LLOBET'S COMPOSITIONS:

AN ANALYTIC EXAMINATION OF SELECTED WORKS

By

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Abstract

The compositions of Miguel Llobet give a view of the early twentieth century guitar virtuoso as an innovator, whose view of the guitar as a legitimate part of the international classical music scene would be partly dependent on a more sophisticated repertoire. These compositions show a sensitivity to harmonic nuance, texture, and "orchestration" never before heard on the guitar.

Introduction

The compositions of Miguel Llobet reveal an evolution of thought and practice from his early, somewhat reactionary, works to his late works that show the influence of the Parisian *avant-garde*. Analyses of selected works and comparison with works by other composers make clear that Llobet's earliest compositions show a greater sensitivity to harmonic nuance than do those of other guitar composers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The broadening of his harmonic vocabulary takes place in his middle-period works, and finally, his late works embrace the expanded harmonies used by his Impressionist contemporaries and the weakening of functional tonality that goes with them.

The influence of Chopin's music on Llobet's early works has been noted by a number of the sources cited in this essay. This leads one to the question of Llobet's guitaristic influences. Surely there must have been individuals among the guitar composers of the previous generation whose works were emulated by the youthful Llobet. The figure of Tárrega emerges. Despite previously cited indications that Llobet's private opinion of Tárrega may have differed considerably from his public opinion, one must make a few mitigating observations. The low esteem that Llobet is purported to have admitted to having had for his teacher would, if it existed, most likely have been a mature opinion. It is extremely unlikely that Llobet would have sought Tárrega out as a teacher had he had this opinion as a youth. Therefore, it is reasonable to look for Tárrega's influence in Llobet's youthful works.

For example, although Llobet's earliest published composition, *Romanza* (1896), is, as Purcell points out, Chopinesque in its harmonies, it follows one of Tárrega's favored formal plans quite closely. The *Romanza* begins with an A section in the key of C minor which is repeated. There follows a slightly longer B section, whose theme is an outgrowth of the A section theme, in the parallel major. This is similar to the scheme Tárrega used in two of his most important compositions, *Capricho árabe* and *Recuerdos de la Alhambra.* In both of those works, Tárrega follows the B section with a *da capo*. *Capricho árabe* is in an A-A-B-B-A form, with B being in the parallel major of A. *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* is in A-A-B-B-A-B form, also with B being in the parallel major of A.

The published edition of *Romanza* has a repeat of the B section, but no *da capo*, hence an A-A-B-B form. In this piece, as in the examples from Tárrega, B is in the

parallel major of A. It is this writer's opinion, however, that Llobet intended a *da capo* rather than a repeat. The evidence is in the music itself in the first ending of the B section. This ending is the third measure of a return to the minor. Such a return makes sense in the context of the second ending. Llobet wanted to end the piece in the same mode in which he began, but in the context of a repeat of the B section, this three-measure return to the original mode seems rather forced, and is puzzling in its brevity. The lack of a repeat mark at the beginning of the B section is also to be noted. The substitution of a *da capo* for the repeat solves the problem. This would have brought the formal structure (A-A-B-A-B) in line with Tárrega's example, particularly that of *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*, which repeats both the A and B sections before ending.

The resemblance to Tárrega goes no further than the modal and structural scheme. In his use of harmony, Llobet uses more chromaticism than his teacher ever did. To find examples of chromaticism in nineteenth-century guitar music one must go to two sources, Giulio Regondi (1822-1872) and Napoléon Coste (1805-1883). There is no evidence that Regondi was a likely influence on Llobet. None of the writings this author has examined have linked the two, and Regondi's music went out of print soon after his death six years before Llobet's birth, only to be rediscovered toward the end of the twentieth century. He was, however, known among guitarists in Paris as early as 1830, the year that Coste went there to study with Fernando Sor.

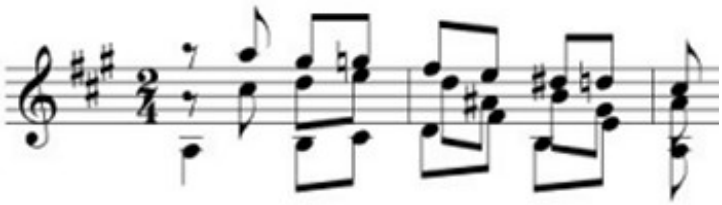
Coste was without a doubt an important influence on Llobet. His works appear on a number of Llobet's concert programs. The 1914 Monaco program cited by Tonazzi includes two etudes by Coste, and programs from October 29, 1912, in Philadelphia and

April 25, 1916, in Boston, reproduced in the introduction to volume one of the Llobet series, include Coste etudes. Llobet also recorded an etude by Coste.

In his description of studies under Llobet, Rey de la Torre mentions having studied all twenty-six of Coste's opus 38 etudes (Rey 1985, 24). Rey also made a point of mentioning the importance of these studies to Llobet, and to himself, when the author was his student in 1975-1976.

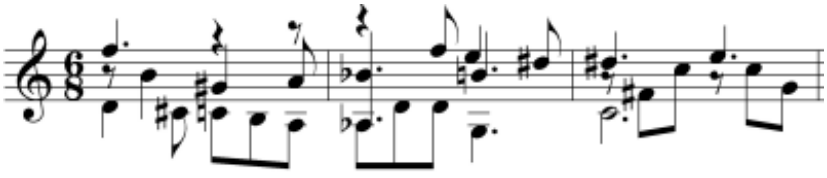
The most harmonically adventurous of Coste's opus 38 etudes is number nineteen. An examination of this work may afford a glimpse into Llobet's approach to chromatic alterations. For example, the piece opens with a progression in A major (example 1).

Example 1: Etude opus 38, no. 19, Coste.



The chromatic descent from A to C# is almost unbroken. The only whole step in the upper voice is the seventh of a secondary dominant. The third of this chord is itself a chromatic alteration. In fact, all of Coste's chromatic alterations serve to create secondary dominants. Compare this with the following excerpt from Llobet's *Romanza* (example 2).

Example 2: Romanza, Llobet.



The lower voice descends chromatically, with an ascending chromatic line in the inner voice beginning on the G# up to C. The chromatic alterations either create secondary dominant functions or are traditional non-chordal tones, such as the upper-voice D# in the last measure, which is a suspension from the previous augmented triad.

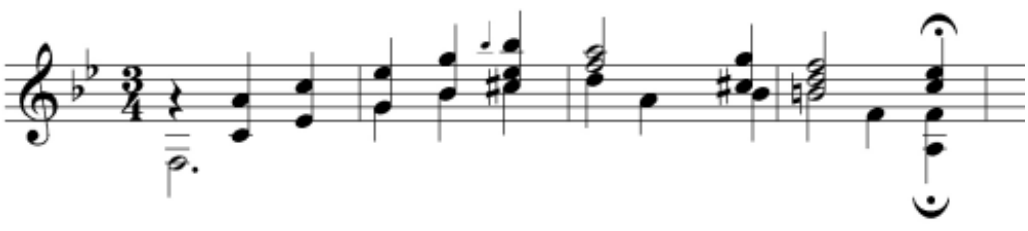
The first beat of the second measure of this example creates a somewhat dissonant clash between the A♭ and the B♭. The A♭ is the seventh in a third-inversion seven chord ($B^{\circ 7}$), which resolves to an augmented five chord. The B♭ in the melody is a chromatic passing tone going from the A to the B♮. This kind of chromaticism goes beyond Coste's secondary dominant function. So while Llobet may well have been influenced by the more advanced harmonies of Coste, he seemed acutely aware that the guitar was suffering from a diatonic stagnation.

Mazurka (1901)

Written when Llobet was twenty-three years of age, this minor work points toward some important trends in his style of composition. While his earlier music shows a nascent fertility in Llobet's harmonic sensibilities, this is the first to use such bold (for a guitarist at the turn of the century) chromaticism. It is also in this work that intimations of his method of using voice leading to supersede harmonic progression can be seen.

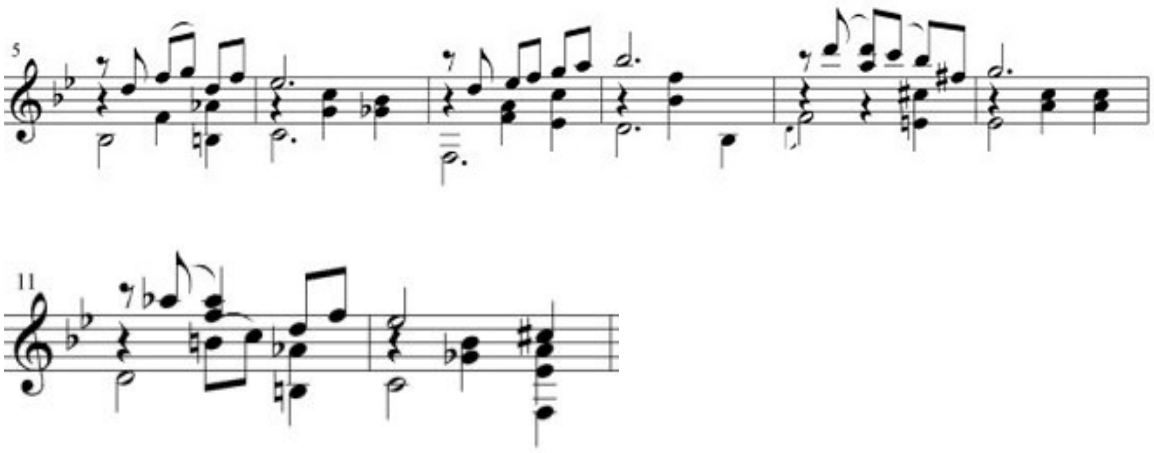
The piece, a five-part rondo, begins with a four-bar introduction over a dominant pedal. This opening (example 3) seems to be more like a prolonged anacrusis and, indeed, the final chord, a first-inversion V7 with a fermata, is the true point of the introduction.

