

NATIONALISM IN TWO WORKS BY  
EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTEZ

By

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My mother, Vilma Isabel Alves de Oliveira.

My sisters, Ana Claudia de Oliveira Borba and Simone de Oliveira Borba.

In loving memory of my grandmother, Ana (Anita) Alves de Oliveira (1924-2015).

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER	
I. NATIONALISM	
1. Definitions and Origins .....	4
2. Manifestations and Classifications .....	8
3. Nationalism in Brazil	
a. Origins .....	16
b. Mário de Andrade and Heitor Villa-Lobos .....	21
c. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation and Post-Nationalism .....	31
d. <i>Bossa Nova</i> .....	43
II. EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTEZ	
1. Biography .....	46
2. Stylistic Considerations .....	52
III. HISTORY OF SUITE AND ANALYSIS	
1. History of the Suite .....	55
a. Baroque Origins .....	56
b. Romantic Variety and 20 <sup>th</sup> Century Revival .....	57
c. The Brazilian Suite .....	59
2. <i>Série Brasileira Op. 8</i> .....	64
3. <i>Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras</i> .....	87
CONCLUSION .....	105
APPENDIX	
A. <i>Manifesto de 1946</i> by Hans-Joachim Koellreutter .....	109
B. <i>Carta Aberta aos Músicos e Críticos do Brasil</i> by Mozart Camargo Guarnieri .....	113
C. <i>Cadenza</i> by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes, for the improvisation of the <i>Chôro Op. 8 Nr. 4</i> .....	125
D. <i>Cadenza</i> by Ednaldo Borba for the improvisation of the <i>Chôro Op. 8 Nr. 4</i> .....	129
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	131



## INTRODUCTION

Among many anecdotes about the pianist and composer Frédéric Chopin, a few describe his free treatment of the rhythmic pulsation, or *rubato* – a feature often associated with his piano playing. A peculiar case involves the famous opera composer Giacomo Meyerbeer, who once attended a lesson Chopin was giving to Wilhelm von Lenz. The latter was playing the *Mazurka Op. 33 Nr. 3* (mazurka is a Polish dance in 3/4), but Meyerbeer insisted that the music sounded binary. Chopin disagreed, but because of Meyerbeer's relentless insistence, Chopin, who was known to have a very reserved and quiet personality, lost his composure and yelled at Meyerbeer, leaving the room in a tempestuous manner. This episode was probably very hurtful to Chopin, since it seems he never reconciled with Meyerbeer.<sup>1</sup>

There is still another very similar anecdote, this time involving the pianist and organist Charles Hallé. After playing a mazurka for Hallé, the later commented to the composer that it didn't sound in 3/4, but rather in 4/4. Again, Chopin disagreed, but after playing while Hallé simultaneously counted, the mazurka fitted perfectly in the quaternary pulsation. But instead of a belligerent reaction, this time Chopin laughed and gave an explanation that was quite curious: “it was the national character of the dance which created the oddity.”<sup>2</sup>

Unfortunately, since the invention of recording devices was yet to come, we can only wonder how exactly Chopin interpreted rhythm to cause such controversial reactions. But even more intriguing was his explanation, blaming the folk character of the dance for his choices of rhythmic fluctuation. However, since the respect that Chopin

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1 Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger. *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils* (3rd English ed. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 72-3.

2 Ibid.

upheld for his country and culture is well-known, it is very unlikely that he was just providing a casual excuse for a musical eccentricity. Instead, he was much likely trying to faithfully convey a musical gesture that was closer to its original folkloric roots, even at the expense of being misunderstood.

This folkloric influence is of course not only restricted to Chopin's Polish dances, this episode is just one single example of how elements from folk music can directly influence the interpretation of concert music. Nowadays, for example, it would also be inconceivable for a performer to play one of Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsodies without prior knowledge of its rhythmic evocation of the *csárdás*'s dance steps, or the sound of instruments such as the cimbalom. Similarly, the Spanish music of Albéniz and Granados would suffer tremendously in the hands of performers unaware of its so characteristic hemiolas, or the imitation of sounds like the guitar or castanets.

The same is also applied to Brazilian concert music, especially the ones written after mid-nineteenth century, since by that time they start to be influenced by an aesthetic ideal loosely defined as nationalism. In other words, they frequently evoke elements from Brazilian folklore or culture, and they are so intrinsic to their own musical language that prior knowledge of these elements is necessary to a better understanding of the musical material, either for performance, listening or analysis.

Considering those facts, in this document I selected two works by the composer Edmundo Villani-Côrtes – his *Série Brasileira Op. 8* for piano and his *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* for Piano Trio – to demonstrate how Brazilian Nationalism shapes these works.

I chose those particular works because it clearly states in their titles that they are

“Brazilian,” which obviously means that cultural references should logically appear within the works' structure. I also chose the composer Edmundo Villani-Côrtes for two reasons: First, because unfortunately there is still not much written about his works. To this day, for example, the composer still lacks an article at Oxford Music Online<sup>3</sup>, which is one of the most basic references for music research. Fortunately, many dissertations and research documents have recently sprouted especially in Brazil and the USA, so this document is one more effort to fill this gap, examining two of his works from the perspective of nationalism. And second, because his musical relationship with the Brazilian Nationalist School is not a straightforward one – even the composer doesn't consider himself a nationalist – allowing the opportunity to discuss the topic of nationalism dialectically within composer and compositions.

To answer these questions – whether Villani is a nationalist composer and how does he use nationalism in his work – we will first glance at the history of nationalism itself. In the first chapter we will investigate its origins and developments within the European musical context, and show how it arrived in America, affecting the Brazilian musical scenario and culminating with a Brazilian Nationalist School. In the following chapter we will contextualize his work and biography, in order to show what possible influences could have made their way into his work. Lastly, we will analyze these works' structure and musical elements (e.g.: form, melody, harmony, rhythm, textures, timbres), in order to reveal and discuss their Brazilian cultural references.

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3 <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/> (last accessed, 28 May. 2018)

## CHAPTER I

### NATIONALISM

#### 1. DEFINITIONS AND ORIGINS

Previously, I referred to “nationalism” as a loose term. In fact, until nowadays there is not yet quite a precise connotation for that word, making some scholars even frown upon its academic use in a carefree manner. The general consensus established throughout the years (specifically concerning music studies) is that nationalism refers – at least partially – to an aesthetic movement usually associated with the romantic period, which strives to express the identity of a particular social group or nation.<sup>4</sup> Curiously, “romanticism” itself is already a very vague definition of the events that took place during and around the nineteenth century, to the point of a philosopher like Arthur Lovejoy say it is “one of the most complicated, fascinating, and instructive of all problems in semantics.”<sup>5</sup> Consequently it is not surprising that, like romanticism itself, nationalism expresses its own characteristics in a kaleidoscopic degree of shades and nuances, sometimes making it difficult to define its boundaries, offering an opportunity to even question those pre-established definitions.

But before we proceed to explore its multifaceted manifestations, it is worth questioning if nationalism even truly has its origins in the Romantic period. Consider the following statement by Jon Finson, which he writes within his own discussion of nationalism:

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4 Wilfrid Mellers, *Romanticism and the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from 1800* (Man and His Music; 4. Fair Lawn, N. J.: Essential Books, 1957), 49. See also Rey M. Longyear, *Nineteenth-century Romanticism in Music* (2nd ed. Prentice-Hall History of Music Series. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 6. See also Jon W. Finson, *Nineteenth-century Music: The Western Classical Tradition* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2002), 10.

5 Longyear, 1.

Human beings organize themselves into groups sharing common cultural backgrounds, and experience would suggest that they should organize themselves politically according to their respective ethnic affinities.<sup>6</sup>

It becomes clear that by being a product of a human social condition – that of belonging to a group sharing cultural affinities – nationalism could consequentially be almost as old as the roots of civilization. And, for the purpose of this study, we should not forget that nationalism also includes aesthetic and artistic expressions of those individualities. However, as Taruskin reminds us, nationalism is an attitude, and should not be equated to nationality, which is the human condition.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, as a product of the condition of nationality, nationalism (and its aesthetic branch) will manifest itself depending on uncountable variables, ones such as a society's own awareness as a nation, the proliferation of its own culture, or even its economic and political power.

As an example, if we look back at the eighteenth century there are already plenty of particular representations of different nations or cultures in music. Mark Kroll, in his discussion about French baroque masters, mentions that those composers' character pieces tried to portray, among other elements, “scenes from the folk heritage.”<sup>8</sup> As an example, works like François Couperin's *Les Nations* (a collection of sonatas and suites) are organized in four volumes designated to a specific “region” or “culture” (the French, the Spanish, the Imperial and the Piedmontese). Even Johann Sebastian Bach was not far from this trend, since in his *Clavier-Übung II* he purposefully contrasted a Concerto after the Italian taste (*Italian Concerto BWV 971*) against a Suite in the French style (*French Overture BWV 831*).

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6 Finson, 11.

7 Richard Taruskin, “Nationalism.” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 28, 2018.) <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000050846>.

8 Mark Kroll, “French Masters,” in *Eighteenth-century Keyboard Music*, ed. by Robert L. Marshall (2nd ed. Routledge Studies in Musical Genres. New York: Routledge, 2003), 132.

The aforementioned suite, a very popular baroque genre, is *per se* actually a true compendium of “nationalistic practice”: each dance has its origins in a particular country or region, with very specific characteristics associated with each one. In some cases (like the *courant*, or the *gigue*) there are even multiple cultural variants to be observed. We will have the opportunity to discuss the suite furthermore on chapter 3.

Those few examples demonstrate that at least the basic concept of nationalism's aesthetic – to express individualities of a particular nation or region through art, in this case, music – is already latent even before the romantic period. The only question that persists is: why is there still an insistence to link nationalism with romanticism?

Both Finson and Longyear point towards the answer to that question from the aesthetical perspective. Finson reminds us that “romanticism placed a premium on originality, distinctiveness and idiosyncrasy,”<sup>9</sup> in opposition to the classical style of the enlightenment age, which Longyear describes as prizing “harmonious adjustment, discipline, moderation and adaptation.”<sup>10</sup> This means that romanticism was convenient for the cultivation of nationalism, since its emphasis on the characteristic, the unique, or even the eccentric (also described as “the other”) bolstered an interest on the particularities of each national culture. We can clearly observe this change in tendency when comparing it to the previous classical age, which Longyear contextualizes in a “rationalist collectivism,” meaning that this same emphasis on the unique would be not only undesirable, but considered deviations from the good taste of an “idealized mankind.”<sup>11</sup>

From an ideological perspective, both Finson and Taruskin remind us that a

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9 Finson, 7.

10 Longyear, 2.

11 Ibid.

considerable amount of literature from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (especially resulting from the modernization of the printing press during the industrial revolution) dealt with topics directly connected with nationalist aspects. Finson also mentions the publication of collections of folk songs that sprouted everywhere in Europe, from its first incipient attempts in the eighteenth century to the realism-inspired folk studies and recollections of the late nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Taruskin also mentions the publications of Johann Gottfried Herder, especially his *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (Treatise on the Origin of Language, 1772.) Because this treatise distinguishes humanity by its use of language – and language is indeed a social and national construct – his ideas are generally considered the foundation of nationalism, or at least of German nationalism.<sup>13</sup>

Lastly, Taruskin also describes how the nationalist agenda corroborates the move towards the political unification that would take place in Europe during the nineteenth century, especially in countries nowadays known as Germany, Austria and Italy (and affecting many adjacent countries as well). These political unifications nurtured a cultural self-awareness, which was expressed (and encouraged to be expressed) not only in music, but in every artistic realm.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, regarding the origins of nationalism, we can observe that even though nationalistic aspects were already latent in the European culture, the aesthetical, ideological and political events leading up to the nineteenth-century romanticism were truly the decisive factors that fostered its genesis and growth, explaining its usual connection with the romantic period.

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12 Finson, 10.

13 Taruskin, “Nationalism”.

14 Ibid.

## 2. MANIFESTATIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

But how did nationalism express itself in music during the romantic period? The previous chapter already mentioned the examples of Chopin, Liszt, Albéniz and Granados. And all those composers have at least one similarity (which happens to be one of the most common nationalist influence in music): they all adapted their homeland characteristic dances to their own compositions.

Notice, however, that I did not use the word “transcribed,” but “adapted.” Because the use of those folk dances are re-interpreted in the context of a classical standpoint on rhythm, harmony and counterpoint.<sup>15</sup> This means that these folk-derived pieces were not phonographic representations of their original counterparts – neither were they meant to be – but rather, they were only inspired by folk elements, and meant to be listened in the saloons or recital halls in the same way as an abstract sonata or quartet would. In the case of Chopin, for example, Barbara Milewski comments:

In the end, Chopin, like so many of his musical compatriots, was not interested in recovering rural truths, but in bringing Poles of the urban upper classes a little bit closer to a highly constructed and desirable idea of themselves.<sup>16</sup>

Of course, we must interpret Milewski’s conclusions in context; it does not mean that the Polish elite had a secret egocentric agenda of “self-promotion,” since they were still suffering the hardships of a war conflict against Russia, and risking their country to “vanish from the maps of Europe” at that time.<sup>17</sup> Polish artists, such as Chopin, were instead following a trend, as was the whole Europe, of raising self-awareness of their own identity as a nation.

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<sup>15</sup> Longyear, 237.

<sup>16</sup> Barbara Milewski, “Chopin’s Mazurkas and the Myth of the Folk,” *19th Century Music* 23, no 2 (1999): 134.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 123.



Ironically, due to this early nationalism, the accurate musical transcription of folk patterns and genres was not only secondary but also unrealistic; only by late nineteenth century (decades after Chopin composed his mazurkas) the scientific subject that properly deals with this topic – ethnomusicology – found propitious aesthetical, political, and sociological background to flourish. With that perspective in mind, it is entertaining to reconsider Robert Schumann's description of Chopin's Mazurkas as “cannons buried in flowers” not only politically, but also aesthetically.

However, that was not by far the only nationalist musical resource of the Romantic period. Following Herder's discourse on language, there was a consequent revival of German folk poetry, which led to the flourishing of the German *lied*. Eventually, the exploration of folk poetry would not be restricted only to the German own culture. Like Herder himself, Germans would also further explore the poetry of other cultures,<sup>18</sup> like Brahms's use of a folk Scottish ballad in his Op. 10 and Op. 75, or translated Persian poetry in his Op. 65.

Those two examples – the use of folk dances or poetry – refer to a kind of nationalism known as “defending nationalism”<sup>19</sup> or “tourist nationalism.”<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately there is a plurality of nomenclatures in the subject of nationalism, which only exemplify the lack of precision that still lingers in defining or classifying it. Anyhow, those definitions refer to a nationalism that draws its inspiration from the folk, usually considered “pure,” “unspoilt” or “primitive,”<sup>21</sup> thus appropriate material to be “elevated through the higher forms of art.” Even though, as pointed out by Taruskin, this

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18 Taruskin.

19 Longyear, 6-7.

20 Taruskin.

21 Longyear, 214.

“elevation” is actually a covert nationalism in itself, German centered, which he defines as “musical colonialism.”<sup>22</sup>

Opposed to that, there is an “aggressive nationalism,”<sup>23</sup> which is less identifiable by musical elements than by ideological connotation, since its objective is not only to elevate a particular folk culture, but also to “impose a cultural identity on others.”<sup>24</sup> The operas of Wagner and Verdi are classical examples, since independent of their use (or non-use) of folkloric material in their music, their operas also served a political agenda that sought to diminish other cultures (Jews in the case of Wagner, if we couple his operas with his writings; and the Austrian Empire in the case of Verdi, if we consider his audience's reception).<sup>25</sup> The implications of this kind of nationalism will be further discussed below.

In any case, Europe after the 1850's would become a spectator of international shows and fairs with exhibitions of music (and other arts) from everywhere in the planet, including Africa and Asia.<sup>26</sup> With the romantic emphasis on “the other,” that influence was quickly translated into concert music, mostly in operas such as Delibes's *Lakmé*, Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Delilah* or Verdi's *Aida* (and even Bizet's *Carmen*, since he was not Spanish), but also found its way to instrumental music, such as in Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien*, Balakirev's *Islamey*, Chabrier's *España*, or Debussy's *Pagodes*.

This rage for foreign culture and music reinforced yet another complicated category related to nationalism: the phenomenon called “exoticism.” While Ralph Locke,

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22 Taruskin.

23 Longyear, 6-7. Also mentioned in Taruskin.

24 Longyear 7.

25 Taruskin.

26 Ralph P. Locke, “Exoticism” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 28, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000045644>.

in his article on the subject, defines exoticism as any kind of “evocation” that contrasts with the local customs,<sup>27</sup> Taruskin in the same source equates exoticism to any “non-German tourist nationalism.”<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile Longyear defines exoticism as “the opposite side of nationalism.”<sup>29</sup> This just demonstrates again how issues of national identity have yet to be thoroughly defined. But at the core of all these definitions resides the relationship between composer and composition: if the composer borrows or tries to emulate folk material foreign to his own culture, it would be considered exoticism.

Ralph Locke, in his most recent book about exoticism, also brings another component that explores the relationship between nationalism and exoticism even further: the point of view of the receptor, the listener. By his definitions, the receiver’s perception also changes the nationalist (or exoticist) qualities of a particular work. For example, a Spanish artist’s work imbued with Spanish folklore (e.g.: Albéniz’s *Iberia*) – and therefore deemed nationalist – will usually be perceived by non-Spanish audiences instead as “exotic.” Locke even suggests, through a quote by Frederick Bohrer, that “reception is not merely a useful methodology in the study of exoticism. Rather exoticism, in a fundamental sense, is reception.”<sup>30</sup> In that same source, Locke mentions a list of elements that have been classically associated with exoticism – such as non-normative modes and harmonies, rhythmic patterns deriving from dances, departure from normative types of formal continuity, evocation of specific musical instruments and their techniques, among others.<sup>31</sup> Curiously, those could apply directly to nationalism as well.

In order to illustrate the complexities of these classifications of nationalism and

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27 Ibid.

28 Taruskin.

29 Longyear, 214.

30 Ralph P. Locke, *Musical exoticism: Images and reflections* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. 2009), 11-2.

31 Ibid, 51-4.

exoticism, we will consider three examples of *Csárdás*, which is a Hungarian folk dance very popular during the nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> The first example is Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2*, the second is the aria *Klänge der Heimat* from Johann Strauss II's operetta *Die Fledermaus*, and finally Vittorio Monti's *Csárdás* for violin and piano. All three examples adopt the usual slow (*lassan*) – fast (*friska*) formal scheme, and adopt characteristic musical gestures, such as the *lassan*'s sharp dotted rhythms of its final cadences, as demonstrated in examples 1, 2 and 3.

Ex. 1: F. Liszt – Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 in C# minor S. 244/2, mm. 9-14.

Ex. 2: J. Strauss II – *Klänge der Heimat* from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Act of *Die Fledermaus*, mm. 19-22.

<sup>32</sup> Jonathan Bellman, “*Csárdás*” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 28, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000006918>.

The image shows a musical score for V. Monti's *Csárdás* for Violin and Piano, measures 9-12. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The violin part features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The piano accompaniment includes chords and a bass line. A "molto rall." marking is present above the piano part.

Ex. 3: V. Monti – *Csárdás* for Violin and Piano, mm. 9-12.

The first one is clearly an example of “tourist nationalism” (or defending), since Liszt is Hungarian and the whole piece is clearly inspired by Hungarian folk references (the evocation of the cimbalom was also already previously mentioned). Oppositely, Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* (ex. 2) would undoubtedly feature as an example of exoticism: both the composer and the plot of the opera are Austrian, and the aria only portrays a façade where the character Rosalinda pretends to be a Hungarian countess, singing an aria from her homeland (that's her only aria in the *Style Hungrois* in the whole opera). One interesting point to observe is that the music itself had virtually nothing to do with those classifications, but rather the social context of those works.

However, it is with the popular Monti *Csárdás* (ex. 3) that we find a controversial problem. According to every definition, we should classify it as another example of exoticism, since the composer is Italian and writing in a foreign, non-German style. But it is worthy to observe that Monti's piece and Liszt's share exactly the same aesthetical objectives: they are both fantasy pieces inspired by Hungarian folklore, meant to be enjoyed in the saloons as virtuosic *tour-de-force* works. The only parameter that distinguishes classifying one as nationalism and the other as exoticism are their

composer's ethnic origins, which seems quite unrefined to say the least, since it implies that a non-Hungarian composer can't ever write Hungarian nationalist music just because he is not native.<sup>33</sup>

One reaction against this nebulous situation would come in the shape of a stylistic shift: the late nineteenth-century realism, with its emphasis on a truthful depiction of the habits of the lower classes<sup>34</sup> (coincidentally also often considered to be the most rich source of folk cultural heritage). Even though at first realism was a partner to exoticism (as in Bizet's *Carmen*), eventually, by annihilating the fantastic and subjective in music, it gradually paved the path for more literal representations of folk culture, or, paraphrasing Jacques Rivière comments on Stravinsky, “passed from the sung to the said, from invocation to statement, from poetry to reportage.”<sup>35</sup> This aesthetical posture change was definitely propitious also for the momentum gained by ethnomusicology at the dawn of nineteenth century.

Also by the turn of the century, another concept to be considered is Schoenberg's “emancipation of the dissonance” – which affirms that a dissonance, especially if constantly used or out of its historic context, with time would call less and less for a resolution, even to the point where it could sound as a consonance by itself.<sup>36</sup> This observation – allied to the ethnomusicologic treatment of folk material – encouraged composers to be much more faithful to the original folk melodic, harmonic and rhythmic constructs in their own compositions, especially regarding the use of modes and

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33 In fact, Bellman in his *Csárdás* article uses Monti's piece as an example of the style's increasing distance from its folk roots by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, justifying the example precisely because of the composer's non-Hungarian nationality.

34 Finson, 8.

35 Quoted in Taruskin, “Nationalism.”

36 The expression first appeared in an essay written by the composer in 1926, see Arnold Schoenberg, “Opinion or Insight?” in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. by Leonard Stein (New York: St. Martins Press, 1975), 258-64.

asymmetrical rhythms, freeing them from the stylistic constraints of the traditional rules of harmony and counterpoint. One of the most famous examples is Béla Bartók, since not only as an ethnomusicologist he recollected thousands of melodies from eastern Europe, but he also used this material in his compositions *in loco*, or without necessarily mixing it with nineteenth-century tonal-centered adaptations. Other composers borrowed folk materials to use in their compositions just as musical tools, without any desire to explicitly represent a particular nation or culture, as in the case of Debussy's use of the whole-tone scales from the Javanese gamelan.

