

*Fernán
Lorca*
LORCA
Living in the Theatre

Gwynne Edwards

By THE SAME AUTHOR

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Lorca: Blood Wedding

Lorca: The House of Bernarda Alba

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Lorca: Three Plays



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Blood Wedding:
The Force of Destiny

Blood Wedding is one of Lorca's two best-known and most frequently performed plays, the other being *The House of Bernarda Alba*. The wedding takes place between the Bride and the Bridegroom, whose marriage has been arranged by her father and his mother, largely with a view to mutual material gain. The Bride's real love, however, is the passionate and good-looking Leonardo Félix, whom she has loved from the age of fifteen, but who is now married and has a child. Aware of this past relationship, and hating the Félix family for its part in the murder of her husband and eldest son, the Bridegroom's mother views her son's marriage to the Bride with apprehension, not least because Leonardo is a guest at the church and the ensuing reception. The Bride and Leonardo elope in the midst of the celebrations, and they are pursued by the Bridegroom and members of his family. The runaway couple hide in the dark forest where the mysterious figures of Moon and Death conspire to bring about the deaths of the two men, who kill each other in an off-stage confrontation. The Bride, no sooner married, becomes a widow, disgraced for her part in the tragedy, and Leonardo's wife is widowed, too. The Bridegroom's mother is left entirely alone, her one remaining child taken from her. *Blood Wedding* is a powerful tale of illicit passion and revenge, its enduring appeal easily explained.

By the time he completed *When Five Years Pass*, Lorca had written half of *Blood Wedding*, and there are certainly some similarities between the two plays. The great trees and the ominous figures of Harlequin and the Clown in Act Three, Scene One of *When Five Years Pass* have their equivalent in the forest and the woodcutters, as well as in the

Moon and Death, in the final act of *Blood Wedding*. And many other characters in the former have their counterparts in the latter. For example, the rather weak Young Man is echoed in the Bridegroom, the reluctant Girlfriend in the Bride, the Girlfriend's father in the father of the Bride and, most strikingly, the ardent and passionate Football Player in Leonardo, the Bride's lover. Nevertheless, *Blood Wedding* differs significantly from *When Five Years Pass* in the sense that it is less autobiographical, has a clear story-line, and its setting, far from being abstract, is rural Spain. The influence of the avant-garde and of the kind of Surrealism to be found in *The Public and When Five Years Pass* is still evident in certain scenes, most obviously in the appearance of the Moon and Death in Act Three, Scene One, but there is also a clear movement away from the two earlier plays. *Blood Wedding* is the first of the plays which are now known as the three rural tragedies, the other two being *Yerma* and *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Undoubtedly, there were several factors which led Lorca in this direction, and one of them was certainly to do with political events in Spain following his return from Cuba.

Less than a year after Lorca had arrived back in Spain in 1930, the country found itself on the verge of democracy, ready to end the dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera. By 1931 both the dictator and King Alfonso XIII, who had approved Primo de Rivera's seizing of power, had gone, and in April of that year, prior to general elections a few months later, a provisional left-wing government was formed and the Second Republic proclaimed. During the course of the next two years, many important reforms were introduced by the Left, all of them intended to transform Spain into a more progressive and enlightened country. Women were given the vote, and divorce became a possibility. The power of the Church and of the highly influential religious orders, such as the Jesuits, was curtailed, not least in relation to their control of education. As a result of the reforms, great advances were made in education: between 1931 and 1933, for example, more than 13,000 new schools were built, thousands of teaching posts were created, and

teachers' salaries were doubled. In May 1931, moreover, the Provisional Government set up the organization known as the Misiones Pedagógicas (Teaching Missions), the aim of which was to educate those people who lived in the remote, isolated and poor towns and villages of Spain. Public libraries would be created, local teachers would be involved, exhibitions would be arranged, concerts would be organized, and plays would be performed. Lorca took on a significant role in performing plays for the Misiones Pedagógicas, and the experience, in turn, fed his own dramatic writing.

The idea of forming a touring theatre company that, in accordance with the plans of the Misiones, would perform plays in rural Spain, seems to have originated amongst the students at the University of Madrid rather than with Lorca himself, but he soon became involved in the project, agreed to become the company's artistic director, and, most importantly, succeeded in obtaining financial backing from the government. A mobile theatre was designed for touring, while plans were made for a permanent building in Madrid, to be known as La Barraca. Although the latter was never built, the name came to be applied to the touring company itself. For his right-hand man, Lorca called on the services of Eduardo Ugarte, a highly practical young man and aspiring playwright, who would act as stage-manager and general organizer of the company's activities. The members of the company, actors and technicians alike, wore a kind of uniform – blue dungarees for the men, a blue-and-white dress for the women – which symbolized their equal status in a true democracy. To meet the initial cost of purchasing vans, equipment and a portable stage, the government made a substantial contribution of 100,000 pesetas, to be repaid annually thereafter.¹

The plays which La Barraca would perform to the often uneducated people of rural Spain would be the great plays of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, particularly those by Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina and Calderón. In his presentation of these works, Lorca was concerned that his audiences should be involved, and that the production, in order to achieve that end, should be stripped of all

those unnecessary elements which had, over many years, come to attend their performance in the commercial theatre, such as elaborate sets, old-fashioned costumes and a declamatory acting style. The sets would be extremely simple and practical, capable of being transported easily and of being erected and dismantled quickly. The set designers were, in many cases, artist friends of Lorca, and it is interesting to note that several of them – Santiago Ontañón and José Caballero, for example – created the sets for Lorca's own plays. (In 1933, the year after La Barraca undertook its first tour, the sets for *Blood Wedding* were designed by Santiago Ontañón with Manuel Fontanals.) Photographs of the costumes used in various productions show them to be striking but relatively unfussy, and in certain cases contemporary. Lorca insisted that his actors avoid excessive gesture and the traditional grand style. They were encouraged to speak clearly and naturally so that the dialogue of these ancient plays should appear fresh, not stilted. In order that the action moved smoothly and convincingly, Lorca was extremely demanding in relation to timing, be it in terms of movement, delivery of a line, or an entrance. Having chosen his actors with great care – at the outset there were thirty actors and technicians in the company – he then proceeded to rehearse them thoroughly, paying attention to every detail, as he informed an interviewer in 1934:

Long and demanding rehearsal is essential in order to create the rhythm that should control the performance of a piece of theatre An actor must not be a second late in making his entrance It is as if, in the performance of a symphony, the melody or a certain effect is not in time²

In short, Lorca brought to bear on his productions with La Barraca his deeply held belief that theatre should combine on stage all the different aspects of performance: speech, movement, music and design. This key aspect of his productions for the company, as well as of his

own writing for the theatre, reveals once more the extent to which Lorca was in touch with developments in European theatre. In 1905, the English stage-designer and director Edward Gordon Craig had set out his ideas on stage-production in *The Art of the Theatre*, a book which would prove influential throughout Europe. The following is typical of his approach:

... the Art of the Theatre is neither acting nor the play; it is not scene nor dance, but it consists of all the elements of which these things are composed: action, which is the very spirit of acting; words, which are the body of the play; line and colour, which are the very heart of the scene; rhythm, which is the very essence of dance.³

This was an approach to performance that was advocated and practised by dramatists and stage-designers as significant as Maurice Maeterlinck, Adolphe Appia and Max Reinhardt, and it was certainly well known in Spain. Cipriano Rivas Cherif, a theatre director and friend of Lorca, had studied the work of Edward Gordon Craig in Italy, and undoubtedly discussed these matters with the dramatist. From his very first play Lorca's commitment to total theatre is quite clear and this was something that he also brought to his direction of plays with La Barraca.

The first tour began in July 1932. The company visited, in the course of one month, the towns of El Burgo de Osma, San Leonardo, Vinuesa, Soria, Agreda and Almazán, and the repertoire consisted of *The Cave in Salamanca*, *The Two Talkers* and *The Watchful Guard*, all by Cervantes, and Calderón's religious play, *Life Is a Dream*. The three short plays by Cervantes are distinguished by their down-to-earth, colourful language and their boldly drawn characters, and were clearly chosen for their appeal to relatively unsophisticated audiences. The sets were simple, consisting of a number of flats, some of them decorated, at the back of the portable stage. The costumes, although unfussy, were stylized and colourful. *Life Is a Dream*, which can be compared to an

English morality play, gave Lorca an even greater opportunity to put into practice his belief in total theatre. Music, both vocal and instrumental, played an important part. At appropriate moments a chorus sang in the background, an effect which Lorca described as being 'in the style of the chorus in the Greek tragedy' and which he would subsequently use in *Blood Wedding* itself.⁴ The musical instruments used by La Barraca were the guitar, the *vihuela* (a larger more ancient cousin of the modern guitar) and the lute. Lorca himself played the character called Shadow, who is, in effect, death and who, in a way, anticipates Death in *Blood Wedding*. Indeed, whenever Shadow appeared, he was illuminated by a spotlight which suggested the light of the moon and which certainly looked forward to a similar effect in Act Three, Scene One of Lorca's own play, which, as we know, was being written at this time.

While he was writing *Blood Wedding*, Lorca was also, in late 1932, preparing to direct Lope de Vega's famous play, *Fuenteovejuna*, which La Barraca would first present in May 1933. The overlapping of the two plays is significant, for, despite many differences, *Fuenteovejuna* is set in a rural community and contains many colourful and vibrant characters, men and women alike. Above all, Lorca decided to update the play, so that the story of a village under the thumb of a tyrannical feudal overlord became that of a twentieth-century landowner ruthlessly oppressing those who worked on his land. This was an issue that was of particular relevance to the Andalusia of Lorca's time, one which preoccupied the left-wing government of 1931-3, and one which frequently finds an echo in Lorca's work. The audiences that attended the performances of *Fuenteovejuna* would have observed its male characters dressed in a corduroy-like fabric, the village women in typical dresses, and the overlord/landowner in a black business suit, so that the play's contemporary relevance would have been immediate. Lorca's determination to create theatre that was relevant because it was fresh and alive meant, also, that the production of *Fuenteovejuna* included songs, sung by a chorus and based on traditional Spanish

melodies, as well as village dances in two of its scenes. Both song and dance are important elements in *Blood Wedding*, especially in the preparations for and the celebrations after the wedding in Act Two, and in this context it is also worth bearing in mind Lope de Vega's play *Peribáñez*, which begins with a village wedding. There can be no doubt that, in the early 1930s, Lorca's activities with La Barraca had a considerable effect on the subject matter and the style of his own writing. *Blood Wedding* seems, in many ways, a continuation of the great tradition of seventeenth-century Spanish drama.

Many of the songs in *Blood Wedding* are also rooted in Lorca's personal experience. As a child in the villages of Fuente Vaqueros and Asquerosa, Lorca had absorbed much in the way of traditional tales, poems, ballads, songs and lullabies from the family servants, not least from Dolores Cuesta, who had been his wet-nurse. Later on, his longstanding interest in folk music and songs was consolidated as the result of his friendship with the great Spanish composer, Manuel de Falla, and, in 1928, at the Residencia, he gave an illuminating lecture on the subject of Spanish lullabies. He noted that 'Spain uses its melodies to colour the moment when its children first fall asleep, and in this respect differs from many other European countries whose lullaby tradition is less dark.'⁵ Spanish lullabies, according to Lorca, are often

invented . . . by wretched women whose children are a burden, a cross that is frequently too heavy to bear. Each child, instead of being a joy, is a sorrow, and, naturally, even though they love him, they cannot help singing to him of their own joyless existence.

The setting of such songs is often a 'nocturnal landscape, and [the mother] introduces . . . one or two characters involved in a simple story which almost always has the most melancholy and beautiful effect possible'. The lullaby which begins and ends Act One, Scene Two, falls precisely into this category.

Other traditional songs also greatly influenced him, especially those associated with love, weddings, celebrations and the like, songs which he had heard many times during the years spent in Granada and the surrounding countryside. Particularly important in *Blood Wedding* is the *alboré*, which, as the word suggests, was a song sung at sunrise (*alba* means dawn), often to newly-weds, and which announced to them the dawn or beginning of their new life together. The following is a good example of the type (the handkerchief was inserted into a bride-to-be to test her virginity):

On a green meadow
I laid out my handkerchief.
Three roses appeared
Like three morning stars.
Oh, good father,
They have crowned your daughter.
Oh, bridegroom, look at her!
How pretty she is to the tips of her toes.

It is significant, too, that the *alboré* was, traditionally, a flamenco song sung at a gypsy wedding, for *Blood Wedding* is suffused with the influence of flamenco.

Lorca's musical gifts, notably as a pianist, proved to be exceptional from an early age. Under the guidance of his music teacher, Antonio Segura Mesa, his talent had developed enormously during his teenage years, and he had also learned a good deal about Spanish folk music. Later he would often dazzle his friends with an impromptu rendition of folk songs on the piano, and, in 1931, he recorded a series of folk songs for HMV with 'La Argentinista', Encarnación López Júlvez. But the most significant moment in Lorca's musical education was undoubtedly the arrival in Granada in 1920 of the composer Manuel de Falla. Lorca had met Falla the year before, but when the he settled in Granada their friendship soon developed, not least because both of

them were interested in Spanish folk music. By this time many of Falla's best-known works had acquired an international reputation, particularly his opera *La vida breve*, the ballet *El amor brujo* (*Love the Magician*) and the orchestral work *Noches en los jardines de España* (*Nights in the Gardens of Spain*). All are deeply influenced by Granada, by its gypsy background and by the rhythms of flamenco. *El amor brujo*, in which part of the action is set in a cave, was clearly based on the gypsy cave-dwellings of the Sacromonte, the hilly district near the Alhambra. This is also one source of the cave setting for Act One, Scene Three, of *Blood Wedding*.

The Sacromonte was an area that Lorca knew well. In 1920 he visited both the Sacromonte and its neighbouring district, the Albaicín, when he accompanied the philologist, Ramón Menéndez Pidal, in the course of his investigations into popular Spanish ballads. Furthermore – no doubt through the influence of Falla – the summer of 1921 saw Lorca learning flamenco guitar from two gypsies from Fuente Vaqueros, and claiming to be able to accompany various kinds of flamenco song. And there is also evidence to suggest that, after Falla's arrival in Granada, he and Lorca made several visits to the caves of the Sacromonte in connection with flamenco music and became friends with a number of flamenco singers and guitarists. This was in part in anticipation of the 'Festival of Deep Song', a celebration of flamenco song as well as a competition, which took place in the Alhambra's Plaza de los Aljibes over a period of two days in June 1922.

In conjunction with the festival, in the organization of which he played an important part, Lorca wrote a series of poems inspired by flamenco – particularly by *cante jondo*, or 'deep song', one of the styles of Spanish gypsy music – and also prepared a lecture entitled '*Cante jondo*: Primitive Andalusian Song', which he delivered at the Granada Arts Club. Amongst other things, he drew attention to the emotional nature of these songs, brought to Spain in the fifteenth century by gypsy tribes who had, over several centuries, headed westwards from India, and he emphasized, too, the tragic tone of the oldest forms, of

which the most emotional is the *siguiriyas*: 'The finest degrees of Sorrow and Pain, which serve the most pure, the most exact expression, beat in the tercets and quatrains of the *siguiriyas* and its derivative forms.'⁸ The latter, in particular, he noted, is 'like a cauterium which burns the heart, the throat, the lips of those who voice it'. The following example, quoted by Lorca in the lecture, encapsulates perfectly the subject matter and the dark tone of the *siguiriyas*:

When I come to die,
I ask of you one favour,
That with the braids of your black hair
They tie my hands.

In the poems that Lorca wrote at this time, and which were published nearly ten years later with the title *Poem of Deep Song*, he attempted to evoke the landscapes and the mood of the *canzón jondo* tradition, and he focused on its typical preoccupations of love, unhappiness, death and loneliness. The following example, called 'Sorpresa' ('Surprise'), anticipates the deaths of the Bridegroom and Leonardo in *Blood Wedding*:

He lay dead in the street
With a knife in the heart
No one knew him.
How the street-lamp trembled!
Mother.
How the little street-lamp
Trembled!
It was early morning. No one
Could look at his eyes
Open to the harsh air
For he lay dead in the street
With a knife in the heart
And no one knew him.⁹

One can well imagine this poem powerfully sung by a good flamenco singer.

Six years later, in 1928, the collection of poems *Gypsy Ballads*, on which he had been working for a number of years, was published. Although these poems, unlike those of *Poem of Deep Song*, are not specifically inspired by flamenco song and its tradition, both collections are linked by the figure of the gypsy and by what, for Lorca, the gypsy symbolized. In a lecture given some years after the publication of *Gypsy Ballads*, Lorca noted:

Although it is called Gypsy, the book in general is the poem of Andalusia. I called it Gypsy because the Gypsy is the noblest, deepest and most aristocratic element in my country, the most profound representative of its way of life, the keeper of the glowing embers, the blood, the alphabet of Andalusian and universal truth.¹⁰

For Lorca, the gypsy represented Andalusia through the ages in all its dark and tragic suffering, and the individuals who appear in the poems of *Gypsy Ballads* therefore have a universal resonance: Soledad Montoya, the lonely and frustrated woman burdened by her sexual anguish; the young woman, who, despairing at her lover's non-arrival, drowns herself; Antonio el Camborio, who, envied and resented by his cousins, dies at their hands; the man, who, told that he will die on a specific day, resigns himself to his fate. But if these are some of the individual characters of the poems, they have in fact one main character, to whom Lorca had also referred in his lecture: 'Anguish, dark and big as the summer sky . . . Andalusian anguish, which is the struggle between the loving intelligence and the impenetrable mystery which surrounds it'. Lorca, of course, identified himself with that anguish. The gypsy appealed to him because he had been, and continued to be in Lorca's Spain, a marginalized, outsider figure, as much an outcast as the homosexual. Thus the oppressed and suffering characters of *Gypsy Ballads* are also Lorca himself, voicing his own anguish, and it is easy to

see how he became so attracted to both the flamenco tradition and the history of the gypsies in Andalusia. In many ways *Blood Wedding* is a continuation of *Poem of Deep Song* and *Gypsy Ballads*, for, although its characters may not be gypsies, it possesses all the anguish and the tragic spirit of both collections of poetry.

Blood Wedding also owes something to Lorca's knowledge of classical tragedy. In the spring of 1933, the Ministry of Public Education organized an ambitious artistic festival that would take place in June that year in the town of Mérida. As part of the festival Seneca's *Medea* was to be performed in the Roman amphitheatre by the company of Margarita Xirgu and Enrique Borrás, directed by Cipriano Rivas Cherif.⁹ A spectacular production, it opened there on 18 June, accompanied by choirs and a symphony orchestra, and watched by an audience of 3,000. At the beginning of September it was presented in one of the great squares of the Royal Palace in Madrid before moving on to Salamanca and then to the Greek theatre in the Monjuïc park in Barcelona. And on 28 October, a scaled-down version, in which the emphasis was on the acting rather than the spectacle, began the 1933-4 season at the Teatro Español in Madrid. While this production came some months after the première of *Blood Wedding* (8 March 1933), it is important to bear in mind that Lorca was a good friend both of Margarita Xirgu and Cipriano Rivas Cherif. Xirgu, indeed, had starred in Lorca's *The Shoemaker's Wonderful Wife* in 1930 and would do so in *Yerma* in 1934 and in *Blood Wedding* and *Doña Rosita the Spinster* in 1935. As for Rivas Cherif, he was literary adviser to Xirgu's company, as well as someone with whom Lorca frequently discussed theatre matters. It is inconceivable that, while Lorca was writing *Blood Wedding*, he would not have discussed with them particular aspects of *Medea*, including the role of the chorus, of which he would make extensive use in both *Blood Wedding* and *Yerma*. It is worth noting, too, that, in 1931, Margarita Xirgu had presented *Elektra*, a version of the Greek tragedy by the Austrian dramatist Hugo von Hofmannsthal, in an ambitious open-air production in the Retiro Park in Madrid. Later,

in the summer of 1934, she would perform both *Medea* and *Elektra* in Mérida's Roman amphitheatre. It is no coincidence, then, that *Blood Wedding* was being written at the same time as the spirit of classical tragedy was very much in the air. Furthermore, like *cante jondo*, this was something that connected the ancient and the modern world, a connection which was very close to Lorca's heart and which transformed particular experience into something much more universal, a process that is the hallmark of his writing.

Given this last point, the direct source for *Blood Wedding* could not have been more local and precise: a newspaper report which Lorca had read in 1928. The Madrid newspaper ABC had briefly reported a murder which had occurred near the town of Nijar in the south-eastern province of Almería, and over the next six days the story was told in much greater detail in the *Heroldo de Madrid*, which Lorca often read. It concerned a young woman, Francisca Cañadas Morales, who was engaged to be married to Casimiro Pérez Pino, but who, the night before the wedding, had run away with a former lover, Curro Montes Cañadas. As they escaped, however, they encountered the bridegroom's brother, José Pérez Pino, who was on his way to the wedding, and who, realizing what was happening, shot Curro Montes dead. This dramatic and violent story evidently caught Lorca's imagination both in its broad outline and in terms of many of the details which appeared in the newspaper accounts, although he did, of course, make important changes.¹⁰

Although there is no indication of the precise setting of *Blood Wedding*, most of its action takes place in a landscape strongly suggestive of Almería. In Act One, Scene Three, the Bridegroom and the Mother visit the home of the Bride and the Father in what the Bridegroom describes as 'the dry lands' (p. 46). This is an isolated place where hardly anyone passes by, where the soil is poor and full of stones, as the Father observes in Act Two, Scene Two: 'You have to wage a constant battle with the weeds, with the thistles, with the stones that come up from who knows where' (p. 65). The dry, dusty, often desert-like

terrain is largely due, of course, to the intense heat, inescapable in the summer in Almería, as the Bride and the Servant note in Act Two, Scene One:

SERVANT: I'll finish combing your hair out here.

BRIDE: No-one can stay inside there in this heat.

SERVANT: In these lands it doesn't get cool even at dawn. (p. 52)

The newspaper account in the *Heraldo de Madrid* had referred to 'fields full of stones' and to the barren nature of the landscape 'with barely a tree'. It was a landscape with which Lorca was familiar, for at ten years of age he had spent some months at a boarding school in the town of Almería itself, and been taken on trips into the surrounding area by Antonio Rodríguez Espinosa, the headmaster and a friend of the Lorca family. But, in *Blood Wedding*, Lorca mentioned neither Almería nor Níjar by name. The setting for the events involving the Bride, the Bridegroom and Leonardo is described simply as 'the dry lands'. In other words, the location of the real-life event is made less specific, or, to put it another way, is made more general and so universalized. The hot and inhospitable land is an appropriate place for the unsatisfied longing of the Bride and Leonardo for each other – as much a metaphor as a location, and in that sense typical of Lorca's practice of universalizing the particular.

This kind of transformation may be seen, too, in relation to many other details of the real-life story. The bride-to-be, Francisca Cañadas, lived with her father on a farm near Níjar called 'El Fraile'. In Lorca's play the farm – or rather, the farmhouse – becomes a cave. As we have seen, Lorca was familiar with the gypsy caves of the Sacromonte, and the gypsy was for him a symbolic figure who encapsulated the age-old anguish and suffering of Andalusia. In transforming a farmhouse into a cave, he replaced a man-made building with a natural setting, which, for him, had much more powerful associations and a timeless resonance. As for Francisca Cañadas, she was an extremely plain young

woman, lame, with a squint and prominent teeth, desired by the local young men less for her physical charms than for the dowry which her father would give her on her marriage. In Lorca's Bride these physical defects are stripped away, for she is clearly an attractive young woman. When she first appears, the Bridegroom's mother refers to her 'lovely expression' (p. 49), although hers is not a porcelain beauty. In Act Two, Scene Two, her father describes her as 'wide-hipped' (p. 66); in Act One, Scene Three, as hard-working; and at the end of this scene the Servant refers to her as 'stronger than a man' (p. 50). Used to hard work and responsible for running the house in difficult circumstances since her mother's death, she is very much a peasant girl, but, unlike Francisca Cañadas, good looking enough to prove an irresistible attraction to Leonardo.

Leonardo owes rather more to his real-life source. Curro Montes Cañadas was, according to the newspaper reports, rather handsome and something of a womanizer, with a 'girl on every farm'. A cousin of Francisca, he had had a relationship with her previously, when she was much younger and before her engagement to Casimiro Pérez. He was also something of a horseman. In creating Leonardo, Lorca absorbed these details and added others. Leonardo is clearly handsome, for in their dialogue in Act Three, Scene One, the Bride says: 'Oh, I look at you / And your beauty burns me' (p. 83), and, in her final lament, the Wife describes him as 'a handsome horseman' (p. 91). There can be little doubt that Lorca wished to present Leonardo as a kind of Heath-cliff figure, physically attractive, virile, dynamic and passionate. His name is carefully chosen, for it is an amalgam of *león* (lion) and *ardo* (from the verb *arder*, which means 'to burn'), and suggests good looks, strength and blazing passion. If Curro Montes had some of these qualities, Leonardo has them in a much more heightened form. In Act One, Scene Two, the Wife observes: 'Yesterday the neighbours told me they'd seen you the other side of the plains' (p. 42). When he and the Wife arrive ahead of the other wedding guests in Act Two, Scene Two, the Servant claims that 'They drove like demons' (p. 64). And later in

the scene the Wife describes him as a man who 'likes to fly around too much' (p. 67). In short, he is much larger than life, to be identified with the strength, the speed and the instinct of the horse on which he sweeps across 'the dry lands'. If Lorca transformed Almeria into a much more universal setting, he did much the same with the real-life lovers, creating out of them and their earth-bound relationship a passion which, in Leonardo and the Bride, transcends both time and place.

They are a man and a woman destined for each other, their mutual attraction irresistible and ineradicable, as insistent as the forces at work in nature itself. Indeed, Lorca constantly portrays their passion in terms of the natural world. Such is the implication of Leonardo's anguished words as he and the Bride attempt to hide in the wood in Act Three, Scene One: 'Oh, I'm not the one at fault. / The fault belongs to the earth . . .' (p. 82). In the same speech he speaks of his attempts to forget her and of the impossibility of setting aside an instinct which is as natural and uncontrollable as that of his horse:

And I put a wall of stone

Between your house and mine

...

But I'd get on the horse

And the horse would go to your door . . . (p. 82)

And when, in Act Two, Scene One, he accuses the Bride of betraying their love, he uses an image that suggests both its strength and permanence: 'When the roots of things go deep, no one can pull them up!' (p. 57). As for the girl, her feelings for him are as strong as his for her. In the forest scene referred to above, she reveals her helplessness:

And there's not a minute of the day

That I don't want to be with you,

Because you drag me and I come,

And you tell me to go back

And I follow you through the air
Like a blade of grass . . . (p. 82)

And in the earlier scene, when she dismisses his accusations of betrayal, she describes his effect on her as one of intoxication:

It's as if I'd drunk a bottle of anise and fallen asleep on a bedspread of roses. And it drags me along, and I know that I'm drowning, but I still go on . . . (p. 57)

Again, in attempting to account for her actions to the Bridegroom's mother in the play's concluding scene, she speaks of Leonardo's irresistible pull:

... but the other one's arm [Leonardo's] dragged me like a wave from the sea, like the butt of a mule, and would always have dragged me, always, always . . . (p. 90)

We may, of course, be tempted to see in all these explanations an element of self-justification for actions which both the Bride and Leonardo know to be wrong, but this is set in its proper context by the Woodcutters, objective commentators on events, in Act Three, Scene One:

FIRST WOODCUTTER: In the end the blood was strongest.

...

SECOND WOODCUTTER: Her body for him, his body for her . . .
(pp. 74-5)

In the light of their words, the title of Lorca's play, *Bodas de sangre*, which is usually translated into English as *Blood Wedding*, suggesting the bloody outcome, can also be rendered as 'Marriage of Blood', which refers to the instinctive bond between the Bride and Leonardo,

as opposed to the arranged marriage of the Bride and the Bridegroom. They are, indeed, lovers on an elemental scale, far removed from their real-life source.

In the newspaper account, Casimiro Pérez, Francisca's husband-to-be, was described as a rather dull and unexciting labourer to whom Francisca was not genuinely attracted. Lorca's Bridegroom is similarly unattractive to the Bride, although the reason seems to be not so much that he is physically unappealing as that he is rather naive, inexperienced with women and, above all, tied to his mother's apron strings. Praising the boy to the Bride's father in Act One, Scene Three, the Mother observes that 'He's never known a woman' (p. 48). Because of the deaths of her husband and her other son, she has become extremely protective, even wishing that her son were a girl who could stay at home and not be exposed to the dangers men face in the world at large. Although at times he is impatient with her because of this, he does on the whole submit to her authority, rather like an obedient daughter. When, for example, she tells him in Act Two, Scene Two, that in his father's absence she has taken on the paternal role, his reply is revealing: 'I'll always do what you want me to' (p. 72). He is, in short, something of a mummy's boy, his emotional growth rather stunted. Despite the fact that in Act Two, Scene Two, the Servant suggests that, like his grandfather, the Bridegroom has 'the same twinkle' in his eyes (p. 68), we cannot imagine him, as his grandfather did, leaving 'a son on every street corner' (p. 35). At the wedding reception he seems relatively lively, but, even so, his remarks are somewhat gauche, and his embracing of the Bride from behind rather clumsy. The nub of the matter is clearly expressed by the Bride when, in Act Three, Scene Two, following the deaths of Leonardo and the Bridegroom, she explains to the Mother the effect of both men upon her: '... your son was a tiny drop of water ... but the other one was a dark river ...' (p. 90). Drawing on the source material's suggestion of the basic differences between Curro Montes and Casimiro Pérez, Lorca heightened the contrast, and, in the case

of the Bridegroom, linked his character to the influence of the Mother.

In Casimiro's story there was no mother figure, for all the encouragement to marry Francisca was provided by his brother and his sister-in-law. In *Blood Wedding*, on the other hand, the Mother becomes a dominant presence, as much in the play's opening scene as in its final one. What, then, was the reason for this fundamental change in the details? It would be easy to suggest that the introduction of the Mother allowed Lorca to give prominence to the family feud which has long existed between her family and that of Leonardo, but he could equally have done so had the Bridegroom's surviving parent been his father. There may be more than one explanation. In the Spain of Lorca's time, particularly in the harsh environment of rural Spain, there were many widows – women deprived of their husbands and struggling to bring up their children. Lorca knew them well and felt for them. Again, even though women were regarded as inferior both by that society and by the Catholic Church, they were the heartbeat of family life, raising their children, controlling the finances, setting an example. As for Lorca himself, women – the family's servants and, as we shall see later, his own mother – were influential in his early life. From the beginning of his career as a writer, they have a prominent role in his poems and his plays, suggesting an understanding of them. And then, of course, there is the simple fact that in the classical tragedies which probably influenced *Blood Wedding* the protagonists were powerful women, as was also the case in J.M. Synge's *Riders to the Sea* – another probable influence – in which a mother grieves for the death of her loved ones.¹¹ All these things may have played a part in making Lorca give the Mother such a prominent role. But most important of all, perhaps, was the nature of the bond between the mother and the child she has brought into the world, raised, worried over and feared for. A father-son relationship does not have quite the same emotional closeness, and Lorca, as a dramatist, was well aware that, in a situation where the Mother has seen her

husband and a son murdered and fears for her one remaining son, there were tremendous theatrical possibilities. At all events, she proves to be an enormously powerful presence, obsessed with the deaths which have already deeply affected her, constantly apprehensive about the future, driven to seek revenge when her son is betrayed by his wife, and plunged into inconsolable grief when he, too, is killed. She is, indeed, a figure worthy of a place in any classical tragedy.

Lorca also made a number of crucial changes in relation to the events described in the newspaper accounts. First of all, Francisca and Curro Montes ran off together before the wedding, not after it, as do Lorca's characters. It is a fundamental change that transforms an already dramatic situation into a much more dramatic one, not least because the Bride is now also guilty of adultery, with all the implications that this has in a highly traditional and Catholic society. As a result of this shift of emphasis, the Bridegroom and members of his family set out in pursuit of the runaway couple, driven on by the Mother. It is an altogether tighter and more intense situation than that of the source material, in which the fleeing couple encounter Casimiro's brother on the road by pure chance. And, by having the wedding take place, Lorca was also able to introduce the reception in Act Two, Scene Two, which allowed for music and dance and the remorseless building of dramatic tension in the midst of the celebration, right up to the point when the couple make their escape.

Introducing the long-standing feud between the two families represents another significant addition. No sooner is the knife mentioned in Act One, Scene One, than the Mother's obsession with the Félix family, 'the family of murderers' (p. 35), comes to the fore. Although the precise reasons for the feud are not given, it seems to have existed for many years, for in Act Two, Scene Two, the Mother refers to Leonardo's bad blood, which 'comes from his great-grandfather, who started the killing, and it spreads through the whole breed, all of them

knife-handlers and smiling hypocrites' (p. 64). In rural communities of the kind in which *Blood Wedding* is set, family feuds and violent crimes were often the result of disputes over land and ownership. Lorca's lack of precision on this point is clearly deliberate. He prefers to avoid the local detail, allowing instead the unexplained family enmity to hang over the play's events like a dark cloud. It is, perhaps, an echo of the dynastic rivalries to be found in many classical tragedies, and it should not be forgotten that, as we have seen in the discussion of *The Public*, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, with its feuding families, was a play that Lorca knew well. At all events, the introduction of the family feud could not have been better calculated as a device to heighten the dramatic temperature of the play.

Act Three of *Blood Wedding* bears no relation to the newspaper story, however. In the first of its two scenes, the setting of the forest with its great moist tree trunks is a reworking of a similar scenario in the final act of *When Five Years Pass*, while the characters of Moon and Death (in the form of an old beggar woman), who conspire to bring about the death of Leonardo and the Bridegroom, are reminiscent of Harlequin and the Clown, who, in the earlier play, mock the Young Man. To some extent, too, the three Card Players who pay a final fatal visit to the Young Man in the last scene of *When Five Years Pass* have their counterpart in the three woodcutters of *Blood Wedding*.

In both plays the emphasis is on predestination and the inability of human beings to change the course of destiny – although in *Blood Wedding* the influence of classical tragedy and gypsy/Flamenco culture is much more in evidence. Apart from bringing to mind the Three Fates of classical mythology, the woodcutters intone their lines in a manner strongly suggestive of the chorus in Greek and Roman tragedies. On the other hand, the image of the woodcutter and the tree is frequently to be found in Lorca's poetry, and so indeed is the association of the moon and death. Consider the following poem, 'The Rider's Song':

Córdoba.
 Far away and alone.
 Black mare, great moon,
 And olives in my saddle-bag.
 Although I know the roads
 I shall never get to Córdoba.
 On the plain, in the wind,
 Black mare, red moon.
 Death is watching me
 From the towers of Córdoba.
 Oh, how long the road!
 Oh, my brave mare!
 Oh, death awaits me
 Before I get to Córdoba!
 Córdoba.
 Far away and alone.¹²

And in another poem, 'The Moon and Death', there is a clear anticipation of the conspiracy of the characters Moon and Death in *Blood Wedding*, for in both Death is an old woman:

The river-beds are dry,
 The fields no longer green,
 And in the withered trees
 No nests or leaves.
 Doña Death, wrinkled,
 Passes amongst the willow-trees,
 ...
 The moon has bought
 Paintings from Death...¹³

In Spanish folklore, and especially in the gypsy culture of Andalusia, fate and destiny are frequently linked to the moon, which, after all,

has in its movements and cycles a marked inevitability, and in its colour and appearance a deathly coldness. It is no surprise, then, that these things should acquire such importance in Lorca's work. For example, in one of the most powerful and evocative poems in *Gypsy Ballads*, 'Somnambular Ballad', a young woman drowns herself in the water-tank on the roof of her house:

On the surface of the water-tank
 The gypsy-girl swayed.
 Green flesh, green hair,
 Her eyes of cold silver
 An icicle of moonlight
 Holds her on the water.¹⁴

The moon, reflected in the water, takes on the appearance of an icicle or a knife which seems to connect with the floating body. The visual link between the moon – especially a half or quarter moon – and the ever-present knife of *Blood Wedding* is very clear indeed.

While the play reflects the combined influence of classical tragedy and Andalusian folklore, it also reveals to some extent the imprint of Surrealism. The events of Act Three, Scene One, are, after all, decidedly dreamlike, even nightmarish. Looked at in a certain way, they could be said to be the embodiment of the anxieties and guilt of the Bride and Leonardo: the projection of their unconscious as they lie asleep in each other's arms. Their hiding-place, the forest with great moist tree-trunks, and the events that occur in it could indeed be their nightmare. If *When Five Years Pass* is a play in which, it is possible to argue, the whole of the action takes place in the mind of its main character, the Young Man, so the great wood of *Blood Wedding*, with its eerie atmosphere and its frightening non-human characters, can be seen as the embodiment of the lovers' deepest fears.

In *The Public* and, to a lesser extent, in *When Five Years Pass* Lorca gave dramatic expression to the anguish which was in no small part

the consequence of his homosexuality. He would never do so again in such an explicit way, even though he had a number of homosexual relationships after his return to Spain from Cuba. In Madrid he had many gay friends who were writers and painters. In the spring of 1933, the twenty-one-year-old Rafael Rodríguez Rapún, an athletic and passionate man, became secretary to La Barraca, and, although apparently not by nature homosexual, he became Lorca's lover between 1934 and 1936. During a six-month visit to Argentina between October 1933 and March 1934, it seems likely that Lorca had several brief affairs, and there is certainly evidence that he was rejected by a young amateur actor, Maximino Espasande, whom he ardently pursued. Nevertheless, the conflict within him that had previously raged so fiercely – and which obviously continued to exist to some extent – was now expressed in a different way, channelled into characters who were part of a story, which, like the characters themselves, seemed less autobiographical.

