

ALBERTO GINASTERA'S USE OF ARGENTINE FOLK ELEMENTS
IN THE SONATA FOR GUITAR, OP. 47

by
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ABSTRACT

Alberto Ginastera's *Sonata for Guitar*, Op. 47, is one of the most important works composed in the twentieth century for the instrument. This study examines elements of Argentine folk music, and discusses the ways in which Ginastera made use of these folk elements in the construction of the *Sonata for Guitar*.

Three overall categories of folk elements are present in the *Sonata for Guitar*. Characteristics of the *criollo* folk guitar tradition and of the guitar itself play important roles in the construction of the *Sonata for Guitar*. Elements of the *andino cantos de caja*, the *baguala* and the *vidala*, are used in the development of important thematic material as well. Finally, the *malambo* and other *criollo* folk dances are utilized to generate the rhythms of the energetic closing movement of the *Sonata for Guitar*.

INTRODUCTION

Alberto Ginastera (1916-1983) is widely acknowledged as a master of the imaginative use of folk music elements in the construction of compelling contemporary compositions. The *Sonata for Guitar*, Op. 47 (1976), is an outstanding example of Ginastera's compositional approach. This study will examine specific folk elements which Ginastera has drawn upon in the creation of the *Sonata for Guitar*, and will discuss how these elements are used in the construction of the work.

Ginastera came of age musically at a time when Argentine art music was experiencing a strong and creative nationalistic trend. Beginning with Alberto Williams (1862-1952), and continuing with the generation which followed him, Argentine composers drew upon their national folk music for musical ideas and inspiration, as a look at the works composed in the '20s and '30s demonstrates.¹ At the same time, the young Ginastera was strongly influenced by the music of Igor Stravinsky and Béla Bartók. Ginastera credited Bartók with awakening in him a sense of how to forge a national music, and his admiration for Bartók's strength of rhythm was surpassed by his fascination with Bartók's ideas of form and structure.²

Ginastera made direct and vivid use of Argentine folk music in many early works. Beginning with the *String Quartet No. 1*, Op. 20 (1948), Ginastera moved from what he described as objective nationalism to subjective nationalism, transforming folk elements with imagination and inspiration. This

¹Juan María Veniard, *La música nacional argentina* (Buenos Aires: Instituto Nacional de Musicología Carlos Vega, 1986) 96-124.

²Alberto Ginastera, "Homage to Béla Bartók," *Tempo* 135 (1981): 3-4.

change from the overt use of folk elements to a more sublimated approach also included increasing use of dodecaphonic and serial techniques. The result was a more personal style, combining these contemporary compositional methods with the strong rhythmic character and passion inherent in Argentine folk music. From 1958 onward, beginning with the *String Quartet No. 2, Op. 26* (1958), Ginastera's style evolved further into what he called neo-expressionism, continuing to make use of his own "imaginary folklore" in combination with more advanced contemporary compositional procedures.³

Ginastera himself enumerated three constant characteristics in all his works: an exaltation of lyricism, the use of strong rhythms, taken from masculine dances, and finally a certain expressionist climate, seeking to evoke an almost magical ambiance.⁴ All of these characteristics are clearly represented in the *Sonata for Guitar*. Composed in 1976, and exemplifying Ginastera's mature style, it is a bold and imaginative work, requiring great virtuosity of the performer, and soliciting a number of ingenious special effects. The piece shares formal characteristics with many of Ginastera's earlier works, notably the *Piano Sonata No. 1, Op. 22* (1952), the *String Quartet No. 1*, and the *Piano Concerto No. 1, Op. 28* (1961). Each of these compositions consists of four movements arranged in a nearly identical scheme. The first movement is an energetic introduction. The second movement is a fast scherzo in 6/8 time, usually beginning and ending *pianissimo*, Ginastera's mystical evocation of "night music." It is interesting to note that the closing measures of the second movement of the *Sonata for Guitar* are

³Pola Suárez Urtubey, *Alberto Ginastera* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1967) 68-69.

⁴Suárez Urtubey 70, interview with Ginastera.

nearly identical to those of the second movements of the *Piano Sonata No. 1* and the *String Quartet No. 1*. The third movement is a free and lyrical rhapsody, a marked contrast to the driving rhythms of the surrounding movements. Finally, the closing movement is a fast toccata based upon the rhythmic characteristics of the *malambo*.

The harmonic elements employed in the *Sonata for Guitar* are also typical of Ginastera's mature works. His neo-expressionist idiom is typified by a very free and expressive atonality. Extensive use is made of quartal harmony, which may have been partly inspired by the tuning of the guitar. Ginastera also incorporates dodecaphonic procedures in a very free and unconstrained way, avoiding strict serial techniques. Twelve-tone procedures are generally used to create short melodic segments or short blocks of harmony.

The focus of the present study is Ginastera's use of Argentine folk music elements in the construction of the *Sonata for Guitar*. As in many previous works, Ginastera has drawn upon elements of Argentine folk music as a starting point for creating his own "imaginary folklore." The composer expands upon these folk elements, making imaginative alterations and transformations. The result is a coherent and integrated composition embodying the distinct feel of the original folkloric material, yet with the harmonic and rhythmic inventiveness of the twentieth century. This stylistic synthesis is the hallmark of Ginastera's mature style.

The Argentine folk elements used in the *Sonata for Guitar* will be discussed in three groupings. First, elements derived from the style and techniques of folk guitarists and from the guitar itself will be presented, followed by a discussion of Ginastera's incorporation of these elements. Secondly, characteristics of certain

types of music of indigenous derivation from the mountainous northwest of Argentina will be examined, once again followed by a discussion of how Ginastera makes use of this material. Finally, the *malambo* and other folk dances will be discussed, followed by an examination of the extensive use of elements from these dances in the final movement of the *Sonata for Guitar*.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON ARGENTINE FOLK MUSIC

A complete review of Argentine folk music is beyond the scope of this study. For the purposes of illuminating Ginastera's use of folk elements in the *Sonata for Guitar*, some general comments can provide the necessary background needed to understand the material to be discussed.

Argentine folk music can be divided into three groups by origin: *andino*, *criollo*, and European. Music of *andino* origin derives from the indigenous peoples of the northwest mountain region of Argentina, the survivors of the pre-Columbian civilizations. *Criollo*, or creole, is a term which refers to people and cultural traditions born in the new world, but of European ancestry. *Criollo* music is the folk music of the rural population of the *pampas*, the central grasslands of Argentina. Finally, there are folk music types more directly influenced by European culture and musical forms, waltzes and schottisches, for example.⁵ The folk elements utilized by Ginastera in the *Sonata for Guitar* are drawn from *andino* and *criollo* music.

There is certain difficulty in applying musicological categorization to folk music. The people who play this music are interested in songs and dances, not forms or rhythmic categories.⁶ It is difficult to draw the line between *andino* and *criollo* cultural elements. The cultural mixing which has taken place since the conquest of Argentina resulted in a large *mestizo* population, especially in the northwest. These people of mixed indigenous and European ancestry have a

⁵Isabel Aretz, *El folklore musical argentina*, 3rd. ed. (Buenos Aires: Ricordi, 1973) 29.

⁶Carlos Vega, *Panorama de la música popular argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1944) 104.

mixed cultural tradition as well, which complicates attempts at categorization. Characteristics of one cultural tradition migrate fairly freely into others. Names of types of pieces vary from one region to another, and any attempt at a systematized nomenclature is sure to be riddled with exceptions and contradictions. Nonetheless, there are distinct characteristics associated with particular types of folk music, and these characteristics are more pertinent than the vagaries of popular nomenclature.