From this point – the early 20th century – Brazilian aesthetical nationalism had already begun to established itself, so we can proceed to start discussing its origins and developments. But before, we should consider some important general factors that are also connected to Brazilian nationalism: First, after the technological advancements in communication during the twentieth century (such as radio, TV and internet), the concept of a “pure,” “unspoilt” folk heritage has increasingly disappeared. Even though Locke still considers post mid-twentieth-century cultural borrowings as exoticism,<sup>37</sup> it is unlikely that, especially with the help of media, a composer or musician would be totally unaware of other foreign cultures. Besides, with the mutual cultural exchange between societies, provided by the high speed of information exchange, it would make much more sense to speak of a “globalized” or perhaps “neo-cosmopolitan” nationalism (since the folk influences of twentieth-century music usually trace back to multiple distinct cultures) rather than exoticism.

Second, as we observed before with “aggressive nationalism,” the idea of elevating one's culture can at the same time consequently diminish the culture of others.

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37 Locke, “Exoticism.”

As Taruskin puts it:

Any act of inclusion is an act of exclusion as well. Nationalism, whatever its democratizing and liberalizing early impact, has always harbored the seeds of intolerance and antagonism.<sup>38</sup>

It is true, as observed before, that nationalism can be used as a targeted weapon, but I refuse to agree that it always is. Nationalism becomes harmful only when there is also an intrinsic moral judgment attached to it. By themselves, even Wagner's and Verdi's operas don't necessarily display any xenophobia; it is only when put within their social contexts (adding moral evaluation between conflicting societies) that they become dangerous. Nevertheless, the nationalist label is not only a hazy one, but could also be oddly incriminatory, and thus should not be taken lightly. All those factors will be considered as we analyze Villani-Côrtes work from a nationalist perspective.

### 3a. NATIONALISM IN BRAZIL: ORIGINS

Every society had different ways to deal with their own “awareness as a nation,” hence the fact that usually most books dealing with nationalism usually attach a nationality to it: “Hungarian nationalism,” “Polish nationalism,” “Russian...,” “Scandinavian...,” “American...,” and etc. With Brazil it was not different. In fact, while the roots of nationalism were being planted in Europe, by the beginning of the nineteenth century Brazilian composers were still writing mostly sacred music, reproducing the style of European baroque and classical oratorios.<sup>39</sup>

This is not a surprising fact at all, since Brazil was then still a Portuguese colony.

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<sup>38</sup> Taruskin.

<sup>39</sup> Gerard Béhague, “Music in the *New World: The Baroque in Mexico and Brazil*” in *The World of Baroque Music: New Perspectives*, ed. by George B. Stauffer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 274.



Taruskin's expression “musical colonialism” achieves here a very literal meaning, since as a colony, Brazilian artists could only create, write or compose through the Portuguese metropolis’s educational and cultural monopoly: until 1808, by the occasion of the court transference from Portugal to Brazil, printing presses were still forbidden and there were no universities in the country (as opposed to the Spanish and British colonies).<sup>40</sup>

Similarly to Europe, the first roots of Brazilian nationalism would germinate in the artistic field of literature. So it is no surprise (and somewhat ironic) that only after the arrival of the Portuguese court – and consequently the freedom of press and encouragement of literary consumption – that nationalism was possible in Brazil. Its first romantic writers – Gonçalves de Magalhães, Gonçalves Dias and José de Alencar – were also referred to as “*Indianistas*,” due to the fact that their themes often borrowed from the native Amerindian culture.<sup>41</sup> The latter was of major significance to the birth of nationalist music in Brazil.

Both Gerard Béhague and José Maria Neves point out that, also with the court transference, there was an increasing interest in opera and theater in the colony.<sup>42</sup> Some restorations and the construction of new theaters and music institutions followed, but most productions were still dominated by Italian operas and companies. It was only after the foundation of the National Opera in 1857 that a consistent support to original Brazilian operas would happen.<sup>43</sup>

In any case, the Italian opera would have a significant influence in the musical

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40 Ibid.

41 José Luís Jobim. *Indianismo Literário na Cultura do Romantismo*. Revista De Letras 37/38 (1997): 35-48. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27666689>

42 Gerard Béhague, *Music in Latin America: An Introduction* (Prentice-Hall History of Music Series. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 111-113. See also José Maria Neves, *Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (1a. Ed., São Paulo, SP, Brasil: Ricordi Brasileira SAEC, 1977), 16.

43 Béhague. “*Music in Latin America*,” 112-113.

production of Antônio Carlos Gomes (1836-1896). Its popularity enchanted the composer, who as young as 25 years old was already premiering his first opera in Brazil, *A Noite do Castelo* (“The Castle's Night”).<sup>44</sup> But it was one of his later operas, “*Il Guarany*”, composed and premiered in Milan nine years later in 1870 that would be the first landmark in Brazilian musical nationalism. The opera was a great success that attracted the interest even of opera composers like Verdi, being the first Brazilian opera to be acclaimed abroad.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, it was inspired by the *indianista* José de Alencar's romance *O Guarani*, and as mentioned above, the writer was also one of the main representatives of the early Brazilian nationalist school, showing that this nationalist movement was not only literary or musical, or neither were they independent movements, but it was rather a trend intimately felt on various realms of artistic expression, connecting them as a whole.

However, Ermelinda Paz recognizes Taruskin's “musical colonialism” even in this major work. She writes:

The objective of this movement [the 1920's Brazilian Modernism] was the esthetic-musical liberation from the influences of the Italian melodrama and the German and French Romanticism. Then, the necessity to protect the national patrimony from imported elements arose.<sup>46</sup>

It is clear that when mentioning “Italian melodrama,” she was referring to the Brazilian opera practices of the nineteenth century. And her reflection is absolutely appropriate: despite the use of a Brazilian nationalist theme, Carlos Gomes makes Peri (the main role of the native Amerindian) sing in the most perfect Italian language, and his fellow Amerindian companions dance in a very fine European choreographic ballet style.

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44 Vasco Mariz, *História Da Música No Brasil* (6a. ed. ampliada e atualizada. Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brasil: Editora Nova Fronteira, 2005), 76.

45 Neves, 17.

46 Ermelinda A. Paz, *O Modalismo na música brasileira* (Brasília: Editora Musimed, 2002), 128.

However, it was one year before Carlos Gomes's opera debut that another Brazilian composer, Brasília Itiberê da Cunha (1846-1913), published a piano piece named *A Sertaneja, Fantasia Característica* (“the country song, a characteristic fantasy”).<sup>47</sup> This piece is considered one of the earliest examples of Brazilian nationalism, especially because it quotes a very popular folk melody from that period, known as “Balaio.”<sup>48</sup> But, even though the utilization of the folk rhythm of this melody imbues the piece with a certain nationalistic (or even “exotic”) flavor, as we can see in example 4, the piece still owns a great deal of its virtuosic passages to the Lisztian piano school.<sup>49</sup> Indeed, it is faithfully reproducing the early 19th-century European nationalism of Chopin and Liszt, bringing to the Brazilian saloons music inspired by its folk heritage masked in a classical musical accent.

Ex. 4: B. Itiberê da Cunha – *A Sertaneja, Fantasia Característica*, mm. 112-116.

Other composers contemporary to Itiberê also started moving towards this “romantic nationalism,” sometimes even challenging his pioneering. Béhague, for example, remarks Alexandre Levy's (1864-1982) *Tango Brasileiro* as the “first known Brazilian nationalist work by a professional musician,” since Itiberê was actually an

47 Vasco Mariz, “*História Da Música*” 115.

48 Ibid. See also Neves, 18.

49 Liszt even supposedly played it. Mariz, 115.

amateur.<sup>50</sup> José Maria Neves, alternatively, states that Alberto Nepomuceno (1864-1920) “could be considered the pioneer of Brazilian nationalism,” especially because his works were publicly performed more often than that of his contemporaries, with the possible exception of Carlos Gomes.<sup>51</sup> But, as we can see in one of his most famous nationalist works, a piano piece named *Galhofeira* (which could be translated as “playful” or “mockery”, ex. 5), it is still in a very similar language to Itiberê's *A Sertaneja*.

Nevertheless, Nepomuceno's nationalistic influence also spread into other genres, since he was the first composer to use Portuguese language systematically in his vocal music (solo and choral).<sup>52</sup> As discussed above, since any language is a national construct according to Herder (including of course the Brazilian Portuguese), its native incorporation into its own art music (rather than the imported Italian, French, and German languages) was a decisive step for the flourishing of musical nationalism.

COM VIVACIDADE E ESPIRITO.

*p*

*fp*

*simile.*

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Ex. 5: A. Nepomuceno – *Galhofeira*, mm. 1-8.

<sup>50</sup> Béhague, “*Music in Latin America*” 118.

<sup>51</sup> Neves, 21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

By the turn of the 20th century, the Brazilian musical scenario would remain under the influence of this early romantic nationalism. Even the most iconic nationalistic works from this period – like the celebrated *Odeon* (1910) by Ernesto Nazareth (1863-1964)<sup>53</sup> – still rely on the formula of the European saloon piece (ex. 6). But in its early decades two personalities would turn Brazilian musical nationalism into a new direction: they were Mário de Andrade (1893-1945) and Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959).



Ex. 6: E. Nazareth – Odeon, mm. 1-4.

### 3b. NATIONALISM IN BRAZIL: MÁRIO DE ANDRADE AND HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

Mário de Andrade was the philosopher, researcher and theorist of the Brazilian Nationalist School. He graduated from and later taught at the São Paulo Conservatory, and one of his major contributions to the Brazilian nationalism was his monograph *Ensaio sobre Música Brasileira* (Essay on Brazilian Music, 1928).<sup>54</sup>

Andrade's essay would pinpoint the major faults of Brazilian artists in their attempt to create an authentic national identity, as well as the author's thoughts for a

<sup>53</sup> Mariz, 123.

<sup>54</sup> Norman Fraser and Gerard Béhague, “Andrade, Mário (Raul) de,” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 28, 2018.)  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000000871>.

“true” Brazilian nationalism. Considered to be the cornerstone of the Brazilian Nationalist School, the essay states that “a national art is already made into people's minds”, and should not be sought in one single ethnicity (Amerindian, African or European), but rather embrace any of its origins. Additionally, his idea was not to react against a foreign culture, but rather to transform and adapt from and into it in clever ways. However, still according to his thoughts, an artist should not conform to the European models, as he would be much more productive and efficient paving the way to a true national art.<sup>55</sup>

On the other hand, Villa-Lobos was the practical example, the composer that would bring a totally new approach to the inclusion of Brazilian folk culture into music and art. As acclaimed by Béhague, “musical nationalism in Latin America found in Villa-Lobos its strongest supporter and one of its most original creators.”<sup>56</sup> Curiously, by his definitions of nationalism, Mário de Andrade seems to have been highly inspired by Villa-Lobos (whom he constantly quotes, praises and criticizes in his essay) and his ideas, since this quote by Maria Neves basically summarizes many of Andrade's points of view:

More than his predecessors, Villa-Lobos saw the folklore and popular tradition as a whole, like a complex mixture from which is impossible to isolate this or that element. Because of that, his music wasn't tied to African or Amerindian characteristics, but would seek to reflect a sonorous ambient that, like said by many writers, displays more the country than the race.<sup>57</sup>

In fact, it almost seems that in Villa-Lobos's case the process of early romantic nationalism is reversed: adopting the “exotic” European music into his main language,

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55 Mário de Andrade, “*Ensaio sobre Música Brasileira*” (S. Paulo, Brasil: I. Chiarato & Cia., 1928), 4-9.

56 Béhague, “*Music in Latin America*” 204.

57 Neves, 24-5.

the Brazilian vernacular.

However, those achievements in developing a “new nationalist sound” happened gradually throughout his life, and since Villa-Lobos is a central figure in the consolidation of the Brazilian nationalism, we will investigate his biography more closely.

Curiously, he had a very rigorous early musical training with his father, Raul Villa-Lobos, a teacher, librarian and well-rounded musician.<sup>58</sup> But by the time of his father’s early death in 1899, popular music (such as the *maxixe*, the *tango* and later, the *chôro*) started to become more popular and less frowned upon by the Brazilian elite. Consequently, as a teenager, Villa-Lobos would continue his musical training on the streets, to the dismay of his mother. He never completed a full academic program, although he did attend a few classes with teachers from the National Institute of Music, where he found musical friends and enemies alike.<sup>59</sup>

The fact that Villa-Lobos developed his musical tastes without formal training, but rather truly inspired by the music of the people in the streets is already a novelty and absolutely outstanding; but additionally, Villa-Lobos's search for Brazilian cultural influences led him to further explore in the most remote regions of Brazil. He allegedly traveled around the country from 1905 to 1911, getting in touch with authentic native folklore from the regions he came across.<sup>60</sup> But as Béhague explains, even if he did collect any folkloric materials during those trips, his approach was not as scientific as his European counterparts like the Spanish Felip Pedrell or the Hungarian Béla Bartók.

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58 Mariz, 137.

59 Mariz, 139-142.

60 Ibid.

Instead, these experiences were for him rather more intuitive than musicologic.<sup>61</sup>

Strangely, even after all those experiences, his first compositions for piano and chamber ensembles from the 1910's still reflect a strong influence from European models, especially the late romantic French school. For example, his character piece *The Cat and the Mouse* from *Characteristic Fables* (1914) seems like a direct descendent from Debussy's Books of *Preludes* (1910, 1913), composed during that same decade. This influence could be explained by his personal studies of European composers at the early 1910's, and Mariz also mentions that he did come across Vincent d'Indy's *Cours de Composition Musicale* (Course on Musical Composition, 1912), which definitely closes the link with the French school.<sup>62</sup> Those early compositions, despite their artistic value, had little importance (if any) to the construction of the Brazilian Nationalist School.

Even so, by this same decade he starts experimenting with folk elements in his compositions. The first piano set that displays that particular tendency are the *Three African Dances* (1914-15, ex. 7). This set was later orchestrated and, even though it is still under the harmonic influence of French music, its rhythmic syncopations are an obvious tribute to the African musical influence. Some scholars such as Vasco Mariz and Simon Wright point out another interesting aspect about this set: Villa-Lobos affirmed that he used authentic material from the Caripuna Indians from Mato Grosso, a state from the central region of Brazil.<sup>63</sup> But of course many scholars, such as Béhague, contest this claim, since there is no proof of this supposed native Caripuna folk material.<sup>64</sup>

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61 Béhague, "Music in Latin America" 184.

62 Mariz, 141.

63 Simon Wright, *Villa-Lobos* (Oxford Studies of Composers. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 9-11. See also Mariz, 167.

64 Gerard Béhague, review of *Villa-Lobos*, by Simon Wright, *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Autumn - Winter, 1993), 294-7.



ALLEGRO GIOCOSO

*con grazia*

*bene marcato il canto e sempre legato*

Ex. 7 – H. Villa-Lobos – Three African Dances Op. 47 – 1. Farrapos, mm. 9-12.

Whether those claims are true or not, it is actually not really relevant, since in this work there is a clear transformation in his musical language from an early lyric and chromatic post-romantic style (mostly from the French influence) into a more percussive and repetitive one (connected to the Afro-Brazilian folklore). So much so, that this set is actually considered to be the one that marks the change from Villa-Lobos's first stylistic period (featuring heavy European influence) to his second stylistic period (when he turns his attention to more nationalistic matters).<sup>65</sup> This technique – to employ (or emulate) authentic native musical elements – certainly brought Villa-Lobos a lot of criticism: his concerts often received bad reviews, and the “academic musical elite” constantly dismissed his works.<sup>66</sup> Still, this is when his nationalist language starts to germinate, as Maria Neves rightly asserts regarding another work from this same period, the symphonic poem *Amazonas* (1917):

... a nationalism that has nothing to do with the lightness of the late-romantic saloons, assuming thoroughly a violent “primitivism” like the tropical nature. It is through this new form of expression, rude and direct, that opens ... a “new phase in Brazilian music history: possessing a legitimate national expression, total and clear.”<sup>67</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Mariz, 166.

<sup>66</sup> Mariz, 143.

<sup>67</sup> Neves, 25.

The 1920's was “the golden age” of Brazilian nationalism, with its pinnacle at the *Semana de Arte Moderna de 1922* (1922 Modern Art Week). By that decade, Villa-Lobos's nationalistic vein aligned with the ideals of other Brazilian artists, and Maria Neves explains how that happened: led by Mário de Andrade, a group of artists from São Paulo (mostly comprising writers and painters) had already organized themselves into a group baptized as “the futurists” by Oswald de Andrade (not everyone from the group agreed with that label, including Mário de Andrade). These artists planned the already mentioned Modern Art Week in São Paulo one hundred years after the Brazilian Republic Proclamation, their goal being exactly to achieve cultural independence from Europe in the same way that they achieved political independence from Portugal.<sup>68</sup> Not surprisingly, Villa-Lobos was invited from Rio de Janeiro to be the artist responsible for the musical concerts, since his already matured nationalist ideals matched the aspirations of the group.

The event, however, was terribly received by the general audience, especially because of these artists' strong reaction against the traditional European models still cultivated and cherished by the academicians. But it was also a milestone in defining the future path for the Brazilian culture in general: no art or artist was left untouched by the ideals proclaimed during that event.<sup>69</sup> In fact, one of the main purposes of the Modern Week was actually to challenge the “lukewarm and provincial academic traditions” in Brazil.<sup>70</sup> So it was no surprise that their reception in the Brazilian artistic scenario was met with severe resistance. Even Villa-Lobos, who programmed some of his “less

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68 Neves, 30-8.

69 Ibid.

70 Roberto Pontual, "Semana de Arte Moderna," *Grove Art Online*. (accessed May 28, 2018.)  
<http://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oa0-9781884446054-e-7000077514>

adventurous” music still reflecting much of a post-romantic style from his early period, was poorly acclaimed.<sup>71</sup> But nevertheless, with the 1922 Modern Art Week was born the Brazilian Nationalist School, and for the purposes of this study, the expressions “Brazilian nationalism” or “Brazilian Nationalist School” will conform specifically to the ideals preached by Mário de Andrade and other artists during this event.

Another important fact that happened to Villa-Lobos during his transitional years were his meetings with two very important musicians: French composer Darius Milhaud and the internationally-renowned pianist Artur Rubinstein by the end of the 1910’s. These men not only helped to acquaint Villa-Lobos with the avant-garde music produced in Europe during that time, but Rubinstein also performed his works worldwide and introduced him to the wealthy Brazilian businessmen brothers Arnaldo and Carlos Guinle. These men were instrumental in supporting Villa-Lobos’s financial needs during his travels to France in the 1920’s. Without their help Villa-Lobos may never have had the chance to become internationally known.<sup>72</sup> After all this assistance – cultural, financial and moral – Villa-Lobos sails to France in 1923. In 1927, when he was in Paris, he gave a series of concerts in the Salle Gaveau, which brought him international acclaim. From there, he departed to several European countries and conducted (or had his works performed) in many concerts throughout Europe. His international fame was then established.<sup>73</sup>

During this decade, at the peak of his nationalist style, he produces his most famous masterworks, including the massive collection of *Choros*. This work includes 14 *Choros* (from which Nrs. 13 and 14 are unfortunately lost) plus an *Introduction to the*

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71 Neves, 37.

72 Mariz, 143-5.

73 Mariz, 147-9.

*Choros* and the *Choros Bis*. The reference to the urban Brazilian *chôro* (which is a popular genre often played by folk ensembles) in the title is already a hint to the nationalistic influences in this work. And in fact, the whole set is a huge compendium of Brazilian traditional musical practices, and authors like Maria Neves don't hesitate to claim it as the culmination of the ideals of the Brazilian Nationalist School.<sup>74</sup> In Ex. 8, the opening of his *Choros Nr. 5 “Alma Brasileira”* (Brazilian Soul) for Piano, it is already noticeable how more intimately connected with Brazilian folk music his writing is, compared to the earlier *African Dances*. According to the composer himself, “what is most interesting in this *Choros*, are the rhythmic and melodic cadences, irregular within a quadruple meter, giving the disguised impression of rubato, or of a delayed melodic execution, which is precisely the most interesting characteristic of the serenaders.”<sup>75</sup>

Ex. 8: H. Villa-Lobos – *Choros Nr. 5 “Alma Brasileira”*, mm. 1-4.

<sup>74</sup> Neves, 50-5.

<sup>75</sup> Béhague, “*Music in Latin America*” 194-5.

When Villa-Lobos came back to Brazil in 1930, he met a country in the process of revolution (the following period was also known as the Vargas Era from 1930-1945, a totalitarian dictatorship governed by president Getúlio Vargas). Upon his arrival, Villa-Lobos wrote a plan to fix the precarious method of music teaching in Brazil, what led him a few years later to be hired by the government to take charge of the Superintendency of Musical and Artistic Education for Rio de Janeiro, the country's capital at that time. The government during the Vargas Era was known to have made significant improvements for the Brazilian lower social classes, and was also known to have supported an extreme patriotism (once again, aligning with the modernist and nationalist ideals), but was also compared to its contemporary fascist European regimes.<sup>76</sup>

Villa-Lobos always had a deep interest in writing pieces for pedagogical purposes. But because of his new appointment, he increased even more his pedagogical production to attend the artistic necessities of the government: pride in national folklore. These circumstances culminated with the *Guia Prático* (Practical Guide), a method that Villa-Lobos compiled with several folksong arrangements (not only for piano, but also for choir or voice ensembles) to be used throughout all schools in Brazil.<sup>77</sup> Considering Villa-Lobos's bold statement "I am folklore," its connotations gains a deeper meaning with his government appointment and the institution of the *Guia Prático*. As Maria Neves points out, the statement implies that since Villa-Lobos musical background was in the streets and country travels, he "is" folklore because that is the natural language that

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76 Gerard Béhague, "Villa-Lobos," *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 28, 2018.)  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000029373>.

77 Neves, 55.

comes out of his music due to the pragmatism of his cultural experience.<sup>78</sup> However, since he had the power to create pedagogical material that was taught throughout the entire country, nowadays it is rather difficult to draw a line between what material is vernacular and what was actually composed by Villa-Lobos. He indeed became an inseparable part of Brazilian folklore. Besides, his agenda to align music making with nationalistic pride were remarkably well-received during his political appointment, and received notorious government support.<sup>79</sup>

Yet, during his association with the government, Villa-Lobos experienced a subtle change in his style. As it happened with other composers during totalitarian regimes (especially the Germans and Russians), Villa-Lobos now feels the necessity to ally his use of nationalistic traits with universal forms (or traditional European forms, such as symphonies, concertos, dances, etc), which means that there is a certain abandon from the “primitivist” qualities of his middle period, changing into a clearer and lighter neo-classical approach. His main experiment with those ideals is the impressive cycle known as *Bachianas Brasileiras* (comprising 9 suites), in which he combines Baroque features inspired by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach with Brazilian elements. He admired the music of Bach immensely since his youth. According to him, Bach is a “universal folkloric source, rich and profound, with all the popular material from all countries, connecting all people.”<sup>80</sup> Together with the cycle of *Choros*, they comprise the most varied and thorough display of Villa-Lobos musical capabilities.

After that, there were no particular innovations in the Brazilian nationalistic style

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78 Ibid, 27.

79 David E. Vassberg, “Villa-Lobos: Music as a Tool of Nationalism.” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol. 6, no. 2 (1969): 55–65. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/3512733](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3512733)

80 Neves, 53.

throughout Villa-Lobos's life. In 1943 he embarked in his first travel to the USA, where his works once more achieved a lasting success. He attended several international appointments in the USA (especially New York), Europe and Israel, until he died in 1959. During these international travels, he not only propagated his own works, but also disseminated the works of his fellow Brazilian composers.<sup>81</sup> The labor that Villa-Lobos did for the improvement of the Brazilian musical culture was unprecedented, and very possibly will never be surpassed.

### 3c. NATIONALISM IN BRAZIL: 2<sup>nd</sup> GENERATION AND POST-NATIONALISM

The stylistic shift witnessed in Villa-Lobos's musical output can also be contextualized within the American continent, which is another way to demonstrate that this nationalistic trend was not only present in Brazil, but it was a growing phenomenon worldwide.

Beardsell, in his book *Europe and Latin America, Returning the Gaze* explains how Latin America (mostly the Spanish speaking countries) and its artists struggled to achieve this same cultural independence described above in the birth of Brazilian Nationalism. He also makes use of two words which connotations we already alluded to: *acculturation* and *transculturation*.

Acculturation refers to a one-way process of conversion and substitution of native cultures by European ones, whereas transculturation, ... is concerned with the mutual transformation of cultures, in particular of the European by the native.<sup>82</sup>

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81 Mariz, 154.

82 W. Rowe and V. Schelling, *Memory and Modernity. Popular Culture in Latin America* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), quoted in Peter Beardsell, *Europe and Latin America, Returning the Gaze* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 173. It is noteworthy to mention that the definition provided for “acculturation” share many similarities with Taruskin's “musical colonialism.”

Meanwhile, Ralph Locke in his article about the shift of American artistic tastes during the turn of 20<sup>th</sup> century objectively states:

Composers needed to begin to speak a more recognizably American dialect and to reflect ... the character of the American people.<sup>83</sup>

Therefore, this search for a national art, exemplified in the ideals of Mário de Andrade, the 1922 Modern Art Week or the music of Villa-Lobos, were not only products of regional circumstances or the eccentricities of a particular group of artists, but part of a global process: a sort of response from the former European colonies in their search for political and cultural independence from Europe.

This growing thirst for nationalistic music, allied to the innovations found in Villa-Lobos's works, affected the way Latin-American composers digested that material into their own music, and in Brazil that is especially noticeable in the musical production of the composers that lived during Villa-Lobos's life. In order to show how that translates into actual musical elements, compare the examples of piano music prior to Villa-Lobos (Exs. 4-6), with this section from composer Oscar Lorenzo-Fernández's (1897-1948) *Jongo*, from his *Suíte Brasileira* Nr. 3. (1942, Ex. 9).

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83 Ralph Locke, "Music Lovers, Patrons, and the *Sacralization* of Culture in America," *Nineteenth-Century Music*, Vol. 17 No. 2 (Autumn, 1993): 166-7.



Ex. 9: O. Lorenzo-Fernández - Suíte Brasileira Nr. 3 – 3. Jongo, systems 11 and 12.

In the selected extract, we can already notice some modernists tendencies, such as the chromaticism in the bass line (shared between the lower staves), played alternately between both hands. However, the heavy modal inflection noticeable in the main melody in the second system (treble clef) isn't only derived from modernism, but is actually a reflection of the modal melodies of Brazilian folklore, by its turn also heavily influenced by African inheritance. The constant percussive *ostinati* in the lower registers are also reminiscent of the percussion instruments of that culture. But it is the repetitive nature of the music (with a melodic fragment being repeated several times from the beginning of the piece, and, of course, the left hand *ostinati*), already hinted at in Villa-Lobos's *African Dances*, that shows a definite break with the European traditional forms.

In fact, many composers from the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century started to gear towards this new nationalistic direction. Mariz calls them the *Second Nationalist Generation* (the first being Villa-Lobos)<sup>84</sup>, featuring composers as the aforementioned Lorenzo-Fernández, the also prolific composer Francisco Mignone (1897-1986), among others. Those composers share one fact in common with Villa-Lobos: unlike Bartók, none developed a systematic way of studying and writing folk music. Besides, even though Villa-Lobos eventually promoted a very intense political nationalist agenda, as observed above, still in the majority of his compositions (and the other composers) his use of folklore remains only as a source of inspiration, or, in other words, there is no “aggressive nationalism” attached to his nationalist aesthetics. Furthermore, all three composers, after an intense nationalist period, would experience a universalist period, where traditional European forms and influences would become more evident, even though still marked by a Brazilian accent. It was only with Mozart Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993) that the ideals of Mário de Andrade (who called Guarnieri his favorite disciple)<sup>85</sup> and Brazilian Nationalism would find some ethnomusicologic support.

However, this “ethnomusicologic support” would not come necessarily from Guarnieri’s own research. Instead, since his twenties, Guarnieri frequented the house of Mário de Andrade, who would not only supply him with folkloric materials to use as inspiration for his own compositions, but would also provide a cultural and aesthetical environment for the composer. About those experiences Guarnieri himself states:

Then I started to visit his house [Mário de Andrade’s] relentlessly. [...] This companionship gave me the opportunity to learn a lot. The little house at Lopes Chaves Street was always buzzing as a beehive. We

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84 Mariz, 195-242.

85 Mariz, 246.

discussed literature, sociology, philosophy, art and the devil! That was for me the same as watching classes at any university.<sup>86</sup>

But it would be wrong to assume that Mário de Andrade purposefully turned Guarnieri into a nationalist composer. By 1928, when they first met, Guarnieri showed him two of his piano compositions, the *Dança Brasileira* and the *Canção Sertaneja* (ex. 10), both already influenced by folkloric elements and quite aligned with the musicologist's artistic ideals. Mário de Andrade only provided the basis to nurture Guarnieri's own aesthetical aspirations.

The image shows a musical score for 'Canção Sertaneja' by M. Camargo Guarnieri. The score is in 2/4 time, marked 'Dolentemente M. M.' with a tempo of 58. It features a piano accompaniment with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piece is marked 'mf' and 'bem cantado'.

Ex. 10: M. Camargo Guarnieri – *Canção Sertaneja*, mm. 1-8.

As a counterpart to Guarnieri, Neves also mentions the composer Luciano Gallet (1893-1931), who perhaps was the earliest composer to consciously develop studies in Brazilian folklore to support his musical nationalist writing. He (and the omnipresent Mário de Andrade) even published posthumously a theoretical study named *Estudos de Folclore* (Folkloric Studies, 1934), but his life was unfortunately cut short too early for

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<sup>86</sup> Neves, 66.

his musical and literary works to mature.<sup>87</sup> Regarding those last four composers, Neves further states:

Therefore, we can see four nationalist postures that don't directly interconnect, [...]: Luciano Gallet and his extreme intellectual honesty, that makes him study the Brazilian folklore deeply before venturing into composition; Lorenzo-Fernández, that allows the spirit of Brazilian popular music to permeate his work without further rationalizations; Francisco Mignone, which better represents the populism in Brazilian music, composing accessibly to be easily understood by the masses; and Camargo Guarnieri, the most self-conscious, perhaps the most technically prepared, but the most artificial, less spontaneous, and the one that heavily influenced the next generation of young composers.<sup>88</sup>

Perhaps, calling Guarnieri “artificial” and “less spontaneous” may be an exaggeration, but it is true that – as opposed to the initial primitivism encountered in the early nationalism of Villa-Lobos, Fernández and Mignone – this folkloric influence seems already diluted in Guarnieri's works. Mariz writes that “Guarnieri keeps himself in an elevated state of distilled Brazilianism, intimate and non-exhibitionist, less accessible to the big masses at first contact.”<sup>89</sup> Nevertheless, he was one of the major defenders of the Brazilian Nationalist school, and counted among his students many of the most prominent names of the next generations of Brazilian composers. In any case, it was propitious for Brazilian Nationalism to find Guarnieri as its idealistic defender, as its very foundations would be vehemently questioned by a foreign German composer that arrived in Brazil in 1937, Hans-Joachim Koellreutter (1915-2005).

It would be naïve, however, to claim that Koellreutter alone was the arch-enemy of Brazilian nationalism. In truth, the nationalist agenda in general was becoming very

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87 Neves, 57-9.

88 Neves, 69.

89 Mariz, 246.

unpopular especially due to the political configuration of Europe, with the rises of Nazism, Fascism and the consequent Second World War outbreak. Since those regimes adhered to a strong nationalist agenda, as the war became quite unpopular, so did nationalism.

Koellreutter came from Europe precisely in order to escape from a Germany facing the challenges of war, obviously an unfruitful situation for artists in general (like him, many composers flew from Europe to America). Already influenced by the distaste for the strong nationalism he experienced in his homeland, nothing would be more natural than to combat the nationalism he found lingering in the artistic realms of his new home country.

Consequently, in 1939 he created the group of composers named *Música Viva* (Music Alive), which sought to elevate the current musical environment by advertising the newest European aesthetic trends (such as the twelve-tone method). It was a few years later that the group published one of the most important documents concerning musical aesthetics in Brazil, the *Manifesto de 1946* (1946 Manifest, Appendix A). This document reflects the core ideals of the group: an art that is a product of the social, and that strengthens it, not by enhancing individualities, but by cultivating the new and universal.<sup>90</sup>

This document was considered by many composers (including Camargo Guarnieri) as an attack to the Brazilian nationalism, and prompted a reaction years later. However the *Música Viva* group would not live much longer to feel its impact, since the group suffered a huge blow when the 1948 Prague International Convention of

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<sup>90</sup> Mariz, 298-99.

Composers and Music Critics declared the twelve-tone technique as “decadent,”<sup>91</sup> encouraging many members of the group either to drop the avant-garde techniques completely or at least start to come back to nationalistic traits.

However, the document still prompted a reaction, and its most scandalous document was not less important than the previous Manifesto, and was written by no one else other than Camargo Guarnieri himself. The document, entitled *Carta Aberta aos Músicos e Críticos do Brasil* (Open Letter to the Brazilian Musicians and Critics, 1950, Appendix B,)<sup>92</sup> criticized the teachings of Koelleutter with a great deal of violence, accusing the dodecafonic method of being too artificial and even anti-national, and encouraged all other musicians to fight against that “foreign intrusion.”

In fact, many artists actually sided with Guarnieri, but as pointed out by Neves, none of his supporters actually commented or developed new arguments to support his cause, while Koellreutter and his students (besides other artists, critics and writers) attacked the letter point by point, exposing Guarnieri’s ignorance on the method, and advocating for all young artists’ freedom to choose their own aesthetical path. This was the first Brazilian musical-aesthetical conflict to gain widespread notoriety in the press, and its impact will be discussed below.<sup>93</sup>

It is important to notice, however, that by this point the nationalism of certain composers (like Camargo Guarnieri, César Guerra-Peixe and possibly Cláudio Santoro), assumed a certain degree of “aggressive nationalism,” since they could be socially interpreted as a reaction to the modern methods implemented by Koellreutter. That

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91 Mariz, 305.

92 Neves, 121-4.

93 Neves, 127-33.

perspective becomes clear when we read Mariz's statement that Guarnieri wouldn't "write at the top of the page *larghetto* or *allegro* not to concede an inch-worth of land to the enemies of modern nativism."<sup>94</sup>

The aforementioned César Guerra-Peixe (1914-1993) and Cláudio Santoro (1919-1989) are perfect examples of the consequences of this aesthetical fight, since they are some of the first composers to be classified in the *post-nationalist* (or *post-modernist*) generation.<sup>95</sup> Regarding this period, Salles states:

The post-modernism is far to be a stage of consensus. In Brazil, the most radical extremes seem to be, at one side, the electroacoustic composers and, at the other, the neo-romantic/nationalists; however, we can't appreciate any hegemony among these orientations. That is confirmed by the fact that the most recent Brazilian periodicals and universities open equivalent spaces for all those approaches.<sup>96</sup>

That means that post-nationalism started as a period of "taking sides": either one was a nationalist or an avant-garde composer. Curiously, even though both Santoro and Guerra-Peixe started as Koellreutter disciples, composing through the dodecafonic system, by the time of the conflict they had already turned their styles towards nationalism, and actually sided with Guarnieri.<sup>97</sup> But in contrast to the previous nationalist generation, they actually conducted field studies in music and Brazilian folklore, supporting their nationalist writing with authentic folkloric material.<sup>98</sup>

As the years passed, the effects of the conflict diminished, and composers felt

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94 Mariz, 247.

95 Mariz, 301-28.

96 Mônica Giardini, "Processos composicionais de Edmundo Villani-Côrtes na sua Sinfonia no. 1 para Orquestra de Sopros" (PhD th., Universidade do Estado de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2013), 19.

97 Neves, 127-33.

98 Gerard Béhague, "Guerra-Peixe, César," *Grove Music Online*. (accessed June 14, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000011926>.

See also Gerard Béhague, "Santoro, Cláudio," *Grove Music Online*. (accessed June 14, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000024553>.

much freer to transition between aesthetical tendencies: Guerra-Peixe and Santoro eventually turned back to atonal writing, mixing them with nationalist elements,<sup>99</sup> and even the pivot of the conflict, Camargo Guarnieri, eventually tried the dodecafonic system in his later works.<sup>100</sup> The separation between the nationalist and avant-garde schools may have stayed somewhat pronounced since the conflict, but it certainly didn't prevent composers to meander in between those schools.

It is true that some older nationalist composers, such as Radamés Gnattali (1906-1988), were already dealing with stylistic eclecticism much before the battle of the *manifestos*. However, there was always a public thought that Brazilian nationalism, to achieve its “pure state,” should not mingle with external influences, contrary to Mário de Andrade's ideals of absorption and re-invention. Gnattali himself felt it was necessary to separate his works into two categories: “popular” (with jazz influences, usually for the media or entertainment industry in general) and “serious” (concert music for the concert halls, usually molded after classical European models)<sup>101</sup>, a kind of classification that actually mirrors many other composers and Brazilian culture in general, especially amongst musicians and music critics of that century. However, even those classifications proved to be non-exclusive – at least in Gnattali's case – since it is possible to identify traces of each style in his compositions from both categories. However, it is the “necessity to conform to labels” that makes all the difference, since after the establishment of post-modernism that kind of attitude weakened considerably amongst composers.

The next generation that displayed nationalist tendencies – represented by

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99 Neves, 137-40.

100 Neves, 142.

101 Mariz, 263-4.



composers such as Edino Krieger (1928) and Marlos Nobre (1939) – were immensely affected by those cultural dynamics. During their youth they would start writing in a romantic nationalist style as expected, but that would quickly change due to their immediate contact with Koellreutter and his avant-garde school. Therefore, when shortly later these composers decide to include back Brazilian folk elements into their composition, that inclusion already accepts other influences without restrictions or reservations, even foreign trends such as the dodecafonism, electro-acoustic devices and aleatory. It doesn't mean that those later techniques would necessarily be their main musical language; actually, they are usually not aligned together with the Brazilian avant-garde composers at all (such as Gilberto Mendes, Jocy de Oliveira, Almeida Prado, Jorge Antunes, among others); but following the post-modernist tendencies, they would adapt any compositional tendencies they felt appropriate to a particular work, independent of their nationalist traits (if any).

It is among this generation of composers that we find Edmundo Villani-Côrtes (1930). Like Edino Krieger and many other composers, he studied with both Camargo Guarnieri and Koellreutter, absorbing the musical styles and ideologies from both schools. He also lived through the same duality that Gnatalli experienced regarding his stylistic eclecticism: both composers were very well versed in popular music, working for jazz symphonic bands, pop singers and the TV. But, as usual with post-modernist composers, he never felt the necessity to compartmentalize each style. Much to the opposite, Villani often mixes those disparate influences in subtle and harmonious ways. Monica Giardini also points out the connection between the post-modernist period and

Villani's eclectic writing, justifying then his stylistic "freedom of expression."<sup>102</sup> We will have the opportunity to further scrutinize his biography in the next chapter.

But it is worth mentioning that the two works by Villani that we will analyze, the *Série Brasileira Op. 8* and the *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* actually reflect those cultural dynamics quite characteristically. The *Série* (composed in 1957) reflects a more primitivist nationalism from the young Villani, mixing Brazilian cultural references with jazz and European classical traditions, and it is certainly still under the influence of his teachers from the *Conservatório Brasileiro de Música* – exponents of the older nationalist generation, including Villa-Lobos himself. Meanwhile, the *Miniaturas* (composed in 1978) showcases a more mature Villani, who had already studied under Guarnieri and Koellreutter, and consequently had also ventured into the avant-garde writing, especially in pieces such as his first two *Timbres* for piano and his prized *Noneto*. The style of the *Miniaturas*, however, is clearly directed towards a "purer nationalism" (meaning folk references without much "foreign disguising"), be it due to the piece's pedagogical intentions to preserve a lighter texture, or perhaps due to the "stylistic exodus" of his contemporary composers already witnessed years before.

Nevertheless, Villani, alike many composers, is definitely part of the post-modernist movement, which until the present has preserved its characteristics. And that is the contemporary state of Brazilian nationalism: a period that honors the knowledge and use of authentic folkloric sources, an inheritance from Mário de Andrade and the Brazilian Nationalist School; but also tolerates the co-existence of disparate influences, national or not, due to the advent of post-modernism.

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102 Giardini, "Processos composicionais" 19-20.

### 3d. BOSSA NOVA

However, there is still one important factor unaccounted throughout the musical production of those Brazilian composers in general. Consider Mário de Andrade's following statement:

...If the Brazilian composer could employ the syncope, our constancy, he could especially employ melodic movements apparently syncopated, albeit lacking accents, respecting the prosody, or musically fantastic, free of *remeleixo maxixeiro* [his words for the usual frenetic swing of the samba], movements completely out of measure or rhythm from which the piece goes by. Effect that besides being exquisite could, as in the folk tradition, become extraordinarily expressive and beautiful. But that depends on what the composer will have to tell us...<sup>103</sup>

Andrade's remark refers specifically to the characteristic of the syncope in Brazilian folklore, often not being an accentuation displacement, like in the European tradition, but usually a prosodic effect based on the particularities of the language. In fact, we can now safely conclude that his prediction did not become true within the first or second generation of nationalist composers, since they were more often attracted to the piquancy of the Brazilian rhythm rather than its subtleties.<sup>104</sup> Ironically, the concretization of that prophecy would not become alive in the hands of any classical composer, but rather in Brazilian pop music, specifically in the music movement nowadays known as *bossa nova*.

Writing about the *bossa nova* style, Béhague comments:

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<sup>103</sup> Andrade, "Ensaio" 14.

<sup>104</sup> Villa-Lobos is arguably an exception, as Andrade quotes many of his original uses of Brazilian rhythms. But Villa-Lobos's prosodic treatment of the Portuguese language has quite often been severely criticized.

...The deliberately intimate character of *bossa nova* expression called not only for simplicity of language (reinforced by colloquialism), but also for the specific sound effects of the words, showing some affinity with Brazilian concrete poetry of the 1960s. This remarkable preoccupation with the language's sounds was also reflected in the close relationship of text and melody in many songs, where the lyrics do not seem to have been conceived separately from the music itself.<sup>105</sup>

Béhague remarks explains how *bossa nova* was much more than just another “commercial label,” but rather a change much anticipated since Andrade’s premonitions: a musical style that would first and foremost be intimately connected with the Brazilian Portuguese language – fact which as we have already observed, is one of the most basic steps for the blossoming of musical nationalism. If *bossa nova* was indeed Andrade’s actual vision, it is difficult to assess, since he died before the *bossa nova* movement actually started – the first recording credited to João Gilberto and dating to 1952.<sup>106</sup> But its impact makes this kind of confirmation irrelevant, since *bossa nova* was not only a success in Brazil, but actually thrived abroad, being quite often the first musical association that foreigners would link with Brazilian culture. And that is why *bossa nova* is so relevant to Brazilian nationalism, not only because it became a staple of Brazilian music internationally (even more than international composers such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, Cláudio Santoro, José Siqueira, Edino Krieger or Marlos Nobre), but also because it affected the musical production inside the country in many levels.

But what are the characteristics of the *bossa nova* style? First, as described above, its connection to language is a major factor. Besides, Caetano Veloso in his biography asserts:

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105 Gerard Béhague, “Brazil,” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed September 30, 2018.)  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000003894>.

106 Ibid.

...At bottom the music of *bossa nova*, even in its incorporation of Brazil's deepest samba roots with America's freshest cool jazz, was quintessentially Brazilian and therefore carried tremendous historical valence. Put another way, *bossa nova* did not represent a grafting of a foreign branch on to an indigenous rootstock but rather the continuation of a process of innovation that had always been integral to an ever-changing samba.<sup>107</sup>

Therefore, *bossa nova* is undeniably a fusion of styles: the "cool jazz from the fifties"<sup>108</sup> with the Brazilian samba, which is itself the heir of the Brazilian *chôro*. Therefore, not only *bossa nova* has an intimate connection with the national language, but also with Brazilian musical roots.

Furthermore, Béhague also specifies a few other musical elements of the *bossa nova*: a certain *nonchalance* (or *sprezzatura*, meaning to avoid displays of extreme emotions), flowing singing in a subdued tone (making it even closer to the spoken language), a bigger connection between harmony and rhythm (harmonic instruments usually provide both harmonic support and rhythmic variety) and a preference for more complex chords derived from American jazz.<sup>109</sup>

Eventually, *bossa nova* would originate other movements (such as the *Tropicália*) or even merge with other styles, but none had as much significance and influence over Brazilian nationalism, and of course, its nationalist composers. Villani certainly consumed and absorbed it, and *bossa nova* left quite identifiable marks in his compositions. But before we analyze those influences, we will glance at his biography.

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107 Caetano Veloso, *Tropical Truth: A Story of Music and Revolution in Brazil*. (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), 22-3.

108 Ibid.

109 Gerard Béhague, "Bossa Nova," *Grove Music Online*. (accessed September 30, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000003663>.