Blood Wedding is the first example of this process. Many critics argue, of course, that a work of art has little to do with its creator's life, but the fact cannot be ignored that, as has already been suggested, the work of many dramatists owes its particular emotional charge and its characteristic ideas to their problematic and often intense inner lives. For example, O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night* is essentially a dramatization of his own family history, while many of Tennessee Williams's unstable female characters reflect his sister's mental problems. In channelling personal preoccupations into the more objective story of *Blood Wedding*, Lorca may well have been responding to two things. Firstly, after the anguish of the New York period, he felt more in control of his sexuality and thus more able to objectify his personal feelings. And secondly, he wanted to write not a play 'for the theatre years from now', as he had declared *The Public* to be, but something which would be a success in the Madrid of his time.

It was more than the dramatic possibilities of the events near Nijar that drew Lorca to the story; however: they reflected his own dilemma.

In *When Five Years Pass* he had already created in the Young Man a character who, at least in the first half of the play, is sexually unresponsive to women and who is finally rejected by the Girlfriend. Casimiro Pérez Pino in the Nijar story is a similar individual, a young man incapable of awakening genuine passion in his fiancée and who, it seems, had not even kissed her prior to the wedding-day. This type of man fascinated Lorca precisely because he mirrored his own heterosexual impotence, and so it is that the Bridegroom in *Blood Wedding* is in many ways yet another self-portrait. On the other hand, Leonardo is the man Lorca may well have wanted to be, the male who is attracted to women and whom they cannot resist. He had already appeared in *When Five Years Pass* in the form of the Football Player, who, in Act Two, is described by the Girlfriend as having in his breast 'a great flowing torrent' (p. 146). Leonardo is an extended form of him, the most dynamically sexual male in the whole of Lorca's theatre. But even if he is unlike Lorca in his passionate pursuit of women, he at the same time embodies Lorca's growing belief that one should be true to one's nature, whatever one's sexuality. In *The Public First Man* posed the key question: 'Can a man cease to be himself?' In *Blood Wedding*, as well as in the later plays, the message is even more insistent. Although the relationship of the Bride and Leonardo is heterosexual, the question of following one's instinct would equally have applied had the relationship been homosexual. Leonardo may be Lorca's fantasy, but he is also the embodiment of an important truth which the dramatist had come to embrace.

If *Blood Wedding* has a clear autobiographical resonance, how does the character of the Mother fit into the picture? In the play's opening scene the Bridegroom lifts her in his arms with the words 'You old woman, you old, old woman, you old, old, old woman' (p. 35). This, it appears, was something which Lorca did with his own mother, whose effect on his life was clearly profound. Vicenta Lorca Romero, prior to her marriage, had been a teacher at the primary school in Fuente Vaqueros. She clearly exercised a considerable influence over her

eldest son's childhood years, not least because flat feet and a slight limp restricted his ability to take part in physically demanding games. This meant that, while his father attended to the demands of his estate, she encouraged Lorca's already evident artistic talents, in particular his musical abilities. In later life he would say that his mother, more than anyone, had shaped his artistic inclinations. To what extent his closeness to her inhibited his subsequent interest in and attraction to other women is a matter of conjecture, although some of his statements in adult life are extremely suggestive. In 1934, during his visit to Argentina, he was asked if he planned to get married and replied that his brother and sisters were free to do so, but as for himself, '... I belong to my mother'.¹⁵ In the following year he spoke of his homosexuality to Cipriano Rivas Cherif, and suggested that his closeness to his mother had made it impossible for him to engage in a heterosexual relationship.

Quite apart from all this, Vicenta Lorca was a woman for whom traditional values were extremely important. She was a practising Catholic whose religious beliefs made their mark on Lorca himself. As a schoolteacher she attached great importance to discipline and hard work, an area in which Lorca, with his lack of application and poor examination results, often disappointed her. And, as the wife of a well-known and prosperous landowner and the mother of two sons and two daughters, she was concerned with the well-being of the family as well as its good name and reputation in the community. Is it surprising, then, that this concern should be reflected by the Mother in *Blood Wedding*? In Act One, Scene One, she expresses the hope that her son's intended bride is good and respectable: 'I know that the girl's good. She is, isn't she? Well-behaved. Hard-working. She makes her bread and sews her skirts' (p. 35). In Act One, Scene Three, she indicates to the Bride's father that the Bridegroom's reputation is unblemished: 'His name's cleaner than a sheet spread in the sun' (p. 48). As for the Bride, she is fully aware that, in running away with Leonardo, she has dishonoured her husband, and the Mother, in

urging the Bridegroom to hunt them down, is as much concerned with restoring the family honour as with taking revenge. The point is clearly made when in the play's final scene she confronts the Bride:

You see her? There, weeping, and me calm, without tearing her eyes out. I don't understand myself. Is it because I didn't love my son? But what about his name? Where is his name? (p. 90)

This preoccupation with family honour was, of course, something that had been deeply embedded in the Spanish psyche over the centuries, as true of Lorca's time as it had been in the seventeenth century, when Spain was at the height of its powers. As for Lorca himself, he was clearly aware that his homosexual activities were precisely the kind of thing to damage the family name, quite apart from causing his parents untold grief. It goes without saying, therefore, that, close to his mother as he was, he would have been anxious not to cause her pain while at the same time he could not resist his true sexual inclinations. The emotional conflict which stemmed from this cannot be underestimated, and it is certainly one explanation for the prominence in *Blood Wedding* of the importance of good name and the extent to which it is endangered by obedience to one's instincts. An appreciation of the anguish which Lorca must have experienced in this respect undoubtedly coloured his view both of himself and of the world around him, and it explains, too, the tragic vision which he set out in his plays.

The principal theme of classical tragedy is that the fates of mortals are determined by the gods; Shakespearean tragedy, on the other hand, is about men and women brought down by some fundamental moral flaw, after whose passing a better future is promised. In more recent times tragic drama is, more often than not, the spectacle of human beings cast adrift in a meaningless universe, and posing questions to which there is no answer. Lorca, given the nature of his life, must often have asked himself such questions. Why, for instance, was

he different from most men, not least from his markedly heterosexual brother Francisco? Why, given his difference, must he seek sexual satisfaction in ways which caused him anguish and were also socially unacceptable? And why had the dice been cast in such a manner? Thinking on these things, Lorca must have felt that fate had intervened and that his life was predetermined. Furthermore, the gypsy culture which so interested him believed firmly in the decisive influence of fate on people's lives. The following lines from a *siguiriyá* illustrate the point perfectly:

I looked over the wall,
The wind answered me:
'Why sigh so much
If there is no solution?'

The unanswerable questions that Lorca must have asked himself echo throughout the serious forms of *canje jondo*, as he himself observed: 'At the heart of all the poems the question is to be found, the terrible question for which there is no answer . . .'¹⁶ It is a question which he often posed in *Poem of Deep Song* and *Gypsy Ballads*, in which the marginalized and persecuted gypsy is simultaneously cast as a suffering individual – a form of Lorca himself – and a symbol of the age-old anguish of Andalusia. In short, Lorca was acutely conscious, through personal experience and cultural background, that the individual finds himself in an uncomprehending universe and at the mercy of a hostile fate in the face of which his deepest aspirations come to nothing and very often prove to be the source of his own downfall. His vision is, of course, pessimistic, suggesting a world without hope, but in that sense it is typical of the twentieth century and places Lorca firmly alongside such dramatists as O'Neill, Arthur Miller and Samuel Beckett.

Blood Wedding, like so much of Lorca's work, has at its very core the essential duality of aspiration and negation, a conflict which gives the

play its dramatic tension and leads to its tragic outcome. In the case of Leonardo and the Bride, aspiration takes the form of their sexual longing for each other. For the Bridegroom, it is his desire to marry and enjoy a conventional married life. For the Mother, it is a wish for the Bridegroom's happiness, a long life and children; for the Father, a desire to see his daughter settled and contented. Each of these characters pursues a particular goal, and each of them does so with passion and intensity. But if these aspirations are strong, they are also, for the most part, mutually exclusive, the goals of the Bride and Leonardo completely at odds with those of the Bridegroom, the Mother and the Father. In consequence, the mutually exclusive nature of the characters' aspirations leads inevitably to their final negation.

In addition, the objectives sought by the characters involve passions and desires which are ineradicable, whose course cannot be changed. The attraction of the Bride and Leonardo to each other is, we are told, long-standing, going back to the time when she was only fifteen, seven years before the action of the play. Furthermore, their separation and Leonardo's subsequent marriage have done nothing to change their feelings. The Bride, in Leonardo's presence, is intoxicated by his good looks, is as helpless as a blade of grass in the wind, while he responds instinctively to the scent that comes from her breasts and her hair. But if their feelings cannot be changed, neither can the Mother's concern for her son, the Bridegroom, rooted as it is in her long-standing grief for the husband and son already lost to her. In Act One, Scene One, the Bridegroom takes her to task for endlessly harping on the same subject, and her reply is illuminating: 'If I lived to be a hundred, I wouldn't speak of anything else' (p. 34). Her concern for her surviving son's future is as understandable as it is desperate, as natural as it is single-minded. But, crucially, her objective, as well as her son's, is totally at odds with that of the Bride and Leonardo. In each case the course is set before the events we see unfold on stage, and that sense of inevitability, of the way things are, is underlined by frequent references to fate, as well as by the appearance of characters

who are its physical manifestations: the axe-wielding woodcutters, Death and Moon, the girls who, in Act Three, Scene Two, unwind the ball of red wool, suggestive of the thread of life soon to be cut. The fate of the on-stage characters is, indeed, mirrored in advance in the experience of other members of their respective families. Thus, the Bride will suffer as did her mother before her:

BRIDE: She wasted away here.

