 December 1939, BC, FHV, Jva1199. Even though Hinrichsen announced the publication of Valls's works (Hinrichsen, newsletter no. 4, 1938), there is no evidence that these were ever printed or distributed, as no copies have survived in libraries or archives.

<sup>65</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_querette Delille, 4 December 1938, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>66</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 28 July 1938, BC, Fons Josep Carner (FJC), Ms4877.

Republican government as the Francoist troops advanced. There is no evidence, however, that Valls was regularly in touch with the *Consejo* or that he relied on it to publish or promote his works. At the time, tensions existed between Mayer and Gerhard, on the one hand, and the predominantly Madrilenian composers who made up the *Consejo*,<sup>67</sup> with the former publishing and promoting Catalan music almost exclusively. As a Catalan composer who had seen himself as part of Catalan music circles even in exile, it is perhaps to be expected that Valls felt naturally drawn towards Mayer and Gerhard rather than Bacarisse and Rodolfo Halffter. In any case, there is no evidence either that Valls was actively inimical towards the *Consejo*.

After Barcelona fell at the hands of Franco's troops on 26 January 1939, Valls was one of several thousand soldiers and civilians to cross the border into France, which marked the beginning of the second part of his life-long exile. He was finally detained in the refugee camp of Argelès-sur-Mer, but, unlike many of his fellow Catalan and Spanish citizens, he was able to leave it within a few days because of his marriage to a French citizen.<sup>68</sup> By 15 February 1939, he was already back at his vice-consul job in Anvers,<sup>69</sup> which he must have left shortly thereafter as the Spanish Second Republic disintegrated. He was back in Le Havre by late summer 1939 and started looking for non-music jobs to support his family,<sup>70</sup> but was still keen to develop a music career: he initially enquired about teaching at the Schola Cantorum, but found that, with staff and many students having been mobilized, there was little teaching going on,<sup>71</sup> so he decided to resume cello lessons in Le Havre instead.<sup>72</sup> In these months, as the German occupation of France started, Valls made some enquiries with acquaintances to ascertain whether it would be possible for him to move with his family to Mexico or the United States, but none of these came to fruition.<sup>73</sup>

Little is known about Valls's whereabouts and activity during the Second World War, as he was cut off from many of his former friends and colleagues who were similarly scattered across Europe and America after Franco's triumph. Correspondence with his family back in Barcelona was scarce as well.<sup>74</sup> He and his family spent at least one period in evacuation elsewhere in France in 1940, after which they returned to Le Havre.<sup>75</sup> In 1944, Valls was issued with a discharge certificate from the *Résistance*, although the nature or extent of the activities he was engaged in are unclear.<sup>76</sup> From 1945 he lived in Montivilliers—a suburb in Le Havre—and worked at various Latin American embassies as an administrator.

<sup>67</sup> Moreda Rodríguez, *Music and exile in Francoist Spain*.

<sup>68</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_quette Delille, 8 February 1939, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>69</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_quette Delille, 15 February 1939, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>70</sup> Letters from Josep Valls to Paquette Delille, 31 October, 9 November and 2 November 1939, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>71</sup> Letter from Ernest Xancó to Josep Valls, 11 August 1939, BC, FJV, Jva1057; letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_quette Delille, 14 October 1939, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>72</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Pa\_quette Delille, 26 October 1939, BC, FHV, Jva1199.

<sup>73</sup> Letter from Ernest Xancó to Josep Valls, 6 May 1939, 15 July 1939, BC, FJV, Jva1057; letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 21 October 1945, BC, FJC, Ms4877; letter from Otto Mayer to Josep Valls, 10 July 1939, BC, FJV, Jva1250; letter from Ventura Gassol to Josep Valls, 11 June 1939, BC, FJV, Jva953; letter from Refugee Musicians' Aid Committee to Josep Valls, undated (probably 1939), BC, FJV, Jva1024.

<sup>74</sup> His brother Joan organized a performance of Valls's song "Mater Pulchra" at a private party in Barcelona in 1943. Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 24 June 1943, BC, FJV, Jva1225.

<sup>75</sup> Letter from Joan Valls to Josep Valls, 15 August 1940, BC, FJV, Jva1225.

<sup>76</sup> Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur, F.N. 25, Secteur est. Certificat de llicenciament de la Resistència a favor de Josep Valls. Coeuilly, 22 September 1944, BC, FJV. Valls's name, however, does not appear in a list of members of the Résistance in Le Havre compiled by the Le Havre branch of the *Fondation de la France Libre* in 2018: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/s4zxxnrd80rsvv4/Fichier%20Résistants%20LH.xlsx?dl=0> (last accessed: June 2019).

