



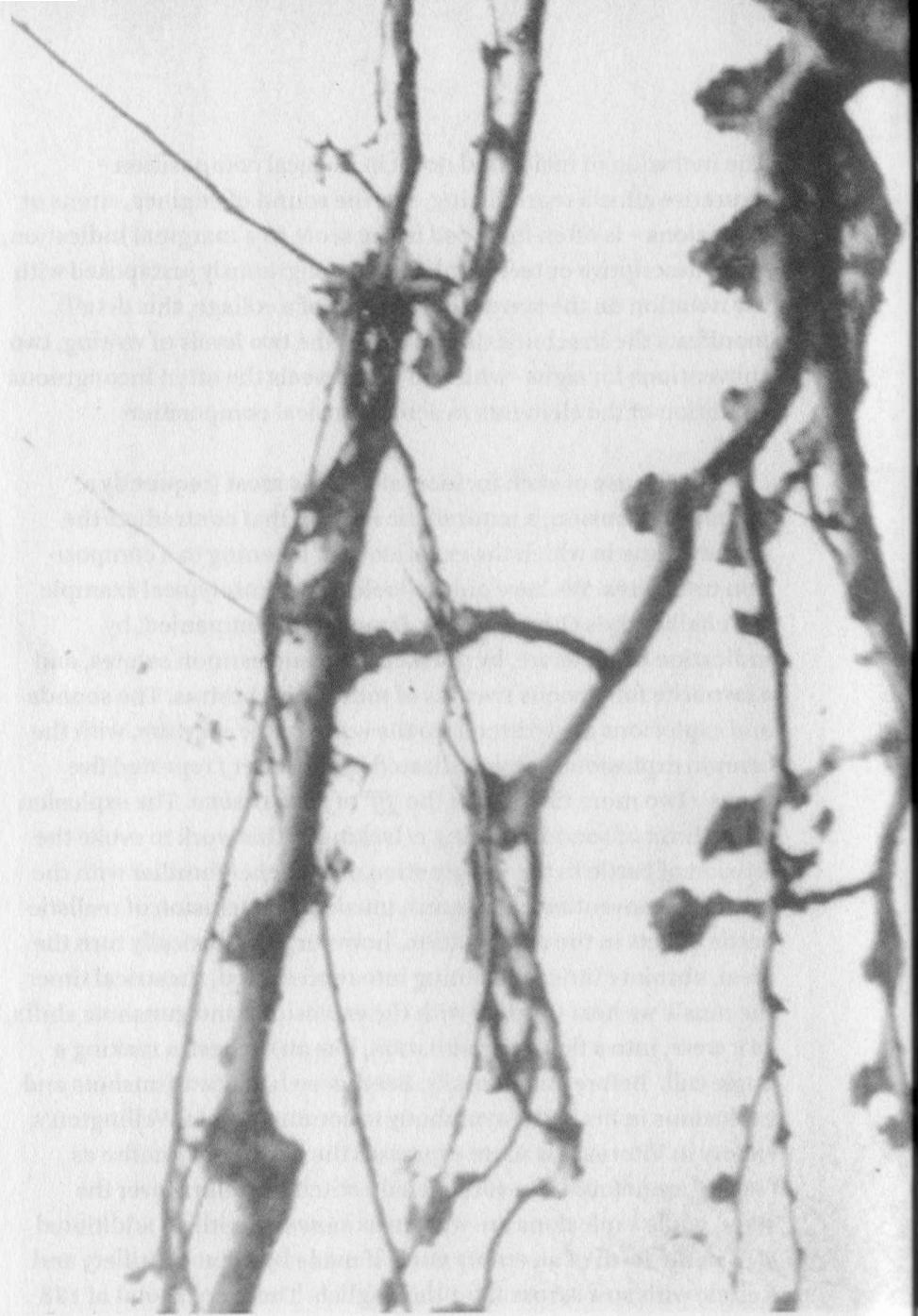
Composition and Arrangements



1.

The inclusion of incidental noise in musical composition – figurative effects reproducing, say, the sound of engines, sirens or explosions – is often included in the score as a marginal indication, like a descriptive or technical note, incongruously juxtaposed with the notation on the stave. Like the idea of a collage, this detail manifests the irreconcilable nature of the two levels of writing, two conventions for signs - which in turn reveals the often incongruous condition of the elements in actual musical composition.

The use of such incidental noise is most frequently a figurative intrusion, a naturalistic illusion that contradicts the abstract time in which the experience of listening to a composition transpires. We have only to look at the prototypical example of Tchaikovsky's *Overture 1812*, famously accompanied, by indication of the score, by musket shots and cannon salutes, and a favourite for obvious reasons of military orchestras. The sounds and explosions are written into the score in the overture, with the cannon explosions being indicated by the letter *f* repeated five times – two more times than the '*fff*' of *fortississimo*. The explosion as the limit of sound. Nothing is lacking in this work to evoke the tension of battle in the imagination of a listener familiar with the narrative conventions of western music. The inclusion of realistic battle effects in the composition, however, paradoxically turn the ideal, absolute time of listening into represented, theatrical time: the music we hear overlaid with the explosions and gunshots shifts, as it were, into a figurative situation, like an orchestra making a bugle call. Before Tchaikovsky, Beethoven had used gunshots and explosions in his battle symphony to commemorate Wellington's victory in Vitoria. His score expresses the barrage of gunfire as "rattle", annotated as a sort of chain stitch stretching over the stave, while explosions are written as *kanonen*; with an additional sign in the form of an empty circle if made by French artillery and a circle with an *x* across it for the English. There are a total of 188



shots. The most ambitious interpretations of the work place each army's cannons on opposite sides of the orchestra; and particularly meticulous renderings use Napoleonic muskets and cannons, as in the 1958 recording by the London Symphony Orchestra.

Incidentally, this particular record has Beethoven's piece on one side and Tchaikovsky's on the other. The salutes and gunshots were fired by the West Point military academy, and the reconstructed unit of the American Civil War, the second light artillery battalion of New Jersey.

This somewhat naïve and certainly spectacular use of figuration reoccurs insistently in both works at decisive points in their progression, when the national anthems of each side burst into the composition. Chords of *La Marseillaise*, *God Save the Queen*, and *God Save the Tsar* clash as they come in and out of the composition with the same mimetic intention as the explosions, and the same unintended consequence of turning the composition into an accessory of the situation it is portraying. *God Save the Tsar* was also not the Russian national anthem at the time of the actual battle the composition refers to; to be aware of this is to understand that there is an obstinacy in the use of these symbols, which are seen as universal, eternal and unequivocal.

We do not know if either of these compositions were references for Free Jazz saxophonist Albert Ayler, who was later to dismantle the logic of portraying anthems as univocal, closed symbols, or figurative elements. Ayler, who was sent by the US Army to France in 1957, deconstructed military band music almost deliriously by fragmenting and fusing conventional expressive elements of anthems like *La Marseillaise* and the *Stars and Stripes*, which he merged almost obsessively in his improvisations. While the most radical Jazz was saddling its political conscience, directly reincorporating ancestral African and Caribbean traditions and speculating with the utopian projection of Afro-futurism –

projecting the construction of its political identity back into the past or forward into the future – Ayler took on the canon of Euro-American Enlightenment, accepted as universal and atemporal, and wrestled with it. Ayler's working of the recognisable tunes of the anthems – unlike the almost banal use of marches on the battlefield – was a structural procedure. In relating the anthems of the two great historical revolutions (French and American), Ayler did not dismiss referential content; but his approach was to exploit the element of recognition that such heavily signified compositions will elicit and then render them unrecognisable, by taking the listener through a journey where form itself, rather than representation, gradually dissolves into what the most academic critics continue to dismiss as noise.

2.

Noise – given its unpredictable nature, and being a metaphor for the unpredictable – is incompatible with the static concreteness of conventional scores. Luigi Russolo's scores for the *intonarumori*, whose broken lines run upwards and downwards on the score, modulate volume only and would seem to be a rather flat solution to the problem. Sylvano Bussotti's scores written from the 1950s to the 1970s, which are almost better known in some circles than his music itself owing to the reproduction of one of them at the start of Deleuze and Guattari's chapter on the *rhizome* in *A Thousand Plateaus*, spread the notes over broken staves in a visual representation of a deflagration. The erratic lines of the staves overlap and intercross, making starlike points like comic ideograms and pictograms for explosions; but do not translate into music in the way the scores would lead us to expect. Drawn as gestural hieroglyphics intended to allow indeterminacy in the playing of the piece, they do not, in actual fact, create anything more than the illusion that we are *seeing* the music in the scores. At best, as with Bussotti's *Piano Piece for David Tudor*, where the score is shattered



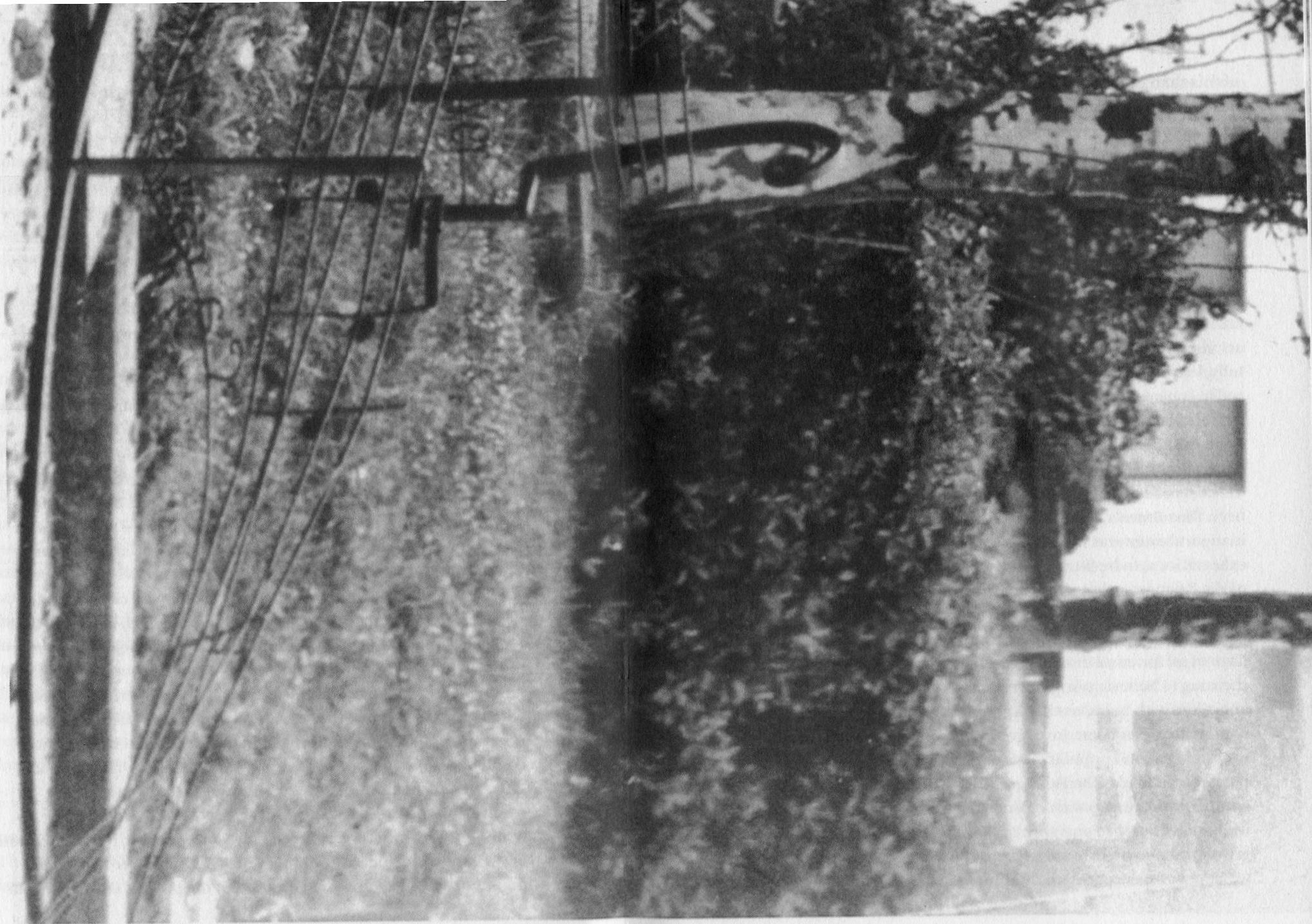
into shards, the composer trusts a particular musician (Tudor, for whom he wrote the piece) to translate the explosion. In line with the aesthetic aims of the time, Bussotti's particular form of notation intended to allow randomness to determine the end result through the translation of an indeterminate, almost illegible form of writing; to stimulate randomness through the clash between two systems of representation so that the music could, so to speak, make itself.

3.

As far as I can remember, I have always known of a sculpture in Zegama, near where I grew up, in honour of Juan Telleria. My memory, however, undoubtedly relates to the unease I felt towards the only image I had seen at the time of the sculpture; the only photograph which occasionally appears to illustrate the monument's short-lived presence in the village. But – and this is why it caused me the unease that sticks in my memory as strongly as the image itself – the photograph does not show the sculpture itself. The entire frame is filled by a group of men in raincoats. They are standing to attention, shoulder to shoulder, staring into the camera lens with their right arms raised, hiding the sculpture being inaugurated behind them. All that we can make out of the sculpture in the photograph, behind the men's heads, is a wrought iron stave in a horizontal arc, set off by pilasters and nondescript decorations like running scrolls. The bronze bust of Juan Telleria peeps out between the men in raincoats' heads. Each of the very occasional reproductions of the photo I have seen caption the occasion as the inauguration of the monument to the "composer of *Cara al sol*."

The monument was a sculptural ensemble holding a portrait of Telleria, a bronze bust with a thoughtful expression. The musician's head is tilted slightly towards the sky and his torso is smooth, as in a nude. The classical aspiration of the smooth,

undetailed torso clashes somewhat comically with the musician's hair, which is combed backwards almost like a quiff in his characteristic style (once a style in fashion), topping the rigid statue's attempt at timelessness in a somehow intolerable combination. References to classicism which gives away their mundane present are a frequent, though involuntary effect of the academic tendency in such an authoritarian context. The same artistic naivety can be even more clearly seen in the symbolic elements in the ensemble, and, revealingly for this narrative, in the allegorical detail in the background behind the bust: the wrought iron stave adorning the men in raincoats' presence. The sculptor of the piece was Madrid-born José Diaz Bueno, the maker of a large number of public monuments in different sites in Gipuzkoa. His solution to the piece's necessarily monumental scale was to surround the bust with a solid stone construction. At the top of the semi-spherical hollow, which resembles an upside-down niche, the iron stave has the appearance of a delicate railing or decorative grille. The border, as a newspaper report described it, "gracefully" set off the concave stone niche and ended on each side with pilasters decorated with the Falange yoke and arrows on one side and the Carlista Cross of Burgundy on the other. But the candidly figurative function of the stave, the gravity of whose theme is taken to be obvious, was, by musical notation, to represent the song which is, in reality, the reason for the homage to its composer. The stave held the notes – also in wrought iron – of the opening bars to the *Cara al sol*, official anthem of the Falange and the unofficial hymn of Francoist Spain, with the lyrics to the anthem also in wrought iron, following the notation, as if trusting in a synaesthetic effect whereby the music could be *seen* by looking at the notes on the railing. The symbolic effectiveness of monumental representation is always hard to resolve, but the ingenuousness of paying tribute to a song by writing its score in iron is almost naïve; or would be, if the evocation of the tune were not so inevitably sinister. What there can be no doubt of, however – and inauguration of the piece is stronger proof

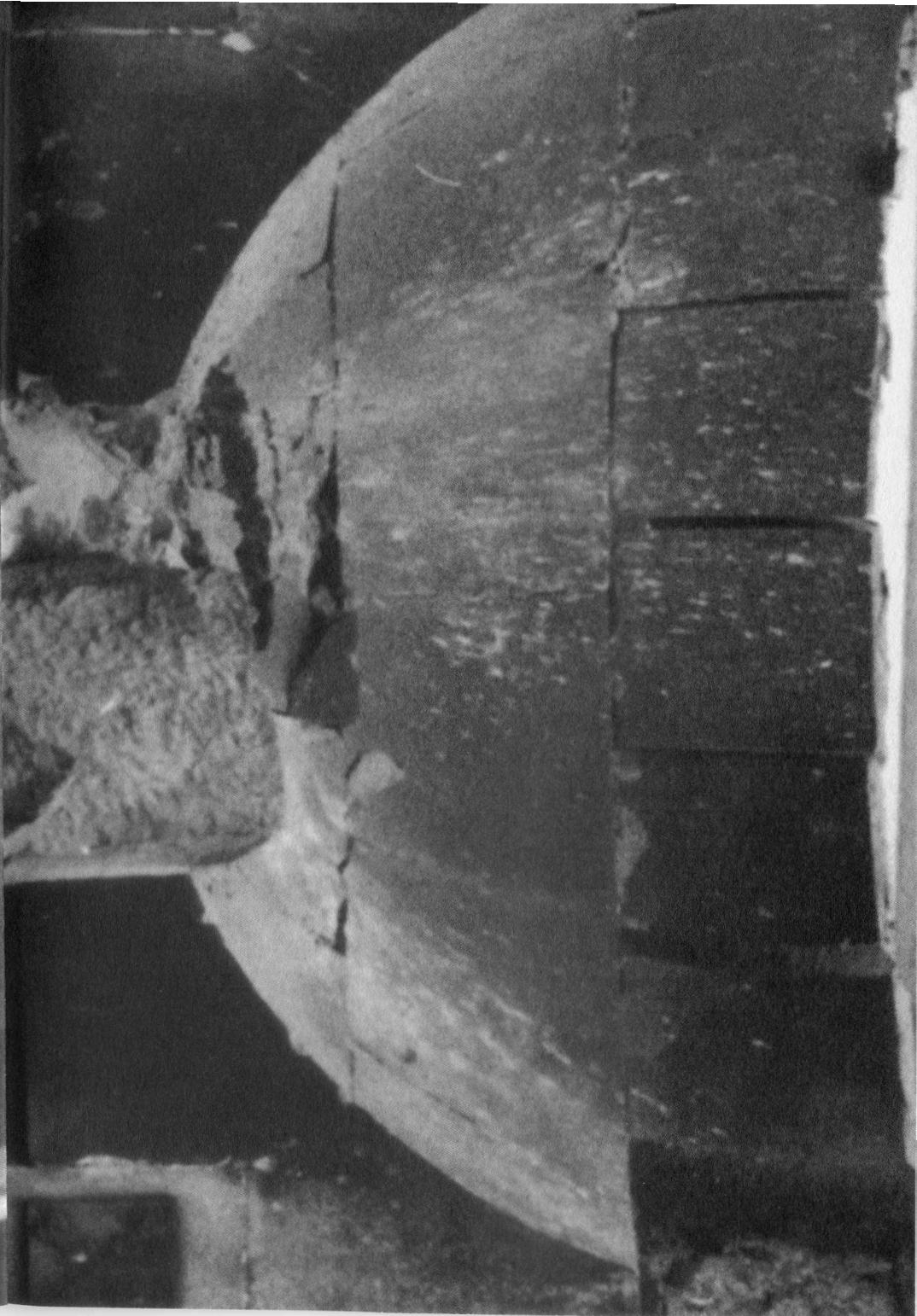
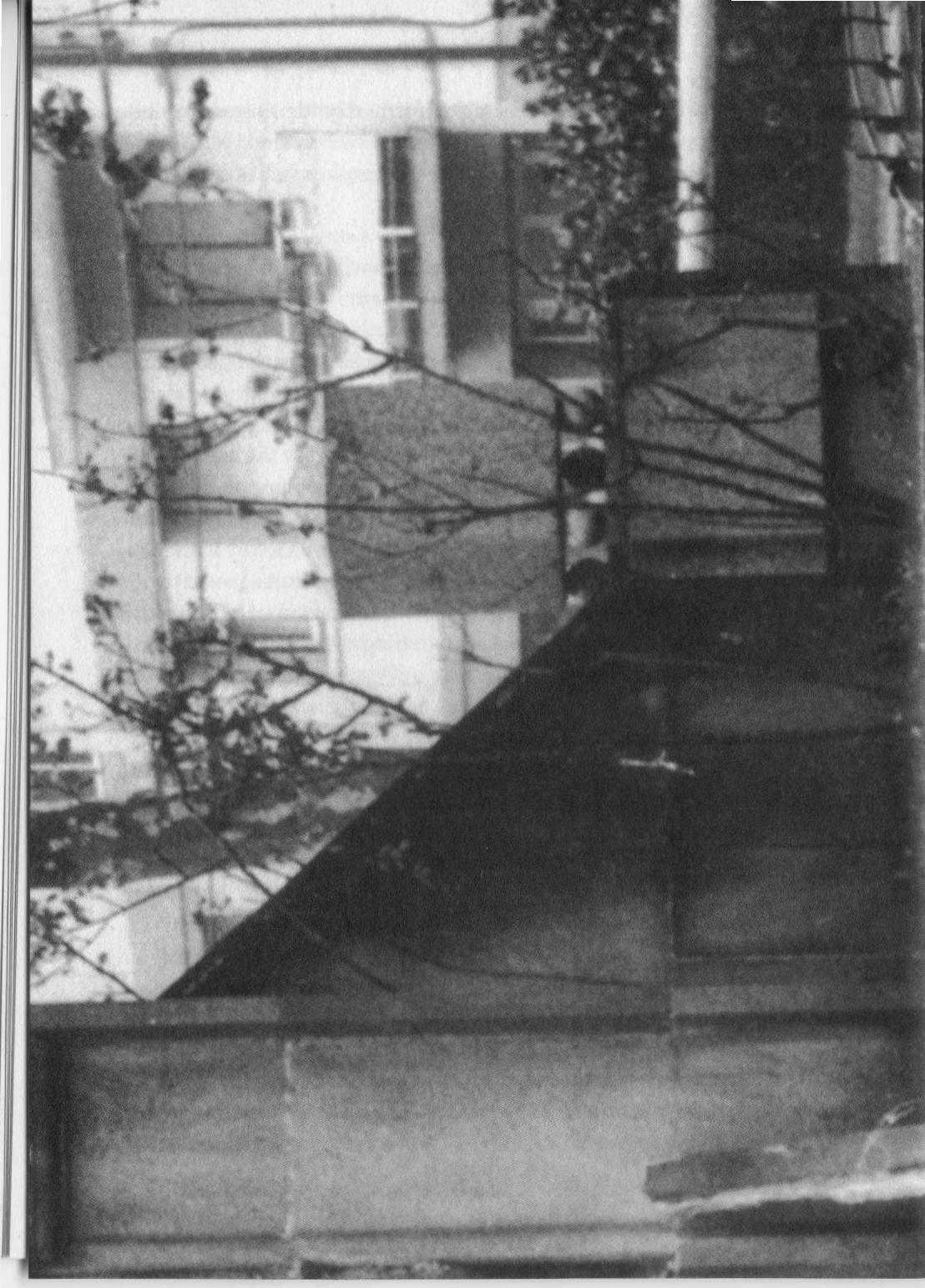


of this than the iron borderwork – is that the object intended for veneration here was the song rather than its composer. Or, at the very least, that the composer's right to the homage came with being the writer of the song.

The photograph was taken on 19th May 1957; the day the monument was inaugurated. The unveiling of the bust was just one of the events in a busy program. Villagers from Zegama, sympathisers and cadres of the Falange were present, as one would expect; but also, in allegedly larger numbers, were representatives of the Carlist traditionalist¹ movement. The day began with a memorial act in honour of Tomás Zumalakarregi². Uncle Tomás' tomb, incidentally, lies in the Church of San Martín, in Zegama. Zumalakarregi's coffin is placed in a niche, almost like a saint's in a chapel, and is sheltered by an impressive sculptural ensemble by Francisco Font. In the middle of the ensemble stands a dynamic effigy of the general's entire body, under an allegorical arch embellished with the coats of arms of the Spanish provinces – which might well have been Díaz Bravo's inspiration for his monument to Telleria. The inaugural event was followed by speeches, hymns and anthems and exhortations, to be fittingly ended by a homage to the composer of the Falange anthem. More than fifty *txistularis* (Basque flute players) lightened the day with their playing. Isidro Ansorena, the conductor of the San Sebastian municipal band, arranged the *Cara al sol* for *txistu* and drums, which we might imagine, returned the song to Telleria's original *zortziko*³ rhythm before its later adoption, with lyrics, as the "Anthem of Love and War." The band conductor's grandson, Jose Ignazio Ansorena – also a *txistulari*, a musicologist and popular clown – tells that his grandfather, having been forced to play the Falange anthem, introduced a form of moral compensation and political protest of his own in the way of another well-known *zortziko* and anthem, *Gernikako arbola*⁴. While all the great symbols can be used to stage allegorical battles, anthems, as we have seen, are particularly able to enact this staging at the very

moment of battle – albeit a theatrical form of battle. Or to break in surreptitiously as messages in the music to be decoded by sympathetic ears. Ansorena's version of the story evokes such a reading.

In truth, as I have said, the day was a staging of the confluence between two political branches whose respective essences were being revalidated at a moment in history when their influence as political narratives was beginning to decline. It was the 19th of May, and one of the main speakers referred to the historical coincidence of the "Day of Unification, when the Falange and traditionalists joined hearts". The Decree of Unification that the speaker was referring to, when the new state was founded by the official fusion of the Falange and Carlismo, actually took place on the 19th April 1937; but the speaker perhaps coincidentally hit the mark – on the 19th of May, two years after that, Franco led the Victory Parade ludicrously dressed in the new outfit that Ignacio Zuloaga was to paint him in soon afterwards, in which he endeavoured to illustrate the merging of the two factions by matching the blue Falange shirt with the red beret of the Carlista militiamen, occasionally combined with a white admiral's jacket. The insistence on this moment of coming together, after years of tension between the two factions, must have been seen as a necessity in 1957, by which time Francoism was beginning its changing of the guard, replacing the staunch representatives of unification with technocrats close to the ranks of the Opus Dei. The Zegama reunion therefore largely aimed to demonstrate the strength of the ideologies that Francoism had always held as its central dogma; a reassertion of the validity of its spiritual essence in a landscape that the very same rhetoric held to be deeply essential. In the context, the *Gernikako arbola* would not have been a protest or an act of resistance; rather, it was a timely symbol for the Carlists, too – who three years earlier had held an act in modest anticipation of this one, which paid homage to Iparragirre, the musician acclaimed for his *Gernikako arbola*, and the song that made him famous. Telleria's *zortziko*, which the



arrangement of the *Cara al sol* was based on, was originally titled *Amanecer en Zegama* (Dawn in Zegama).