## CHAPTER II

### EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTEZ

#### 1. BIOGRAPHY

Edmundo Villani-Côrtes was born on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 1930 in Juiz de Fora, one of the biggest cities of the state of Minas Gerais. This state was responsible for most of the gold production and other precious minerals during the Brazilian colonial period, and the positive economic effects could be felt even during the first decades of the twentieth century: during Villani- Côrtes's youth years Juiz de Fora already featured a Municipal Conservatory and a Municipal Symphony Orchestra – commodities mostly found only in the biggest cities of the country – and consequently was very active musically. Even nowadays, the city still maintains its cultural reputation: it is one of the pioneers for research on baroque and classical music from the Brazilian colonial period.<sup>110</sup>

Also, it is noteworthy to remind that 1930 was the year when president Getúlio Vargas assumed the Brazilian government, and composer Heitor Villa-Lobos became his minister of culture, raising awareness for music education throughout the country.<sup>111</sup> These facts attest that Villani-Côrtes was born in a very propitious environment to develop his innate artistic qualities.

His childhood coincidentally shared many similarities with Villa-Lobos's: his father, Augusto de Castro Côrtes, was a famous flutist in the city, and would often bring his fellow musicians to rehearse or serenade at his home *saraus*,<sup>112</sup> not much differently from Villa-Lobos's household. He also had an older brother, named Augusto like his

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110 Affonso Romano de Sant'Anna, "Edmundo: simplesmente criativo" in *Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: Música Contemporânea Brasileira*, ed. by Francisco Carlos Coelho (São Paulo, Brazil: Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga, Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2006), 27-8.

111 Giardini, 24.

112 *Saraus* were very popular Brazilian family parties in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, where people would reunite for entertainment, including serenades. Giardini, "Processos composicionais" 24.

father, who played the guitar. Since his early years Villani was part of his house's musical events, and had a *cavaquinho* (Brazilian small guitar) to imitate his older brother. When the later left the country to study in the USA, Villani picked up his guitar and taught himself to play it.<sup>113</sup> He later received informal lessons on the instrument, but they had very little theoretical or technical foundation.<sup>114</sup>

Perhaps the main difference between Villani's and Villa-Lobos's childhood was the result of a few particular technological innovations, such as the radio and the movies with sound. Villani's family were eager listeners, and the repertory offered was quite eclectic, including classics, Brazilian popular music, Broadway musicals and movie soundtracks.<sup>115</sup> Of course the young Villani was deeply influenced, especially by the performance of Chopin waltzes by the pianist Alexander Brailowsky.<sup>116</sup> Therefore, since an early age, Villani was already exposed to a very broad musical repertory.

He tried to play the repertory he listened to by ear, and he soon felt the desire to learn how to play the piano. He arranged to practice at his aunt's house, since he didn't have a piano at home, and finally started lessons at age 17 with Nialva Bicalho.<sup>117</sup> It is surprising to consider that only ten years after his initial studies – in 1957 – he was already concluding his *Série Brasileira Op. 8*, one of the works that will be discussed in the next chapter.

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113 Thais Lopes Nicolau, “The Piano Concertos of Edmundo Villani-Côrtes” (DA diss., University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, CO, 2013), 8-9. See also Giardini, 25-6.

114 Irailda Eneli Barros Silva Rodrigues, “The Art Song of Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: A Performance Guide of Selected Works” (DMA diss., University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, 2014), 7-8.

115 Alfeu Rodrigues de Araujo Filho, “Timbres e Ritmatas para Piano Solo de E. Villani-Côrtes: Conceito, Análise e Interpretação Pianística” (PhD th., Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Campinas, SP, 2011), 8-9. See also Nicolau, “Piano Concertos” 12.

116 Irineu Franco Perpetuo, “Dados referenciais” in *Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: Música Contemporânea Brasileira*, ed. by Francisco Carlos Coelho (São Paulo, Brazil: Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga, Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2006), 17.

117 Giardini, 26.

Nivalva Bicalho was the niece of one of the most prominent piano teachers of Juiz de Fora, Cincinato Duque Bicalho. Unfortunately, he also had a very conservative character, and dismissed the young Villani due to his excessive curiosity and taste for popular music.<sup>118</sup> Yet another coincidence between Villani-Côrtes's and Villa-Lobos's life, this is just another example of the prejudice still reminiscent from the academicians against popular music and musicians. Nonetheless, Villani kept his inspiration alive, and managed to compose the first piano work of his catalog, the Nine Preludes (1949), which displays a clear indebtedness to his beloved composer Chopin.<sup>119</sup> He showed those preludes to the pianist and composer João Octaviano, who encouraged him to complete his musical studies.<sup>120</sup>

But before he left his hometown, he acquired experience playing with orchestras and small ensembles. In 1950 he started playing for the Juiz de Fora Philharmonic Orchestra. Shortly after, he also performed for the radio PRB3, and the Industrial Radio Mário Vieira Orchestra.<sup>121</sup> Those ensemble experiences were important because they provided him the chance to get acquainted with the popular music played in ballrooms and nightclubs, and would have a definite influence in his compositional language.

In 1951 he moved to Rio de Janeiro, starting his studies at the Conservatório Brasileiro de Música. There he encountered some initial difficulties due to a certain lack of musical formal education, but he still graduated in 1954. While in Rio, he was able to support himself by playing again for orchestras and nightclubs, including the Radio Tupi Philharmonic Orchestra, which was known for its diverse repertory, including Americans

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118 Giardini, 26. See also I. Rodrigues, "The Art Song" 8-9.

119 Nicolau, 13.

120 I. Rodrigues, 9.

121 Giardini, 29.



like Gershwin, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern, and also Brazilians like Ary Barroso, Custódio de Mesquita and Garoto.<sup>122</sup>

By now, we can establish a very clear pattern in Villani's musical life, which is his curiosity and willingness to explore different styles of music. In his early years, he was exposed both to classical and popular music and showed interest in both, while during his educational years he received formal training at the conservatory while gaining practical experience in piano bars. This tendency to conciliate disparate sources will persist even further in the following decades, and certainly helps to explain the plurality of influences in his works.

After his graduation in 1954, Villani returned to his hometown, where he would live for the remaining of that decade. He stayed very active during those years, being appointed soloist and composer-in-residence for the city's orchestra, and had the chance to premiere his Piano Concerto No. 1 as soloist. He also directed the conservatory and took an accompanying position at a voice studio, where he met his wife Efigênia Côrtes, a singer, marrying her during this period. And on top of all this activity, he also managed to complete a law degree.<sup>123</sup> It was also during those years that he completed the *Série Brasileira Op. 8* for piano solo, in 1957, and it should be no surprise that many of the previously discussed musical influences would make their way into this work.

In 1960 Villani moved to São Paulo with his family, to further his studies with the renowned piano teacher José Kliass from 1960-63. On the following years, from 1963-65, he took composition lessons with Mozart Camargo Guarnieri.<sup>124</sup> Both musicians were significant defenders of the Brazilian Nationalist School, and perhaps that is why there is

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122 I. Rodrigues, 10.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid, 11. See also Perpetuo, "Dados referenciais" 18.

a general misconception in readily classifying Villani-Côrtes as a nationalist.

Nevertheless, Villani refuses to accept those labels; he never pursued specific studies in Brazilian folklore, or, as he admits it, he has never even read Mário de Andrade's *Ensaio sobre Música Brasileira*, as shown previously, one of the most important documents of the movement's mentor.<sup>125</sup> Instead, the nationalist elements characteristic of his music come to him naturally, due to his own practical experiences.

While he was pursuing those studies, he started having financial difficulties, what prompted him to interrupt his studies to accompany singers Maysa Matarazzo and Altamar Dutra on tours abroad in South America. Upon his return, he took his usual jobs playing for orchestras and started working as a composer and arranger for the former TV Tupi. Tragically, now most of this prolific work is lost due to hazardous fires that happened on the late 70's, and to the disposal of the company's files when they closed in 1980.<sup>126</sup> In any case, all this work for the TV and radio stations brought him notoriety, and he was in high demand as an arranger and performer on shows such as the popular Brazilian late night talk-show, *Jô Soares Onze e Meia*.<sup>127</sup>

Those work engagements unfortunately prevented him to keep having lessons with Camargo Guarnieri, while they brought him his first teaching opportunity: he started in 1973 to teach theory and composition courses at the Paulista Academy of Music. It was there, through his students, that he met the German composer Hans-Joachim Koellreutter,<sup>128</sup> and under his guidance got acquainted with the most recent European compositional techniques, such as Schoenberg's twelve-tone system, extended techniques

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125 Lutero Rodrigues, "Música de câmara de Edmundo Villani-Côrtes" in *Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: Música Contemporânea Brasileira*, ed. by Francisco Carlos Coelho (São Paulo, Brazil: Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga, Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2006), 41.

126 I. Rodrigues, 12-3.

127 Perpetuo, 22. See also de Sant'Anna, "Simplesmente criativo" 31.

128 de Sant'Anna, 31.

and electronic experiments.<sup>129</sup> Through Koellreutter's influence, Villani composed a *Noneto* to submit for a competition in Munich, through the Brazilian Goethe Institute. That would become his first relevant prize, the first of many to come in the following years.<sup>130</sup> The completion of the *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* would follow soon, in 1978.

Curiously, in the same way that he distanced himself from the nationalist school, he refused to strictly adopt the *Música Viva* ideals. After his brief excursion into dodecafonism, he soon came back to his usual tonal language. Later he commented: “When I studied with Koellreutter, he would say that to achieve respect a composer should have his compositions contain 90% of new elements, including structural ones. I don't think like that. For me, a good writer is the one who is able to use the vocabulary known and understood by all to transmit a new idea with clarity. He doesn't need to invent a new vocabulary or language to be original.”<sup>131</sup>

Shortly after, in 1982, he becomes teacher at the prestigious UNESP (São Paulo State University). At this point, his engagement with TV and radio reduced significantly, mostly after the closing of TV Tupi.<sup>132</sup> Consequently his musical production increased, making the following decades the most productive for his catalog of compositions.

From 1985-88 Villani worked on his Masters at UFRJ (Rio de Janeiro Federal University), studying with the esteemed Henrique Morelenbaum. And ten years later, in 1998, he concludes his PhD at UNESP, retiring from his teaching position in the next

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129 Nicolau, 16-7.

130 Perpetuo, 21.

131 Giardini, 17.

132 Perpetuo, 21.

year,<sup>133</sup> but still remained active as a teacher at the Tom Jobim Center for Musical Studies.<sup>134</sup>

After the 90's, the Brazilian musical scenario started to recognize the value of Villani's work, since many of his works were prized by competitions and institutions. In 1990, his *Ciclo Cecília Meirelles* received the “Best of 1989” prize by the Paulista Association of Art Critics (APCA). In 1994 he received a commendation from his hometown Juiz de Fora, the “Comenda Henrique Halfeld.” In 1995 he received another prize from APCA, this time for his work for choir and orchestra *Postais Paulistanos*, and received yet again another prize from this institution in 1998, for his Vibraphone Concerto. Besides those recognitions, many other works and songs also received prizes in Brazilian competitions.<sup>135</sup> The composer remains still active nowadays, and I had the opportunity to meet with him in the early 2000's in São Paulo, when I was performing the *Série Brasileira Op. 8* discussed in the next chapter.

## 2. STYLISTIC CONSIDERATIONS

By observing his musical choices, it is clear that Villani preferred not to be labeled by any “school” or “trend;” he preferred to absorb different styles around him, synthesizing them into his own writing. Nevertheless, some of those styles left some recognizable traces in his musical language.

It is important to consider that even though Villani always listened to classical music, most of his early performances and professional engagements were in the area of

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133 I. Rodrigues, 14.

134 Perpetuo, 22.

135 “Edmundo Villani-Côrtes,” Orquestra Sinfônica Edmundo Villani-Côrtes, accessed May 30, 2018. <http://orquestravillani.blogspot.com/p/edmundo-villani-cortes.html>

popular music, playing for ballroom orchestras and composing and arranging for the radio and TV. As Mariz states, “he worked intensely with popular music until transferring to the academic setting.”<sup>136</sup> This fact left a very indelible mark in his writing, especially texturally and harmonically: lighter textures are usually preferred over heavy counterpoint, allowing the composer to explore more complex harmonies, which are also reminiscent of his jazz practice.<sup>137</sup>

Another definite characteristic is his use of Brazilian dances, rhythmic configurations, and even indigenous titles in his pieces. It is already established that Villani doesn't label himself as a nationalist composer, but as Lutero Rodrigues comments, “any superficial approach to his music will elicit the question: isn't Villani-Côrtes a nationalist composer?”<sup>138</sup> But, as we already discussed, this influence doesn't come from extensive studies or research on Brazilian folklore, but rather happens spontaneously due to his own background.

One may then ask, where does the classical influence come from? The answer lies in the structural forms, which usually follow very definite traditional patterns. Besides, he also displays an innate lyricism that is quite vocal, in the same way that Chopin, one of his major classical influences, borrowed from the early 19th-century operatic style to compose his *Nocturnes*. But this lyricism also shares a debt with the Brazilian popular music styles of the 50's and 60's, especially the *bossa nova*.

But what is truly inherent to his style, is that those characteristics from disparate origins are usually intertwined in a blend that doesn't prioritize one style over another, they usually coexist comfortably. As Thais Nicolau paraphrases from the composer

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136 Mariz, 383.

137 L. Rodrigues, “Música de câmara” 40-1.

138 Ibid.

Marlos Nobre, his music is surely a “mixture of everything.”<sup>139</sup> And as a result of his rich cultural exposure, it is natural that the composer himself would state: “my way of composing is linked to my life. Composition became for me a way of expressing myself. I discovered that, through music, I could say what I felt.”<sup>140</sup>

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139 Nicolau, 7-8.

140 Perpetuo, 23.

### CHAPTER III

#### HISTORY OF SUITE AND ANALYSIS

Mário de Andrade, the idealist of Brazilian nationalism, noticed one characteristic of the Suite that was very advantageous for his artistic plans. In his *Ensaio*, he writes:

...The Suite form (a series of dances) is not patrimony of any country. Among us it appeals well... It was just repugnant to me that our suites had to be labeled “*Suíte Brasileira*.” Why not “*Fandango*”, a perfectly nationalized word? Why not “*Maracatú*” for another more solemn group?... Or else to invent individual names alike Hindemith’s “Suite 1922” or the “*Alt Wien*” by Castelnuovo Tedesco.

Imagine, for example, this Suite:

- 1 – *Ponteio* (prelude in any meter or speed)
- 2 – *Cateretê* (fast binary meter)
- 3 – *Coco* (slow binary meter, choral polyphony, Sarabande’s substitute)
- 4 – *Moda* or *Modinha* (in triple or quaternary meter, old Aria’s substitute)
- 5 – *Cururú* (utilizing Amerindian motives, or imagine an African dance to employ AfroBrazilian motives, without established meter)
- 6 – *Dobrado* (or *Samba*, or *Maxixe*, fast binary meter or imponent ending).<sup>141</sup>

This time, Andrade’s prophecy became true rather quickly: just a few years after the publication of the *Ensaio*, many Brazilian composers started meddling with those kind of ideas (for example, Lorenzo-Fernández’s *Suíte Brasileira* in ex. 9.)

However, Andrade’s first statement is not entirely true. Given the essay was published in 1928, when the research on pre-classical music was still very timid and far to be as comprehensive as today, it is understandable that the author ignored that the suite can be indeed traced back to multiple ethnic origins, and displays characteristics of particular courts, regions or countries. In order to clarify this misunderstanding, we will briefly look into the origins of the suite.

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<sup>141</sup> Andrade, 30.

## 1a. HISTORY OF SUITE: BAROQUE ORIGINS

Dance was among the most basic abilities a nobleman was required to pursue during the European monarchies from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century. John Hill explains that “a high degree of skill in dancing was expected of all noblemen and ladies, and several kings of France distinguished themselves as solo dancers on stage.”<sup>142</sup> One can therefore conclude that the demands for music, in order to supply the dance needs of the court, would also be of utmost importance. It was a common practice to group those dances together: Fuller remarks that they “could be danced in four mensurations, corresponding to four dance types... Three and even four of these were used in the pantomimic balli, though the norm for ordinary dancing was the pair.”<sup>143</sup>

The first groupings of dances into suites are found in late 16<sup>th</sup>-century France, in the works of Estienne du Tertre<sup>144</sup> and Denis Gaultier<sup>145</sup>. Hill also credits Gaultier to be the first mixing dances together (rather than separating by each type) and adopting the model of organizing them by mode.<sup>146</sup> That tradition became quite popular and culminated with the suites of the high-baroque era across Europe, as in the examples of composers such as François Couperin (in France), George Frideric Händel (in Britain) and, of course, Johann Sebastian Bach (in Germany), to mention just a few.

It was already mentioned that each dance had its particular ethnic origin, and sometimes they even had cultural variants on one single type of dance (for example the *courante* and the *corrente*; or the *jig*, *gigue* and *giga*). That already could be used to

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142 John Walter Hill, *Baroque Music: Music in Western Europe, 1580-1750*. (1st ed. The Norton Introduction to Music History. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005), 126.

143 David Fuller, “Suite,” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed September 30, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000027091>.

144 Ibid.

145 Hill, “*Baroque Music*” 126.

146 Ibid.



question Andrade's statement of "cultural patrimony", even though he would still be partially right, since the incorporation of contrasting nationalities would render the suite more universal rather than national. However, the national characteristics of the suite surpass the ethnicity of its components: further research showed that each court would have their specific manners in regarding to composing, interpreting, listening and dancing to their suites. Kirby, for example, details that in between French, German and British suites, differences such as order and number of dances, style interpretation, phrasing regularity and ornamentation could differ significantly.<sup>147</sup>

Curiously, after its peak during the high-baroque period, the suite gradually faded away, being replaced by other formal structures such as the sonata, concerto and symphony. They arguably preserved many of the suite characteristics (movements organized by key signature, eventually even including dances), but the "suite" designation virtually disappeared.

#### 1b. HISTORY OF SUITE: ROMANTIC VARIETY AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVAL

When the label "suite" returned to common use by mid 19<sup>th</sup> century it was given a slightly different signification: it still remained a set of pieces, but now rather connected through an external program – and not necessarily by key signature. The movements could be dances numbers from an opera or ballet (Bizet's *Carmen Suite* or Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*) sometimes even with nationalistic or exoticist colors (as in Saint-Saëns's *Suite Algérienne* Op. 60, or even the previous examples as well).

As Fuller points out, the original conception of the suite (as a collection of dances

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<sup>147</sup> Frank E. Kirby, *Music for Piano: A Short History*. (Corrected Reprint ed. Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 2000), 30-33.

in the same key) became quite old-fashioned by the 19<sup>th</sup> century, used more as a composing exercise, even though the composition and publication of dances never really stopped. But it was the “suite idea,” as Fuller puts it, that still attracted the composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century: “sets of pieces meant to be performed at a sitting.” Through that concept, much of the piano 19<sup>th</sup>-century repertory could be thought as suites even if not carrying the title (Schumann’s and Brahms’s *Klavierstücke*, for example.)<sup>148</sup> It is also important to clarify that I’m including Villani’s *Série Op. 8* in the suite tradition not only because it fits this particular romantic trend, but also because according to one of the composer’s work catalogues (on Monica Giardini’s dissertation), the title of the piece reads *Série (ou Suite) Brasileira*.<sup>149</sup> Yet the *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* definitely falls into that category of nationalist inspired settings that borrows the “suite idea.”

As if the suite genre did not have enough connections with nationalist aesthetics, further developments of late 19<sup>th</sup> century tightened their association even more. By mid 19<sup>th</sup> century the overgrowing German dominance in music (exemplified by the “cult” of Beethoven’s symphonies, the growing fame of Wagner operas and even the revival of Johann Sebastian Bach), among other factors, lead a reaction by French composers culminating with the creation of the *Société Nationale de Musique* in 1871, with the intention to promote instrumental compositions by French composers.<sup>150</sup> Additionally, the *Schola Cantorum de Paris* was founded a few decades later in 1894 over a disagreement with the teaching methods of the *Paris Conservatoire*, encouraging a curriculum that was founded on Gregorian chant and old counterpoint methods.<sup>151</sup> By one

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148 Fuller, “Suite”.

149 Giardini, 243.

150 Finson, “*Nineteenth-century music*” 218-9.

151 Robert Orledge and Andrew Thomson, “Vincent d’Indy,” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed September

side, there is a movement that sought to encourage French compatriots to disseminate their art, while by the other there is a strong movement towards the revival of ancient music. The results were not only the rediscovery of baroque French music (composers such as François Couperin and Jean-Philippe Rameau) but also the resurrection of their compositional techniques and genres. The suite, appealing to both trends, was then brought back to life and became popular again in its old practice, first in France (Debussy's *Suite Bergamasque*, Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin*) and later – as the tonal system became outdated (and genres that depend on it highly as well, such as the sonata) – in Germany (Schoenberg's *Suite Op. 29*, Hindemith's *Suite 1922 Op. 26*) and abroad.

Composers that were strongly influenced by their homeland folk music (such as Isaac Albéniz, Manuel de Falla, Bela Bartók, among others) quickly borrowed the “suite idea” into their own agenda. Therefore, Andrade's comments about the suite were not really an entirely new concept, but still illuminating for Brazilian composers, since, as already observed above, Brazilian nationalism did not take shape until the 1920's. Consequently, the “suite path” in Brazil would take a slightly different shape

### 1c. THE BRAZILIAN SUITE

As mentioned previously, until early 19<sup>th</sup> century Brazilian musicians focused most of their production on sacred repertory. Instrumental secular music, although present, was definitely much rarer in comparison, and the few examples that survived are quite scarce. One of the earliest examples of instrumental music, which actually shares

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<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000013787>.

certain similarities with the suite, is Priest José Maurício Nunes Garcia's *Compendio de Música e Methodo de Pianoforte* (Music Compendium and Pianoforte Method, 1821).

But it only compares to the suite as it is also a set of pieces. They clearly serve primarily as technical or musical etudes, without the intention of being performed as a set (perhaps not even intended for performance at all).

By mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, after the court transference to Brazil and the European romantic style started to disseminate, the label “suite” was still not yet popular. However, two of Carlos Gomes earlier piano works, his *Quilombo* (1856) and *Caxoeira* (1867) already display the romantic tradition of the set of characteristic pieces to be performed as a cycle (both are sets of *quadrilhas*, a typical Brazilian country dance)<sup>152</sup>. However, as described above, those early Brazilian nationalist romantic pieces still are much indebted to the European romantic composers.

Besides those early examples, the practice of writing dances was quite common: waltzes, polkas, mazurkas, *galanteries* (such as the minuet, gavotte, etc.) were then common instrumental compositions. It was just not usual to compose or publish them in sets or suites. One of the earliest uses of the title “suite” would be credited to Alberto Nepomuceno, his *Suite Antique Op. 11* (1893, the movements are named *Prélude*, *Air*, *Menuet* and *Rigaudon*). However, the piece also shows a clear indebtedness to the imitative style of its high-baroque European models, which the composer is clearly alluding to, even in their French titles (ex. 11).<sup>153</sup>

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152 Maria Abreu and Zuleika Rosa Guedes, *O Piano Na Música Brasileira: Seus Compositores Dos Primórdios Até 1950*. (Coleção Luís Cosme, 22. Porto Alegre: Movimento, 1992), 48.

153 Abreu and Guedes, “*O Piano*” 81.

*Allegro comodo. M.M.  $\text{♩} = 108.$*

PIANO. *mf*

Ex. 11: A. Nepomuceno – Suite Antique Op. 11 – 1. Prélude, mm. 1-7.

Heitor Villa-Lobos would be the first composer to make extensive use of the “suite idea,” either as a label or just as a concept. Earlier works, such as the *Suite Popular Brasileira* for guitar (1908-12), the *Suites Infantis Nrs. 1 and 2* for piano (1912-13) and the *Suite Floral* (1917-18) are just a few examples of pieces that use the word suite in its title (not to mention sets of pieces, which are many since Villa-Lobos was quite a prolific composer.) But those earlier works were also still very subtle in their nationalism – they still display a strong influence from the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century French school – since only in the late 1910’s would Villa-Lobos start his primitivist nationalist style.

It is during the 1930’s that we find the first examples of suites that could possibly fit Andrade’s ideals: Villa-Lobos’s cycle known as *Bachianas Brasileiras* (9 suites composed in between 1930-45.) The title, as suggested by Andrade, avoids the labels “*Suite Brasileira*” or even “*Suite*,” but remaining remarkably satirical, since it alludes both to Johann Sebastian Bach (whose suite production is one of the largest and most widespread, and was also deeply admired by Villa-Lobos) and to its Brazilian influences.

Indeed, almost every movement from each suite has a European baroque “Bachian” title followed by another title referencing Brazilian culture. For example, Béhague comments about the first movement (*Ária - Cantilena*) of the worldly famous *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* for soprano and cello ensemble (ex. 12) describe the following:

...The pizzicatos in contrary motion of cellos II and IV in the first two measures and the descending progression of the bass line (cello III) suggest an amplified version of the picked style of guitar playing known in Portuguese as “ponteio.”<sup>154</sup>

As we will observe further below, this “*ponteio* opening” mentioned by Béhague (lyrical melody with active accompaniment usually inspired by guitar playing, quite often in descending harmonic progression) became quite a standard procedure for Brazilian suites, even on both Villani works we will analyze.



Ex. 12: H. Villa-Lobos – *Bachianas Brasileiras* Nr. 5 – 1. *Ária* (*Cantilena*), mm.

1-2.

Following Villa-Lobos example, an array of suites followed. Just to name a few examples, composers such as Francisco Mignone, Radamés Gnattali, César Guerra-Peixe, Osvaldo Lacerda, all composed nationalist suites during this period, highly inspired by Andrade’s ideals and Villa-Lobos’s model. Perhaps the most famous examples are Lorenzo-Fernández’s *Suites Brasileiras Nrs. 1, 2 and 3* for

<sup>154</sup> Béhague, “*Music in Latin America*”, 200-1.

piano (1936, 1938, 1938, ex. 9 above). The opening of the *Suíte Nr. 2* (ex. 13) being another classical example of the “*ponteio* opening.”

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of the *Suíte Brasileira No. 2* by O. Lorenzo-Fernández. The score is in 2/4 time, key of D major, and tempo 'Lento e espressivo' (♩=58). It features a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes markings for 'ligado', 'allarg.', and '(rit.)'. The score is written for piano and includes a bass line with a double bar line and a fermata over the first two measures.

Ex. 13: O. Lorenzo-Fernández – *Suíte Brasileira No. 2* – 1. *Ponteio*, mm. 1-3.

However, consider Andrade’s statement that follows his previous quote:

And since I am imagining big works, it is easy to avoid the forms of Sonata, Toccata etc. very outdated nowadays. Just follow the example of Cesar Franck in his “Prelude, Choral and Fugue.” Amongst those creations, but always preserving individual liberties, we could obey the human obsession for ternary constructions and heed the reasonable advice for diversity between movements. “*Ponteio, Acalanto e Samba*”; “*Chimarrita, Abôio e Louvação*” etc. etc.<sup>155</sup>

Virtually every Brazilian composer followed this advice, and Villani’s contemporaries mentioned above – Edino Krieger and Marlos Nobre – are just a few examples. Krieger’s *Prelúdio e Fuga* (1954) shows that kind of influence (perhaps influenced more directly from Bach’s *Well Tempered Clavier* than Cesar Franck), but also follows Villa-Lobos model, since it also pairs a Brazilian title to each movement (*Cantilena e Marcha-Rancho*), and its opening movement (ex. 14), is yet another example of the “*ponteio* opening.”

<sup>155</sup> Andrade, 30.



Ex. 14: E. Krieger – Prelúdio e Fuga – 1. Prelúdio (Cantilena), mm. 1-3.

Based on those facts, we can conclude that Villani's works are not just pieces of exhibitionist nationalism, or designed to attract by its "exotic flavor." They are rather part of an aesthetical trend existing not only in Brazil, but throughout Latin America in general. But before answering if we can actually consider Villani as another nationalist composer, we must first verify which nationalist elements are present in those particular works.

## 2. SÉRIE BRASILEIRA OP. 8

It was after Villani-Côrtes's return to his hometown Juiz de Fora, following his graduation from the *Conservatório Brasileiro de Música* in 1954, that he wrote his *Série Brasileira Op. 8*, dated 1957 in his composition catalogue from the Centro Cultural de São Paulo's publication.<sup>156</sup> Curiously, the published scores reveal contrasting dates, 1958 for the first two movements and 1956 for the last. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that with only about 10 years of piano studies he was already able to compose a very consistent

<sup>156</sup> Francisco Carlos Coelho, ed., *Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: Música Contemporânea Brasileira* (São Paulo, Brazil: Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga, Centro Cultural São Paulo, 2006), 59.



piano cycle.

During the years he spent in the conservatory he may have got acquainted with some of the most recent piano works by Brazilian composers, perhaps including some of the nationalist works and suites mentioned above (the conservatory was founded by Lorenzo-Fernández, who died before Villani's studies, but the institution also counted with other illustrious teachers while he was there, including even Villa-Lobos himself).<sup>157</sup> Those influences could have been models or at least some kind of inspiration behind the *Série Op. 8*, since according to his composition's catalogue, the *Série* is not only one of his earliest works (the 6<sup>th</sup> item on the list and shortly composed after his conservatory studies), but also the first to explicitly acknowledge a “Brazilian” (nationalist) quality in its own title.<sup>158</sup>

The *Série Op. 8* is divided in four distinct movements: *Prelúdio* (Prelude), *Dança* (Dance), *Movimento em Três por Quatro* (Movement in  $\frac{3}{4}$ ) and *Chôro em Forma de Rondó* (Choro in Rondo Form). Those pieces are not linked by key as in the baroque suite tradition, and they also don't share any evident thematic connections (even though it is possible to argue, as will be shown below, some intervallic and harmonic quotations foreshadowing the last movement throughout the cycle). The only structural ties connecting all four movements as a whole are their Brazilian folk roots, allowing each piece to be consistently performed individually out of the set. But the whole work, as we will see, also share some structural tendencies (preference for repeating sections in different textures, or forms that resemble a sonata) that make the work organic as a whole. We can also observe a symmetric fluency in the organization of each movement's

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<sup>157</sup> Mariz, 198.

<sup>158</sup> Coelho, ed., “*Música Contemporânea Brasileira*” 59.

speed and character (moderate, moderate/fast, slow, fast), conveying a certain progression towards the lively last movement, but interrupted by the lyrical and nostalgic third movement (very similar kind of progression witnessed in the late baroque *sonata da Chiesa*). Since these movements are very contrasting, even coming from different places and styles from the Brazilian culture, we will proceed to analyze each movement individually.

The *Série's* opening movement, the *Prelúdio*, is a short 47-measure piece in G minor (ex. 15), constructed in an AA'B scheme, where B is just a small codetta with 8 measures that borrows the first fragment from Section A's main theme. It is the only movement that has a “freer” formal structure, unrelated to classical preconceived binary or sonata forms. Section A (mm. 1-18) starts with a 2-measure accompaniment pattern in the left hand that remains throughout most of the piece, changing pitches in order to provide the harmonic structure, while the main theme starting on m. 3 in the right hand (marked *cantabile*) comprises two symmetrical 8-measure phrases (mm. 3-10 and 11-18). Section A' preserve most of the first half of the theme's melody (mm. 19-26), while exploring new harmonic contexts in a fuller and louder texture, but completely changes the second half (mm. 27-39), which is expanded to arrive at the dominant cadence on mm. 35-39. The piece is not only short, but also not very demanding technically. However, the melodic line must be played very *legato* with careful attention, since the melody alternates rhythmically between long notes and short syncopated rhythms, requiring a deliberate tone control very reminiscent of Chopin's Nocturnes.

The image shows a musical score for a piano prelude. It is written in 2/4 time and B-flat major. The tempo is marked 'Moderato' and the style is 'cantabile'. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system shows the beginning with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system shows a crescendo (*cresc.*) leading to a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The melody in the right hand is characterized by syncopated rhythms and chromatic movement, while the accompaniment in the left hand features a descending pattern.

Ex. 15: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 1. Prelúdio, mm. 1-10.

But what is “Brazilian” about this prelude? Undoubtedly the Brazilian influence is the subtlest in this short opening movement in comparison to the subsequent ones, but it is still identifiable. First, the aforementioned syncopated rhythms in the melody (also shown in ex. 15) are a staple in Brazilian music, intimately connected to the *samba* rhythm (coincidentally also a dance written in 2/4 usually played in faster tempos, but also have slower variants such as the *samba-canção*). Furthermore, there is also a certain melancholy felt throughout the piece, especially due to the chromatic harmonic descent present in the accompaniment line (ex. 16). If we compare the analysis of Villani’s Prelude with other opening movements from other nationalist suites, such as the analysis shown above of Lorenzo-Fernández’s *Ponteio* from his *Suíte Brasileira Nr. 2* in ex. 13 or Edino Krieger’s *Prelúdio (Cantilena)* in ex. 14, we will quickly identify a tendency to use a descendent accompaniment pattern below a long lyrical melodic line as a very common opening gesture, used classically in Brazilian nationalist music and inspired by the guitar playing of the *ponteios*, as already established above by Béhague.

The image displays three musical excerpts on a light yellow background. The first excerpt, 'Villani - Prelúdio', is written on a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. It features a melodic line with a long, sweeping slur. The second excerpt, 'Fernandez - Ponteio', is written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, showing a more rhythmic and syncopated melody. The third excerpt, 'Krieger - Prelúdio (Cantilena)', is written on a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp and a common time signature, featuring a melodic line with a long, sweeping slur.

Ex. 16: Analysis of the melodic contours of Ex. 15, 13 and 14.

The second movement, the *Dança*, is completely opposite formally to the opening *Prelúdio*. It is a much longer piece (201 measures) with multiple sections that are very contrasting in tempos and mood. Despite the fact that no key signatures are given, the piece clearly ends in E minor, even though it starts in F major. Its formal structure, ABCA'B'D, resembles that of a *sonata allegro*, where C represents a developmental section and D a coda. Since each section has a very distinctive quality and function, also borrowing from different elements of Brazilian culture, we will analyze each section separately.

Section A (mm. 1-16) presents another long lyrical melody (ex. 17) also marked *Moderato* and accompanied by syncopated rhythms distributed between the hands. Even though the texture is somewhat similar to the *Prelúdio*, the syncopated rhythms allied to

the parallel major 7<sup>th</sup> chords create a very different nuance, it is not a melancholic *ponteio* anymore, but a song rather inspired by the urban *bossa nova*. Indeed, the qualities we have described above for that particular Brazilian style – complex rhythms in a subdued and “laid back” mood, small pitch range approaching the spoken language, plus the preference for complex harmonies (major 7<sup>th</sup>s) inspired from American jazz – are not only present, but basically describe the whole section. So, even though there is a lack of dynamics indication in this section (especially if compared to the previous movement), if the performer recognizes the *bossa nova* style, he should be able to create the right color and mood.

Ex. 17: Villani-Côrtés – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, mm. 1-6.

Also, inserted in the chords' parallelism, there's another Brazilian element subtly hidden. In the first two measures (and further repetitions), the composer plays with two harmonies, Fmaj<sup>7M</sup> and Ebmaj<sup>7M</sup>, establishing a very modal flavor to the song. Since Eb is the flat 7<sup>th</sup> degree of the F major scale, that makes a reference to the modal scale known as mixolydian (ex. 18). As noted by many researchers and scholars, this particular scale (as well as some of its other mixed variants) are very commonly used in the folk music of Brazil, especially in the Northeast region.<sup>159</sup>

<sup>159</sup> Paz, “O Modalismo” 32-3.



Ex. 18: Mixolydian mode starting on the pitches C and F.

Section B (mm. 17-34), marked *Allegretto*, totally abandons the previous stylized *bossa nova* mood in favor of a more energetic rhythmic drive. We can notice the influence of a more repetitive and percussive articulation, similar to Villa-Lobos's *African Dances* discussed previously, exchanging the jazzy parallel major 7<sup>th</sup>s from the previous section for expanded dominant chords and quartal harmonies in the accompaniment (ex. 19). This almost atonal accompaniment – considering every measure has an unresolved tritone (or multiple tritones) – reinforces the rhythmic emphasis, bringing one African-inspired rhythmic element to the forefront: accentuation displacement.

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a piano accompaniment. The first system is marked 'Allegretto' and is in 2/4 time. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand has a complex rhythmic pattern with many tritones. The second system continues this pattern with similar rhythmic complexity and tritone usage.

Ex. 19: Villani-Côrtés – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, mm. 17-23.

Section C (mm. 35-92) acts like a developmental section (hence the similarity with the sonata form), picking certain elements from the previous sections and mixing them to create new textures. It starts with a 6-measure false entrance of Section A, which leads into the *Allegretto* (also only 4 measures) and *Allegro* (mm. 45-80). The following *Allegretto* (mm. 81-92), is an elision between Sections C and A'.

Section C is very playful and inventive: after the false start (which is a true copy of the 6 first measures of the piece), the following *Allegretto* (mm. 41-44, ex. 20) plays with the syncopated rhythms of Section A in a more energetic and percussive manner, now polarizing C rather than F. The following *Allegro* borrows the following descendent chromatic idea from the *bossa nova* section (mm. 5-6 in ex. 17) and transforms it into an almost diatonic passage in C major (mm. 45-48, ex. 20), which becomes the accompaniment for the innocent percussive theme borrowed from Section B (mm. 19-23 in ex. 19), first presented in C major (mm. 52-56, ex. 20,) but later modulating to Eb major, F# major and A major. The passage climaxes at m. 68 where a cascade of syncopated rhythms starts to descend exploring a great deal of the keyboard's extension. This climax starts with augmented chords, but sneakily transforms into the key of Ab major, before modulating back to F at the arrival of the following *Allegretto*.

Ex. 20: Villani-Côrtés – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, mm. 41-56.

The *Allegretto* sub-section from mm. 81-92 doubles as the conclusion of the developmental Section C as well as the beginning of Section A' (ex. 21). It is still developmental because – even though we are back to the thematic material of Section A and also back to the key of F major – it is re-elaborated into the previous percussive mood of Section C. Because Section C only reworks material from previous sections, most of its Brazilian elements obviously refer to the aforementioned ones. However, at the end of this *Allegretto*, at mm. 91 and 92, Villani's interplay of black against white keys (ex. 22) certainly brings a hint of Villa-Lobos's music, not seen anywhere else in the whole cycle.<sup>160</sup>

<sup>160</sup> Even though Igor Stravinsky was famous for his use of the bitonality between the keys of C and F# major (black against white keys,) especially in his ballet *Petrushka*, Villa-Lobos started using this device before travelling to France and most likely never heard the ballet before using it in his own compositions. He most likely was influenced instead by French composers such as Darius Milhaud or possibly Claude Debussy. For a reference of his travels and composition dates, see Mariz, 135-194.



Ex. 21: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, mm. 81-86.

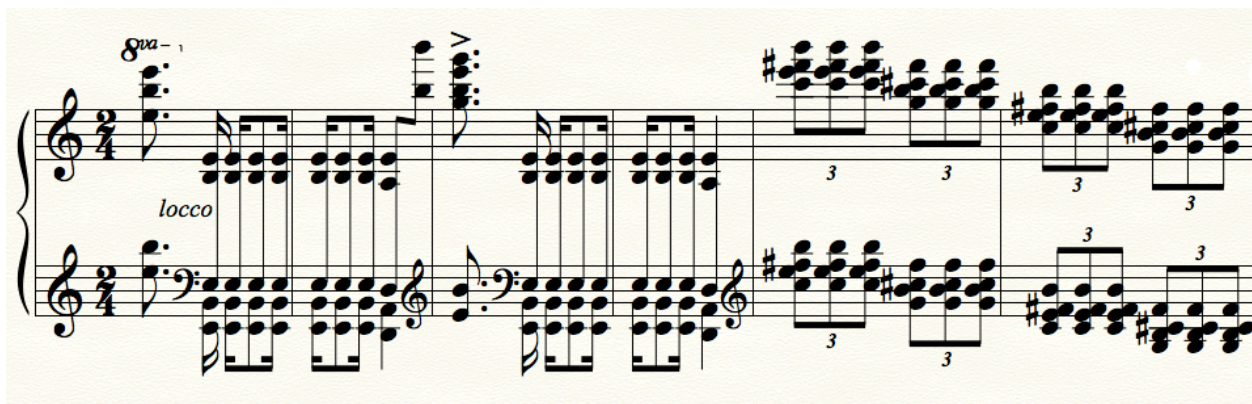
Ex. 22: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, mm. 91-2.

Sections A' and B', being restatements of previous sections, don't bring new Brazilian elements. Section A' (mm. 81-106) starts, as stated above, with the re-elaborated *Allegretto* sub-section. However, as it suddenly resumes the original *bossa nova* spirit (mm. 93-106), the key mode is exchanged, starting in F minor and then exploring other keys centers introduced in the development: Ab major, A major and Gb (F#) major. Meanwhile, Section B' (mm. 107-139) is just a more exciting version of section B. The previous atonal harmonies are now explored with arpeggios flying across the keyboard (ex. 23, mm. 107-108) and the accentuation displacement is now constructed with large 9<sup>th</sup> chords in the right hand against a low 5<sup>th</sup> dyad in the left hand. The innocent melody that was intensely explored in Section C is absent here (ex. 23, mm. 109-110). After replaying that passage within chromatic modulations, a series of

augmented chords explores the rhythmic interplay between hands (mm. 121-127), and finally, from mm. 128-139, sequences of expanded chords in chromatic progression are interpolated against rhythmic articulations of sixteenth notes.

Ex. 23: Villani-Côrtés – *Série Brasileira* Op. 8 – 2. *Dança*, mm. 107-110.

Section D (mm. 140-201) starts with a clear and sudden rupture, a very low B octave in the left hand, which later (m. 148) will be revealed to be a dominant to the key of E minor. At that point (mm. 148-160) we are presented with yet another version of the *bossa nova* theme, this time with a syncopated *samba* rhythm first in E minor (ex. 24), and then in A minor. An outburst of virtuosic octaves starting at m. 160 lead the way back to E minor in m. 169, where we hear the *samba* rhythm for the last time in E minor, and then in  $C^7$ , which could prepare us for a regular conclusion in F major. Instead, at m. 177 we drop back to E minor, into another torrent of flowing sixteenths that lead us to a virtuosic cascade similar to the one at m. 68 in section C. But this time, Ab major modulates into E minor instead of F major, concluding the piece very forcefully in that foreign key.



Ex. 24: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, mm. 148-153.

Similarly to the idea of the whole cycle, the contrasting sections of the *Dança* still work together due to their Brazilian roots: the *bossa nova*, the African rhythms, the *samba*, among others. Here we certainly have a clear example of Nicolaus’s paraphrase on Villani’s music as a “mixture of everything,” as mentioned above in his bio. The *Dança*, as opposed to the *Prelúdio*, is definitely not a beginner’s piece. Some of its virtuosity require a great deal of strength and flexibility, not to mention its references to specific instances of Brazilian culture (such as the *bossa nova*), which demands from the performer very tasteful musical choices in regards to color, character and style.

The *Movimento em Três por Quatro*, third piece of the set, resembles the *Prelúdio* in its contemplative mood. It’s marked *Lento* (the slowest movement of the set) and *piano* (soft), with a very gentle flowing melody soaring over a delicate accompaniment. Despite a short turmoil in the middle, the movement retains its tenderness throughout, working nicely as a break from the forceful and agitated ending of the previous movement. It is a short 97-measure piece, an uncomplicated slow dance in Db major (even though it is assigned the key signature of Ab major).

The *Movimento* is divided in 4 sections, ABA’B’ as in a classical binary form (section A mm. 1-19.2.1, section B mm. 19.2.2-43, section A’ mm. 44-78.2.1, section B’

mm. 78.2.2-97). However, unlike the *Dança*, those sections don't need to be discussed separately, since they have more similarities than contrasts. In fact, the only arguable difference between sections A and B is that A resembles a minuet with its fluid counterpoint, while section B resembles a waltz. This ambiguity could perhaps be the reason for labeling the movement *Movimento*, rather than a generic dance like minuet or waltz.

In regards to form, it is worth noticing that the first half of the piece doesn't end in the dominant (Ab), as it is customary in a classical binary form. Section B ends instead in a half cadence of the major mediant (F major). The choice of F major is indeed curious, since it is the key we expected the previous movement to conclude on, linking both movements harmonically. Section A' starts in F major as well, but gets greatly expanded and concludes on an ambiguous altered and expanded Dmaj<sup>7th9th#11th</sup> chord (ex. 25 m. 78, Gb enharmonic of F# and Ab of G#), while section B' resumes in the dominant of Db straight away, concluding the piece in that expected key.

Ex. 25: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 3. Movimento em Três por Quatro, mm.

77-8.

Once again we ask ourselves: “what is Brazilian about this piece”? Brazilian influence here is very subtle, since the harmonies aren't far from any European

counterpart, in fact, some of the harmonies are even very evocative of Debussy and Ravel (expanded, altered and parallel chords, and even the occasional excursion into whole-tone scales, ex. 25 and 26). Yet, all this European interference doesn't obscure the distinct "Brazilian flavor" that this piece is imbued with. But in order to understand this "Brazilian flavor", we have to understand the development of the waltz in Brazil.



Ex. 26: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 3. Movimento em Três por Quatro, m. 10.

The salon waltz, quite popular in Europe during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also enjoyed the same status here in Brazil. By mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Chopin was definitely the main model, as we can observe in the waltzes of Carlos Gomes, Chiquinha Gonzaga, Alberto Nepomuceno, among others. Additionally, even though Carlos Gomes counts one *Grande Valsa de Bravura* (Great Bravura Waltz) in his piano catalogue, still most of those early waltzes tends to imitate the slower lyrical waltz (such as Chopin's Op. 64 no. 2 in C# minor or Op. 69 No. 1 in Ab major "*l'Adieu*"). Mário de Andrade named this process "*Modinhismo*," when not only European dances were being adapted (such as the waltz, polka, schottish, among others), but also a flow of sentimental songs (usually named *modinhas*) inspired by European models also became very abundant during this

period.<sup>161</sup>

However, no one championed the Brazilian salon piano waltz more than Ernesto Nazareth, with over thirty items in his catalogue. It is also worth noticing that most of his famous waltzes (*Epônina*, *Coração que sente*, *Confidências*, etc), are from the slow lyrical quality. Later, Francisco Mignone would compose one of his biggest and most prominent piano cycles, the *Valsas de Esquina* (Waltzes from the Street Corners), which definitely owes a great deal to Chopin and Nazareth. Villa-Lobos also composed works reflecting this tradition of the Brazilian waltz, from the early *Tristorosa* (from 1910), to some of his most famous piano pieces, like the *Valsa da Dor* (Pain Waltz) and *Impressões Seresteiras* from the *Ciclo Brasileiro* (Serenade Impressions, usually also translated as “Minstrel Impressions”).

Consequently, by early and mid 20<sup>th</sup> century the waltz was already well established in Brazil, either as entertainment salon pieces or concert music, and it had a more common reputation of an intimate, lyrical piece. This was also quickly absorbed later by the pop-music artists: composers like Tom Jobim (in his song *Luiza*) and Chico Buarque (in his song *Beatriz*, from the musical *O Grande Circo Místico*, in partnership with Edu Lobo) quickly captured this sweet nostalgic atmosphere of the waltz not only on those songs, but in several others that relate to the waltz either by name or meter.

Therefore, even though there is not a specific chord, rhythm, theme or melody in the *Movimento* that we could specifically pinpoint as inherent of the “Brazilian folklore” (other than the imported waltz), it is the general mood of the piece, its tenderness and lyricism, that drinks from the source of the old Brazilian masters. It is the historical

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161 Gerard Béhague, “Brazil,” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 30, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000003894>

context of its background that gives the *Movimento* a shade of nationalism, even if it is just a subtle nuance. In fact, Villani even evokes a “recollecting” mood in section B’, where he holds the dominant in the bass for about 14 measures while replaying theme B with its harmony virtually unaltered, making this thematic material to seem out of place, far away removed, truly as a remembrance (ex. 27). It should be performed with lots of *rubato*, as in the romantic tradition, and convey an incredible sense of nostalgia and intimacy, an advice appropriate also for the whole piece.

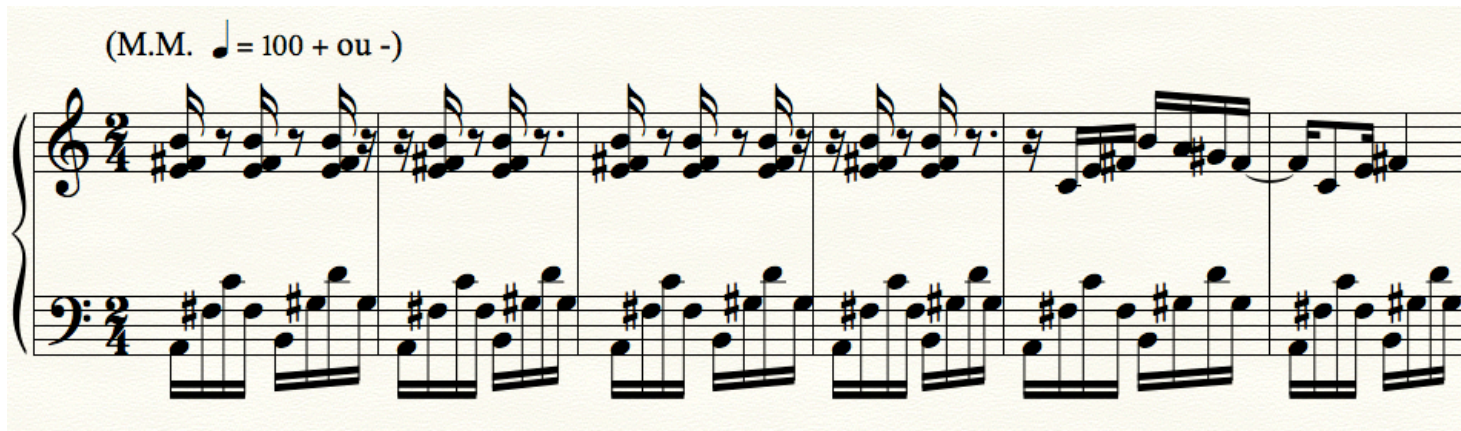
The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It is in 3/4 time and A minor. The tempo is marked 'Tempo Primo' and the dynamics are 'pp'. The right hand plays a melodic line with slurs, and the left hand plays a bass line with slurs and a dominant pedal point. The score is for measures 79-84.

Ex. 27: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 3. Movimento em Três por Quatro, mm. 79-84.

Following the symmetrical architecture of the work, the last movement couldn't be more contrasting to the *Movimento*. The extroverted *Chôro em forma de Rondó*, the fourth and concluding piece of the set, has a toccata-like feel, quite appropriate to the *chôro*, which is a popular Brazilian genre antecedent to the *samba*. It is the longest piece of the set (218 measures), a fast dance in A minor written in binary meter (as usual for Brazilian *chôros*).

It is not only the lively mood of the *Chôro* that contrasts with the previous piece. If the Brazilian influence in the *Movimento* was the subtlest, here it couldn't be more exposed than in the title itself. The reference to the Brazilian *chôro* is not only in its label, but also in the constant use of offbeat and syncopated rhythms, which are quite

characteristic of the genre (ex. 28). Furthermore, the toccata-like feel mentioned above is also quite often associated with the *chôro*, since it often allows the performers to play virtuosic improvisations from the chamber ensembles, usually comprised of wind instruments accompanied by guitars and percussive instruments.<sup>162</sup>



Ex. 28: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 4. Chôro em Forma de Rondó, mm. 1-6.

However, the Brazilian influence in this piece surpasses the association with the *Chôro*. In order to properly analyze its influences, we will investigate each of its sections separately.

The *Chôro em forma de Rondó*, as its title suggests, is in a classical Rondo form divided as ABACAD. The opening section A (mm. 1-16), which appear unaltered twice (mm. 33-48 and 147-162), immediately starts in the spirit of the *chôro* as showed above. Allied to the rhythm and texture, the harmonic element contributes to the Brazilian essence of this section: the melody of the theme (ex. 28, m. 5) is constructed within the ascendant melodic minor scale (with the raised 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> degrees, even on descending melodic contours), giving the main theme a very modal inflection.

<sup>162</sup> Gerard Béhague, “Chôro,” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 30, 2018.)  
<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000005679>



Throughout the whole cycle, Villani has prepared us for this particular mode, since the melodic fragment from m. 5 (ex. 29, the pitches have been numbered for comparison with the following fragments in different keys) has been imperceptibly introduced in every movement, as shown in the following examples. In the first movement, the introduction of the mode (G minor with E natural and F#) has such a significant impact, that it interrupts the left hand rhythmic accompaniment that started the piece in order to introduce the new scale configuration (ex. 30). In the second movement, a subtle reference is made in the outline of the quartal harmonies (ex. 31), but it is at the end of the piece that we find a clear new quote in E minor (ex. 32). And the *Movimento* rearranges the pitches within a new harmonic context, giving a fresh diatonic major harmonic support to the fragment (ex. 33). Since there are no thematic or cyclic connections between the movements, this little fragment works as a connective element linking all pieces together.



Ex. 29: Melodic fragment from the main theme of the *Chôro em Forma de Rondó*, m. 5.

Ex. 30: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 1. Prelúdio, mm. 33-4.



Ex. 31: Villani-Côrtés – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, m. 19.

Ex. 32: Villani-Côrtés – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 2. Dança, m. 177-8.

Ex. 33: Villani-Côrtés – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 3. Movimento em Três por Quatro, m. 1-2.

Furthermore, it is interesting to notice an obvious jazz influence in Villani's language: the sixteenth-note accompaniment of the left hand (ex. 28) matches perfectly the lilting accompanying chords of Gershwin's popular lullaby *Summertime* from the opera *Porgy and Bess* (ex. 34). The chords, and even its expanded notes (added#6), are exactly the same. On another hand, the passage on mm. 187-196 (ex. 35), could also be

linked to Rachmaninoff's opening of his famous Second Piano Concerto (ex. 36). It is hard to determine if those quotes were purposefully done; in any case, Villani definitely played Gershwin during his activities as a pianist for the orchestras and ensembles in his hometown and in Rio de Janeiro, and also certainly must have heard Gershwin's and Rachmaninoff's music.

The image shows a musical score for a soprano solo. The title is "Soparano Solo" (sic) with the instruction "(with Vln. 1.)". The music is in common time (C) and features a vocal line with lyrics: "Sum - mer - time an' the liv - in is eas - y,". The piano accompaniment is in the same time signature and consists of a series of chords, with the label "Str." indicating the string section. The score is presented on two systems of staves.

Ex. 34: G. Gershwin – *Summertime* from the Act 1 of “Porgy and Bess,” mm. 34-36.

The image shows a musical score for a choral piece. It is in 2/4 time and consists of two systems of staves. The top system shows a vocal line with a melodic line and a piano accompaniment with a rhythmic pattern. The bottom system shows a piano accompaniment with a similar rhythmic pattern. The score is presented on two systems of staves.

Ex. 35: Villani-Côrtes – *Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 4. Chôro em Forma de Rondó*,  
mm. 187-196.

Moderato. ( $\text{♩} = 66.$ )

*pp* *poco a poco cresc.* *rit.*

Ex. 36: S. Rachmaninoff – Piano Concerto No. 2 in C minor Op. 18 – I. Moderato,  
mm. 1-8.

Section B (mm. 17-32) keeps the restless rhythmic drive, without introducing any particular distinctive Brazilian feature (other than keeping the *chôro* mood). In fact, this section seems more like an improvised passage, with quartal harmonies transposed chromatically (mm. 17-20), polyrhythmic passages in the scale of A major (mm. 21-22), and virtuosic broken chords and arpeggios outlining augmented harmonies (mm. 25-32).

Section C (mm. 49-146) starts after a literal restatement of Section A. It is a fairly large section (almost 100 measures), and introduces many new elements associated with the Brazilian culture. Its first subsection, c1 (mm. 48-79), works as a bridge to the main thematic material of Section C. It starts by introducing a dominant to Gb (mm. 49-50), leading into the re-elaboration of a fragment of the *chôro* theme in E major (with chromatic modulations to the neighboring semitones). A cascade of broken chords in the dominant of C (mm. 59-61) suddenly leads the section into the *chôro* theme in C major (mm. 62-68). Then, finally, another modulating passage outlining tritones (mm. 69-72) brings back the *chôro* theme into the arrival key of D melodic minor (mm 73-79).

In the second subsection c2 (mm. 80-128) we are introduced to new Brazilian elements. The composer introduces the bass rhythm of a northeastern Brazilian dance known as *baião* (starting at mm. 80), as shown in ex. 37. Then Villani proceeds to unify

that new rhythm with a transformed version of the *choro* theme now in D dorian (82-109). The choice of a modal scale (embellished with some lydian excursions at the end, on mm. 109-110), allied to the new Brazilian rhythm, creates an unmistakable Brazilian sound.



Ex. 37: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 4. Chôro em Forma de Rondó,  
mm. 80-5.

Following the *baião*, Villani introduces a new pattern in mm. 112-115 (ex. 38), to be utilized as an accompaniment for a *cadenza*, an opportunity for the performer to display his improvisation skills. As shown in example 38, he offers a graphic as a suggestion to guide the improvisation, but he also wrote out a cadenza in case the performer would prefer not to create his own. Villani's cadenza is offered in Appendix C, my own cadenza (written prior to knowing Villani had his own) is offered in Appendix D, with an explanation of my own interpretation of Villani's graphic.



Ex. 38: Villani-Côrtes – Série Brasileira Op. 8 – 4. Chôro em Forma de Rondó,  
mm. 112-5.

It is definitely impressive for a composer with only about ten years of familiarity with an instrument to compose such a consistent cycle as this *Série*. Even more impressive is the fact that Villani uses a notation procedure (graphic notation) that had just been introduced abroad, due to the experimentations of the composer John Cage.<sup>163</sup> In Brazil, most of the well-known avant-garde composers (such as Hans Joachim Koellreutter, Gilberto Mendes, Ernst Widmer, Jocy de Oliveira, Jorge Antunes, among others) didn't start experimenting with alternative notations until the 1960's.

It is also possible to connect this improvised *cadenza* with other Brazilian folk elements. In the Northeast region of Brazil, the tradition of the *desafio* (the same Portuguese word for “challenge”) is very popular during folkloric events: it is usually performed between two singers or players, when they both improvise interchangeably, usually by comically commenting on the lines of the last improvisation, until the other runs out of ideas and technically “loses the challenge.”<sup>164</sup> With that perspective, it is at least humorous to consider this *cadenza* as a *desafio* between the composer and the performer, where the performer borrows the suggestions provided by the composer to create his own *desafio*.

After the *cadenza*, the *baião* returns for a few measures (mm. 116-128), leading into the last subsection of Section C, c3 (mm 129-146), which starts by transposing a fragment from the *chôro* theme into several key areas (mm.129-134), followed by a bridge (mm. 135-146) that transitions harmonically through the dominant and subdominant areas (and even with phrygian accents) of A minor, in order to prepare the

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163 James Pritchett, Laura Kuhn and Charles Hiroshi Garrett, “Cage, John (Milton, Jr.),” *Grove Music Online*. (accessed May 30, 2018.)

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002223954>

164 Béhague, “Brazil,” *Grove Music Online*.

second restatement of Section A in that original key.

Section D (mm. 163-218), doesn't present any new folkloric materials. Instead it reworks materials from Sections A and B, presenting the theme in whole-tone scales (mm. 168-174), virtuosic syncopated broken chords (mm. 175-186), the "Rachmaninoff passage" in *samba* rhythm discuss above (mm. 187-196, ex. 35), and the final re-elaboration of the *chôro* theme, traveling from F minor back to A minor (arriving at m. 201) to conclude the piece in a display of virtuosic fireworks. The *Chôro* is definitely the most demanding piece of the set, requiring absolute technique control of double notes, arpeggios, broken chords and a clear articulation. If a pianist decides to approach this set, it would be wise to start with the *Chôro*, not only because of its technical demands, but because it will certainly affect the interpretation of the other movements regarding tempo decisions (none should really feel faster than the *Chôro*), unity (highlight passages that relate to the *Chôro* theme's fragment) and cohesion of Brazilian folk elements (how to play with colors and characters that would reinforce those elements).

#### 4. CINCO MINIATURAS BRASILEIRAS

The *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* (Five Brazilian Miniatures), composed in 1978, are certainly one of Villani's most well-known works. The set was originally composed for recorder and piano and intended as a didactic piece. It became so popular that nowadays it has originated fifteen versions, including ones for strings orchestra, piano trio, baroque recorder and harpsichord, among others.<sup>165</sup> For the purposes of this paper we will use the version for piano trio arranged in the same year of the original.<sup>166</sup>

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165 I. Rodrigues, 94.

166 Coelho, ed., "*Música Contemporânea Brasileira*", 61.

The five movement's titles are *Prelúdio* (Prelude), *Toada*, *Chorinho*, *Cantiga de Ninar* (Lullaby) and *Baião*. Even though the cycle has an even lighter writing in comparison to the *Série Op. 8* – especially due to its pedagogical character – we also find a more mature Villani, who had by now studied under both Camargo-Guarnieri and Koellreutter. He condenses into those small pieces clear Brazilian folk references in a very refined stylistic economy.

The *Cinco Miniaturas*, similarly to many cycles from the romantic period, has a strong connection with the suite genre, much alike the *Série* also does. However, the movements' connections also lie more in their cultural Brazilian references than in formalities such as key signature or thematic material, with the possible exception of the *Chorinho* and the *Baião*.

The opening movement, *Prelúdio*, is certainly the most famous of the set and therefore was the movement most arranged by the composer. In fact, there is even a very illustrative version for voice and piano, a song composed 20 years later (1998) to the same music with lyrics by the composer, entitled *Para Sempre* (Forever), which we will examine after the formal analysis of the movement.<sup>167</sup>

The *Prelúdio*, in A minor and marked *Moderato*, is cast in the traditional ternary form ABA', where both sections have two affirmative phrases (they start similarly but are modified at their final cadences). The first phrase of section A (mm. 3-10, ex. 39), starts and concludes in the tonic, while the second phrase (mm. 11-18) is interrupted at its final cadence with subdominant inflections, by introducing the pitches B $\flat$  and C $\sharp$  leading to D

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid, 70. See also I. Rodrigues, 94. In the same year an arrangement of that movement for piano solo was published as his *Prelúdio Nr. 10*. See: Luciana F. Hamond, "Prelúdios para piano solo de Edmundo Villani-Côrtes: um estudo técnico-interpretativo" (MM diss., Universidade do Rio de Janeiro, RJ, 2005), 53.



minor. The texture is very straightforward: soaring melodies for the strings accompanied by ascending waves of eighth notes in the piano. It is also affirming to observe that a harmonic analysis of the first phrase (ex. 40), also conforms with the expected melancholic character of the Brazilian *ponteio* as described in the analysis of the *Série*'s *Prelúdio* as well (Ex. 16).

The image displays a musical score for two instruments: Violin (Vc.) and Piano (Pno.). The score is in 4/4 time and marked 'Moderato'. The Violin part begins with a melodic line that is marked 'solo'. The Piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment of ascending eighth notes, marked 'p cantabile'. The score is divided into two systems, each with a Violin staff and a Piano staff. The Piano part includes a '7' marking, likely indicating a fingering or a specific technique. The overall texture is straightforward, with soaring melodies for the strings and ascending waves of eighth notes in the piano.

Ex. 39: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 1. Prelúdio, mm. 1-9

The image displays a musical score for a melodic contour analysis. The score is in 4/4 time and marked 'Moderato'. The Violin part features a melodic line with a 'solo' marking. The Piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment of ascending eighth notes, marked 'p cantabile'. The score is divided into two systems, each with a Violin staff and a Piano staff. The Piano part includes a '7' marking, likely indicating a fingering or a specific technique. The overall texture is straightforward, with soaring melodies for the strings and ascending waves of eighth notes in the piano.

Ex. 40: Analysis of the melodic contour of Ex. 39.

Section B introduces a contrasting chordal texture to the piano accompaniment,

while the strings keep carrying the melody. The first phrase (mm. 19-26) starts in the anticipated subdominant D minor, and instead of concluding back in the tonic A minor, the composer repeats the previous interrupted cadence to lead the melody back to D minor, starting the second phrase (mm. 27-32) again in the subdominant, but leaving the conclusion suspended in the dominant, since the last note of the violin melody, the leading tone G#, does not resolve in the next measure. Instead, the cello brings back the first phrase of Section A (mm. 33-40), while the second phrase (mm. 41-56) finally resolves the piece in A minor, being expanded at the conclusion by repeating a plagal cadence three times.

Irailda Eneli, in her dissertation about Vilani songs, describes how one of the major styles of Brazil's popular music, the *bossa nova*, influences this piece.<sup>168</sup> Even though the melodic treatment is not necessarily closely related, being quite lyrical and somewhat eloquent rather than spoken and intimate, some elements are definitely there. She points out specifically the chromatic inflections in the melody (m. 7, ex. 39) comparing them to Tom Jobim's popular song *Insensatez* (ex. 41, compare with m. 6) and the harmonic complexity such as the use of tall chords and chromatic relationships, which are quite common *bossa nova* features.<sup>169</sup>

Ex. 41: Tom Jobim – *Insensatez* (mm. 1-8).

<sup>168</sup> I. Rodrigues, 20-2.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

In fact, perhaps the lyrical quality of the melody was what led Villani to re-write it as a song. And his choice of subject, inspired by wedding vows,<sup>170</sup> certainly reflects the intensity and solemnity of the music's spirit. The lyrics of the poem with my own English translation are included below.

Para Sempre	Forever
Ah! Quanto amor trago dentro do meu coração	Ah! How much love I bring inside my heart
E passou a ser maior	And it became bigger
A razão de toda minha vida	The reason of my whole life
Nem mesmo a dor a tristeza o sofrimento	Not even pain, sadness or suffering
Irão mudar meu pensamento	Will change my thoughts
Prometo só te amar	I promise to only love you
Sempre contigo estar	Always be with you
Até que a morte nos separe	Until death do us part
E a Deus entreguemos nossos corações	And to God let us give our hearts
Vem sou teu destino	Come, I'm your destiny
E você também o meu será	And you also mine will be
Pra todo o sempre eu vou te amar	Forever and ever I will love you
Pra sempre	Forever

The piece presents little technical difficulties for the piano, which should remain subdued to avoid getting in the way of the strings' melody, but from the string players it is required a good control of bowing and vibrato in order to manage the long phrases.

The *Toada*, second piece of the cycle, is a very short 27-measure song in G major, marked *moderato*. The word *toada* is a term widely used to describe many songs of folkloric origin.<sup>171</sup> It is also usually associated with very dry and monotonic melodic contours and textures, due to its often improvisatory nature.

Villani captures those folk elements quite captivatingly. He sets the piece in a simple ternary ABA' structure with one 8-measure phrase per section (except Section A' that gets expanded with one extra measure). Section A reflects the *toada*'s monotonic

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170 I. Rodrigues, 94.

171 Béhague, "Brazil".

tendencies by alternating the harmonies in the piano accompaniment between the tonic and subdominant measure by measure, coloring the subdominant with minor inflections (ex. 42). Furthermore, the simplicity of the melodic contour and its formal predictability allude to the aforementioned improvisatory qualities of the *toada*.

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Violin (Vln.), Viola (Vc.), and Piano (Pno.). The score is in 4/4 time, key of D major (one sharp), and marked "A tempo". The Violin part has a simple melodic line. The Viola part has a simple bass line. The Piano part has a rhythmic accompaniment with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

Ex. 42: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 2. Toada, mm. 3-6.

Section B (11-18) certainly is one of the most compelling moments from the cycle. He shifts the textural color by bringing the melody from the violin to the piano, but spreads the melody a 10<sup>th</sup> apart (ex. 43) in the high register, in a subtle reference to Brazilian popular country music, where usually a male duo sings a third (or sixth) apart throughout the song. However, this common practice found in commercial Brazilian country music also has its roots in folkloric tradition. Suzel Ana Reily, in her article about the musical practices of the old Brazilian festivities of the *folia de reis* (folly of the kings, a catholic procession following Christmas, symbolizing the travels of the “Three Kings” that visited Jesus), shows an example of *toada paulista* that uses this exact kind of

melodic construction: parallel thirds (ex. 44).<sup>172</sup> But it is her comment about the *toada baiana* that will show an even more intimate connection with this particular section of Villani's *Toada*. She writes:

The *toadas* in this style [*toada baiana*], however, tend to be more syncopated [than the *toada paulista*] and the accompaniment is dominated by drums and percussion instruments, which perform various rhythms against the Bantu eight-pulse timeline of the largest drum.<sup>173</sup>

That description matches Villani's texture precisely: the melody in tenths symbolizing the parallel thirds, the syncopated rhythm similar to the *toada baiana*, and the eight-pulse represented by the violin part.

Ex. 43: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 2. Toada (mm. 10-14)

Pe-ço a Deus, aos Três Reis San-tos, pra vo - cê eu vou can - tar

Ex. 44: Toada Paulista

172 Suzel Ana Reily, "Political Implications of Musical Performance." *The World of Music* 37, no. 2 (1995): 72-102. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43561446>. (accessed September 30th, 2018).

173 Ibid.

Besides those melodic and rhythmic qualities, throughout the *Toada* the use of the mixolydian mode is quite accentuated (already mentioned above as a common feature in the northeastern Brazilian folklore) especially on final cadences.

The *Toada* is certainly the less challenging piece of the cycle, since its simplicity also reflects the unpretentious aspects of its folk heritage. However, careful attention should be given to balance, since the melody in the violin is quite low compared to the counterpoint in the high tessitura of the cello, which should not overpower the former. The final result should sound very melancholic and expressive.

The *Chorinho* (little *chôro*), the third piece of the cycle, is a 41-measure *scherzo* in C major, very humoristic, which is noticeable already by its assigned tempo marking of *vivo saltitante* (lively “jumpy”). The title obviously refers to the same Brazilian influence of the last movement of the *Série* – the *chôro* – and they logically share many stylistic similarities.

The form of the *Chorinho* coincidentally also resembles that of a rondo, ABAB’A’, and the sections’ length follow a very regular 8-measure pattern (ex. 45, m. 1 works as a pickup to m. 2). Example 7 already shows many similarities with the *Série*’s *Chôro*: texturally, Section A also resorts to the toccata-like characteristics of the *chôro*, but here the constant sixteenths are spread throughout the instruments, resembling even more the style of traditional *chôro* ensembles. It is also hard to miss Villani’s subtle reference to Nazareth’s *Odeon* (shown in ex. 6), the chromatic bass line clearly alluding to the former’s iconic melodic opening.

Vivo saltitante

Vln. *f*

Vc. *f*

Vivo saltitante

Pno. *f*

Ex. 45: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 3. Chorinho, mm. 1-5.

Section B (ex. 46) stops the running sixteenths to introduce the characteristic syncopated rhythm of the *samba*, which is one of the modern successors of the *chôro*. The melody also becomes less contrapuntal, with the cello doubling the violin melody a 10<sup>th</sup> below (as we have seen in the *Toada*, another characteristic of Brazilian folk song). The result is not only quite percussive and humorous, but also impregnated with Brazilian flavor.

Vln.

Vc.

Pno.

Ex. 46: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 3. Chorinho, mm. 10-13.

Since the sections are repeated, there aren't any other Brazilian folk influences throughout the piece. Section B' only trades the melody doubled by 10<sup>ths</sup> from the strings to the piano, giving the accompaniment to the former, and Section A' ends with a comical two-measure abrupt ending, marked *mais rápido subitamente* (suddenly faster) after a *fermata* in the tonic chord of C major.

The *Chorinho* is the hardest movement of the cycle after the *Baião*. The individual difficulties of each instrument aren't overbearing at all, but the ensemble has to be very communicative in order to coordinate the offbeat entrances of the thematic material. In its didactic purposes, this piece is certainly a great cueing exercise. It is also important to achieve the lively spirit of the piece without over-exaggerating the quickness of the tempo, since it is important to give the last two measures enough room to be even faster.

The fourth movement *Cantiga de Ninar* (lullaby), marked *calmamente* (calmly), works as the slow movement of the cycle. It is a 28-measure lyrical piece in F major, where the violin plays the melody accompanied by counterpoint or lilting eighth notes in the cello and piano parts (ex. 47). The form is a simple ternary ABA' (mm. 4-11, mm. 12-19, mm. 20-28), where A' presents the same thematic material of A but with differences in register, harmony, and with a measure expansion at the end to conclude the piece in a plagal cadence.



Ex. 47: E. Villani-Côrtés – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 4. Cantiga de Ninar, mm. 4-7.

Since the lullaby is a universal phenomenon, perhaps this is the movement that will look the less “exotic” or “picturesque” in its use of Brazilian nationalism. But nonetheless the *Cantiga* is still a typical example of Brazilian cultural practices, even if those practices share many similarities with other cultures around the world.

Perhaps one of the most famous models of lullaby would be Johannes Brahms’s *Wiegenlied* Op. 49 No. 4, which is still very well-known and sung nowadays, especially across occidental countries. Of course, many other composers wrote lullabies – Chopin, Schubert, Grieg, Stanford, to name just a few – but none reached as much popularity as Brahms’s. In fact, there are even striking similarities between Villani’s and Brahms’s melodic treatment, but especially the polarization of the subdominant harmonic area at the start of the contrasting phrase (m. 11 in Ex. 48 and m. 12 in Ex. 49), and that particular moment also coincides with the melodic contour’s highest climax.

Deck: mor-gen früh, wenn Gott will, wirst du wie - der ge -

Ex. 48: J. Brahms – Wiegenlied Op. 49 No. 4, mm. 10-3.

Ex. 49: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 4. Cantiga de Ninar, mm. 11-5.

Curiously, the two most famous folk Brazilian lullabies share those same characteristics: the highest pitch coincides with the subdominant appearance. The melody of *Boi da Cara Preta* (Ox with a Black Face, ex. 50) has its climax on the subdominant at m. 3, while *Dorme, neném* (Sleep, little baby, ex. 51) has its climax on the pitch B at m. 5, which works as a neighbor note to the pitch A, which also belongs to the subdominant harmony. However, those folk melodies and Villani's also share another similarity that distinguishes them from Brahms's lullaby: their melodic contour equilibrium, relying more on step motion rather than skips and arpeggios. Instead, foreign lullabies like Brahms's don't particularly show any emphasis on step-motion at all, fact also noticed in

lullabies such as *Rock-a-Bye Baby*, and to some degree even the aforementioned Gershwin's *Summertime* (ex. 34). However, all three Brazilian examples (ex. 49, 50 and 51) display a considerable upwards leap right by the subdominant arrival, emphasizing that moment expressively even more.

Boi, boi, boi, boi da ca-ra pre - ta pe-ga es-te me - ni-no que tem me-do de ca - re - ta

Ex. 50: Boi da Cara Preta, mm. 1-8.

Dor - me ne - nê, que a cu-ca vai pe - gar, ma - mãe tá na ro - ça, pa - pai foi tra-ba - lhar

Ex. 51: Dorme, Nenê, mm. 1-8.

Comparing Villani's lullaby with those by nationalist Brazilian composers will also reveal those same tendencies. Lorenzo Fernández's *Suave Acalanto* (Gentle Cradle Song) from his *Brazilian Suite No. 1* is a curious example (ex. 52). The subdominant bass arrives at m. 11, but when the melody reaches its climax by the second half of the measure, the harmony shifts to a secondary dominant, bringing a new harmonic color to emphasize it even more. Meanwhile, Francisco Mignone's song *Cantiga de Ninar* (ex. 53) displays all the traditional characteristics: melody emphasizing step-motion, with an expressive big leap by the subdominant arrival, where the melodic contour finds its climax (mm. 18-21).



Ex. 52: O. Lorenzo-Fernández – Suíte Brasileira Nr. 1 – 2. Suave Acalanto, mm. 10-2.

mão de va - gar. E quan - do tu dor - mi - res can - ça - do Fi - ca -  
 fin - da do mar. E quan - do el - lache - gou tu - do ri - a, E quan - do

Ex. 53: F. Mignone – Cantiga de Ninar, mm. 16-23.

Those similarities demonstrate that Villani's *Cantiga de Ninar* is strongly rooted on Brazilian traditions, even if those traditions were adapted from abroad, similarly to the imported waltz from the *Série's Movimento*. The *Cantiga* doesn't require any kind of virtuosic agility, but the quality of sound and control of the phrasing are vital to an appropriate interpretation, due to its intimate lyrical nature.

The *Baião* concludes the cycle with an unmistakable Brazilian flavor. It is the longest piece of the cycle with 134 measures and certainly the most difficult, not only because of its length, but also because the instruments get more virtuosic passages to play, especially at the middle Section B. Marked *decidido* (with resolution), the *Baião*, written in D mixolydian (but using the key signature of D major), is divided in three large

sections in ternary form ABA' (mm. 1-22, m. 23-114, mm. 115-134), where Section A' is a shorter restatement of A, without the second phrase, and repeating the closing cadence of the first phrase three times as a conclusion to the whole piece and cycle.

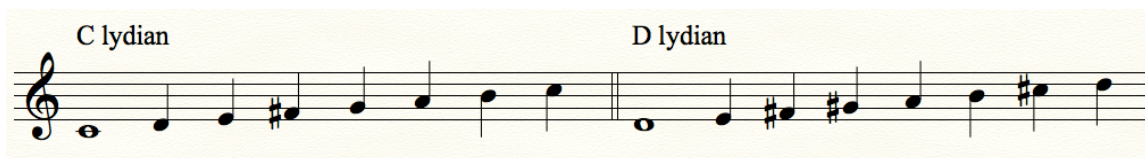
As mentioned before, the *baião* is a northeastern dance characteristic of its use of a syncopated rhythm in the bass (ex. 54, mm. 1-2). The dance became quite popular after performances of the folk singer Luiz Gonzaga, known as “the *baião* king.”<sup>174</sup> One of his first successes was the song actually also entitled *Baião* (ex. 55), which not only helped to popularize the style, but also became a model for the following *baiões*. One similarity between Villani’s and Gonzaga’s examples is their adoption of the mixolydian mode, one more influence from Brazilian’s northeast region already previously discussed. But Villani goes one step further, and also utilizes the lydian mode (ex. 56) at the final cadence of the first phrase (see m. 10 at ex. 54), in a clear case of modal dualism.

Ex. 54: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 5. Baião, mm. 1-11.

174 Béhague, “Brazil”.



Ex. 55: Luiz Gonzaga – Baião, mm. 1-8.



Ex. 56: Lydian mode starting on the pitches C and D

Furthermore, compare Gonzaga's melody (ex. 55) with the melodic contour of the violin in Villani's Section B opening (ex. 57). The similarities are striking: an upwards arpeggio outlining the tonic chord with its 7<sup>th</sup> minor, followed by stepwise descending notes. The highest pitch in both cases is achieved at the latter half of the melody, the 9<sup>th</sup> in both cases, followed again by a descending stepwise motion. It becomes clear that Villani not only borrowed from the folk tradition, but also absorbed and reproduced the very core of the style.

Ex. 57: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 5. Baião, mm. 23-30.

Villani's *Baião* also provides the conclusion of the cycle with a certain structural unity. Compare, for example, the intervallic 4<sup>ths</sup> in the first phrase of the *Baião* (ex. 54,

mm.3-4) with a similar passage in the *Chorinho* (Ex. 45, mm. 3-4). Even more compelling are the similarities between the Section B of the *Chorinho* (Ex. 46) and the Section B of the *Baião* (Ex. 58).

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in a key signature of one sharp (F#). The treble staff contains a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The second system is a grand staff, also in one sharp, featuring a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. It includes a treble clef staff with complex chordal textures and a bass clef staff with a more active, rhythmic accompaniment.

Ex. 58: E. Villani-Côrtes – Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras – 5. Baião, mm. 12-5.

Lastly, similar to the *Série's Choro*, section B is also presented in a very similar manner of the northeastern *desafio*: the violin opens with the melody inspired by Gonzaga, and proceeds to comment on it in many virtuosic and improvisatory ways, until giving its spotlight to the cello (m. 55), that then plays its own virtuosic passages. At m. 87, the strings take the accompaniment pattern and the piano starts his own melody, as if each instrument had their chance to respond to the *desafio* before coming back together to play the *baião* once more to conclude the performance. All those northeast references seem even like an homage to that particular Brazilian region, which is very rich culturally and certainly influences all others with their music, dance, folk literature, festivities, food and culture.

Villani's *Série Brasileira Op. 8* and his *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* have a wide array of Brazilian cultural references as they were analyzed, described and deciphered above. They have influences that are more universal, such as the lullaby and the waltz, but also very specific regional instances like the *chôro* and *baião*, to finally even commercial pop music references like the *bossa nova*. But we also inferred that those allusions are not a result of any field studies, and they don't have the intention to portray those cultural elements "in loco", meaning that they are reinterpretations of those elements to be expressed in a place and context alien to their original counterparts, namely the recital chambers or concert halls. And sometimes those national references are even mixed with elements foreign to Brazilian culture, such as the American jazz and European concert music. Previously, Villani's style was described as very eclectic, and those pieces, aside their strong Brazilian ties, certainly are no exception.



## CONCLUSION

After examining the music of the *Série Brasileira Op. 8* and the *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* by Villani-Côrtes, we can safely assert that there is a considerable amount of cultural Brazilian references in those pieces. This brings us to an important question: is Villani-Côrtes a nationalist composer?

As we will find out, the answer is complex and ambiguous. From a romantic standpoint, based on the origins of nationalism as an aesthetic movement, of course Villani could be considered a nationalist composer, since he adapted dances and folk elements from his homeland into his music, like the aforementioned composers Chopin, Liszt, Albéniz and Granados.

It is also worth mentioning that these Brazilian references are not only found in those works; other works, such as the *Série Brasileira* for flute and piano, also share nationalistic influences. And this is just to mention a cycle that have the nationality “Brazilian” attached to its title. It is possible to find Brazilian connections abundantly in his varied output, even in pieces with more generic titles. Why would the composer then distance himself from the nationalist movement?

There may be many reasons for that, as for him nationalism is only one tool to compose, it is a means and not an end. As we observed above, he also borrows influence from other sources such as the European concert music, American jazz, and even sometimes alludes to specific composers (like Gershwin and Rachmaninoff in the *Chôro*). But those extra inspirations don’t simply erase the nationalism out of his music, the nationalism is still there regardless of any foreign trends.

However, comparing that to the Brazilian Nationalist School, where usually

composers conduct extensive research in folk music to properly adapt its materials into their own language (and are very careful about how much foreign influences they will allow into it), we can perceive an acute systematic difference in their approach. Villani, much like Villa-Lobos, composes from his personal experiences, from his musical practice, from whatever comes his way naturally, and it “doesn’t make sense” for him to work otherwise.<sup>175</sup> So, from a twentieth-century Brazilian cultural standpoint, it is not possible to classify Villani among Brazilian nationalist composers such as Camargo Guarnieri, José Siqueira and Guerra-Peixe, since their compositional approach are radically different. In conclusion, even though Villani serves himself of nationalistic practices, he certainly doesn’t conform to the Brazilian Nationalist School. Like Chopin, his music is not a phonographic representation of the culture *in loco*, but rather music to be heard and enjoyed aesthetically, regardless of its origins. The comment of the pianist Achille Picchi certainly summarizes those reflections very well: “Villani-Côrtes uses the national with intelligence, but without too much green and yellow.”<sup>176</sup>

Yet, prior knowledge of those cultural references are indispensable for the performer, in the same way that it is necessary for a performer to know how to properly play a sarabande, or how to play in the romantic *style hongrois*: by experiencing their folk characteristic elements, it will inform the player how to properly color their performance.

According to the classifications discussed in chapter 1, we can definitely position Villani-Côrtes in the category of “defending nationalism,” since he is a Brazilian writing in his own homeland language (but due to our “global neo-cosmopolitan” world ruled by

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175 Perpetuo, 21.

176 Mariz, 384. Green and yellow are references to the Brazilian flag’s colors.

technologic advancements, not free from external influences either). We also can safely remove his music out of the “aggressive” zone of nationalism, since his writing – as exemplified by his *Série Brasileira Op. 8* and the *Cinco Miniaturas Brasileiras* – attempts to accommodate the most disparate influences harmoniously: from the rural *ponteios* to the urban *bossa-nova*, or from the worldly lullaby to the African-inspired *samba*. Those unrelated elements don’t overcome each other, there is no political agenda, they peacefully coexist together.

And with the idea of coexistence in mind, I feel inclined to conclude this document the same way it started: with another Chopin anecdote regarding this subject. The Polish physician Ferdynand Dworzaczek recalls an experience he had: while lying in the sofa listening to Chopin improvise, “...all of a sudden his music rang out with a song which went to the heart of my soul... a well-known song... a song from the homeland... beloved... from the family home... from childhood years.” Calling the composer, Ferdynand declared surprised that Chopin had just played a melody that his mother used to sing to him as a child, to which Chopin, shocked, first retorted that Ferdynand couldn’t possibly have heard that tune before. As he realized what the situation was, Chopin then rose to embrace his friend in tears, saying: “you have just made me indescribably happy; there are not words for it! You never knew this song... only its spirit: the spirit of Polish melody! And I am so happy to have been able to grasp and reveal it!”<sup>177</sup>

Nationalism, unfortunately, is a sensitive topic nowadays. And as Taruskin points

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177 Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger. *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils* (3rd English ed. Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), quoted in Jonathan Bellman, *Chopin’s Polish Ballade: Op. 38 as Narrative of National Martyrdom* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 134.

out, it can be used as a weapon to exclude, isolate, and degrade people and other cultures. Sadly, many scholars fail to see the other side: how it brings people together, as in the case of the Polish physician and musician; how it can be used to revive memories of family, country, childhood; and most of all, how it can easily communicate to people regardless of national roots and grant a sense of belonging somewhere in this gigantic planet. Those were my feelings the first time I heard Villani-Côrtes's music, and to me he is indeed a nationalist composer, but not because of his use of Brazilian folklore, or because of the tradition of Brazilian composers and musicians which he reverently assimilates, or not because of his bravery in reconciling disparate trends in a time where an artist usually had to take sides to survive in the musical world; but, as I paraphrase the physician's words, because "his music rang out with a song which went to the heart of my soul."

## APPENDIX A

### *MANIFESTO DE 1946 BY HANS-JOACHIM KOELLREUTTER*

This Appendix includes the original document text and my own translation.

**Grupo Música Viva**  
**Manifesto 1946**  
**Declaração de princípios**

A música, traduzindo idéias e sentimentos na linguagem dos sons, é um meio de expressão; portanto, produto da vida social.

A arte musical – como todas as outras artes – aparece como super-estrutura de um regime cuja estrutura é de natureza puramente material. A arte musical é o reflexo do essencial na realidade.

A produção intelectual, servindo-se dos meios de expressão artística, é função da produção material e sujeita, portanto, como esta, a uma constante transformação, à lei da evolução.

Música é movimento. Música é vida.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, compreendendo este fato combate pela música que revela o eternamente novo, isto é: por uma arte musical que seja a expressão real da época e da sociedade.

“MÚSICA VIVA” refuta a assim chamada arte acadêmica, negação da própria arte.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, baseada nesse princípio fundamental, apoia tudo o que favorece o nascimento e crescimento do novo, escolhendo a revolução e repelindo a reação.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, compreendendo que o artista é o produto do meio e que a arte só pode florescer quando as forças produtivas tiverem atingido um certo nível de desenvolvimento, apoiará qualquer iniciativa em prol de uma educação não somente artística, como também ideológica; pois, não há arte sem ideologia.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, compreendendo que a técnica da música e da construção musical depende da técnica da produção material, propõe a substituição do ensino teórico-musical baseado em preconceitos estéticos tidos como dogmas, por um ensino científico baseado em estudos e pesquisas das leis acústicas, e apoiará as iniciativas que favoreçam a utilização artística dos instrumentos rádio-elétricos.

“MÚSICA VIVA” estimulará a criação de novas formas musicais que correspondam às idéias novas, expressas numa linguagem musical contrapontístico-harmônica e baseada num cromatismo diatônico.

“MÚSICA VIVA” repele, entretanto, o formalismo, isto é: a arte na qual a forma se converte em autônoma; pois, a forma da obra de arte autêntica corresponde ao conteúdo nela representado.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, compreendendo que a tendência “arte pela arte” surge num terreno de desacordo insolúvel com o meio social, bate-se pela concepção utilitária da arte, isto é, a tendência de conceder às obras artísticas a significação que lhes compete em relação ao desenvolvimento social e a super-estrutura dela.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, adotando os princípios de arte-ação, abandona como ideal a preocupação exclusiva de beleza; pois, toda a arte de nossa época não organizada diretamente sobre o princípio da utilidade será desligada do real.

“MÚSICA VIVA” acredita no poder da música como linguagem substancial, como estágio na evolução artística de um povo, combate, por outro lado, o falso nacionalismo em música, isto é: aquele que exalta sentimentos de superioridade nacionalista na sua essência e estimula tendências egocêntricas e individualistas que separam os homens, originando forças disruptivas.

“MÚSICA VIVA” acredita na função socializadora da música que é a de unir os homens, humanizando-os e universalizando-os.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, compreendendo a importância social e artística da música popular, apoiará qualquer iniciativa no sentido de desenvolver e estimular a criação e divulgação da boa música popular, combatendo a produção de obras prejudiciais à educação artístico-social do povo.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, compreendendo que o desenvolvimento das artes depende também da cooperação entre os artistas e das organizações profissionais, e compreendendo que a arte somente poderá florescer quando o nível artístico coletivo tiver atingido um determinado grau de evolução, apoiará todas as iniciativas tendentes a estimular a colaboração artístico-profissional e a favorecer o desenvolvimento do nível artístico coletivo; pois a arte reflete o estado de sensibilidade e a capacidade de coordenação do meio.

Consciente da missão da arte contemporânea em face da sociedade humana, o grupo “MÚSICA VIVA” acompanha o presente no seu caminho de descoberta e conquista, lutando pelas idéias novas de um mundo novo, crendo na força criadora do espírito humano e na arte do futuro.

Rio de Janeiro, 1º. de novembro de 1946.

Heitor Alimonda, Egídio de Castro e Silva, Guerra Peixe, Eunice Katunda, Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, Edino Krieger, Gení Marcondes, Santino Parpinelli, Cláudio Santoro.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Mariz, 298-9.

**Grupo Música Viva**  
**1946 Manifesto**  
**Declaration of principles**

Music, translating ideas and feelings into the language of sounds, is a means of expression; therefore, product of social life.

The musical art – as any other art – appears as super-structure of a regimen which its structure is of purely material nature. The musical art is the reflex of the essential in reality.