Example 3: Mazurka, Llobet.



The first phrase to which this leads is in a clearly discernable periodic structure. The two opening phrases, bars five through twelve, constitute a more-or-less orthodox harmonic progression, as follows: I - vii^{o7}/ii | ii - ii$^{\varnothing 7}$ | V | I | followed by | iii – G♭ 6 | vii ½^{o}7 | vii^{o}7/ii | ii- ii$^{\varnothing 7}$ - V+7 | (example 4).

Example 4: Mazurka, Llobet.



This moves to I in the next phrase. The final chord in measure nine appears to be an inversion of F# minor seventh if the A in the previous chord is thought of as an implied third. Respelled as an augmented sixth, however, the chord and its resolution make perfect sense.

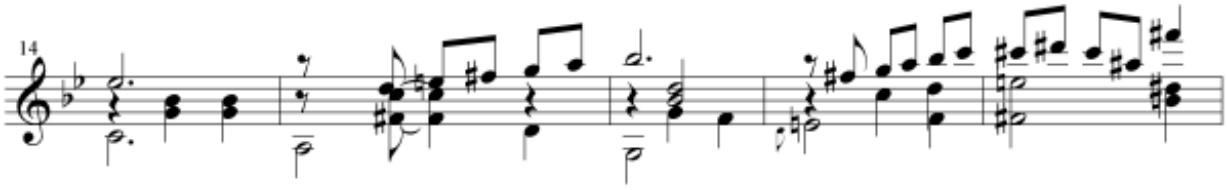
Llobet's fondness for the diminished seventh, and its resolution to an augmented V7, although not really novel, represents a bit of a departure from the harmonically-conservative guitar composers of Spain. It may be thought of as the next step after Coste, and has obvious links to the Parisian piano music of an earlier generation, as exemplified by Chopin.

The second period of the *Mazurka*, commencing in measure thirteen, begins the same

as the first, but by its third bar (measure fifteen) moves toward a cadence in G minor – V7/vi in measure fifteen to vi in measure sixteen (See example 5). Measures seventeen and eighteen increase the harmonic tension with a move toward B♮ - an enharmonic Neapolitan, predictably followed by V - I to complete the A section. The movement in measure seventeen, as in measure nine, although functional by nature, is remarkable for its voice leading. The lower voice moves in ascending half steps, E to F in measure seventeen to F# in the next measure. The upper voice moves stepwise (half steps and whole steps) from F# to C#, and the middle voice ascends in whole steps from C to E. Llobet's method of connecting by the smallest possible steps will show up in later works, such as *El Mestre,* and will often overshadow traditional harmonic function.

What is relevant here is the rather unexpected appearance of the Neapolitan in measure eighteen. Although the use of the Neapolitan was not new in Llobet's day, its appearance in guitar music represented a move away from the naive harmonies of Tárrega and Coste.

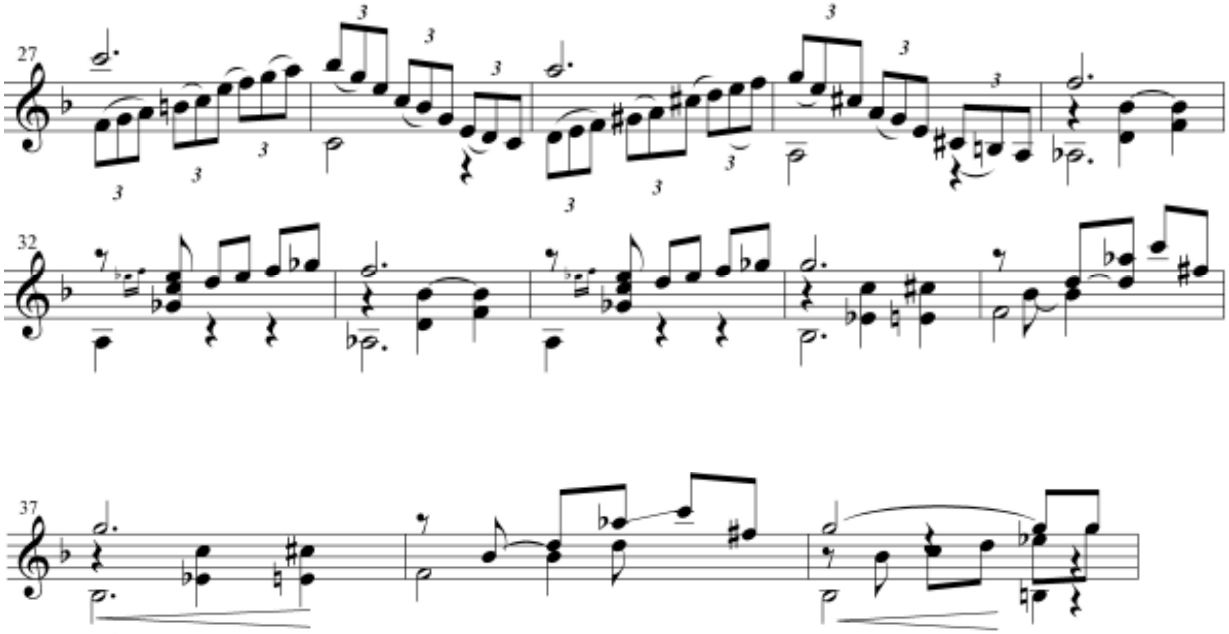
Example 5: Mazurka, Llobet.



The B section, beginning in measure twenty-one, is in D minor, and has an harmonically straightforward opening: i - iv - V7 - V/V - V7 with a repeat that replaces V/V - V7 with I (See example 6). This four-bar phrase is compressed to two, I - V7 played in F,

in measures twenty-seven and twenty-eight, then sequenced in d minor in measures twenty-nine and thirty. A move toward E♭ follows, with a third inversion V7 in E♭ in measure thirty-one moving to the vii°7 of V in measure thirty-two. This is reiterated in the following two measures, and finally resolves to E♭, which is slightly mitigated by the C on the second beat. The C# and E♮ on the last beat of measure thirty-five act as chromatic passing tones to the second-inversion dominant in measure thirty-six. These two measures are also repeated and finally resolve to E♭ in measure thirty-nine, where the move toward C minor begins. The somewhat unusual A♭ in measures thirty-one and thirty-three may be thought of as neighbor tones (or leading tones) to the A♮, giving a slight foreshadowing again of what will later become a priority in Llobet's music, i.e., voice leading by short steps.

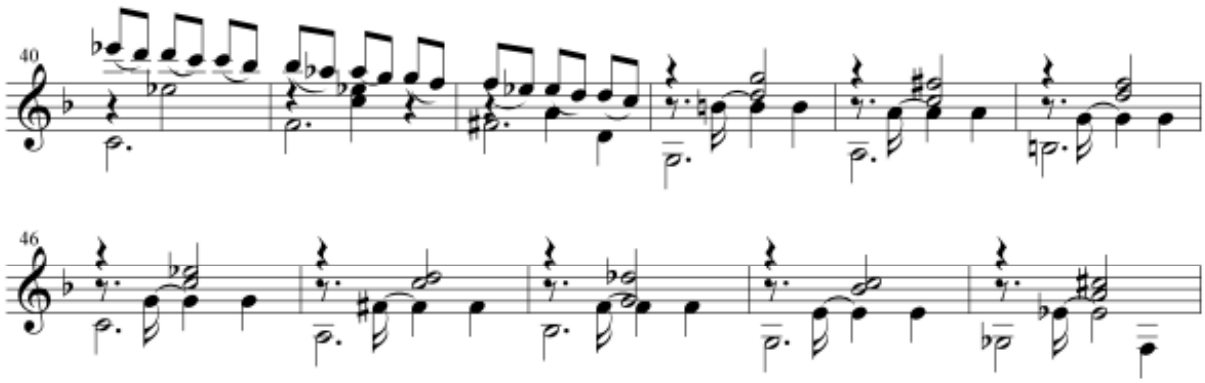
Example 6: Mazurka, Llobet.



The closing material, measures forty through fifty, (see example 7) is in C minor, moving from i | V7/vii | viiº7/ V | V | V7/V | V7 | I, followed by a second inversion five of five. Measure forty-eight is unstable, with a second inversion G half diminished seven resolving in measure forty-nine to a second inversion secondary dominant. This prepares the sudden modulation for the reprise of the A section that follows. Through an interesting bit of voice leading between bars forty-nine and fifty, an F augmented with a flatted seventh leads to the reprise.

It is interesting that in these final measures of the B section, Llobet could easily have taken the very predictable route of flatting the E in measure forty-nine, creating a two chord in B♭ major. This would have prepared the modulation effectively, and would have made the second inversion D seven chord in measure forty-seven a convincing pivot chord. However, Llobet is giving precedence to the chromatic descent in the inner voice, which begins in measure forty-six.