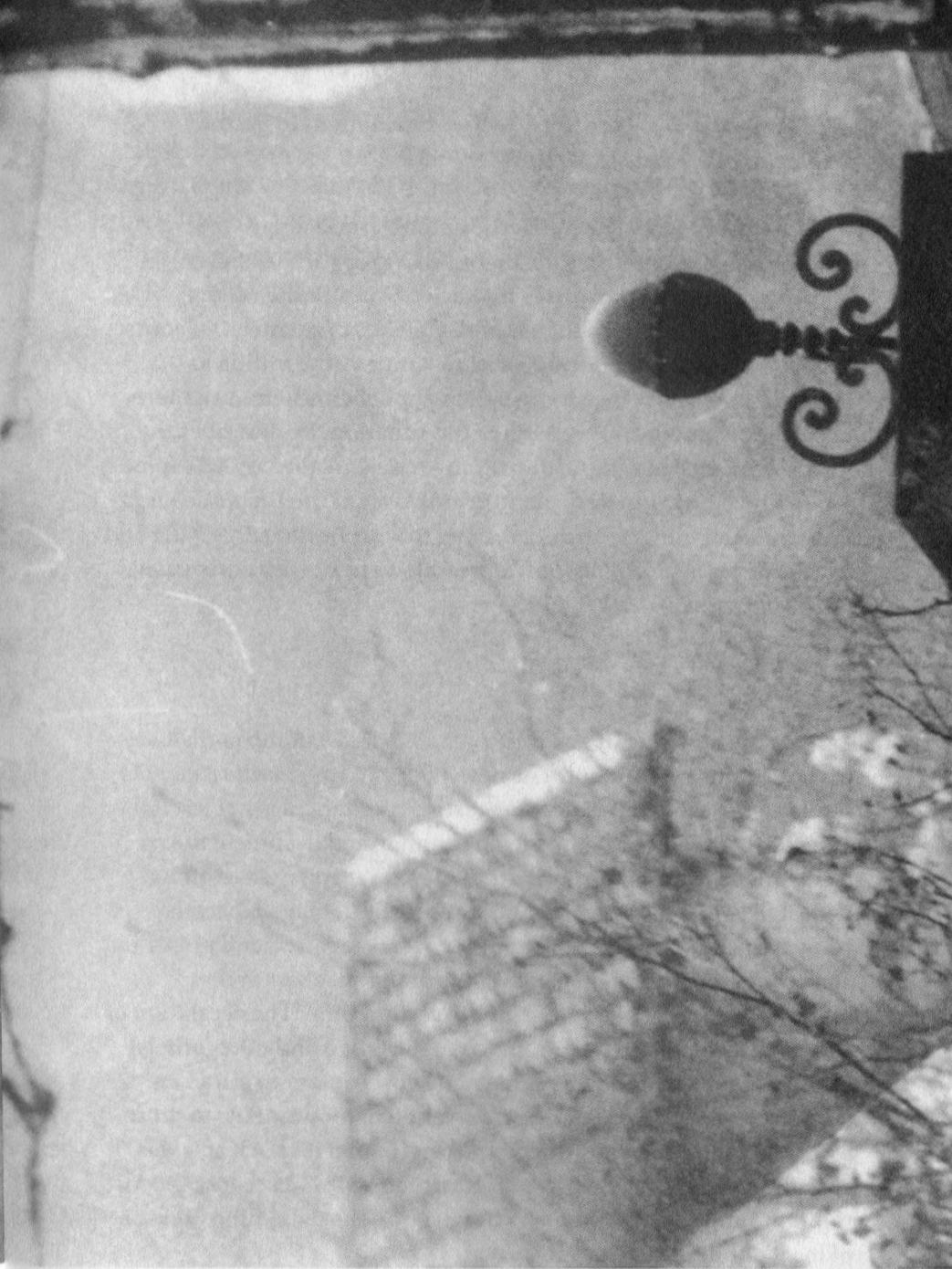
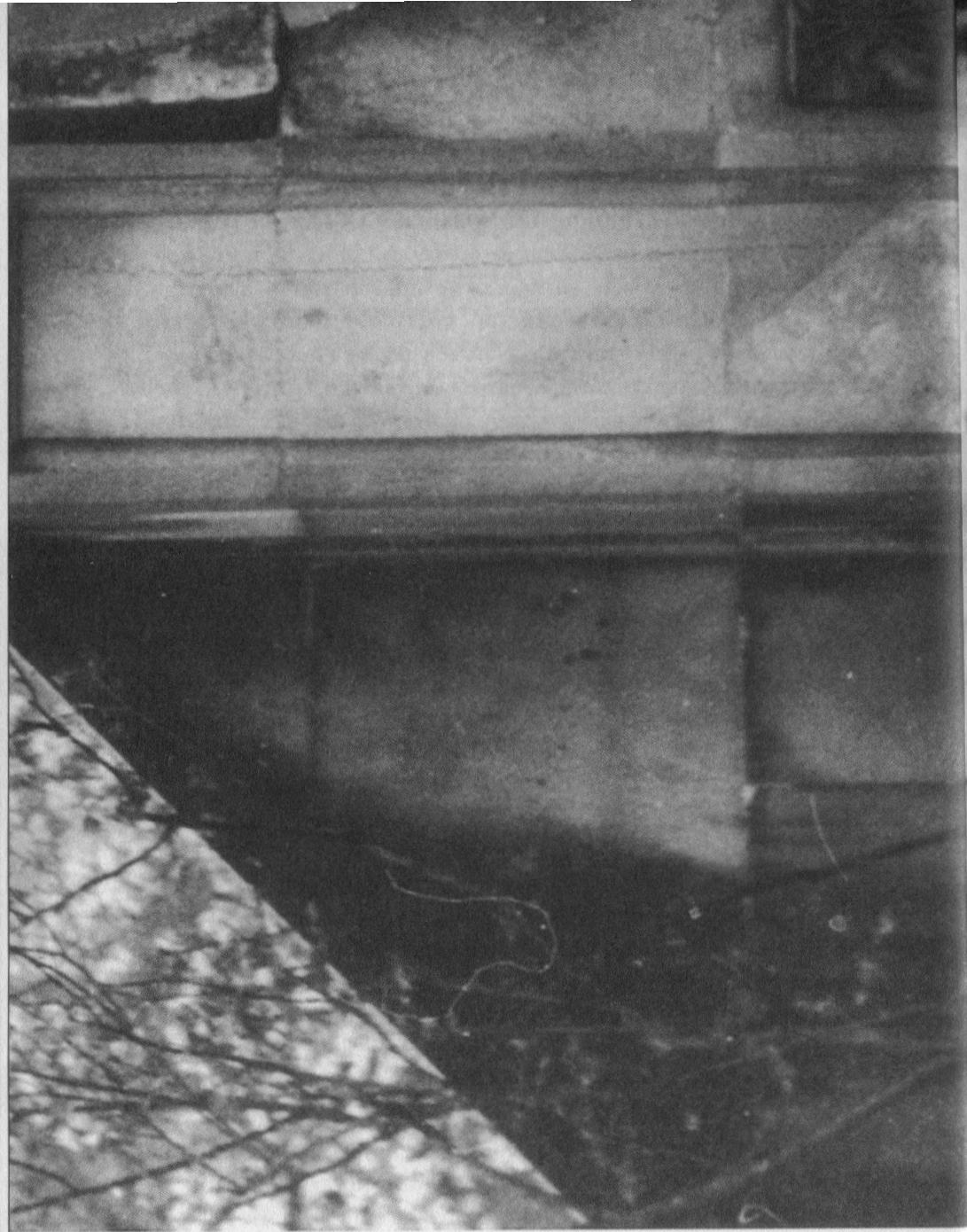
4.

The term *zortziko* refers to an air considered to belong to traditional Basque music. It is agreed that the *zortziko* is characterised by the infrequently found 5/8 time beat; however, the true origin of the word, which in the Basque language is used indistinctly for metre in verse (eight lines), for dance (eight dancers), and for the music accompanying the dance, is still uncertain. In the early of the 20th century, this uncertainty gave rise to a lively debate among musicians, ethnologists and the occasional dilettante. In the historical context, systematically categorising ethnic differences through folk culture was not only seen throughout Europe as an ideological project, but as an unquestionable scientific procedure. In 1989, Juan Antonio Urbeltz, an anthropologist and folklorist, began his book *Música militar en el País Vasco* (Military Music in the Basque Country) with a reference to the debate, subtitling it "The Problem of the Zortziko", thereby including himself in the discussion. As one would expect, Urbeltz's theory added another layer to the issue. He proposed an entirely different interpretation of the term, situating its etymological root not in the cardinal number eight (*zortzi*) all other hypotheses are derived from, but from the Knave in a pack of cards, who is also known as the *zortziko*. One of the most forceful responses to his argument came from Jose Ignazio Ansorena, the txistulari, musicologist and clown who told the story of his grandfather and the anthems in Zegama. With the authority of his experience with folk music, he dismantled Urbeltz's proposal. Independently of where the etymological truth of the term lies, Urbeltz's idea could be easily misused in its evocative linking of the Knave with soldiers, and thus with the dances and music associated with militia and thus with festivities and rituals, presentations or gun salutes, which Urbeltz describes somewhat emphatically as "gunpowder parties."