SERVANT: Her fate. (p. 52)

Leonardo's wife will be abandoned, as was her mother: 'It's the way things are. My mother's fate was the same' (p. 62). And, of course, the Bridegroom will die by the knife as did his father and his brother. The knife, indeed, hangs over the action of *Blood Wedding* like the sword of Damocles, as inescapable as the fate which it embodies.

In *Blood Wedding*, as in his other tragic plays, Lorca portrays the predicaments of his characters in all their stark inevitability, and, in so doing, leaves us with a sense of terrible bleakness. If Shakespeare's tragedies, dark as they are, end on a note of hope, evoking the calm which follows the storm, Lorca's, in contrast, provide no such consolation. All aspirations have come to nothing: the Mother's son is dead, the Bride is a widow and Leonardo is dead, too. In the play's final scene, the female mourners can only lament the destruction of beauty by death:

He was a handsome horseman,

Now a frozen heap of snow.

He rode to fairs and mountains

And the arms of women.

Now the dark moss of night

Forms a crown upon his brow. (p. 91)

For none of them is there any relief or escape: the mother's anguish is

merely intensified, the Bride is dishonoured and will never re-marry, the Father's life is blighted by his daughter's conduct, and Leonardo's widow is left disgraced and with two small children to bring up. It is, indeed, a depressing spectacle, in which hope for the future has been snuffed out. In *The Public* Lorca drew upon personal experience in relation to the conflicts and the anguish created by his homosexuality; in *Blood Wedding* he gave expression to a view of the world that had its roots both in earlier forms of drama and in the culture of Andalusia, but to which his own life also bore painful witness.¹⁷

The effect of Lorca's involvement with La Barraca can be seen very clearly in *Blood Wedding*. The sets for their productions were, of necessity, simple and stark, and even if in much of Lorca's earlier work there are examples of this, *Blood Wedding* reveals that kind of economy in almost every aspect. No set in the whole of his theatre is evoked more concisely than that for Act One, Scene One: 'Room painted yellow' (p. 33). The setting for Act One, Scene Two, is only a little more detailed: 'A room painted pink, with copper ornaments and bunches of common flowers. Centre-stage, a table with a cloth. It is morning' (p. 39). And that for Act One, Scene Three, is much the same: 'Interior of the cave where the BRIDE lives. At the back a cross of big pink flowers. The doors are round with lace curtains and pink ribbon. On the walls, made of a white hard material, are round fans, blue jars and small mirrors' (p. 45). Lorca creates for all three scenes stage-pictures which are simple and stylized, stripped of unnecessary detail. Furthermore, the figures which are placed against these backgrounds produce an effect which is at once visual and emotional. Against the yellow walls of her house the Mother will be dressed in black, the colour of mourning, and the combination of colours suggests at once the harshness and the bitterness of a life in which she finds no comfort. Indeed, the yellow walls already anticipate the Bridegroom's death and the return of his body to the house with 'lips turned yellow' (p. 93). As for Scene Two, the pink of the walls, the glow of copper, the colour of flowers and the brightness of morning all suggest a calm and tranquil mood, a fitting

background for the sleeping baby and the lullaby. The pink of the walls is, indeed, echoed in the lullaby itself – ‘Go to sleep, carnation’ (p. 40) – but that sense of tranquillity is quickly disrupted by the reference to ‘Horsey’s hooves are red with blood’ (p. 40), and by the end of the scene, after Leonardo’s violent altercation with the Wife and the Mother-in-Law, the emphasis on blood is much more anguished and we can well imagine the walls of the room slowly turning from pink to red, the baby’s future already threatened by Leonardo’s death. In contrast, the pinks, whites and blues of the Bride’s home point to optimism, innocence, the wedding to come, a happy future. They form a background to the positive and constructive arrangements made throughout the scene by the Bridegroom’s mother and the Bride’s father. But, against it, the Bride’s final outburst as the scene ends – and, significantly, ‘*The light begins to fade*’ (p. 50) – are jarring, discordant notes, which disrupt the initial mood.

Lorca’s use of simple yet careful stylization thus invests the specific with a universality, transforming something Spanish into something with a much wider resonance. The Mother is, at the same time, all grieving and fearful mothers; Leonardo and the Bride, all desperate lovers. It is no accident that the names of most of the characters should be not particular but generic – the Bridegroom, the Bride, the Mother, the Father, the Wife, the Neighbour – and the same universalizing effect is achieved by Lorca’s use of music in the play. Although music was used selectively in his earlier work, nowhere was it employed more extensively than in *Blood Wedding*, and this clearly owed something to Lorca’s work with La Barraca. Given the use of musical elements in the company’s stagings of Calderón’s *Life Is a Dream* and Lope de Vega’s *Fuenteovejuna*, it is surely no coincidence that in *Blood Wedding* musical effects are created, as in those productions, by instruments, by individual voices and by a sung chorus. The eerie atmosphere of Act Three, Scene One, is underpinned by two violins. Individual voices create the lullaby; the song which opens Act Two, Scene Two – ‘Turning / The wheel was turning’ (p. 63) – and

the almost operatic soliloquy of the Moon. And choral effects, chanted if not sung, are everywhere: the arrival of the wedding guests, the intonations of the Woodcutters, the three girls’ game with the wool and the final lament.

Most important of all, however, is the way in which these episodes work in relation to each other. Act Two, Scene One, for example, begins with the Bride’s dejection, but this is soon swept away by the wedding guests’ song, ‘Let the bride awaken now / On this her wedding day’ (p. 55), which comes progressively nearer, and, when the guests finally arrive, becomes a rapturous and infectious outburst of joy and celebration. The way in which the passage is created and constructed is, to use a musical analogy, almost symphonic, words and lines the equivalent of notes and phrases. As the latter pass from instrument to instrument, building to a climax, so here lines pass from one speaker to another, forming a crescendo. And although the words and images are important, the rhythm and tone of their delivery – uplifting, inspiring – are even more important, enveloping not only the characters but the audience. Throughout the play we are moved from one emotion to another: joy, apprehension, despair. It is no coincidence that, while he was writing *Blood Wedding*, Lorca was constantly listening to music – to gramophone records of *cante jondo* and Bach. In many ways, the play itself is a piece of music and, in precisely the same way, its resonance is universal. An audience would be moved by it even if it did not know the language in which it was being performed.

Through his work with La Barraca Lorca also honed his skills in other aspects of theatre, particularly movement. Calderón’s *Life Is a Dream* is a morality play in which the journey of the characters through life is presented almost as in a ballet, while in Lope de Vega’s *Fuenteovejuna* moments of tranquillity are often punctured by dramatic interventions, in addition to which the rebellion of the villagers against their overlord demands very accomplished choreography.

In *Blood Wedding* the use of movement is as varied as the play’s musical effects and is, of course, frequently combined with them. So,

for example, the song of the wedding guests in Act Two, Scene One, is performed in the context of constant movement; and Act Two, Scene Two, involves not only the animated movement of the guests at the wedding reception but the agitated coming and going of those searching for the absent Bride, and finally the swift and dramatic entrance of the Wife as she announces that the Bride and Leonardo have escaped together. In total contrast there are moments of great stillness. In Act One, Scene One, the Mother and the Neighbour are both seated, facing each other, the stillness seeming to emphasize even more the former's restless state of mind as she questions the Neighbour about the Bride. And in Act Three, Scene One, Death and the Moon slip in and out of the on-stage action in the most sinister way. In the discussion of *The Public*, mention was made of Lorca's familiarity with the ballets of Manuel de Falla, with the Madrid productions of Diaghilev's ballet company, and the elements of dance in his own early plays. In an interview he gave in Buenos Aires Lorca complained about the neglect of physicality in the theatre, and stated that it was his intention to restore it: 'One must re-evaluate the importance of the body in performance. That is my aim.'¹⁸ This love of movement on stage is everywhere evident in *Blood Wedding*, and Lorca choreographs it with precision in a way which captures the changing rhythms – the movement from sadness to joy, from joy to despair – of life itself.

The premiere of *Blood Wedding* took place on 8 March 1933 at the Teatro Beatriz in Madrid – and, crucially, the director was Lorca himself. Not surprisingly, he employed individuals who were his collaborators with La Barraca. One of them, Santiago Ontañón, co-designed the sets with Manuel Fontanals, and these, faithful to Lorca's stage directions, had precisely that simplicity which Lorca adopted with the productions of La Barraca. Carlos Morla Lynch attended the premiere, and subsequently wrote that the setting for Act One, Scene One, comprised a simple room in different tones of yellow; Scene Two a room painted pink; and Act Three, Scene Two, a room painted white.¹⁹ A photograph of Act Two, Scene Two – the wedding reception – portrays

the Bride and Bridegroom and their close relatives at stage-level, while other guests stand on steps to the right and the left against a background of white walls. The simplicity and symmetry of the set are very clear. Contemporary reports and photographs of this first production suggest that Lorca staged the play much as we have it in its published form.

His work with La Barraca also revealed his concern with timing and precision when it came to dialogue, movement, entrances and exits. Lorca's brother Francisco wrote subsequently of the problems Lorca had had in this respect with the actors during rehearsals for *Blood Wedding*.²⁰ As far as the text was concerned, the actors, many of whom were much more used to comedy and the commercial theatre, were bound to have difficulties with a play which, in its combination of poetry and a prose which is itself strongly rhythmic and full of images, was quite different from anything in the mainstream theatre of the 1930s. Furthermore, there are scenes – for example, Act Two, Scene One – in which voices interplay in a very complex manner, and sequences – the intonations of the Woodcutters, the exchanges of the Bride and Leonardo in the wood, the final lament – which have to be performed convincingly if they are not to sound comic. In every case timing, emphasis and rhythm have to be precise, and Lorca evidently drove the actors hard, often losing his temper. Again, these were actors who were simply not used to the variety of movement demanded by the play. Because movement in *Blood Wedding* is so complex, Lorca, according to his brother, demanded mathematical precision, as indeed was the case in his productions with La Barraca.

As we know, Lorca listened to a great deal of music as he wrote the play, and music was used in his own production. He accompanied the entrance of the Woodcutters at the beginning of Act Three with the andante from Bach's second Brandenburg Concerto, played on a gramophone record, the music preparing the audience for the mysterious scene in the wood.²¹ And, even if we have no specific information about the music which was used elsewhere in the play, it is clear that

many of the scenes were performed as if they were part of a musical score. Josefina Díaz de Artigas, who played the Bride, said of Act Two, Scene One – the arrival of the wedding guests – that

there was no voice that did not fit with another . . . He [Lorca] harmonized voices, their timbre, their resonance, as a musician harmonizes sounds. It was an extraordinary exercise. He would call out 'Not like that. Your voice is too sharp! Try it again! I need a voice with weight . . .'²²

For the final scene of lamentation, Lorca had originally envisaged a choral chant, although there is no record of how the lines were actually distributed in the production. From the evidence we have it is perfectly clear that, in staging the play, he gave due emphasis to stage design, movement, music and language, thereby achieving that combination of all the different elements of stage-performance that we now call 'total theatre', and which Lorca, along with other leading theatre practitioners of that time, considered essential if the particular work was to transcend time and place and take on a broader, more universal significance. That this is what the production achieved may be gauged from the reaction of M. Fernández Almagro in *El Sol* when he concluded that

There are, in *Blood Wedding*, more than individual characters, general states of the human spirit . . . That is precisely what impressed me most about *Blood Wedding*: the spirit which energizes it, the common breath which comes from far away and from deep down . . .²³

Critical reaction, in general, was similarly appreciative: the première was a triumph, and Lorca's reputation as a dramatist was firmly established.

During the three remaining years of Lorca's life, there were to be two other highly successful productions of the play in Spain. The first opened at the Madrid Coliseum on 28 February 1935, performed by

the company of Lola Membrives, while the second premièred in Barcelona on 22 November of the same year, presented by the company of Margarita Xirgu. This second production was important for a variety of reasons. Margarita Xirgu and Cipriano Rivas Cherif were, as we have seen, friends of Lorca, and they were also closely associated with his work. In addition to her lead roles in *Mariana Pineda* in 1927 and in *The Shoemaker's Wonderful Wife* in 1930, Xirgu, at the very end of 1934, had appeared as the eponymous heroine in the Madrid production of *Yerma*, which ran for more than a hundred performances, and this production had been directed by Rivas Cherif. Also, the stage-designer was José Caballero, Lorca's colleague from La Barraca. So, even if Lorca was not the director of the Barcelona *Blood Wedding*, it seems clear enough that he would have had considerable influence over the play's staging, and he could be sure that it was in good hands.

An impression of the production may be formed both from the critical reviews which accompanied it and from the photographs available in various archives. Writing in *La Vanguardia*, María Luz Morales spoke of the 'assured stylization' of the piece, and of the way in which 'all the elements in the performance . . . fuse and harmonize: settings, music, visual elements, poetry, delivery, acting . . .'²⁴ José Caballero's designs, as the photographs indicate, were the very opposite of naturalistic. The wedding reception, for example, reveals his liking for stylized, geometric shapes, for the walls and the stairs are much more like an abstract painting than the stonework of a real building. Particularly striking, too, as far as performance was concerned, was the element of contrast, both within and between scenes. Morales referred to 'colour, song, rhythm, now slow, now quick, now spirited, now vibrant, now slow, as in a symphony . . .'. As for the acting, Xirgu, in the role of the Mother, received particular praise, notably for bringing out the inner life of the character, while the performance of the company as a whole was described as highly disciplined. In short, here was a theatre company that was attuned to Lorca's work and which did it justice, paying due attention to its high degree of stylization.

Blood Wedding was next staged in Spain in October 1962 at the Teatro Bellas Artes, directed by José Tamayo, with sets once again by Caballero. But on the whole there have been few major Spanish productions, possibly on account of the difficulty of the piece. The one exception, which merits discussion here, is that directed by José Luis Gómez for the Teatro de la Plaza in 1986, in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of Lorca's death, and which in August of that year was staged at the Edinburgh International Festival.

In some respects, this production was far removed from those described above, notably in its initial impression of realism. The actors themselves were both strongly Andalusian in appearance and convincingly rural: Leonardo muscular and unshaven; the Mother dark-skinned and tough; the Bride strong and unglamorous. Their costumes were authentic in every respect, as were the rough, simple furniture and the rustic instruments used to accompany the songs. On the other hand, every other aspect of the production, from the stage-design by Manfred Ditrich to movement on the stage and the speaking of the lines, was distinguished by a clear stylization. The opening setting consisted of a bare, three-walled box, which suggested a room, with a doorway in each of the side walls. Then, as the action of the play began, the back wall of the box rose to reveal two hills and a blue sky, the effect that of a picture-frame to the on-stage action. Within this frame, constant throughout the three acts of the play, the stage remained virtually bare, and changes of location were suggested entirely by lighting and the introduction of small items of furniture. This was a production far removed from Lorca's own but one which retained his stylization, as well as the play's sense of universality.

Stylization was evident, too, in the movement of the actors around the stage. In Act One, Scene One, for example, the Mother's embracing and holding of the Bridegroom emphasized the bond between them and her desire to hold on to him in more than a physical sense. In Act One, Scene Three, the formal arrangement of chairs, as well as the stillness of the actors, suggested the propriety of the occasion. In Act

Two, Scene One, the Bride's intoxication with Leonardo was revealed in her unsteady, almost swooning movement, and in the following scene, the wedding reception, the constant interweaving, entrances and exits of the different characters evoked excitement and, finally, the frantic search for the missing Bride. The mystery of the scene in the wood was, in contrast, suggested by the slow advance of the Woodcutters across the stage, and by the slow-motion effect of the Moon's entrances and exits. Above all, the careful choreography here created the sense of things beyond this world.

Above all, the production was distinguished by its musicality, both in relation to the speaking of the lines and to the use of music. In Act One, Scene One, for example, the Mother's reference to the knife – 'The knife, the knife . . .' (p. 33) – was more sung than spoken, the almost operatic style vividly expressive of her strong emotions. This was evident, too, when, in Act Two, Scene Two, she recalls how she found her son dead in the road: 'I wet my hands with his blood . . .' (p. 65). In addition, there were many examples of powerful choral effects. In the text of the play, 'Oh let the bride awaken now' (p. 54) is sung initially by the Servant, but here it was sung by a group of men and women, not unlike a chorus. Later, when the wedding guests arrive, their singing of the song was accompanied by a variety of rustic instruments. Again, the opening song of Act Two, Scene Two – 'Turning, / The wheel was turning . . .' (p. 63) – was sung by a group of actors, not by the Servant, and at the end of the scene the escape of the Bride and Leonardo was accompanied by the increasingly urgent rhythm of drums.

Two episodes in Act Three also made use of striking choral effects. The chanting of the girls unwinding the ball of red wool was powerfully performed, pointing to the importance given to language in this production. The final lamentation of the mourning women, from 'He was a handsome horseman' (p. 91) to 'Oh, four handsome boys / Bear death on high' (p. 92), was sung by four of the actors. The next four lines were spoken, the next four chanted by the group of women, and

then the remaining lines, from the Mother's 'Neighbours: with a knife . . .' (p. 92) to the end, sung by the Mother and the Bride. Thus, this was a production which, despite its initial impression of realism, was markedly stylized in almost every respect, and one in which that stylization transformed its Andalusian elements into something much more universal.

It is, of course, the universal appeal of *Blood Wedding* that has led to productions and adaptations in different languages all over the world. In Britain the first English-language production was directed by Peter Hall at the Arts Theatre, London, in 1954. Two years later it was produced at the Nottingham Playhouse, and in 1973 at the Leeds Playhouse. In the last fifteen years, the play has been directed by a number of leading British directors: by Anthony Clark at the Contract Theatre, Manchester (1987), Julia Bardsley at the Haymarket Theatre, Leicester (1992) and Sue Lefton, at the Mercury Theatre, Colchester (2001), all in my own translation; other productions have been directed by Jonathan Martin at the Half Moon Theatre, London (1989), Yvonne Brewster at the National Theatre, London (1991), Nigel Jamieson at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, London (1993) and Tim Supple at the Young Vic Theatre, London (1996).

The most successful of these was, in my view, Sue Lefton's Colchester production in 2001. Played on a rectangle of wood, backed by dark walls, it had that austerity and stylization demanded by Lorca himself. Both stage furniture and costumes were extremely simple: a small table, chairs, a tray, jugs, glasses, an upright piano; the Bridegroom and Leonardo in white shirts and dark trousers; the Mother and Leonardo's wife in black dresses; the Servant in grey; the Moon stripped to the waist; the Woodcutters masked. This was a production, moreover, which was, from beginning to end, carefully choreographed by its director, who, as movement director to the Royal Shakespeare Company, has a thorough understanding of that art. At the beginning of Act Three, Scene One, for example, the members of the company used their arms to suggest trees, advanced menacingly towards the

front of the stage, and then moved back, making way for the Moon, moving slowly towards the audience with outstretched arms. Furthermore, this was an occasion on which flamenco dance, so often badly performed by British actors unfamiliar with the tradition, enhanced the production in no small measure, linking scenes on the one hand but also underpinning, through the sound of drumming heels, the constant presence of fate. It was a skill in which the actors had been rigorously trained. Again, all the members of the cast spoke their lines with power and clarity, matching phrases to gestures. And music played its part, too: the Moon's soliloquy accompanied, for instance, by eerie electronic music, the winding of the wool by a discordant guitar and a repeated note on the piano. In short, Lefton's production interwove settings, movement, music and speech in just such a way that Lorca would have approved. Reviewing the production in the *Daily Telegraph*, Charles Spencer concluded:

The Colchester production of Lorca's 1933 masterpiece is one of the finest productions I have ever seen in a regional theatre . . . There are outstanding individual performances, too, especially from Christine Absalom as the grieving, vengeful mother of the jilted groom, from Kary Stephens as the touchingly confused bride and from Victor Gardener as the dangerous, sexy lover who sweeps her off her feet. Throughout, the play's mixture of passion and pain is both intensified and contained by a production of great formal beauty. . . .²⁵

And Lyn Gardner in *The Guardian* agreed: 'This is an enormously sympathetic production of a big, compassionate play. . . .²⁶ Quite clearly, *Blood Wedding*, performed in the right way, produces an enormous impact.'

1. Lorca, London: Calder and Boyars, 1974, p. 98.
 2. Carlos Morla Lynch, *En España con Federico García Lorca: Pájaros de un díaño tímido, 1928-36*, Madrid: Aguilar, 1958, pp. 105-12.
 3. The interview is published in Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), p. 1811.
 4. See Lorca Plays: Two, Edwards (ed. and tr.).
 5. See Gibson, pp. 157, 220.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 229.
 7. *Ibid.*, pp. 275-6.
 8. See Lorca, *Trip to the Moon*, Duncan (tr.), pp. 35-41.
 9. Photographs of Lorca from childhood up to the year of his death, including several of him in a white suit, may be found in José Luis Cano, *García Lorca, biografía ilustrada*, Barcelona: Ediciones Destino, 1962.
 10. See Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), p. 1754.
 11. See Gibson, p. 146.
 12. See Lorca Plays: Two, Edwards (ed. and tr.).
 13. See Chapter 1, note 22.
 14. There is a very useful study of Expressionism by J.L. Styan, *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice*, 3, *Expressionism and Epic Theatre*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
 15. See David George, 'Commedia dell'arte and Mask in Lorca', in Lorca: *Poet and Playwright*, Robert Hayward (ed.), Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992.
 16. Rafael Alberti, *La arboleda perdida*, Buenos Aires, 1959, p. 130. The translation is my own.
 17. See Gibson, pp. 431, 434.
 18. See Francisco Alvaro, *El espectador y la crítica: el teatro en España en 1978*, Valladolid: Gráficos Andrés Martín, 1979, p. 83.
 19. *Ya*, September 1978.
 20. 30 April 1989.
 21. 30 April 1989.
 22. 22 August 1989.
 23. 7 September 1989.
 24. August 1989.
 25. 26 August 1989.
 26. August 1989.
 27. 19 February 1997.
- CHAPTER 3
1. On the history of the company see Byrd, 'La Barraca', and Sáenz de la Calzada, 'La Barraca'.
 2. Quoted by Alardo Prats in 'Los artistas en el ambiente de nuestro tiempo', *El Sol*, Madrid, 15 December 1934.
 3. See Edward Gordon Craig, *The Art of the Theatre*, London: Heinemann, 1980, p. 138. (The original edition of Craig's book had appeared in 1905.)
 4. See Byrd, 'La Barraca', p. 47.
 5. The Spanish text of the lecture, 'Las nanas infantiles', is given in Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), pp. 91-108. There is an English translation in Federico García Lorca, *Deep Song and Other Prose*, Christopher Maurer (ed. and tr.), London and Boston: Marion Boyars, 1980, pp. 7-22.
 6. For the Spanish text, see Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), pp. 39-61; for an English translation, see Lorca, *Deep Song*, Maurer (ed. and tr.), pp. 23-41.
 7. For the Spanish text see Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), p. 304.
 8. For an English translation, see Lorca, *Deep Song*, Maurer (ed. and tr.), pp. 104-22. See also Federico García Lorca, *Gypsy Ballads*, Robert G. Hayward (ed. and tr.), Warminster: Arts and Phillips, 1990. This volume contains all the poems in translation, with introduction and commentary.
 9. For more information on Margarita Xirgu's theatre work, see Rodrigo, *Margarita Xirgu y su teatro*.
 10. On the original story, see Gibson, pp. 335-9. A detailed account also appeared in the *Sunday Times Magazine*, 29 June 1986, pp. 34-9, in connection with the fiftieth anniversary of Lorca's death.
 11. See Jean J. Smoot, *A Comparison of Plays by John Millington Synge and Federico García Lorca: The Poets and Time*, Madrid: Ediciones José Porrúa Turanzas, 1978.
 12. For the Spanish text, see 'Canción de jinete' ('The Rider's Song'), in Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), pp. 376-7.
 13. *Ibid.*, 'La Luna y La Muerte' ('The Moon and Death'), pp. 264-5.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 430–32. The poem 'Romance sonámbulo' ('Somnambular Ballad') is in Lorca, *Gypsy Ballads*, Robert G. Havard (tr.), pp. 52–7.
 15. See Gibson, p. 378.
 16. In his lecture on 'deep song'. See Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), p. 46.
 17. For a more detailed consideration of the subject, see Gwynne Edwards, 'The Way Things Are: Towards a Definition of Lorcan Tragedy', in *Andas de la literatura española contemporánea*, 21, 1996, pp. 271–90.
 18. Quoted in the Spanish edition of the play, introduced and edited by José Morleón, Barcelona: Aymá Editora, 1971, p. 31.
 19. See Morla Lynch, pp. 329–35.
 20. See Francisco García Lorca, *Federico y su mundo*, Madrid: Editorial Alianza, 1980, p. 335.
 21. See Christopher Maurer, 'Bach and Bodes de sangre', in *Lorca's Legacy: Essays on Lorca's Life, Poetry and Theatre*, Manuel Durán and Francesca Colechia (eds), New York: Peter Lang, 1991, pp. 103–14.
 22. See Marcelle Auclair, *Vida y muerte de García Lorca*, Aitana Alberti (tr.), Ciudad México: Era, 1972, p. 275.
 23. *El Sol*, Madrid, 9 March 1933, p. 8.
 24. *La Vanguardia*, Barcelona, 24 November, 1935.
 25. 11 June 2001.
 26. 6 June 2001.
- CHAPTER 4
1. See Gibson, p. 289.
 2. See Morla Lynch, pp. 426–9.
 3. For the Spanish text, see Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), pp. 201–3.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp. 433–4.
 5. The pilgrimage to Moclín is described in Gibson, pp. 289–90, and in Stainton, p. 332.
 6. See Sáenz de la Calzada, pp. 123–72. The author, a member of the company, provides a detailed account of the itinerary.
 7. All translations from *Yerma* are my own, unpublished.
 8. For the English text, see *Caldwell Plays: One*, Gwynne Edwards (tr.), London: Methuen, 1991.
 9. Gibson, p. 439. Lorca had originally made this statement in an interview published in the newspaper *El Sol* on 10 June 1936, just over a month before his murder.
 10. For the Spanish text, see Lorca, *Obras completas*, del Hoyo (ed.), pp. 1754–5.
 11. The adjective *yermo* means 'barren', used in particular to describe unproductive land. The feminine form, *yerma*, has presumably been applied to Juan's childless wife by the villagers in a typically cruel and unfeeling manner, and is, in effect, a nickname.
 12. For an account of Spanish theatre at this time, see Edwards, *Dramatists in Perspective*.
 13. In *Blood Wedding* the Bride's mother, anticipating her daughter's actions, has been unfaithful to her husband, while the father and the brother of the Bridegroom, both murdered, are pointers to his own fate.
 14. See Byrd, p. 71.
 15. Ezio Levy, 'La Barraca di García Lorca', *Scenario*, Vol. 10, 1934, p. 530.
 16. See the introduction to Federico García Lorca, *Three Tragedies*, James Graham Luján and Richard O'Connell (tr.), Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961, p. 25.
 17. See Chapter 3, note 3.
 18. For an account of the première, see Morla Lynch, pp. 432–6.
 19. See the edition of the play edited by Mario Hernández, Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1980, pp. 135–6.
 20. 31 December 1934.
 21. 30 December 1934.
 22. 30 December 1934.
 23. 4 October 1961.
 24. García's and Morleón's views may be found in the edition of the play edited by Morleón, Barcelona: Aymá Editora, 1973, pp. 26–9.
 25. 20 August 1986.
 26. 20 August 1986.
 27. 24 August 1986.
 28. 28 March 1987.
 29. 27 March 1987.