It was also from 1945 that Valls attempted to rekindle his connections with prominent figures of Catalan musical life now in exile, including Gerhard (now exiled in Cambridge), Badia (in Buenos Aires), Mayer (in Mexico City)<sup>77</sup>, and two others that he had only met more sporadically before the Civil War: composer Baltasar Samper (now exiled in Mexico City) and cellist Pau Casals (in Prades). Valls asked Gerhard and Samper to send him a biographical account for a study of Catalan music he was planning to write (an article on Catalan traditional music was published in 1945 and will be discussed in the next section), and also repeatedly enquired about performance opportunities for his works abroad, with mixed results. Mayer—who remained as enthusiastic about Valls's music as ever—sent Valls's scores to some orchestras and soloists in Mexico, and he published an article in 1945 where he claimed that Valls was the great Spanish symphonist after Manuel de Falla,<sup>78</sup> evidence suggests, however, that Valls's music was not performed in Mexico. Gerhard offered to send some of Valls's works to representatives of the ISCM in the United Kingdom, but warned him that, with Spanish (and Catalan) membership of the ISCM suspended after the fall of the Second Republic, his chances were limited.<sup>79</sup> As for Casals, Valls visited him in Prades in 1946, but was disappointed by the cellist's distant attitude and his resistance to commit to perform Valls's music.<sup>80</sup> Later, in 1948, Casals wrote very positively about Valls's cello concerto ("it is a remarkable work of virtuosic technique; it could not be more perfect"), but there is no evidence that he ever performed it.<sup>81</sup> Among all of Valls's works at that time, it was mostly his songs which were performed on international exchanges: Badia was enthusiastic in learning some of Valls's songs after she received them in 1949, and she programmed them at the BBC, France and Belgium.<sup>82</sup>

Among those connected to the environment of the *Generación del 27* and the *Consejo Central de la Música*, it was only with Óscar Esplá, now in exile in Belgium, that Valls was regularly in touch. Esplá, being more senior than most other exiled composers and having a wealth of international connections before the Civil War, was regarded by many as a leading figure in exile, and in the mid-1940s he started trying to reorganize the Spanish section of the ISCM, which Valls also saw as a potentially attractive connection to have his works performed more widely.<sup>83</sup> Even though Valls and other Catalan composers such as Samper and Gerhard were in favour of having a Catalan sub-section within the ISCM Spanish delegation, Esplá dismissed the idea as unnecessarily bureaucratic and divisive.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, with the Republican government in exile unable to cover the ISCM membership fees, Esplá's project never came to fruition during the 1940s.<sup>85</sup> Esplá eventually returned to Spain in 1950, and he re-established the Spanish section of the ISCM there, with the support of the Spanish government.

Valls's attempts to establish professional contacts in Le Havre or France more broadly were similarly sporadic and not always successful: in a letter in 1946, Valls admitted to his

<sup>77</sup> Mayer adopted the name Otto Mayer-Serra in Mexico City.

<sup>78</sup> Otto Mayer-Serra, "Batuta y apuntador," in *Mañana*, 10 November 1945.

<sup>79</sup> Letter from Roberto Gerhard to Josep Valls, 24 May 1946, 1 January 1947, BC, FJV, Jva1255.

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 27 September 1946, BC, FJC, Ms4877.

<sup>81</sup> Letter from Pau Casals to Josep Valls, 4 October 1948, FC, FJV, Jva919; letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 8 August 1948, BC, FJC, Ms4877.

<sup>82</sup> Letters from Conxita Badia to Josep Valls, 29 January 1950, 12 February 1949, 17 January 1950, BC, FJC, Jva898. Letter from Roberto Gerhard to Conxita Badia, 17 November 1949 and 11 December 1950, BC, Fons Conxita Badia.

<sup>83</sup> Letter from Óscar Esplá to Josep Valls, 8 January 1946, BC, FJV, Jva939.

<sup>84</sup> Letter from Óscar Esplá to Josep Valls, 30 December 1947, BC, FJV, Jva939.

<sup>85</sup> Letter from Óscar Esplá to Josep Valls, 27 September 1948, BC, FJV, Jva939; letter from Roberto Gerhard to Josep Valls, 21 December 1947, BC, FJV, Jva1255.

friend and former protector Josep Carner that he felt rather isolated in Le Havre, claiming his only steady contacts in the cultural world were with *Cultura Catalana* (a cultural association of Catalans in exile), and he could not afford to travel regularly to Paris so that he could stay in touch with French cultural life.<sup>86</sup> He still managed to have his Concerto performed in Paris in May 1946,<sup>87</sup> with famed violinist Joseph Calvet as one of the soloists, but he was ultimately not happy with the quality of the performance, as rehearsal time was limited.<sup>88</sup> His Symphony was performed in Amsterdam in 1948 at the *Concertgebouw*.<sup>89</sup> Throughout the following decades, Valls could sporadically see his music performed internationally, but he could never make a living solely out of music, and until his retirement he was employed in diplomatic services in Le Havre.

