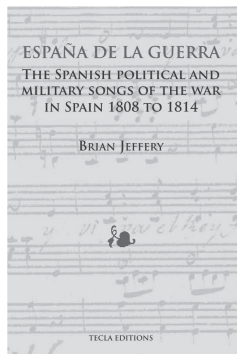


Jeffery, Brian.

España de la Guerra: The Spanish Political and Military Songs of the War in Spain, 1808 to 1814. London: Tecla Editions, 2017. 417 pp. (Available from www.tecla.com).

Brian Jeffery's name is well known to those with more than a passing interest in the history of the classical guitar. The Oxford-educated Jeffery studied French (language and literature) and musicology, and has taught at universities on both sides of the Atlantic. His early interest in both lute and guitar led him to found a publishing company, Tecla Editions, and to research and publish a pioneering biography of Fernando Sor (1977, rev. 1994). This important study was soon followed by a facsimile edition of Sor's collected works for guitar and, a few years later, a monumental set of the works of Mauro Giuliani, also in facsimile, the largest collection to date of the works of any guitarist—enormous projects financed by resurrecting the old tradition of advance subscriptions. Jeffery's Tecla has an eclectic catalog, including Beethoven's piano sonatas in facsimiles of the first editions, Dionisio Aguado's influential *New Guitar Method* of 1846 (in Jeffery's English translation), some very good anthologies of 19th-century vocal music with guitar and Napoléon Coste's voice/guitar arrangements of Schubert *Lieder*, several Italian chamber music gems (especially some charming works by Francesco Molino), and more. *España de la Guerra: The Spanish Political and Military Songs of the War in Spain 1808 to 1814*, the detailed (417-page) monograph reviewed here, might seem to mark a surprising new direction for Jeffery, but it actually reflects two of his perennial interests—vocal music and the guitarist/composer Fernando Sor. It is a highly original work but, in fact, it is only peripherally about the guitar at all.

España de la Guerra is focused on the brutal Peninsular War (1808-1813) and the patriotic music it inspired, some fine examples of which were composed by Sor. Jeffery weaves together the war, the music, and Sor's experiences, like three recurring themes in a symphonic movement. The war was at once a civil war within Spain and a complicated international struggle that pitted the French and their Spanish supporters against Britain, Portugal, and the anti-French Spaniards. The latter included tens of thousands of irregular fighters in a bloody insurrection that gave us the word "guerrilla" and inspired Goya's *Disasters of War* prints. The war featured many of the tactics that would dominate warfare for the next century and so has become standard curriculum at military academies throughout the world. Its consequences extended far beyond the Iberian Peninsula and Europe; Spain lost most of her vast colonial empire (Bolívar's liberation movement began in 1808).¹



The war began with the French occupation of Spain and overthrow of the Borbón monarchy. Fernando, the heir to the Spanish throne, enjoyed a comfortable—albeit enforced—exile in France and was himself none-too-eager to return to Spain or to lead his people, but his supporters in Spain were furious when Napoleon named his brother, Joseph Bonaparte, to be Fernando's replacement. The *Josefinos* soon encountered fierce resistance, including urban riots in Madrid (cf. Goya's *Dos / Tres de Mayo* paintings) and rural insurgencies throughout the countryside. After early setbacks in 1808-09, the tide turned in favor of the French, who occupied much of the country by 1810 (although no part of the countryside was completely safe from the *guerrilleros*). Eventually, the British intervention and the destruction of Napoleon's Grand Army in Russia in 1812 forced the over-extended and poorly reinforced French forces to withdraw across the Pyrenees, and Fernando VII was ultimately restored to the throne.

España de la Guerra is a detailed and comprehensive study of the patriotic songs associated with the war (those by Sor and many others). Some of the songs appeared in printed editions in Spain or abroad, while others were printed sheets of lyrics only, intended to be sung to popular melodies (some now forgotten). Still others survive as rare manuscripts scattered in collections across Europe from Lisbon to The Hague. Many of the songs were sung by crowds in public celebrations and became an essential part of the Spanish resistance to the French; others were art music performed in theaters, churches, or "quieter domestic circumstances." Jeffery's running narrative of the progress of the war serves to place the songs in their historic, political, and military contexts; they are discussed primarily in chronological order. He observes that "The songs fit into the passionate literature of the time: into the rhetoric, the fiery speeches, the theatre, the emotions of this romantic time, for the romantic movement was well under way in Spain in 1808."

Among the first and most famous of the patriotic songs was "España de la guerra" ("Spain at War"), which provides Jeffery's book with its title. The song functioned as a sort of rousing Spanish *Marseillaise* with (in the words of one British officer) a "thrilling effect" on the crowds.² Dating to the first weeks of the war, "España de la guerra" sanctified King Fernando and described the French invasion of that year as a criminal attack on God and religion. Ironically, the Borbón monarchy before 1808 had been profoundly unpopular, its bureaucracy sclerotic, the minister Godoy duplicitous and corrupt, and the army underpaid. The Spanish nobility and clergy censored books or plays that reflected the new ideas of the Enlightenment and were horrified by the *liberté* and *égalité* of the French Revolution

REVIEWS: (cont.)

of the previous decade. Over the centuries the Church had managed to accumulate 20% of all the arable land but paid no taxes, intimidating its critics with the Inquisition (abolished almost everywhere else in Europe). As in the anti-French uprisings against the French in Italy in 1796-99, rural priests often led the bands of violent rebels who fought to protect their traditional native oppressors from those who, they feared, would be new, foreign ones.