CRIOLLO FOLK GUITAR ELEMENTS

Criollo Folk Guitar Style

The *pampas*, the vast grasslands of central Argentina and home of the *gauchos*, is the center of the *criollo* folk tradition. The music is based upon the guitar as the standard instrument for the accompaniment of songs and dances.⁷ Brought to Argentina by the Spaniards, the guitar remains the principal instrument in its folk music. In addition to the standard tuning, the *gauchos* developed a plethora of alternate tunings, whimsically tailored to fit the needs of particular keys or pieces.⁸

The *gaucho* lived a solitary life for the most part, and this is reflected in the music of the *pampas*, which consists largely of solo songs with guitar accompaniment.⁹ Another interesting aspect of the lifestyle of the *gaucho* is the competitive nature seen in certain musical genres, brought into being in those times when the cowboys did meet. In these rare social situations, the contest between singers was the *payada*, in which one singer would improvise music and words in competition with another.¹⁰ The corresponding contest between solo dancers was the *malambo*. The *malambo* and several other *criollo* folk dances play a major role in Ginastera's music, and will be discussed separately in the final chapter.

⁷Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 55-61.

⁸Vega, *Los instrumentos aborígenes y criollos de la Argentina*, vol. 1 (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Centurión, 1946) 163-71; Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 56-58.

⁹Nestor Ausqui, personal interview, El Paso Texas, 2 July 1993.

¹⁰Segundo N. Contreras, *La guitarra argentina: Apuntes para su historia y otros artículos* (Buenos Aires: Castro Barrera & Cia., 1950) 29-30.

The guitar techniques of the *gauchos* give their folk music its distinctive sound and feel. *Rasgueado*, *tambora*, and percussion techniques generate the rhythms of the music. *Rasgueado* means the technique of strumming the strings of the guitar, a seemingly simple idea, yet the actual rhythmic patterns possible via the various uses of right hand thumb and fingers are complex and varied. It is quite possible that the complex *rasgueados* typical of Latin American folk music originated from the guitar techniques of renaissance Europe.¹¹

The *rasgueado* is augmented with the *tambora*, a coloristic and percussive effect created by damping the strings between strums. This effect often includes the percussive noise generated by causing the strings of the guitar to hit the fretboard, by pressing inward toward the body of the guitar while damping the strings.¹²



Fig. 1. Guitar *rasgueados* & *tamboras* from Isabel Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino* (Buenos Aires: Ricordi, 1973) 59. The diamond note-heads represent the *tambora* effect.

This sound is absolutely characteristic of the music of the *pampas*, and similar guitar techniques appear throughout Latin American folk music. Despite

¹¹Vega, *Las danzas populares argentinas* (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Musicología, 1952) 71.

¹²Brian Hodel, "The Guitar: Alive and Well in Argentina," *Guitar Review* 60 (1985): 5.

the prevalence of both the *rasgueado* and *tambora* techniques, there are no standard notations for them, and the various attempts at notation which have been made are largely over-simplified or inadequate for conveying the complexity of the sounds and rhythms created in this way.

In addition to the sounds made with the strings of the guitar, the exuberance and inventiveness of the *criollo* guitarist was also manifested in a number of special effects. *Cajoneo*, the imitation of folk drumming by beating on the top and sides of the guitar with the open palm or closed fist, is a standard part of the folk guitarist's resources.¹³ These *golpes*, or percussive blows, add rhythmic accents to *criollo* guitar accompaniments. Another unusual effect involves placing the open palm of the right hand on the face of the guitar and sliding very quickly and forcefully, resulting in a loud, high-pitched squeak.¹⁴ These special effects, along with whistling, shouting and stamping of feet, were an integral part of the overall atmosphere of folk performances.

The *criollo* folk repertoire consists mainly of songs and dances; the dances are usually also songs, often with well known words. Various standard forms have evolved, although the term "standard" applies in a rather loose sense because of the nature of this music, being both unwritten and largely improvisatory. From the folk guitarist's point of view, there are certain rhythmic characteristics that pertain to each type of piece, though there is room for improvisation and variation of the rhythm within the scope of a particular type.¹⁵ Many of the song and dance forms are similar, and one given type of tune or

¹³Vega, *Panorama de la música popular argentina*, 174.

¹⁴Roberto Aussel, personal interview, Tucson Arizona, 24 March 1993.

¹⁵Hodel 6-7.

accompaniment pattern may have one name in the *pampas* and a different name in another region.¹⁶ For example, the *zamba* and the *cueca* are very similar, owing to their common descent from an earlier Chilean dance called the *zamacueca*. The *gato* and the *chacarera* are another pair of closely-related types.¹⁷

The *gauchos* themselves are not concerned with how their music might be written down, but in general the metric scheme which best describes the rhythms of this music is 6/8, with much hemiola and syncopation giving the feel of 3/4.¹⁸ Popular poetic forms give these pieces their large-scale structure of verses and refrains. Each particular type of song or dance has its own typical rhythmic characteristics. It is quite common to have syncopations between the melody and the accompaniment.¹⁹ Certain antecedents have influenced some forms; for example, the Spanish *seguidilla* is the dominating influence on the *gato*.²⁰ The harmonic structure is generally quite simple, usually involving only a few chords, sometimes nothing more than I-IV-V-I. In simple songs accompanied by guitar, it is not uncommon for the guitarist to perform a short introduction, often consisting simply of a strummed sequence of the chords which form the basis of the piece, or sometimes a plucked melodic prelude.²¹

¹⁶Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 183-207.

¹⁷Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 183.

¹⁸Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 38-41.

¹⁹Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 41-45.

²⁰Vega, *Danzas y canciones argentinas* (Buenos Aires: Ricordi, 1936) 40-41.

²¹Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 59; Aussel, personal interview.

An example of a folk dance showing typical *criollo* characteristics is the *gato*. The *gato* was a very popular dance throughout the nineteenth century, in both the provincial salons and humbler settings. Danced by couples, it is one of the few folkloric dances which are fast and vigorous, with very animated movements.²² The *gato* is typically accompanied by an uninterrupted and uniform guitar *rasgueado* in 6/8 time.

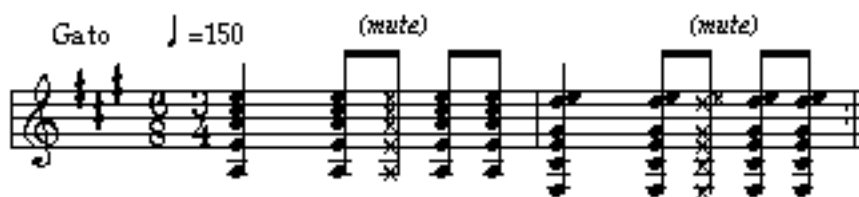


Fig. 2. *Gato* guitar accompaniment from Brian Hodel, "The Guitar: Alive and Well in Argentina," *Guitar Review* 60 (1985): 6.

The *gato* may also be purely instrumental, with one guitarist plucking the melody and a second guitarist playing accompaniment. It is also common for an ensemble of violin and accordion, possibly accompanied by guitar and drums, to play instrumental *gatos* for dancing.²³ Other *criollo* folk dances, the *malambo*, the *chacarera*, and the *milonga*, will be discussed in detail in the final chapter.

²²Vega, *Las danzas populares argentinas*, 539.

²³Aretz, *El folklore musical argentina*, 192-202.

Ginastera's Use of *Criollo* Folk Guitar Elements

The first movement of the *Sonata for Guitar* is entitled *Esordio*, an Italian term meaning "beginning" or "first part."²⁴ Like the Spanish equivalent, *exordio*, this term is more commonly encountered in literary rather than musical contexts, often with the more specific meaning "beginning, introduction, preamble of a literary work; especially the first part of an oratorical discourse, which is intended to stimulate the attention and prepare the enthusiasm of the listeners."²⁵ The latter interpretation gives this introductory movement the proper sense of gravity and structural importance for the entire sonata, amplifying Ginastera's own description of the first part as a "solemn prelude."²⁶

The guitar itself, being the main instrument of *criollo* folk music, carries a broad folkloric implication, a certain inevitable history. The sound of the guitar has been a folkloric presence in Ginastera's music almost from the very beginning. For example, the *Malambo*, Op. 7 (1940), for solo piano, begins with the pitches of the open strings of the guitar, E-A-d-g-b-e'. This is a perfect little *intonazione*, just as if a guitarist were checking his tuning before beginning the piece. This "guitar chord" based upon the instruments tuning appears repeatedly, in standard and transposed form, as something of a signature in many of

²⁴*Grande dizionario della lingua italiana* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1968) s.v. "Esordio." This term derives from the Latin *exordium* (*Oxford Latin Dictionary* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971] s.v. "Exordium"). The original meaning of the Latin term is given as "the warp set up on a loom before the web is started."

²⁵*Diccionario de la lengua española*, 20th ed. (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1984) s.v. "Exordio."

²⁶Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar*, Op. 47, introductory remarks (New York: Boosey and Hawkes, 1981).

Ginastera's pieces.²⁷ It is therefore no surprise to find that the very first chord of the *Sonata for Guitar* is this open-string guitar chord, finally presented upon its original instrument.

Lentamente M.M. ♩ = 138

pp *pp cresc. poco a poco*

rit.

attacca

Fig. 3. Alberto Ginastera, *Malambo* for Solo Piano (1940) mm. 1-3.

Solemne ♩ = 46

arpeggiato lento

fff *sim.* *sempre tutta scissa!*

rit.

Fig. 4. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Esordio*, opening.

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²⁷Gilbert Chase, "Alberto Ginastera: Argentine Composer," *Musical Quarterly* 43 (1957): 449-50; Roy Wylie, "Argentine Folk Elements in the Solo Piano Music of Alberto Ginastera" (diss., University of Texas, 1986) 46-47, 83.

Ginastera uses this open string chord as a point of departure for selecting important pitch centers for the entire sonata. Obviously, E is an important pitch center in this movement and the rest of the work. The second chord is altered to be a perfect quartal chord E-A-d-g-c'-f', and thus C and F enter as important pitch centers as well. The second phrase of the opening movement replaces this quartal chord with E-A-d-g-c#'-f#'. In this instance Ginastera has extended the open string guitar chord downward in his imagination; clearly the F# and C# are chosen to conform with quartal harmony, selected by moving downward in fourths from E beyond the already present B pitch. These will also serve as important pitch centers later in the piece.

In the overall ABA'B' form of the first movement, *criollo* folk guitar elements predominate in the A section. In a manner typical of the beginning of a folk piece, a simple series of chords are presented, though, as noted above, these chords come from Ginastera's imagination, not from any folk music.²⁸ The quartal melodic series which follows moves from the lowest to almost the very highest note on the instrument, and the remainder of the first page is a continuation of this exploration, a transformed form of the folkloristic guitar prelude. Ginastera calls for a "whistling sound" several times in this section, to be made by quickly moving a fingernail of the right hand against the windings of the lowest string. This is clearly a reference to the previously mentioned squeaking sound produced by the *gauchos* with the palm of the hand on the face of the guitar, a procedure likely to be unpopular with the more inhibited classical guitarist.²⁹

²⁸Aussel, personal interview.

²⁹Aussel, personal interview.

A central part of the *criollo* folk literature is the impression made by the vastness of the landscape of the *pampas*.³⁰ One of the most impressive and celebrated aspects is the night sky in this region of clean, dry air and, until recently, no artificial lighting; a common expression of wonder refers to "un cielo diafano," literally, "a diaphanous heaven."³¹ This image is the folkloric influence behind Ginastera's "interplay of shadow and light, of nocturnal and magical ambiance, of dynamic contrasts, distant dances, of surrealistic impressions," as he describes the *Scherzo*, the second movement of the sonata.³² This evocation of a magical night-time ambiance, a favorite image of Ginastera's, is surely indebted to Bartók's "night music," transported from eastern Europe to central Argentina.

The *Scherzo* presents for the first time the rhythmic energy of the masculine dances of the *gauchos*; the 6/8 time signature and driving rhythms are typical of *criollo* guitar music.



Fig. 5. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Scherzo*, mm. 1-2.
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³⁰Chase 444-46.