Valls's trajectory up to 1950 poses some challenges or questions to current historiographical narratives of exile under Francoist Spain, which I summarize here before moving on to discussing some of his songs. First of all, Valls's lack of systematic training in composition certainly singles him out from many of his fellow exiles, and complicates the question of the genealogies of Spanish musical modernism and how these transformed away from Spain. The *Generación del 27* is commonly thought to have built their modernization project for Spanish music on Debussy's and Stravinsky's influence, either directly or through indigenous models like Falla and Esplá, whereas Gerhard provides a direct link to the Second Viennese School through Schoenberg. Valls, however, along with other composers such as Rodolfo Halffter and Simón Tapia Colman, complicates this picture. Valls, Halffter and Tapia Colman were all self-taught, and they would all eventually experiment with twelve-tone technique from the 1950s onwards, whereas Gerhard, although most commonly remembered as Schoenberg's student, also studied with Felip Pedrell, who pioneered the study of Spanish historical music and extensively theorized on how the country's musical heritage should inform contemporary composition; this links him to Falla, also a student of Pedrell's.

Secondly, Valls's absence from Catalonia practically from the moment he started his career is interesting and unusual as well. The most similar career in this regard is perhaps that of Julián Orbón, a much younger composer (born in 1926) who left Spain while still a teenager and who learned Spanish musical traditions, which he borrowed heavily from, mostly through self-study and correspondence with those still in Spain. Unlike Orbón, Valls's attempts to have his music performed and printed in Catalonia throughout his career confirm that he conceived of his music as primarily as connected to Catalan music historiography. The fact that he was much more successful at doing so once the Civil War started and Mayer and Gerhard were put in charge of musical policies illustrates how ideas and discourses of national music history, as well as of what constituted musical modernity, changed dramatically during these years. Similarly, Valls's attempts at keeping in touch with Catalan composers and performers in exile (as opposed to those who had stayed in Catalonia, not all of whom would necessarily support the Franco regime) suggest a willingness to continue in exile his project of modernizing national music. Finally, Valls's (and Gerhard's and Samper's) understanding of national boundaries occasionally clashed with others'. Esplá, for example, saw Catalan music as part of Spanish music history and was reluctant to let Catalan composers present their music separately at international events.

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<sup>86</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 5 February 1946, BC, FJC, Ms4877.

<sup>87</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 5 February 1946, BC, FJC, Ms4877.

<sup>88</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 15 July 1946, BC, FJC, Ms4877.

<sup>89</sup> Letter from Josep Valls to Josep Carner, 8 August 1946, BC, FJC, Ms4877.

### **Songs: the quest for modernity**

Most of Valls's works have not received critical attention or been published or recorded in modern times, so an explanation of why this article focuses on his songs is in order here, one caveat being that these works are by no means the only part of Valls's oeuvre that merits attention. These songs constitute a sizeable but manageable corpus that can offer insights into a significant period of time in Valls's early career. The songs were composed or revised over a period of twenty years in which both Valls and his environment saw enormous change. Living through the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera, the Spanish Second Republic, the Civil War and the Second World War, Valls went from being an ambitious, self-taught twenty-year old who aspired to compose for a living, to being a middle-aged man with a few significant successes behind him but increasingly resigned to spending the rest of his life in exile and composing in his spare time only. Secondly, the songs should not be dismissed as a training ground for Valls before he undertook allegedly more ambitious projects, or as circumstantial pieces written with the hope of securing performance opportunities. Indeed, while it is likely that Valls had these eminently practical reasons in mind when he undertook the composition of songs in his youth, it is also fair to say that he would not have necessarily regarded these as simply minor or formative works, given not only the efforts he undertook later in his life to have them performed and published, but also the revision processes he engaged in. I therefore undertake discussion of these songs in the understanding that these are a comparatively small yet significant sample of Valls's output that can additionally provide a starting point for further analysis of Valls's works (including his Symphony and Concerto for String Quartet and Orchestra). They can also help us further articulate our understanding of issues of exile, modernity and modernism in the context of Spanish and Catalan music. Indeed, Valls's main stylistic concerns in these songs include not only expanded tonality and atonality, but also musical nationalism and folklorism—concerns that he shared pretty much with all of the composers starting out their careers around this time in Spain and Catalonia. These concerns were also shared with some composers whose careers were more established by this point (e.g. Pahissa in Barcelona, Esplá in Madrid) and who would later go into exile. Further study of Valls's works after 1939 (including, in this case, his revision in 1941-1945 of his earlier songs) can similarly open up new avenues of enquiry regarding how these shared concerns evolved in exile, influenced by the experience of greater mobility. Composers were often cut off from their native environment and from some of their former colleagues, but many established collaborations and relationships with other colleagues and with the new musical scene that hosted them. In general they welcomed the new developments in modernism at an international level.

The following table contains details of Valls's songs written or finalized between 1924 and 1950: