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***For the sake of a ‘true’ national music. Musical composition and Cultural Politics during the early Francoism: the National Music Prize (1939–1959)***

Among the initiatives promoted by the Franco regime in order to achieve a reorientation of musical life towards its adjustment to the ideological conservative frame of the “new Spain” claimed for after the Spanish Civil War, the yearly call of the National Music Prize (NMP) stands out, as it provided the chance to enhance composition trends more suitable to its main aesthetic features and to produce new repertoires for the chamber ensembles and orchestras supported by the new cultural institutions. In many of these calls, the choice of historical or literary subjects, often related to the “heroic” times of Spanish Golden Age, the claiming for the use of folklore sources, allegedly holder of a true, changeless national spirit, or even the suggestion of religious genres (oratorio), clearly proofs the strong ideological shift of the NMPs throughout the Francoism, reinforced by the tight control of their juries and the favouring of some composers publicized as representatives of the “right” way to be followed by Spanish composition. The aims of this paper are the description of the annual calls of the Spanish NMPs between 1939 and 1959 – the so-called ‘first' or 'early' Francoism –, the discussion of the ways in which the composers fitted into their specific requirements, and the commentary of some works awarded on occasion of such calls, that show the coexistence of divergent aesthetic trends and generational promotions, such as Joaquín Rodrigo’s Heroic Concerto (1942), Jesús Guridi’s 2nd String Quartet (1949), Rafael Rodríguez Albert’s Quartet for Guitar and String Trio (1952) , and Prelude, ‘diferencias’ and toccata on a theme by Albéniz (1959), by Manuel Castillo.

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