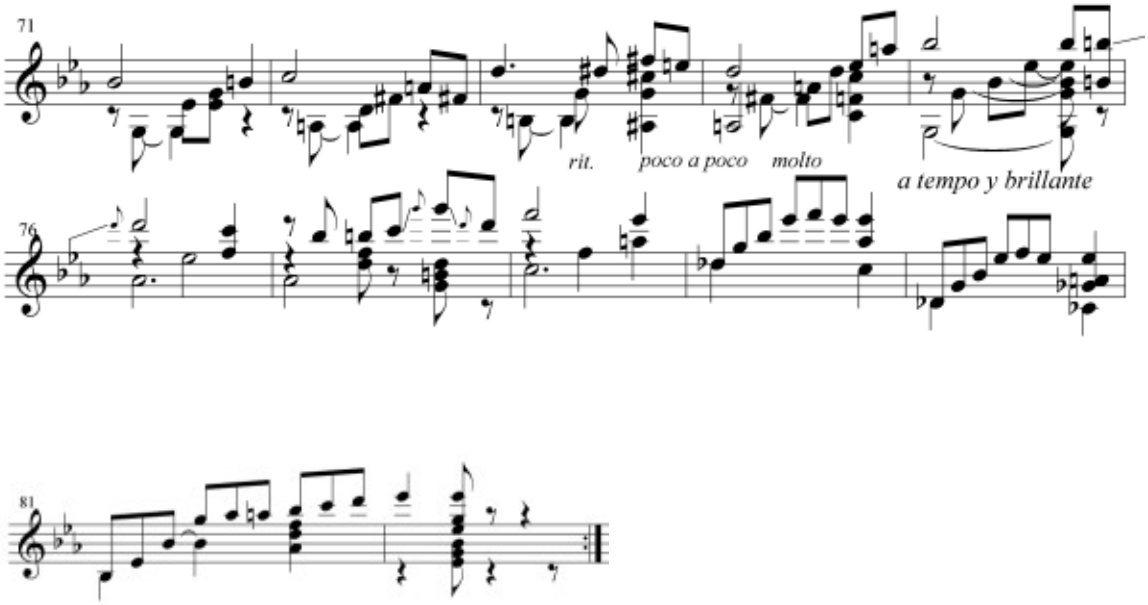
Example 7: Mazurka, Llobet.



After an almost unaltered reiteration of the A section, the C section, in the key of E♭ begins in measure sixty-eight. Measure seventy makes effective use of the diminished seventh chord to return to I. The lines again move in half steps to allow the voice leading to dominate the harmonic progression. The bass in measures sixty-nine and seventy moves B♭ - B - C - D♭ - D, resolving to G in bar seventy-one. The upper voice moves E♭ - D - C (the only whole step) - B to B♭ in bar seventy-one. The inner voices maintain a static F - A♭ oscillation.

The second phrase, beginning in measure seventy-one (see example 8), leads toward, and through, G major, arriving at its cadence through a viiº7 in measure seventy-three. An effective device appears in measure seventy-four. On the last beat of the measure there is a second inversion F seventh chord, a kind of passing chord between the dominant seventh on the previous beat and the G minor in seventy-five.

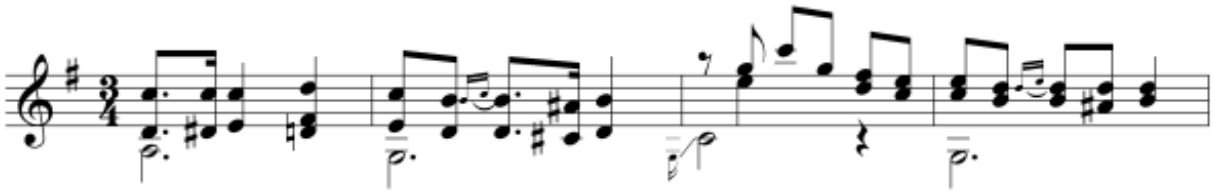
Example 8: Mazurka, Llobet.



Measures seventy-five through seventy-eight include (in E♭) the progression I | ii | V/vi | vi sus4 - V7/V. The sus 4 (F) resolves to E♭, which is the seventh of the V7/V. Measure seventy-nine has V/IV to IV, which is restated in measure eighty, an octave lower, but now resolves to a German sixth. The anticipated resolution to B♭ is somewhat deceptive, because when the B♭ arrives, it is as the fifth of the E♭ triad, the one chord. This is a dissonant inversion, a suspension of the notes that form the tonic triad over the root of a dominant chord. Traditionally, it resolves to the dominant, and Llobet does so. This prepares the perfect authentic cadence in measures eighty-one and eighty-two that concludes section C. Section A is then reiterated verbatim.

In the *Mazurka* one may well find Tárrega's influence most overtly manifested. Although there are two mazurkas by Sor, several by Mertz, and a few by Coste, it was Tárrega who "took what was considered to be a 'pianistic' genre and translated it into guitar music" (Ardizzone 1998, 12-13). But Ardizzone also observes that "Tárrega does not approach Chopin's level of harmonic innovation and sophistication..." (ibid. 12). For example, observe the opening measures of Tárrega's *Mazurka en Sol* (example 9).

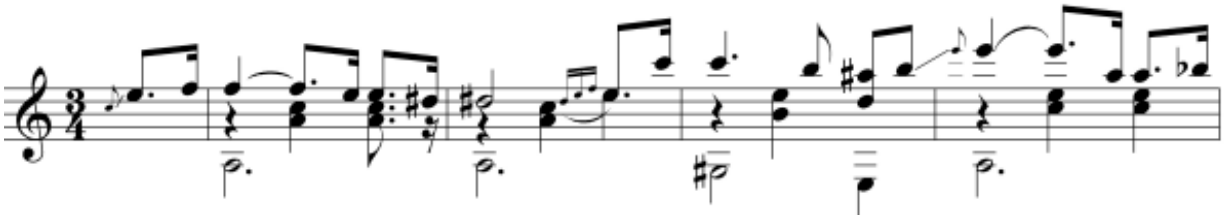
Example 9: Mazurka in G, Tárrega.



The use of the second-inversion dominant seventh as an opening sonority is interesting, and the chromatic alteration of its root points the way toward Llobet's use of

voice leading. A chromatic alteration to D# in the second full measure of another Tárrega mazurka, *Marieta!,* alters the root of a second inversion secondary dominant (example 10).

Example 10: Marieta, Tárrega.



Although this D# behaves as a neighbor to the E, it provides the only hint of harmonic movement in these two measures. Its positioning on a strong beat, and its duration, allow it to be perceived as harmonic.

These examples are about as chromatic as Tárrega ever allows his music to become. Llobet's sole excursion into this genre may be a kind of declaration of the musical influence of his teacher and, to a greater extent, Chopin, but his own compositional voice is already evident. He begins to nudge the mazurka's harmonic vocabulary a bit more towards the Parisian *avant-garde* (although by no means did he reach it) and away from its traditional Polish roots, and, more importantly, toward greater harmonic complexity. Thus, he brings the form to a higher level of sophistication and modernity than had previously existed on the guitar.

Llobet's *Mazurka* was to establish a new standard of harmonic complexity for the guitar. This would be repeated by numerous other composers who were moving in the same musical sphere as Llobet. Although any direct influence may not be supported by existing evidence, it remains that for the first time in the history of the guitar other composers felt free to write for the instrument with a greater degree of sophistication.

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) included a mazurka in his *Suite Popular Brazilienne* written between 1908 and 1912. This mazurka imbues the traditional mazurka with Brazilian folkloric elements. It is neither as harmonically advanced as Llobet's mazurka, nor as much so as Villa-Lobos' own mature works for guitar. It is known, however, that Villa-Lobos was "acquainted with the Catalan virtuoso Miguel Llobet, who toured Brazil in 1910 and apparently made the young composer a gift of two guitars" (Yates 1999, 7). It was at that time that Villa-Lobos rewrote his "Valsa Concerto No. 2" for Llobet. [1] It may also have been around that time that Villa-Lobos composed his famous "Choros," which was originally dedicated to Llobet. This version is a bit different from the one that is published, and is familiar to most classical guitarists. It exists only in manuscript form, and the only known copy, (and until now known only to a few), is in the archive that has been held privately by Fernando Alonso. This archive is discussed in Chapter Four.

The Paraguayan guitarist and composer Agustín Barrios (1885-1944) wrote two mazurkas, one of which figured prominently in many of his own concert programs, the *Mazurka Appassionada*. Written in 1919-1920, it is "loaded with Neapolitan chords and harmonies borrowed from other keys" (Ardizzone 1998, 14). Whether or not there was a direct influence, one cannot help but be reminded of Llobet's approach. Clearly Barrios was moving in the same direction nearly twenty years after Llobet's mazurka.

A mazurka for guitar by Alexandre Tansman (1897-1986) was written for Segovia in Paris in 1925. Its sudden shifts in harmony and extensive use of modes make it clearly indebted to the composers whose musical language would also influence Llobet. Tansman would also make use of artificial harmonics and *etouffé*, effects first explored on the guitar by Llobet in his mature works. Also, Manuel Ponce (1882-1948) incorporated a mazurka into

[1] There are some dating problems with this work which are clarified by Yates in his article.

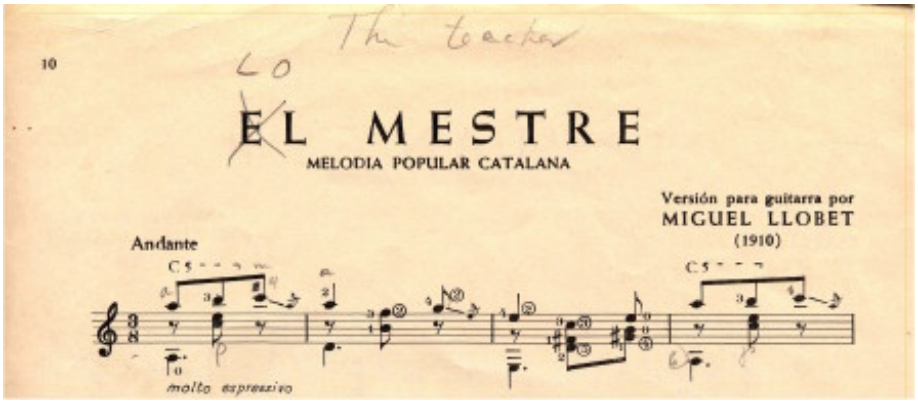
his *Cuatro Piezas*, which he wrote in Paris in 1933. Here again the guitar is used in a way that helps to move the mazurka away from its roots, and toward new influences, both in its use of post-Impressionist harmonies and in its use of Mexican folkloric influences.

El Mestre

Llobet's best-known works are his *Diez Canciones Populares Catalanas* (Ten Catalonian Folk Songs), published by *Union Musicale Española* in 1964. There were, in fact, fourteen Catalonian folk songs that Llobet arranged. *La Pastoreta* was published by U.M.E. in 1969, and *El noi de la Mare*, a very popular Christmas song among Spanish audiences, in 1975. Of the remaining Catalan arrangements, *La Preçó de Lleida* was only published in 1989 by Chanterelle Verlag. *L'emigrant* does not appear to have ever been published. Of all of these, *El Mestre* is without a doubt the best known and most often played.

The title, "The Teacher" is listed in most sources as "***El** Mestre."* This is the title that appears in the original Union Musical edition as well as in the Chanterelle edition. In *Tocatimbal 4*, a collection of Catalonian folk songs, it also appears as “El Mestre,” and the lyrics included the words “*El mestre que m’ensenya*” and “*El mestre va a la Guerra*” (*Tocatimbal 4* 1986, 7). However, according to Rey de la Torre, the title used by Llobet was *"**Lo** Mestre."* A facsimile of the title of the copy that the author used when studying with Rey may be seen below (plate 1). It can be seen clearly that he has crossed out "El" and substituted "Lo."

Plate 1: Title page of *El Mestre* annotated by Rey de la Torre.



The word “El” is the masculine definite article in Catalan as is, it would seem, the word “Lo”. Two of the Llobet folksong settings use the word “Lo,” *Lo Rossinyol* and *Lo Fill del Rei*. Conversely, three settings use the word “El,” *El Mestre*, *El Testament d’Amelia*, and *El Noi de la Mare*. It may be surmised that, owing to the nature of folksongs, they are the product of an oral tradition, and minor discrepancies in the titles, lyrics and music may occur.

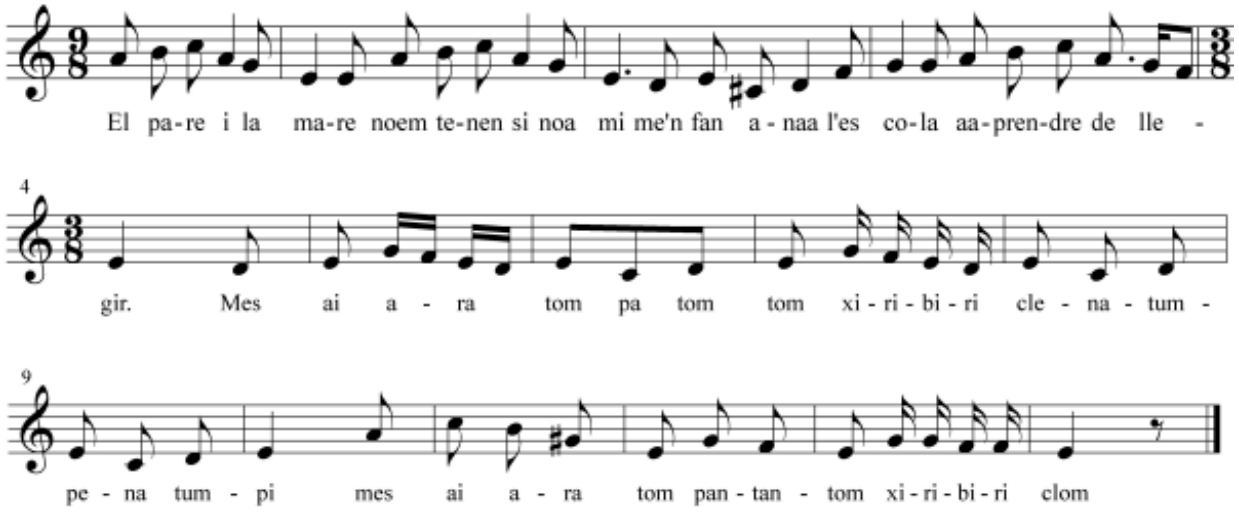
El Mestre (or *Lo Mestre*) was written in 1910, when Llobet's artistry was maturing. The harmonies demonstrate an evolution from his early Chopinesque use of slightly extended tonal function to the more linearly-driven voice leading that was to mark his later style. His chord voicing is becoming more interesting and, for the first time, one gets the feeling that Llobet is "orchestrating" the guitar. This piece may be considered to be the first in his new style, a fruition of the techniques with which Llobet was dabbling in his earlier works.

An examination of the original folk tune in its original monophonic style is instructive (see example 11). The following is reproduced from the Chanterelle edition of the complete folk song arrangements. It was taken from *Folklore de Catalunya-*

Cansoner (p.183) by Joan Amades. The refrain is based on meaningless syllables that were intended to be tambourine-like:

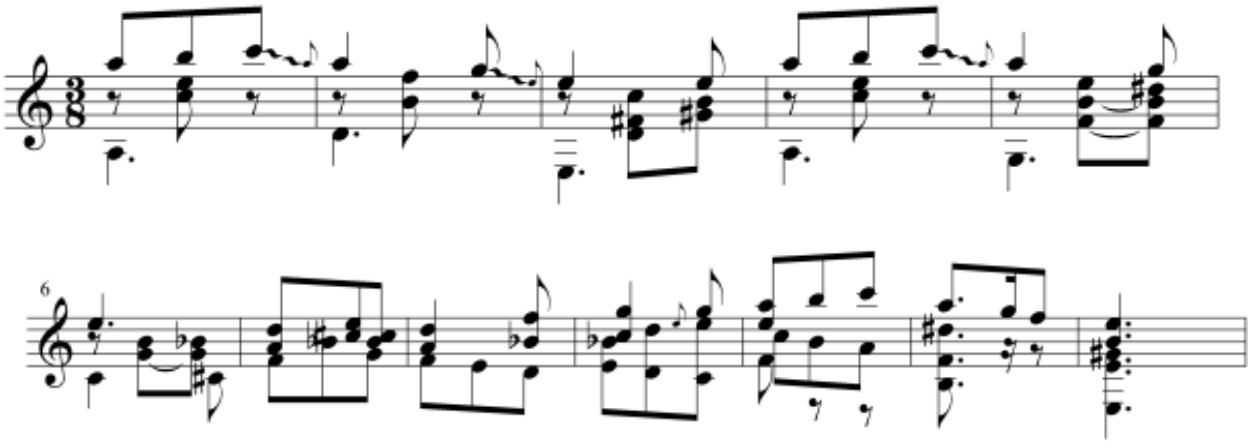
"Mes, ai!, ara tom
pantontom xiribiriclona
tumpena tumpi
Mes, ai!, ara tom
Pantantom xiribiriclom."

Example 11: El Mestre.



In dealing with the innate repetitiveness of the folksong, Llobet immediately shows his keen ear for harmony (see example 12).

Example 12: El Mestre, Llobet.



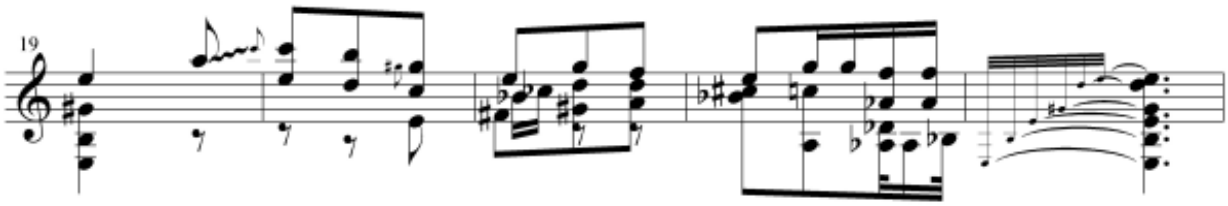
Compare Llobet's opening statement of the three-bar melody to its immediate reiteration in example 12. Notice how the A-minor opening measure moves to a relatively stable ii - V, although the use of the parallel dominant harmony, by way of a raised third in the second chord in measure three, is interesting. The notes imply a set of neighbor notes to those of the V chord, perhaps a sort of "neighbor chord." There is some hint here of bitonality, although not fully realized. However, in measure five a suspended E resolves to a D# to create an augmented seventh chord, a V+7 of C. The sense of repose in its resolution to a C major seventh is brief, and the C and B immediately move inward by half steps to create a C# diminished 7th. The move to the dominant at the end of the first verse is an interesting use of the French sixth in root position resolving as it should.

The refrain is, according to Ronald Purcell (Llobet 1989 Vol. 2, iv) reminiscent of a medieval Moorish lament. These laments formed the basis for what was to become flamenco, and Llobet capitalizes on this in his use of the *rasgueado* (a flamenco strumming technique) in measures fourteen and sixteen. Once again, Rey de la Torre's instruction is useful in the interpretation of this technique. Just as the reference to the lament is subtle, so too should be the use of *rasgueado,* which should be strummed once with the thumb or the back of the middle finger. This is not the violent strumming technique found in the more fervid flamenco pieces.

The move to the dominant (example 13) is accomplished more by tightly constructed voice leading than by harmonic function, and in this Llobet creates heightened tension and a stark contrast to the dominant half cadence of measures ten

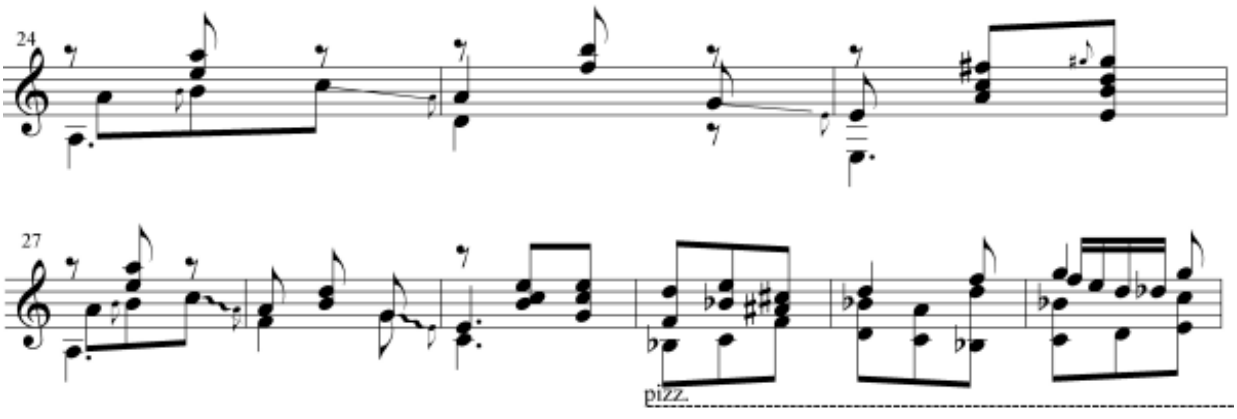
through twelve. This is the use of voice leading that will eventually replace functionality in his later works.

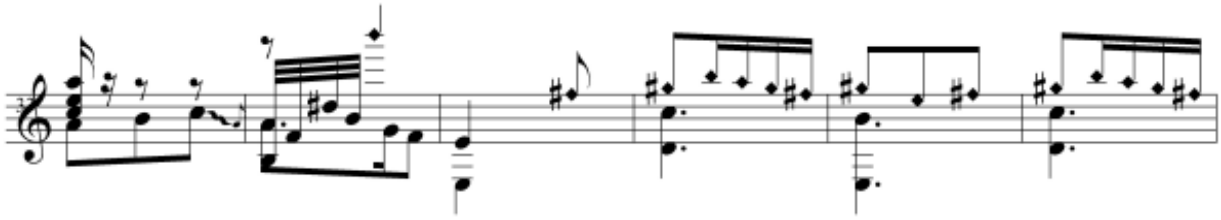
Example 13: El Mestre, Llobet.



The next statement of the melody, beginning in example 14, is moved to the inner voice, and Llobet capitalizes on the rich quality of the fourth string to give the tune a dramatic, and rather masculine, character; this is clearly a tenor solo. The "tenor" is immediately answered by pizzicato strings (achieved through the use of *étouffé*) before completing the verse. This is an excellent example of Llobet's orchestral interpretation of the guitar. It shows his use of a new approach to guitar technique, that of using timbral differences between the strings to create his "orchestrations." Prior to Llobet, guitarists either worked to minimize the guitar's timbral idiosyncrasies, or merely ignored them.

Example 14: El Mestre, Llobet.





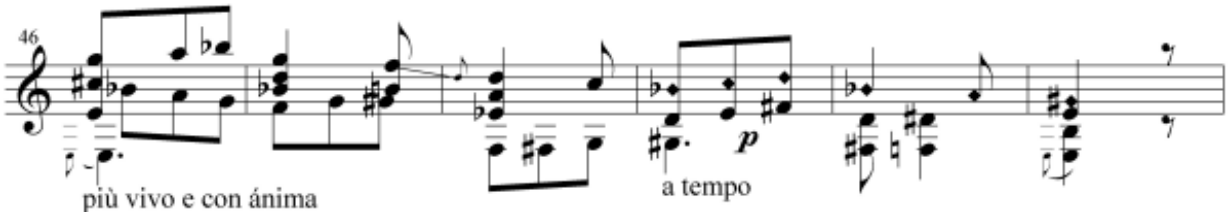
Llobet intensifies the innate drama of his scoring by increasing the rhythmic motion of the inner voice, ultimately accompanying the tenor voice with a thirty-second-note arpeggio and a two-octave leap in measure thirty-four. His departure from the half cadence in measure thirty-five is accomplished with the evocative use of artificial harmonics in the refrain.

In measures forty-six through fifty-one (example 15) Llobet creates a bridge to the final verse. These six measures use a combination of voice leading and chord voicing to maintain tension, and move to the dominant half cadence. The harmonies move from first inversion C# diminished seventh to G minor by way of passing tones, in contrary motion, in the inner and upper voice. This moves to G minor seventh (in its four-two inversion) in measure forty-seven, with a passing G bringing it to G# diminished seventh. It resolves to an unstable F dominant seventh with an added sixth in measure forty-eight. These sonorities create a strong pull toward B♭, the Neapolitan of A minor.

Measure forty-nine begins a three bar section built on an E whole tone scale beginning with a pair of neighbor tones over the G# resolving to a second inversion C augmented chord. These two neighbor tones are not really dissonant, and create a kind of root position version of the Italian sixth. However, rather than resolving to the A, the neighbor tones behave as they should, resolving to a C augmented chord. This is an example of Llobet giving the linear movement of the voices priority over the traditional

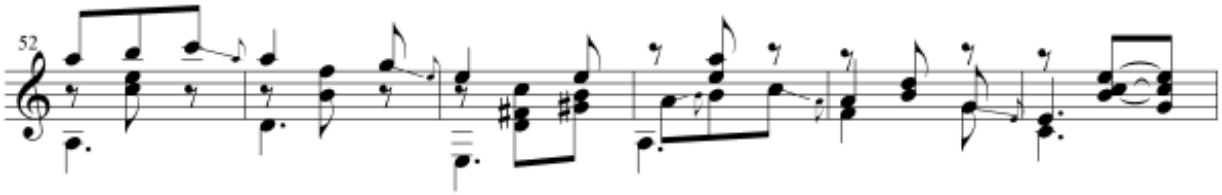
rules of functional harmony. The parallel sixths move in whole tones to the down beat of measure fifty, at which point the whole tone scale is interrupted by chromatic passing tones (chromatic in the sense that they do not fit into the E whole tone scale) in all three voices. These passing tones form an Italian augmented sixth, resolving to E, the dominant. Between the use of the Neapolitan, which most frequently resolves to some form of the dominant chord, and the use of the E whole tone scale, this six-measure bridge creates an strong move to the dominant in preparation for the return to the opening.

Example 15: El Mestre, Llobet.



His return to the theme seems to be verbatim at first, but he continues to exploit the operatic qualities explored in the second strain by turning it into a "duet" between the "soprano" and the "tenor." This can be seen clearly in example 16, at which point the theme is stated first in the upper voice in measure fifty-two, then in the inner voice in measure fifty-five.

Example 16: El Mestre, Llobet.



According to Ronald Purcell (1989, p. iv), "Since the joyful outcome was popular and common knowledge, this text ends without spelling out the details of the conclusion but leaves it to the creative and delightful imagination of the audience and singers." Llobet perfectly matches that by ending on the dominant.

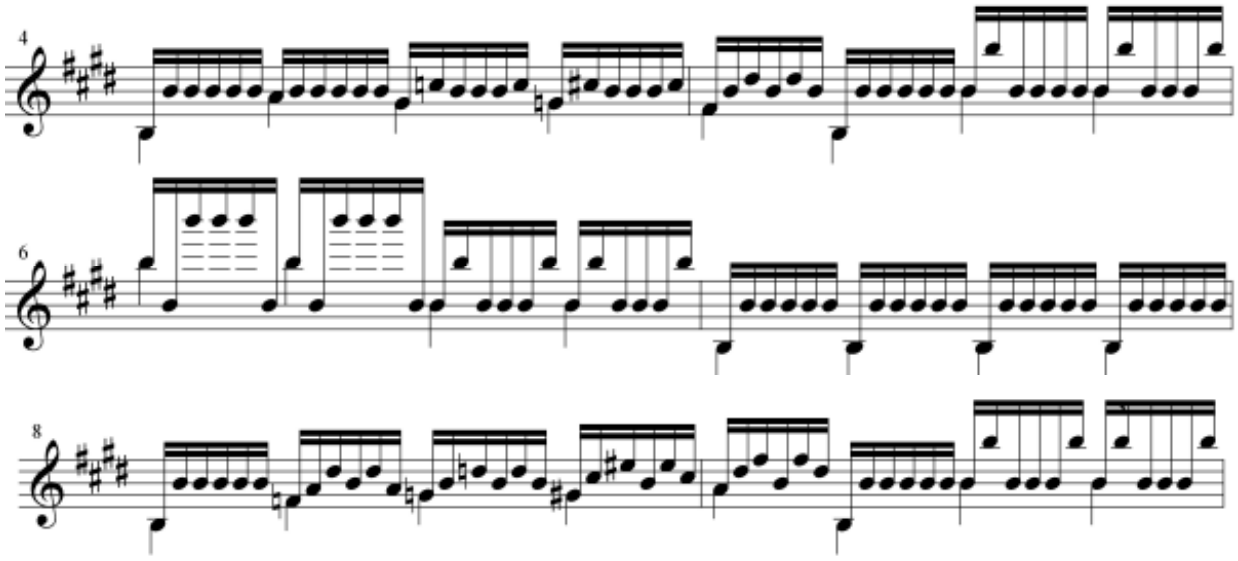
Respuesta

"*Respuesta*" bears the subtitle "Impromtu" which, vague as that designation is, better describes the compositional schema than does the title. The word "respuesta" is a noun which means "answer" or "reply". Since the piece was written in 1922, with a dedication to Maria Louisa Anido, it is more than a little tempting to speculate on the source of the title. Anido was a pupil of Llobet's whose family became a surrogate family for the composer when he was living in Buenos Aires. It has been suggested that the family had hopes of a marital match between Llobet and Maria Louisa, but their relationship appears to have been little more than professional; first as teacher-student, and later as duo partners. It is intriguing to think of the composition as Llobet's answer to the Anido family's (and Maria Louisa's) marital expectations.

