

Article from the *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*, ed. Wayne Dynes (New York: Garland, 1990).

Note: no footnotes could be published with this encyclopedia article. The asterisk indicates a reference to another article in the *Encyclopedia of Homosexuality*.

**Falla, Manuel de** (1876-1946), Spanish composer, a key figure in both the renovation of Spanish classical music and the flowering of Andalusian culture in the early twentieth century. Falla's homosexuality is not known directly, but the circles in which he moved in both Paris and Granada, his friendships, style of life, and enthusiasm for the Andalusian past, which enthusiasm was frequently associated in Spain with homosexuality, permit it to be inferred.

Falla was born in the ancient Andalusian city of Cádiz. As his compositions were received with indifference in Madrid, in 1907 Falla moved to Paris, where he was successful. He left that city at the outbreak of World War I, and influenced by his librettist Gregorio Martínez Sierra, author of *Granada, guía emocional* (1911), made his home in \*Granada from 1919 to 1939.

Andalusian civilization was already of considerable interest to Falla; Granada was the setting of his opera *La vida breve* (*Life is Short*, 1904-05), and his very successful *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (1916) is an evocation of the vanished sensual and erotic world of Islamic Spain. He was the key figure in the effort to conserve, through a festival and competition in 1922, the dying *cante jondo* song of Andalusia's past. The festival, for reasons which are not public, marks a turning point in Falla's work, which became progressively less Andalusian and

more Catholic in inspiration. His *Retablo de maese Pedro* (*Master Peter Puppet's Show*, 1923), based on an episode from *Don Quixote*, and the *Harpsichord Concerto* (1927), both masterpieces, were the last major compositions he would complete. He declined to set to music a one-act libretto, *El calesero* (*The Coachman*), written for him by Federico \*García Lorca, although, strongly urged by friends, he did set Góngora's "Sonnet to Córdoba"—Córdoba was the capital of Andalusia at its peak—to music for the tercentenary of that author in 1927 (\*Spain).

In 1927 Falla began a composition ideologically opposed to his Andalusian-themed works, an operatic setting of Verdaguer's epic poem *L'Atlántida*. In it, Cataluña and Falla's native Cádiz are fulfilled through the discovery of America by Columbus. Falla never completed his *Atlántida*, which was completed after his death by his only student, Ernesto Halffter. It has been indifferently received.

Falla was disturbed and depressed by the anti-Catholic violence of Spain of the early 1930's. Isolated and silent during the Civil War, in 1939 he fled to Argentina, where he died.

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Bibliography: J. B. Trend, *Manuel de Falla and Spanish Music* (New York: Knopf, 1934).