The Peninsular War played a major role in the career of Fernando Sor. As a young Spanish officer with a good musical education, Sor managed to spend much of his early military career composing and performing during his various administrative assignments in Madrid, Barcelona, and Málaga. After the French invasion in 1808, Sor remained loyal to the Spanish Borbón monarchy and received new military assignments in Andalucía. He probably saw combat in 1808-9, but he also found time to compose at least six anti-French patriotic songs, several of which were widely published and performed. By 1809, King Joseph began to win over some supporters; he patronized the theater, literature, and the arts, beautified the capital, and lifted Godoy's unpopular ban on bullfighting. The Inquisition was abolished,³ and extensive bureaucratic reforms were planned. There was also a growing disgust with the excesses of the *guerrilleros* and the behavior of the British troops in Spain, whose penchant for looting matched that of the French. It became clear to many Spaniards that King Joseph was an improvement over the inept Borbóns, providing more opportunities and freedom. The French overran Andalucía in 1810, and Sor was faced with a decision. Like many others, including a number of other Spanish officers (and the painter Goya!), he became *afrancesado*; he switched his allegiance to King Joseph. As his reward, he became a police commissioner in Jerez.

Jeffery identifies six patriotic songs that can be confidently credited to Sor, all but one of which seem to date to 1808-9. "Himno de la victoria [*Venid vencedores*]" and "Los defensores de la patria [*Vivir en cadenas*]," both with lyrics by the soldier-poet Juan Batista de Arriaza, became the best-known songs of the war according to Jeffery; there was even an English version of "Vivir en cadenas" by Thomas Moore. Another song of 1808, recently identified by Jeffery (the misplaced manuscript was located by José Subirá in 1965), is "Corone de victoria," scored for four voices and orchestra.

Two of Sor's compositions remained unpublished until 1814, by which time Sor had emigrated to Paris. One of these, "Marche patriotique espagnole [*Marchemos, marchemos*]," (c. 1808-9) was scored for two tenors and piano and is described by Jeffery as "absolutely splendid."

The other 1814 publication was "¿Adónde vas, Fernando incauto?" ["Where are you going, incautious Fernando?"]⁴ Unlike his other songs, it has lyrics as well as music by Sor, and the words provide poignant testimony regarding the great turning point of the composer's life and his subsequent flight from Spain upon the fall of "King José." Its subtitle states that it describes the events in Spain from the departure of Fernando VII [1808] to the end of 1811, and that it was composed in 1812. Its twelve stanzas consist of a revealing description of the composer's personal crisis of loyalty: at first regretting Fernando's exile and rejoicing in the early Spanish victories, then becoming disgusted with the excesses of the insurrection committed in the name of Fernando, and finally concluding that acceptance of the new regime was a reasonable solution to save his country from further destruction. The last stanza is a prayer that Spain will be reunited and prosper once again.

Jeffery accepts that these words are sincere and heartfelt, although I would note here that there is also an element of self-interest. Sor fled from Spain in 1813, as Joseph's regime collapsed. He emigrated to Paris, still under Napoleon's rule. But 1813 proved disastrous to the Emperor, and by mid-1814 Napoleon had abdicated; the French Bourbon King Louis XVIII was effectively restored to power. In other words, Sor had fled to a Paris ruled by Napoleon only to find himself in a Paris ruled by Louis XVIII, the bitter enemy of the Bonapartes. Sor apparently chose this moment to publish two works: one he claimed he wrote in 1808 that emphasized his role as a famous composer of patriotic pro-Borbón songs, and the other to assert that his collaboration with Joseph's regime had been reluctant, inspired only by his desire to save his *patria*. Fortunately for Sor, Louis XVIII was reconciled to a peaceful restoration and abjured vindictiveness. Jeffery is probably correct in accepting Sor's explanation; as far as we know, Sor never wrote songs that favored the French in Spain. But Fernando VII was not so forgiving; repeated requests for a pardon were ignored or denied, and Sor was never permitted to return to Spain.

The sixth patriotic song by Sor, presented here by Jeffery for the first time, is "La España cautiva y libertada," scored for soloist, chorus, and orchestra. This latter is, in Jeffery's estimation, "a masterpiece ... on a level perhaps with Goya in its creativity and passion." It probably dates to Sor's time in Andalucía in 1809. Also dating from 1809 is Sor's motet, "O salutaris hostia," but it is not a patriotic song and is therefore outside the purview of this book. So, too, is the fact that Sor, who already had a reputation as a guitarist by 1810, had apparently never found a Spanish publisher for his guitar compositions. Printers were scarce outside the great European capitals such as Paris or Vienna,

and the war could not have helped. Beginning in about 1810, however, Sor's guitar music began to appear in Paris in Salvador Castro de Gistau's *Journal de musique étrangère*—notably his earliest published guitar works, including the *Gran Solo*, Op. 14, and the *Sonata*, Op. 15. By 1811, he may have also been published in London. So, by the time Sor arrived in exile in Paris in 1813, the *guitaromanie* had already begun and he was somewhat of a celebrity. His international career had begun.

As noted above, *España de la Guerra* is an unusual and ambitious book that fits into no simple category. Most of it consists of a catalog of about 160 extant songs from various sources, along with original lyrics in Spanish, and (usually) English translations, all presented chronologically in the context of the events of the war. It is not a comprehensive history of the war; the early months of the war generated a great outburst of patriotic music and so get more attention and detail than the last years. Where appropriate, Jeffery provides insightful musicological or literary analysis. His research—uncovering rare scores, multiple editions and variants, library locations, etc.—is thorough and impressive. The Appendices, Catalogues, Bibliography, and Index occupy 134 pages.

The book is well written but, because it is dense with information, it is not an easy read. Given its 400-plus pages, my criticisms are relatively few: It would have been helpful if more scores and musical examples were included (apparently a separate edition of the songs is planned). And Jeffery's graceful translations are missed when they are, here-and-there and somewhat randomly, not included. The Index, less than five pages long, is limited to people and places and so is unhelpful when trying to search for an event, a song title or, e.g., some aspect of Sor's life (he is listed simply as "*passim*"). Jeffery suggests that readers can search in more detail if they purchase the e-book version—a not particularly satisfactory solution to anyone who already paid for a printed copy.

Jeffery's brief but thoughtful Conclusion suggests some parallels with our own age; he points out that there was often a "huge discrepancy between the message and the actual facts" in the lyrics of the patriotic songs in Spain. The nationalist uprisings occurring across Europe after 1806-7 were reactions to Napoleon's Continental System, but the wave of propaganda that emerged suddenly in Spain in 1808 suggests that Fernando and/or his supporters subsidized the deluge, possibly at considerable expense. In other words, a 200-year-old version of "fake news" was spread, meme-like, across the peninsula, striking precisely those notes—*patria, rey, y religión*—that reliably inspired populist fear and anger, in a pattern that would be repeated many times in the next centuries.

—RICHARD M. LONG

¹ The Peninsular War has also provided the dramatic setting for much popular literature, including books by best-selling authors from Bernard Cornwell to Arturo Pérez-Reverte, the ITV series *Sharpe*, and films such as *The Pride and the Passion* (1957). The summation of the war in this review is mine, not a paraphrase of Jeffery's.

² One anonymous song, "A las armas coreos españoles," contains lyrics that actually paraphrase the *Marseillaise*. Jeffery managed to locate its music, previously assumed to be lost.

³ Sor had an unpleasant confrontation with the Inquisition a few years earlier. See Brian Jeffery, "Sor in Trouble with the Inquisition, 1803-1806," *Soundboard*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 3 (2012): 15-19.

⁴ These four songs have been published in Fernando Sor, *Music for Voice and Guitar*, ed. by Jan de Kloe and Matanya Ophée (Heidelberg: Chanterelle Verlag, 2005). Facsimiles of three of these—"Hymno de la Victoria," "Los defensores de la patria [Vivir en cadenas]," and "¿Adónde vas, Fernando incauto?"—were included in Jeffery, *Fernando Sor: Composer and Guitarist*, 2nd ed., Tecla, pp. 14-21. The latter two have been recently recorded on *Fernando Sor: Songs for Voice and Guitar*, performed by Nerea Berraondo (mezzo) and Eva Beneke (guitar) (Naxos CD 8.573686, 2017).

Confalone, Nicoletta.

Un angelo senza paradiso: La chitarra alla ricerca di Schubert.
Bologna: Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2017. 351 pp. (www.utorpheus.com).

Nicoletta Confalone is a guitarist and musicologist from Rovigo who has written productively about several early-19th-century guitarists. In this book she tackles a more celebrated composer from the same period, Franz Schubert, whose association with the guitar spanned his tragically short life (1797-1828) and captured the imaginations of guitarists from his own era and beyond.

The title, *Un angelo senza paradiso* . . . , refers to the Italian version of Schubert's *Leise flehen meine Lieder*, a popular German musical film of 1933 about Schubert's life. It was but one of many novels and theatrical works that appeared in the century after Schubert's death. The brief appearance of a guitar in the film (it is being pawned by the penniless musician) symbolizes for Confalone its ambivalent position in Schubert's life and legend. It was, in effect, an angel without paradise. Ironically, in a 1970 remake of the film the instrument in the pawnshop is a violin.

In the first part of the book, "Schubert and the Guitar," Confalone provides an overview of Vienna's Biedermeier milieu, the guitar's place within it, and the important guitarists of the age such as Molitor, Matiegka, Call, Weber, and Mauro Giuliani. In this context, she examines in detail each of the works including guitar that are associated with Schubert. The revival of the guitar as a concert instrument in the 20th century was hindered by the dearth of repertory from the Romantic and Late Romantic composers, so guitar

Nicoletta Confalone

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