The subtitle, therefore, is valuable in setting the expectations of this piece. A somewhat casually conceived work of modest proportions and with little in the way of development can be anticipated. The harmonies are redolent of Chopin, although the influence of Debussy seems strong. Indeed, although Llobet never completely abandons functional harmony, he weakens it through the repeated use of pan-tonal triadic structures.

The work is structured on a ternary form with an extended introduction that serves the important function of establishing the figuration that unifies the entire piece. The entire introduction is a static B, somewhat akin in its suspension of movement to Wagner's Rhein music, interrupted briefly in measures four and five, and eight and nine (see example 17) by sonorities that, though seemingly triadic, are purely the result of voice leading.

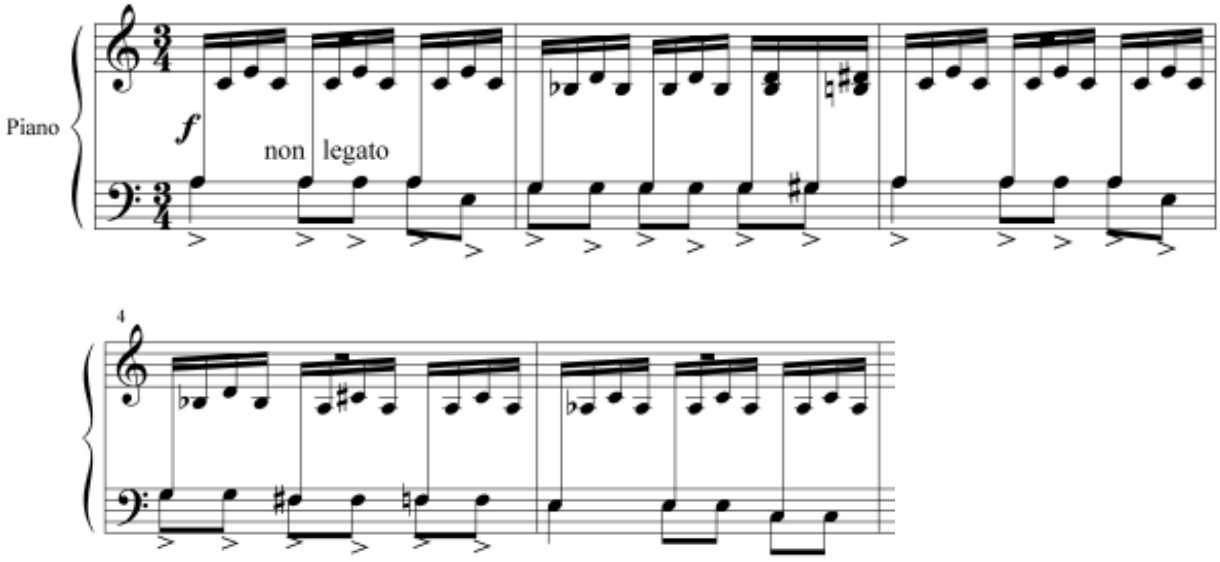
Example 17: Respuesta, Llobet.



For example, the second beat of measure eight appears to be a French sixth in the key of A, which should resolve to E. This would set up an interesting tonal area by modulating to subdominant. But such traditional tonal relationships are not part of the piece's harmonic grammar. Instead, the triad moves to G♮, which only begins to make sense if taken within the context of voice leading as the moving force. This is to be Llobet's chief device for providing harmonic movement.

This emphasis on voice leading seems to derive from Chopin's e minor prelude opus 28 number 4, but Chopin's harmonies are much more traditionally functional. A better example may be found in the Prelude from Debussy's *Pour le Piano (1896-1901).* As can be seen in example 18, within the first three measures Debussy appears to establish a tonal hierarchy based on parallel motion in A minor. However, measures four and five establish the supremacy of half-step voice leading (still in parallel motion) that was echoed by Llobet more than twenty years later.

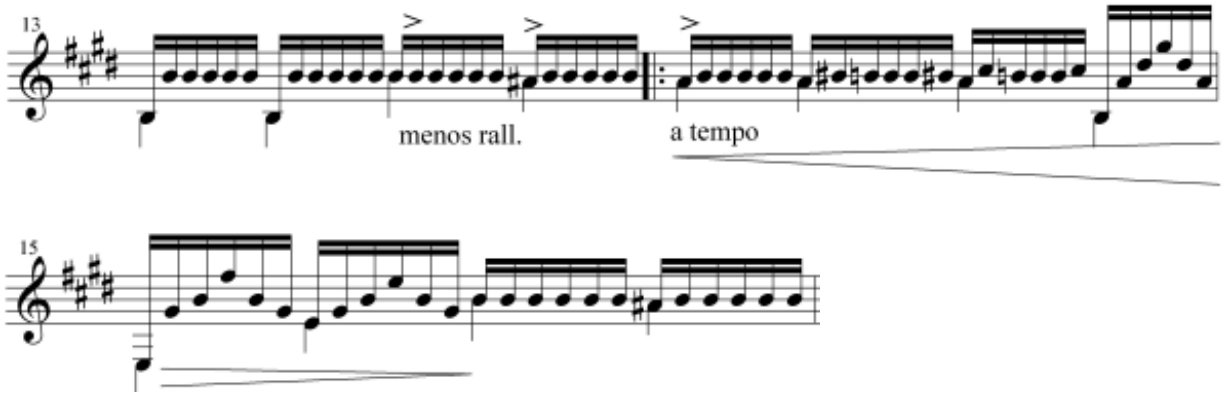
Example 18: Pour le Piano, Debussy.



The figuration of the repeated dominant tone spanning three octaves serves as a both an accompaniment and a generative force from which both the A and B motives grow. These motives are characteristic of Mueller's "tonal pillars". This extended statement of the dominant does appear to have a larger structural/harmonic function

resolving, although only briefly, on the tonic in the second complete measure of the first A section, in measure fifteen (Example 19).

Example 19: Respuesta, Llobet.

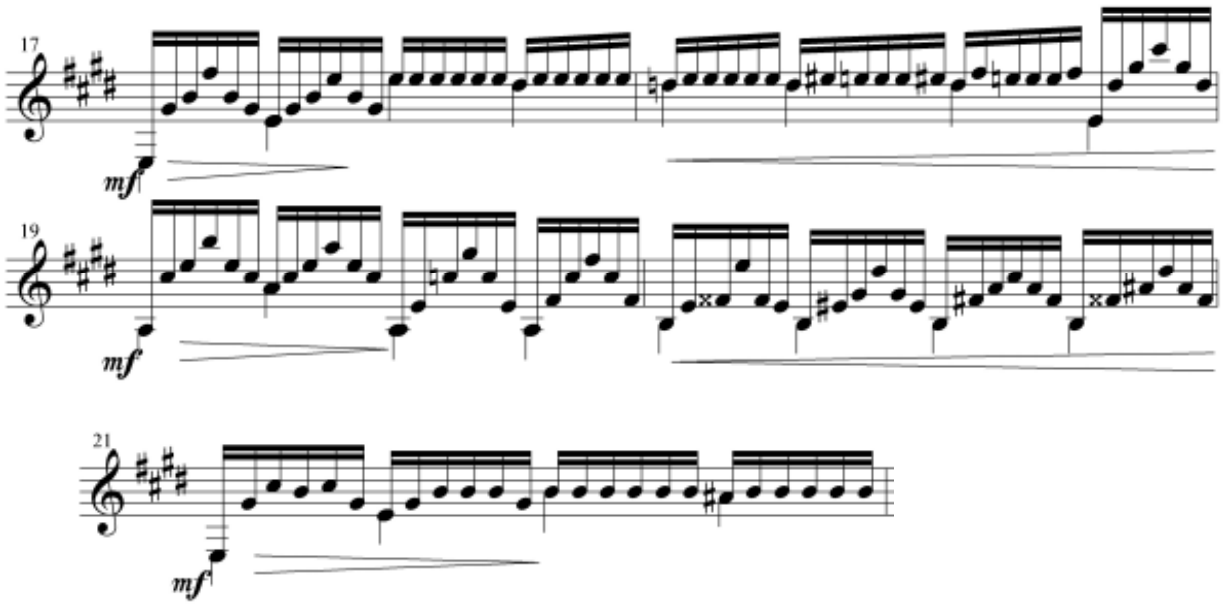


This is one of the few moments when tonality seems to have any real importance. These moments occur at principal structural points; Llobet seems to recognize that tonality is no longer the main point, but is not yet willing to abandon its most useful constructive attributes. This moment of harmonic repose also provides the last note to the first "pillar", which grows from the repeated B. One of the Bs becomes an independent voice in measure thirteen, moving to A#, then A, creating a springboard for the melodic upper voice to move in measure fifteen from B to B#, to C# and then leaping to G# and returning to F# and finally E.

The motive is repeated, but this time the final E (see example 20, measure seventeen) is extended into the next phrase, becoming the new repeated tone and completing the period in measure twenty-one. At this point an equivalent period begins, which now moves toward completion of the A section in measure twenty-nine. The

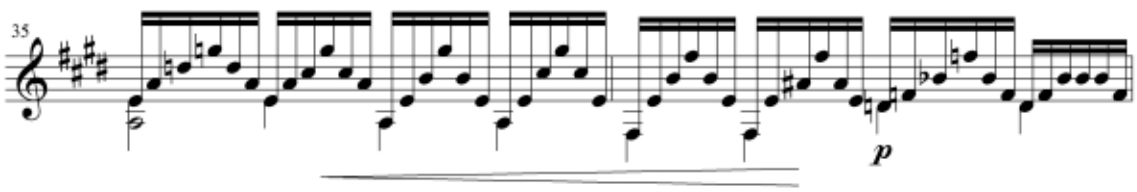
widening of the intervallic leap in measures twenty-seven and twenty-eight, along with the first cessation of the sixteenth-note figure in twenty-nine, create a sense of closure to the A section, and allow the shift to a transitional section.

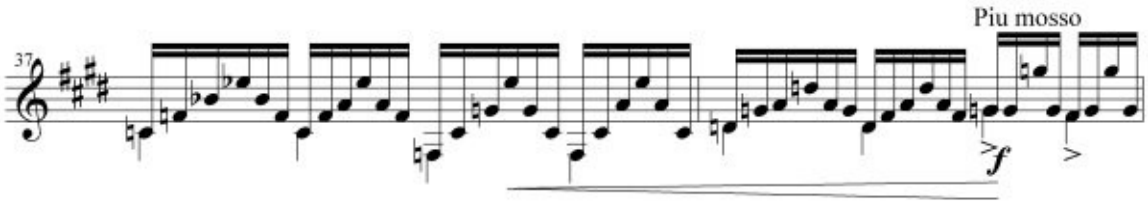
Example 20: Respuesta, Llobet.



In the transitional section (example 21), Llobet moves through the dominant of D major, but never resolves it. The point at which a resolution is expected breaks and moves instead to B♭. The dominant of this new area avoids resolution as well, and finally shifts, in measure thirty-eight, to g minor.

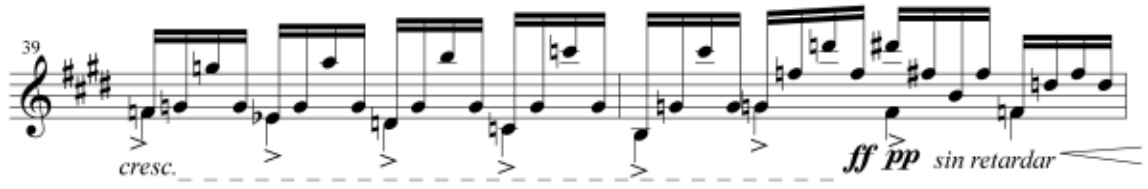
Example 21: Respuesta, Llobet.

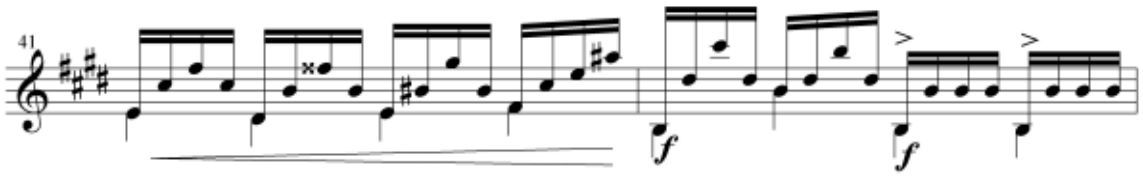




The B section, marked "Più mosso," introduces a new way of using related materials. The figuration is slowed down from sextuplets to quadruplets and the harmonic rhythm, quickens. The newly tonicized G in this section quickly establishes itself as a new dominant in measure thirty-nine (example 22). An ascending C major scale with a C# passing tone in measure forty in the upper voice is heard against a descending c minor scale in the bass, strengthening the new tonal center while creating some ambiguity. Here Llobet's priority seems to be creating movement through linear motion rather than harmonic progression. Nevertheless, harmonic progression is not abandoned, and in measure thirty-nine one finds a dominant in its four-two inversion moving through passing tones to a second inversion five to one. Measure forty begins with a passing C# half diminished seventh, with no third, resolving to the dominant seventh, again with no third.

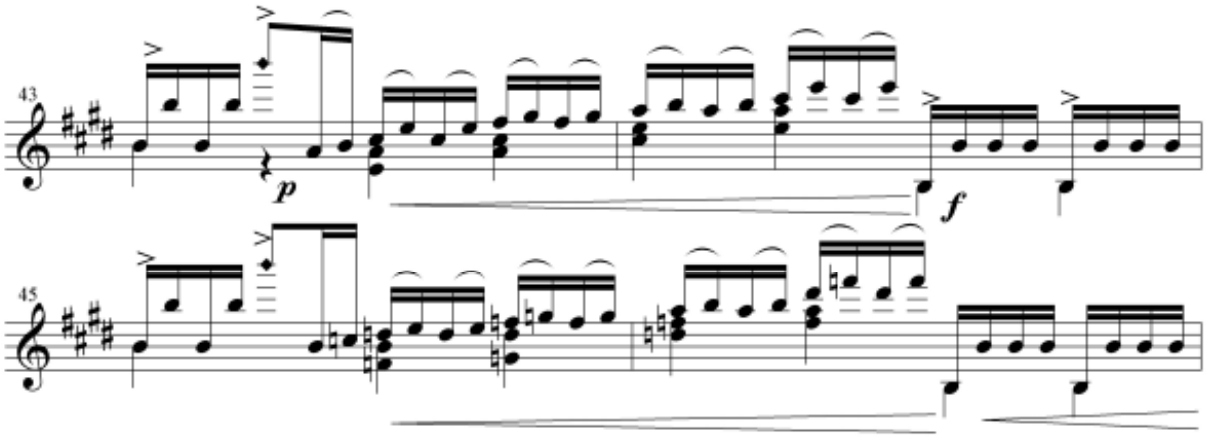
Example 22: Respuesta, Llobet.





A break occurs in measure forty, and the new tonal area is B major. From here to the end of the section Llobet goes about the business of strengthening B, first tonicizing it, and then setting it up as the dominant for the return of the A section. In the process, he introduces a new motive, seen in example 23 in measures forty-three and forty-four, and measures forty-five and forty-six. It consists of nothing more than repeated ascending thirds and repeated ascending seconds. The articulations of these notes can be considered a defining part of the texture.

Example 23: Respuesta, Llobet.



In measure fifty, marked "Tempo primo," there is a return to the A section, which is ultimately closed by a stronger cadence than has been heard in this piece, one that also expands on the rhythmic and textural alteration seen in measure twenty-nine by pausing

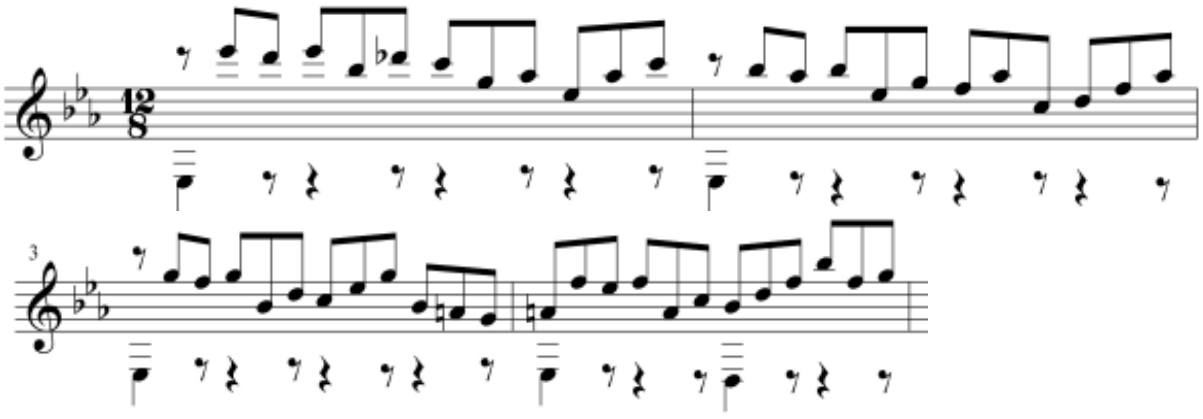
on three successive quarter notes. A coda follows, based on the sextuplet figuration of the A section and functioning as a dominant prolongation, and a final cadence is based on the B section motive heard in measures forty-three through forty-five.

Prelude in E major

Llobet's last known work, the Prelude in E major, was written in 1935. It is, without question, his most harmonically adventurous and perplexing work. It is the only one of Llobet's works that could be considered "Impressionistic" with any degree of accuracy. The piece sounds "Impressionistic" to the ear, but if one sees the avoidance of harmonic functionality as an important feature, as Mueller and Palmer seem to, it may not fit the description.

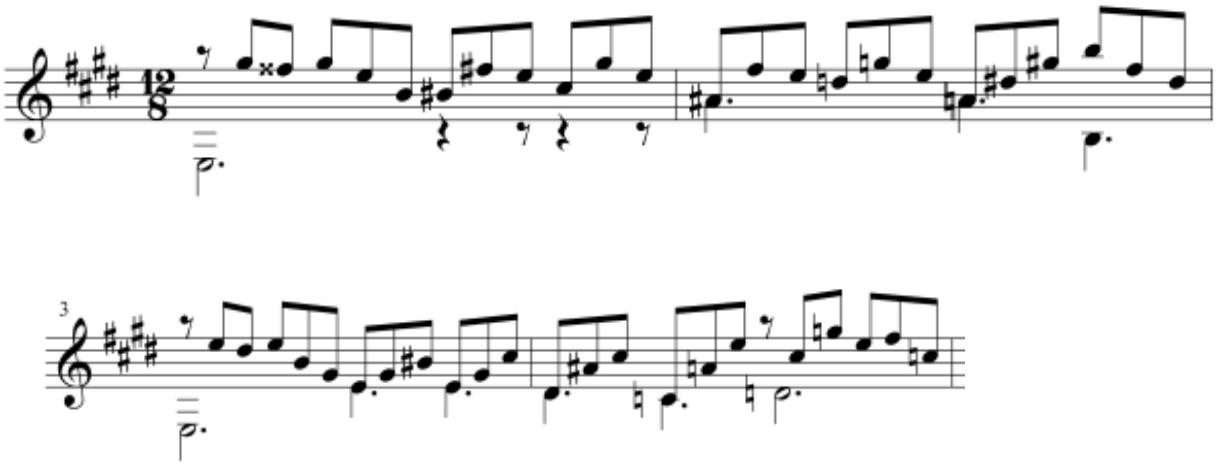
The piece begins with a paraphrase of the opening of the prelude from J.S. Bach's Prelude, Fugue and Allegro. The autograph is "*Prelude pour la Luth. Ò Cémbal. Par J. S. Bach*" and is in the key of E♭ major. It is written on a double staff using a soprano clef and a bass clef. For convenience it is presented here in standard guitar notation, using a single staff with treble clef (example 24).