The intellectual production, serving itself from artistic means of expression, is tied to material production and subjugated, consequently, as the latter, to constant transformation, to the laws of evolution.

Music is movement. Music is life.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, understanding this fact fights for music that reveals the eternally new, that is: for a musical art that is the real expression of its time and society.

“MÚSICA VIVA” repudiates the so called academic art, negation of art itself.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, based on this fundamental principle, supports everything that favors the birth and growth of the new, choosing revolution and repelling reaction.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, understanding that the artist is locally influenced and that art can only flourish once the productive forces have met a certain degree of development, will support any endeavor favoring not only an artistic education, but also ideological; since there is no art without ideology.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, understanding that the technique of music and musical construction depends on the technique of material production, proposes the change of the theoretical-musical teaching based on aesthetical prejudices pre-established as dogmas, into a scientific teaching based on studies and research of acoustic laws, and will support efforts that favor the artistic use of radio-electric instruments.

“MÚSICA VIVA” encourages the creation of new musical forms that match new ideas, expressed in a contrapuntist-harmonic musical language and based in a diatonic chromaticism.

“MÚSICA VIVA” resists, however, against formalism, that is: the art in which form becomes autonomic; since the authentic artwork’s form matches its content.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, understanding that the trend “art for art’s sake” ensues in a terrain of unsolvable discord with the social, strives for the utilitarian concept of art, that is, the tendency of conceding to artworks their own signification related to its social development and super-structure.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, adopting the principles of art-action, abandons the exclusive preoccupation with beauty; because any contemporary work not directly organized upon the principle of utility will be disconnected from reality.

“MÚSICA VIVA” believes in the power of music as a substantial language, as a step in the population's artistic evolution, but fights against the fake nationalism in music, that is: the one that exalts feelings of nationalist superiority in its essence and promotes egocentric and individualist tendencies which separates mankind, originating disruptive forces.

“MÚSICA VIVA” believes in music’s social function which is to unite mankind, humanizing and universalizing them.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, understanding the social and artistic relevance of folk music, will support any efforts to develop and foster the creation and advertising of the good folk music, opposing the production of works that are harmful to the artistic-social education of the people.

“MÚSICA VIVA”, understanding that arts development also depends on the cooperation between artist and professional organizations, and understanding that art will flourish only when the collective artistic level raises to a certain evolutionary degree, will support any efforts promoting artistic-professional collaboration and favoring the development of the collective artistic level; because art reflects the state of sensitivity and coordination capacity of its local.

Conscious of the contemporary art’s mission in face of human society, the group “MÚSICA VIVA” follows the present in its own path of discovery and conquest, fighting for new ideas of a new world, believing in the creative power of the human spirit and in the art of the future.

Rio de Janeiro, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1946.

Heitor Alimonda, Egídio de Castro e Silva, Guerra Peixe, Eunice Katunda, Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, Edino Krieger, Gení Marcondes, Santino Parpinelli, Cláudio Santoro.



## APPENDIX B

### *CARTA ABERTA AOS MÚSICOS E CRÍTICOS DO BRASIL*

This Appendix includes the original document text and my own translation.

**Mozart Camargo Guarnieri**

**Carta Aberta aos Músicos e Críticos do Brasil (1950)**

Considerando as minhas grandes responsabilidades, como compositor brasileiro, diante de meu povo e das novas gerações de criadores na arte musical, e profundamente preocupado com a orientação atual da música dos jovens compositores que, influenciados por idéias errôneas, se filiam ao dodecafonismo – corrente formalista que leva à degenerescência do caráter nacional de nossa música – tomei a resolução de escrever esta carta aberta aos músicos e críticos do Brasil.

Através deste documento, quero alertá-los sobre os enormes perigos que, neste momento, ameaçam profundamente toda a cultura musical brasileira, a que estamos estreitamente vinculados.

Esses perigos provêm do fato de muitos dos nossos jovens compositores, por inadvertência ou ignorância, estarem se deixando seduzir por falsas teorias progressistas da música, orientando a sua obra nascente num sentido contrário ao dos verdadeiros interesses da música brasileira.

Introduzido no Brasil há poucos anos, por elementos oriundos de países onde se empobrece o folclore musical, o dodecafonismo encontrou aqui ardorosa acolhida por parte de alguns espíritos desprevenidos.

À sombra de seu maléfico prestígio se abrigaram alguns compositores moços de valor e grande talento, como Cláudio Santoro e Guerra-Peixe que, felizmente, após seguirem essa orientação errada, puderam se libertar dela e retomar o caminho da música

baseada no estudo e no aproveitamento artístico-científico do nosso folclore. Outros jovens compositores, entretanto, ainda dominados pela corrente dodecafonista (que desgraçadamente recebe o apoio e simpatia de muitas pessoas desorientadas), estão sufocando o seu talento, perdendo contato com a realidade e cultura brasileiras, e criando uma música cerebrina e falaciosa, inteiramente divorciada de nossas características nacionais.

Diante dessa situação que tende a se agravar dia a dia, comprometendo basilarmente o destino de nossa música, é tempo de erguer um grito de alerta para deter a nefasta infiltração formalista e antibrasileira que, recebida com tolerância e complacência hoje, virá trazer, no futuro, graves e insanáveis prejuízos ao desenvolvimento da música nacional do Brasil.

É preciso que se diga a esses jovens que o dodecafonismo, em música, corresponde ao abstracionismo em pintura; ao hermetismo, em literatura; ao existencialismo, em filosofia; ao charlatanismo, em ciência.

Assim, pois, o dodecafonismo (como aqueles e outros contrabandos que estamos importando e assimilando servilmente) é uma expressão característica de uma política de degenerescência cultural, um ramo adventício da figueira-brava do cosmopolitismo que nos ameaça com suas sombras deformantes e tem por objetivo oculto um lento e pernicioso trabalho de destruição do nosso caráter nacional.

O dodecafonismo é assim, de um ponto de vista mais geral, produto de culturas superadas, que se decompõem de maneira inevitável; é um artifício cerebralista, antinacional, antipopular, levado ao extremo; é química, é arquitetura, é matemática na música – é tudo o que quiserem – mas não é música! É um requinte de inteligências

saturadas, de almas secas, descrentes da vida; é um vício de semimortos, um refúgio de compositores medíocres, de seres sem pátria, incapazes de compreender, de sentir, de amar e revelar tudo o que há de novo, dinâmico e saudável no espírito de nosso povo.

Que essa pretensa música encontre adeptos no seio de civilizações e culturas decadentes, onde se exaurem as fontes originais do folclore (como é o caso de alguns países da Europa); que essa tendência deformadora deite as suas raízes envenenadas no solo cansado de sociedades em decomposição, vá lá! Mas que não encontre acolhida aqui, na América nativa e especialmente em nosso Brasil, onde um povo novo e rico de poder criador tem todo um grandioso porvir nacional a construir com suas próprias mãos! Importar e tentar adaptar no Brasil essa caricatura de música, esse método de contorcionismo cerebral antiartístico, que nada tem de comum com as características específicas de nosso temperamento nacional, e que se destina apenas a nutrir o gosto pervertido de pequenas elites de requintados e paranoicos, reputo um crime de lesa-pátria! Isso constitui, além do mais, uma afronta à capacidade criadora, ao patriotismo e à inteligência dos músicos brasileiros.

O nosso país possui um folclore musical dos mais ricos do mundo, quase que totalmente ignorado por muitos compositores brasileiros que, inexplicavelmente, preferem carbonizar o cérebro para produzir música segundo os princípios aparentemente inovadores de uma estética esdrúxula e falsa.

Como macacos, como imitadores vulgares, como criaturas sem princípios, preferem importar e copiar nocivas novidades estrangeiras, simulando, assim, que são “originais”, “modernos” e “avançados”, e esquecem, deliberada e criminosamente, que temos todo um Amazonas de música folclórica – expressão viva de nosso caráter

nacional – à espera de que venham também estudá-lo e divulgá-lo para engrandecimento da cultura brasileira. Eles não sabem ou fingem não saber que somente representaremos um autêntico valor, no conjunto dos valores internacionais, na medida em que soubermos preservar e aperfeiçoar os traços fundamentais de nossa fisionomia nacional em todos os sentidos.

Os nossos compositores dodecafonistas adotam e defendem essa tendência formalista e degenerada de música porque não se deram ao cuidado elementar de estudar os tesouros da herança clássica, o desenvolvimento autônomo da música brasileira e suas raízes populares e folclóricas. Eles, certamente, não leram estas sábias palavras de Glinka “... a música, cria-a o povo, e nós, os artistas, somente a arranjamos...” que valem para nós também – e muito menos meditaram nesta opinião do grande mestre Honegger sobre o dodecafonismo: “... as suas regras são por demais ingenuamente escolásticas. Permitem ao NÃO MÚSICO escrever a mesma música que escreveria um indivíduo altamente dotado...”

Mas o que pretende, afinal, essa corrente anti-artística que procura conquistar principalmente os nossos jovens músicos, deformando a sua obra nascente?

Pretende, aqui no Brasil, o mesmo que tem pretendido em quase todos os países do mundo: atribuir valor preponderante à forma; despojar a música de seus elementos essenciais de comunicabilidade; arrancar-lhe o conteúdo emocional; desfigurar-lhe o caráter nacional; isolar o músico (transformando-o num monstro de individualismo) e atingir o seu objetivo principal que é justificar uma música sem pátria e inteiramente incompreensível para o povo.

Como todas as tendências da arte degenerada e decadente, o dodecafonismo, com

suas facilidades, truques e receitas de fabricar música atemática, procura menosprezar o trabalho criador do artista, instituindo a improvisação, o charlatanismo, a meia-ciência como substitutos da pesquisa, do talento, da cultura, do aproveitamento racional das experiências do passado, que são as bases para a realização da obra de arte verdadeira.

Desejando, absurdamente, pairar acima e além da influência dos fatores de ordem social e histórica, tais como o meio, a tradição, os costumes e a herança clássica; pretendendo ignorar ou desprezar a índole do povo brasileiro e as condições particulares do seu desenvolvimento, o dodecafonismo procura, sorrateiramente, realizar a destruição das características especificamente nacionais da nossa música, disseminando entre os jovens a “teoria” da música de laboratório, criada apenas com o concurso de algumas regras especiosas, sem ligação com as fontes populares.

O nosso povo, entretanto, com aguda intuição e sabedoria, tem sabido desprezar essa falsificação e o arremedo de música que consegue produzir. Para tentar explicar a sua nenhuma aceitação por parte do público, alegam alguns dos seus mais fervorosos adeptos que “o nosso país é muito atrasado”; que estão “escrevendo música para o futuro” ou que “o dodecafonismo não é *ainda* compreendido pelo povo porque a sua obra não é suficientemente divulgada...”

É necessário que se diga, de uma vez por todas, que tudo isso não passa de desculpa dos que pretendem ocultar aos nossos olhos os motivos mais profundos daquele divórcio.

Afirmo, sem medo de errar, que o dodecafonismo jamais será compreendido pelo grande público porque ele é essencialmente cerebral, antipopular, antinacional, e não tem nenhuma afinidade com a alma do povo.

Muita coisa ainda precisaria ser dita a respeito do dodecafonismo e do pernicioso trabalho que seus adeptos vêm desenvolvendo no Brasil, mas urge terminar esta carta que já se torna longa demais.

E ela não estaria concluída, se eu não me penitenciasse publicamente perante o povo brasileiro por ter demorado tanto em publicá-la. Esperei que se criassem condições mais favoráveis para um pronunciamento coletivo dos responsáveis pela nossa música a respeito desse importante problema que envolve intenções bem mais graves do que, superficialmente, se imagina. Essas condições não se criaram e o que se nota é um silêncio constrangido e comprometedor. Pessoalmente, acho que o nosso silêncio, nesse momento, é conivência com a contrafação dodecafonista. É esse o motivo porque este documento tem um caráter tão pessoal.

Espero, entretanto, que os meus colegas compositores, intérpretes, regentes e críticos manifestem, agora, sinceramente, a sua autorizada opinião a propósito do assunto. Aqui fica, pois, o meu apelo patriótico.

São Paulo, 7 de novembro de 1950

Camargo Guarnieri<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Neves, 121-4.

**Mozart Camargo Guarnieri**  
**Open letter to Brazilian musicians and critics (1950)**

Considering my great responsibilities, as a Brazilian composer, before my people and the new generations of musical art creators, and deeply concerned about the current direction of the music by young composers who, influenced by erroneous ideas, affiliate themselves with dodecaphonism – formalist trend that induces to degeneration of our music's national character – I decided to write this open letter to Brazilian musicians and critics.

Throughout this document, I want to alert you about the enormous dangers that, at this very moment, profoundly threaten all Brazilian musical culture, to which we are all tightly tied.

Those dangers arise because many of our young composers, by negligence or ignorance, are letting themselves be seduced by fake musical progressive theories, guiding their new works in a direction against the true interests of Brazilian music.

Introduced in Brazil not too many years ago, by citizens native to countries where they impoverish musical folklore, dodecaphonism found here a warm welcome from some unsuspecting souls.

At the shadow of its maleficent prestige some valued and very talented young composers found shelter, like Cláudio Santoro and Guerra-Peixe who, fortunately, after following this wrong direction, could free themselves and return to the ways of music based on studies and artistic-scientific application of our folklore. However, other young composers, still dominated by the dodecaphonist trend (which unfortunately receives support and sympathy from many misguided people), are suffocating their talent, losing touch with Brazilian reality and culture, and creating brainy and fallacious music, entirely

divorced from our national characteristics.

Since this situation tends to aggravate day by day, compromising the foundations and destiny of our music, it is time to raise a warning shout to stop the formalist and anti-Brazilian nefarious infiltration that, today greeted with tolerance and compliance, will bring, in the future, severe and irreversible damage to the development of Brazilian national music.

We must tell the young that dodecaphonism, in music, equals abstractionism in painting; hermeticism, in literature; existentialism, in philosophy; quackery [*ciarlatanism*], in science.

Therefore, dodecaphonism (like other imported smuggles that we are slavishly embracing) is an expression characteristic to politics of cultural degeneration, an adventitious branch of the cosmopolitan sycamore fig tree that threatens us with its deformed shadows and have the concealed objective to slowly and mischievously destroy our national character.

Dodecaphonism is, from a general standpoint, a product of vanquished cultures, that inevitably decompose; a cerebral artifice, antinational, anti-popular, taken to its extremes; it is chemistry, architecture, mathematics in music – it is anything they want – but it is not music! It is a refinement from bloated intelligences, from dry souls, that disbelief life; it is a half-dead addiction, a refuge for mediocre composers, of beings without homeland, incapable to understand, feel, love and reveal all that is new, dynamic and nourishing in our people's spirit.

It is believable that this pretentious music would find allies in the hearts of decadent civilizations and cultures, where the original sources of folklore wither (as is the



case in some European countries); that this deforming tendency would lay its poisonous roots at the weary soil of decomposing societies. But it may not be welcome here, in native America and especially in our Brazil, where a new society full of creative power has a grandiose future to be built with their own hands! I regard it as a crime against the motherland to import and try to adapt this musical caricature in Brazil, this method of anti-artistic cerebral contortionism, that has nothing to do with the specific characteristics of our national temperament, and that only quenches the perverse taste of small elites of snobs and paranoids. Furthermore, that constitutes offense against the creative capacity, patriotism, and intelligence of Brazilian musicians.

Our country has one of the richest musical folklores in the world, yet almost entirely ignored by many Brazilian composers who, inexplicably, prefer to carbonize their brains producing music after the principles from an apparently innovative but ridiculous and false aesthetic.

Like monkeys, like vulgar imitators, like unprincipled creatures, they would rather import and copy harmful foreign novelties, pretending to be “original,” “modern” and “advanced,” and forget, deliberately and criminally, that we have an Amazonas [huge source] of folkloric music – alive expression of our national character – waiting to be also studied and promoted for the growth of Brazilian culture. They do not know, or pretend not to, that we will only have authentic value, in an international conjecture, as much as we preserve and perfect the fundamental traits of our national physiognomy in every way possible.

Our dodecaphonic composers adopt and defend this formalist and degenerated musical trend because they did not take the basic precaution of studying the treasures of

classical inheritance, the autonomous development of Brazilian music and its popular and folkloric roots. They certainly did not read those wise words by Glinka "... music is created by the people, and us, artists, only rearrange it..." that also serve us well – and moreover missed meditating in this opinion by the great master Honegger about dodecaphonism: "... its rules are too naïvely scholastic. They allow the NON-MUSICIAN to write the same music that a highly gifted individual would..."

But what intends, after all, this anti-artistic trend that seeks to capture mostly our young musicians, distorting their incipient work?

It aims, here in Brazil, the same that it has aimed almost elsewhere in the world: to give prevailing value to form; to strip music out of its essential elements of communicability; to rip its emotional content out; disfiguring its national character; isolating the musician (transforming him in an individualist monster) and achieve its main objective which is to validate homeless music, totally unintelligible to people.

As any trend from degenerated and decadent art, dodecaphonism, with its facilities, tricks and recipes to fabricate a thematic music, seeks to despise the artist's creative work, instituting the improvisation, *ciarlatanism*, and half-science as substitutes to research, talent, culture, and rational employment of past experiences, that are the grounds to make any true artwork.

Desiring, absurdly, to hover above and beyond the influence from social and historical facts, as the location, tradition, practices and classic inheritance; intending to ignore or disdain the Brazilian people's nature and the particular conditions of their development, dodecaphonism seeks, deviously, to destroy the specific national characteristics of our music, diffusing among the young the music "theory" from a

laboratory, created just with the use of some specious rules, without any connections to folk sources.

Our people, however, with its acute intuition and wisdom, have been rejecting this falsification and the scornful music it is able to produce. In order to explain the public's lack of reception, some of its most eager followers claim that "our country is too immature;" that they are "writing music for the future" or that "dodecaphonism is not *yet* understood by the people because its works are not promoted enough..."

We must say, once and for all, that those are only excuses by the ones trying to divert our eyes from the deeper causes of that divorce.

I declare, not afraid to be mistaken, that dodecaphonism will never be understood by the wide public because it is essentially cerebral, anti-popular, antinational, and has no affinities with the people's soul.

Much still has to be said regarding dodecaphonism and its followers' pernicious work developed in Brazil, but this letter, already too lengthy, must end.

And it would not be concluded, if I did not penalize myself publicly before the Brazilian people for having taken so long to publish it. I waited for favorable conditions to a collective pronouncement from our music authorities about this important issue that includes graver intentions than, superficially, we can imagine. Those conditions never happened and there is only an embarrassing and condemning silence. Personally, I think that our silence, right now, is conniving with the dodecaphonist counterfeit. This is why this document has such a personal style.

I hope, however, that my colleagues who are composers, performers, conductors and critics declare, now, sincerely, their official judgement regarding this subject. Here

is, then, my patriotic call.

São Paulo, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1950

Camargo Guarnieri

## APPENDIX C

### IMPROVISATION FOR THE *CHÔRO OP. 8 NR. 4* BY EDMUNDO VILLANI-CÔRTES

This Appendix contains a printed version of a manuscript *cadenza* written and published by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes for the improvisation of his *Chôro em forma de Rondó* from the *Série Brasileira Op. 8*.

The first two pages are the *cadenza* per se. It is possible to argue that the composer did not follow necessarily the graphic notation included in the score (see ex. 38), noticeable especially because it lacks the *trillo* at the end.

The third page includes a rewritten version by the composer for the measures following the *cadenza*. It includes one extra measure, since in the original score section c3 starts at m. 129 and in this version it starts at m. 130. Besides, a few melodic fragments are added to the end of section c2 (mm. 123-4), plus a concluding gesture in the lower register (mm. 128-9, possibly to replace the missing *trillo* at the end of the *cadenza*). The following measures of section c3 (mm. 130-6) in this example, are mostly rewritten harmonically, and given a more active left hand (in the original, the left hand plays only sustained low octaves on each measure).

Piano

Measures 1-6 of the piano score. The right hand features a melodic line with a trill on the first measure, followed by eighth notes and two triplet markings. The left hand provides a bass line with sustained chords and single notes.

Pno.

Measures 7-11 of the piano score. The right hand continues with a dense eighth-note pattern, while the left hand maintains a bass line with sustained chords.

Pno.

Measures 12-15 of the piano score. The right hand continues with a dense eighth-note pattern. A marking 'M.E.' is placed above the right hand in measure 13. The left hand continues with a bass line and sustained chords.

Pno.

17

Pno.

22

Pno.

26

Pno.

31

116

Pno.

Musical score for piano, measures 116-121. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

122

Pno.

Musical score for piano, measures 122-127. The right hand continues the melodic line, and the left hand maintains the eighth-note accompaniment.

128

Pno.

Musical score for piano, measures 128-131. The right hand changes to a treble clef and plays a more active melodic line, while the left hand continues the accompaniment.

132

Pno.

Musical score for piano, measures 132-135. The right hand continues in the treble clef with a complex melodic line, and the left hand continues the accompaniment.



## APPENDIX D

### IMPROVISATION FOR THE *CHÔRO OP. 8 NR. 4* BY EDNALDO BORBA

This Appendix contains a printed version of my own *cadenza* for the improvisation of the *Chôro em forma de Rondó* from the *Série Brasileira Op. 8* by Edmundo Villani-Côrtes.

The composer himself listened to this *cadenza* in a recital in 2009.

I tried to portray a faithful interpretation of the graphic notation provided by the composer (ex. 38), but without losing the feeling of an improvisation. For that reason, I kept the pattern provided by the composer throughout until the last measures leading to the final trill, using a *batuque* rhythm in the lower register of the instrument (mm. 13-5). Since the graph occupied a small portion of the score (only about ten percent of the page), I decided it should not be a long *cadenza*.

I interpreted the wiggly lines as an indication of a dynamic melodic contour, and readily adopted the *glissandos*, which also prepares the listener for the final *glissando* of the piece.

Lastly, I envisioned the dots and lines inside the box as polarizing centers (positive and negative), and therefore adopted the closest relationship we find in music, the tense attraction between dominant and tonic. In my *cadenza*, I transposed the rhythmic pattern to the leading tone (C#, part of the dominant harmonic spectrum, mm. 5-8) in order to show that contrast. Since the final trill has an arrow pointing to it, it seemed clear to me that the *cadenza* should consequentially end in the center pitch D, in a very low register, since the trill is the lowest written symbol.

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system is labeled "Piano" and features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The right hand contains a melodic line with a glissando (gliss.) and a fermata (8va) over a high note. The left hand has a bass line with a "with Ped." instruction. The second system is labeled "Pno." and continues the piece, showing a glissando in the right hand and a fermata (8va) at the beginning. The third system is also labeled "Pno." and includes a fermata (8ve. gliss.) in the right hand, a trill in the right hand, and dynamic markings of *mf* and *fff*. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

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