5.

Zegama had already rendered homage to its own musician many years before. Firstly, when the village received Telleria in 1917 as a young composer returning from a clamorously received delivery of his symphonic poem *La Dama de Aitzkorri*. A blurred photo shows his arrival in the village, smiling as he walks in front of a large group of villagers, most of them children. Even today, those who met the musician remember him affectionately. Those I have asked speak of him, with small variations, as a character who, typically in such a time and place, was perceived as extravagant; a kind, absent-minded bohemian in a white suit, often seen listening to the birds or the water in a stream, depending on who tells the story. An eccentric.

The same eccentric bohemianism is pictured by writer and journalist Tomás Borrás in his hagiographical two-part article on Telleria in *El Español* on the occasion of the monument to the musician's unveiling. Borrás, however, uses the musician's eccentric temperament as the basis for a portrayal imbuing him with epic ambition, a depiction which favours the writer's ideological interests. In a rhetoric that now reads somewhat ridiculously, he focuses a disproportionate part of the story of Telleria's life on the time the musician spent in Republican Madrid, under siege by Francoist troops. Insisting on Telleria's hidden Falangist inclinations in "the Madrid of the Reds," his mythology of the fifth columnist survivor mingles in the narrative with the construction of a reckless, crazy character with the heroic audacity of the quirky artist. Borrás thus makes constant recourse to suspense in his writing, with Telleria being under continual suspicion among the militia, his rebel stance always dangerously close to discovery and the threat of imprisonment and execution. Always escaping from the situation, naturally, by playing the lunatic, or the musician (what difference, anyway...) He sometimes lands up playing the piano at the CNT⁵ headquarters - "for the asanine amusement of the mob -" or at the cinema at the Palacio



de la Prensa, playing the musical accompaniment to *Battleship Potemkin* or *The General Line*.

Borrás' story has it that the amusing, audacious Telleria assures the reporter that each night, as he plays at the anarchists' open-air dances or improvises for Soviet films, he sneaks the chords of *Cara al sol* in between fugues and snatches of zarzuela. Of course, the classist disdain of Borrás' rhetoric portrays the militia as ignorant boors dancing along to their enemy's anthem. In a more unsettling, less credible version of the situation, he describes the musician seated at a piano during an air raid. As the bombs explode around him, "the tuneless piano grinds away at the *Himno de Riego*⁶, the polka of hunger, hummed along to with *Tantum Ergo*," the end of the *Pange Lingua*. "The *Cara al sol* follows next, with arabesques of *The Internationale...*"

6.

Early in the morning of 2-3 April 1972, ETA laid a bomb at the base of the Zegama monument. The newspaper *La Vanguardia Española* reported the event days later, suggesting, perhaps, a miracle: "The bust of the popular musician is unharmed in spite of the tremendous force of the device that blew it several metres off its pedestal." The bust was probably not heavily damaged, because soon after the bombing, the monument was repaired and presented at an act of reparation, in which some of the speakers at the opening ceremony were there for the second time. The escalation of similar attacks against monuments to the fallen and other official Francoist memorials led the provincial government to found an "association for the defence and preservation of monuments to those who died for their country," and the ceremonial for such acts was already in place; along with the infrastructure for buses to transport militants and ex-combatants to them, given the dwindling presence of local public at such events.

A second bomb exploded soon after the act. The bust, which resisted the explosion once more, was given over to the composer's family. Reports do not tell – and there are no remnants to determine this either – whether the wrought iron composition on the stave, which was blasted in the explosion, was perhaps shattered into a strange, different tune.



Notes:

1. Carlism is a traditionalist political movement which originated in 19th Century, seeking the establishment of a separate line of the Bourbon dynasty on the Spanish throne. It was particularly popular in the Basque Country. The Carlists sided with Franco in the Civil War and were an important part of the political establishment of the post-war dictatorship.

2. Tomas Zumalakarregi (1788 – 1835) was a Basque Spanish Carlist general.

3. The *zortziko* is a distinctive musical form in Basque tradition. A more concrete description of the term occurs further on in the text.

4. *Gernikako arbola*, a composition from the mid 19th century, defended the local tradition embodied in the Tree of Gernika, a symbol of Basque governance and laws. It has historically been the unofficial hymn of Basque nationalism.

5. National Confederation of Labour, Spanish confederation of anarcho-syndicalist labour unions.

6. Spanish national anthem during the First and Second Spanish Republics.

Composition and Arrangements

Asier Mendizabal 2016

Zegama-Otsaute

Translation: Toni Crabb

Photograph: Zegamako Udal Artxiboa