Example 24: Prelude (from Prelude, Fugue and Allegro) B.W.V. 998, J.S. Bach.



The first thing one notices about Llobet's paraphrase is that he does not begin the upper voice with the tonic but, with the third (example 25).

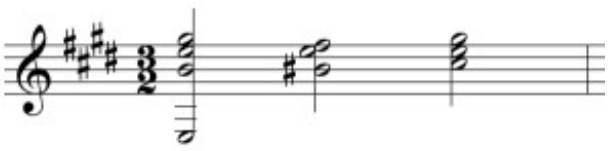
Example 25: Prelude in E, Llobet.



Structurally, the piece is nothing more than a harmonic progression based on a simple motivic figure in A-A' form. It begins on the tonic, to which it returns at midpoint, ultimately moving in the second half to a different area harmonically.

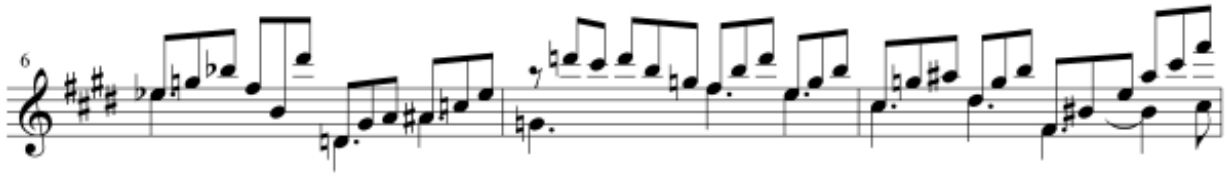
The first measure of the Llobet prelude, written as chords in example 26, moves from the tonic triad through an augmented I chord with an added second, and then to the vi chord. As might be expected in Llobet's mature music, the augmented chord is more a result of voice leading than harmonic function, with the B moving through B# to C#, and the high G# moving to F# and back to G#.

Example 26: Prelude in E, Llobet.



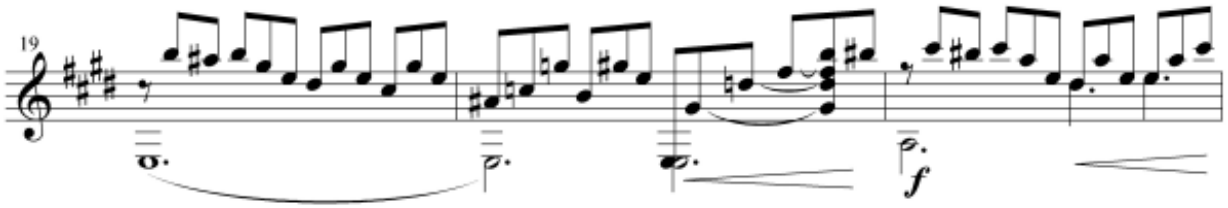
In the same manner, measure two moves from V/V to a V with an added sixth, resolving in measure three to I. This moves again through an augmented one chord to the six, much as measure one did, but with the motivic material imitated at lower pitches. Measure four moves the tonal center toward G major, preparing for a sequence of the opening, now in that key area. An increase in chromaticism continues to destabilize the tonal center, arriving at the end of measure eight (example 27) at an F# dominant seventh with an added augmented fourth.

Example 27: Prelude in E, Llobet.



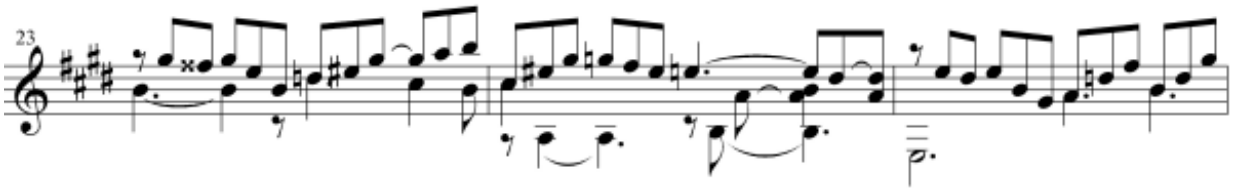
This brings the piece to the dominant, which is prolonged from measure nine through measure sixteen at which point the piece cadences in the tonic. The first two measures are repeated verbatim in measures seventeen and eighteen, but in measure nineteen (example 28) the tonic triad is revoiced, creating added tension by means of the substitution of an ascending melodic line.

Example 28: Prelude in E, Llobet.



The increased tension sets up the alteration of the tonic to create a V7 (and at the end of the measure, an augmented chord) of a new tonal area centered on A in measure twenty-one. From there the tonal center moves to C major in measure twenty-two, and to E major in measure twenty-three, which becomes an E# diminished seventh. This moves to A augmented in measure twenty-four (example 29) continuing to B with a suspended fourth, and finally cadencing in measure twenty-five.

Example 29: Prelude in E, Llobet.



The remaining eight measures comprise a tonic-dominant prolongation. Interestingly, if one argues that the second half of measure twenty-four implies an F# (and this is probably supportable), then measures twenty-three through twenty-five may be seen to present a Schenkerian final descent from three to one. Since the first three measures of the piece present a Schenkerian descent from three to one, this piece may also be analyzed using a Schenkerian graph.

Summary

Llobet's compositions begin with a backward look to Chopin. His *Romanza* was written in 1896, forty-seven years after Chopin's death. Yet, the eighteen-year-old guitarist was already showing signs of wanting more from his instrument than other

composers were willing to provide. He discovered, and eventually began to use, the harmonic language that he sought in the music of the composers with whom he interacted in his years in Paris, particularly Debussy, Ravel, and de Falla.

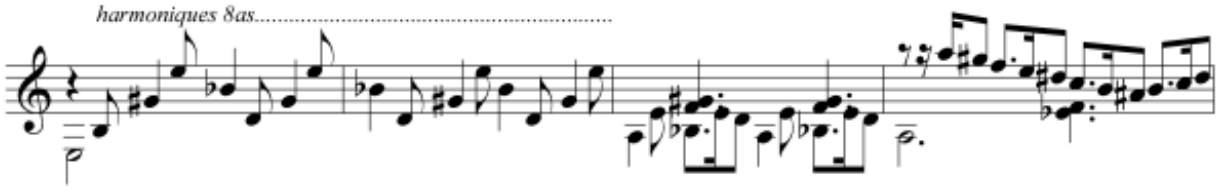
The question as to whether or not any of Llobet's compositions should be considered to be Impressionist is not easily answered. The majority should not be, but *Respuesta* and the Prelude in E major raise some questions. *Respuesta* has something of the Impressionist sound, and the prelude even more so, but both works are solidly grounded in harmonic functionality. There is never any real doubt as to what the key is or how the dominants will function. While much of Llobet's writing is influenced by that of Debussy, Ravel, and de Falla, it would be a mistake to label it "impressionist" music. Although he employs some of the same devices found in the music of Debussy, Llobet still finds himself attached to the function of the dominant-tonic relationship. On the other hand, if one takes liberation of dissonance as its most salient feature, that is, if the dissonance need not be solely in service to harmonic function, then one could argue that Llobet's use of dissonance, in these two works, as a corollary of voice leading qualifies it.

The question as to how to classify these two compositions need not be answered here, and indeed may not even be answerable in any definitive way. What is important to this paper is that Llobet “raised the bar” for the scoring of the guitar and the use of what are called “guitaristic effects.”

The use of artificial harmonics and *etouffé* became a staple in the techniques employed by composers writing for the guitar. When Alexandre Tansman wrote his *Mazurka* for Segovia in 1925 he employed devices such as *etouffé* and harmonics that are clearly indebted to Llobet. Tansman's *Berceuse d'Orient*, published in 1962, includes the

following passage, whose use of artificial harmonics and piquant harmonies are truly redolent of Llobet (example 30).

Example 30: Berceuse d'Orient, Tansman.



Such techniques are found in the music of all composers who write for the guitar. They appear in works as diverse as Benjamin Britten's "Nocturnal," "Lullaby for Ilian Rainbow" by Peter Maxwell Davies, "*Thème Varié et Finale*" by Manuel Ponce, Elliot Carter's "Changes" and Luciano Berio's *Sequenza XI*.

Throughout the music of Villa-Lobos, the Preludes, Etudes, and Popular Brazilian Suite, one hears the clever manipulation of parallel hand figurations to create sonorities that are surprisingly new to the guitar. These harmonies are rich with the sound of the open fourths that comprise the guitar's tuning. It is likely that Villa-Lobos would have arrived at these sonorities with or without Llobet; Villa-Lobos played the guitar as a second instrument. But it may be questioned as to whether Villa-Lobos would have created as large a body of guitar music had there been no important players to perform it. Also, although it was to be Segovia rather than Llobet who would ultimately personify Villa-Lobos' virtuoso-champion, Segovia's artistic and professional successes stood squarely on Llobet's shoulders.

It could be argued that the harmonies that Llobet employed were enough a part of the common harmonic language that they would have eventually found their way into

that of the guitar composers. However, the common harmonic language of the previous generation of composers did not find its way into that of guitarists because no prominent figure emerged to lead the way. In his compositions Llobet was the first to demonstrate that the guitar was capable of expressing the complexities that composers had been employing in their works for other instruments since the mid-nineteenth century. In so doing, he opened the way for important composers who were not guitarists to write for the instrument.

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