³¹Nestor Ausqui, personal interview, El Paso Texas, 2 July 1993.

³²Ginastera, *Sonata*, introductory remarks.

Other important references to the folk guitar style appear: *rasgueados* and *tamboras* are seen in measures 29-36, percussive *golpes* appear in measures 80-87.

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff, labeled '29', is in 3/8 time and features a series of chords. Above the staff, the word 'tastiera' is written above a dashed line. Below the staff, the dynamics 'f' and 'p' are indicated. The bottom staff, labeled '35', is also in 3/8 time and shows a melodic line with a 'T' in a box below it, indicating a percussive effect. A dashed line extends from the 'T' box across the staff.

Fig. 6. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Scherzo*, mm. 29-30, 35-36.
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At the end of the *Scherzo*, Ginastera presents a short melody taken from the music of Sixtus Beckmesser in Richard Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger*.³³ The "phantasmagoria" of Beckmesser's lute is then answered immediately, as if by some imaginary latter-day *gaucho*, giving the effect of a *payada*, the back-and-forth improvisation so popular with the *gauchos*.³⁴

³³Ginastera, *Sonata*, introductory remarks. The exact source of the musical quotation is discussed in Charles King, "Alberto Ginastera's *Sonata for Guitar, Op. 47: An Analysis*" (diss., University of Arizona, 1992) 39-42.

³⁴Eduardo Fernández, personal interview, Montevideo Uruguay, 3 August 1990, suggested the resemblance of this section of the *Scherzo* to a *payada*.



Fig. 7. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Scherzo, coda*.
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The third movement, *Canto*, is related to the first movement. Like the *Esordio*, the overall form is ABA'B', again with *criollo* folk guitar elements dominating the A section. The opening of the A section of the *Canto* presents an arpeggiated chord, much like the beginning of the *Esordio*. This same chord is repeated three times, with interspersed trills or melodic passages, once again evoking a folk guitarist's prelude.³⁵



Fig. 8. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Canto, opening*.

³⁵A previous study of the Ginastera *Sonata for Guitar* (King 18) incorrectly asserts that the opening chord of the third movement is an Argentine folk guitar tuning. An examination of the available documentation of folk guitar tunings (Vega, *Los instrumentos aborígenes*, 165-71; Aretz, *El folklore musical*, 57-58) lists none which correspond to this strikingly dissonant chord, though several examples share some of the pitches. It may be that Ginastera constructed this opening chord with some of the distinctly bi-modal folk tunings in mind, but there is no evidence to confirm this speculation.

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As in the *Esordio*, the entire A section serves as a mystical, imaginary folk prelude to the more lyrical B section. Note how the end of the section introduces the *Più lento e poetico* with a series of three arpeggiated chords, a distinctly folkloristic gesture.

Fig. 9. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Canto*, B Section.

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The last movement, *Finale*, is inspired by the *malambo*, an energetic *criollo* folk dance. The characteristics of the *malambo* and other *criollo* folk dances, and their use in the *Finale*, are discussed in the final chapter. In addition to use of these dances, there are a number of other interesting folk elements present. The movement opens with the characteristic open-string guitar chord, as the first movement did, but this time the performer is asked to recreate the *rasgueados*, *tamboras* and percussive *golpes* of the *gaucho* guitarist.

Presto e feroce

raguendo

Fig. 10. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 1-10.

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This characteristic sound is called for throughout the movement, and it is noteworthy that Ginastera devised a very creative and complex notation to indicate his intentions, complete with text instructions to the performer. Despite all of this effort on the part of the composer, it is still necessary to have a good understanding of the sound and feel of *criollo* guitar style to be able to deliver a successful performance of this movement.

ANDINO ELEMENTS

Andino Music and the Cantos de Caja

There is little surviving music from the pre-Colombian peoples of Argentina. The Spanish conquest destroyed nearly all their cultural traditions, except in the mountainous northwest of Argentina, which along with Bolivia and Peru, was part of the empire of the Incas. The peoples of these regions were merely subdued rather than exterminated, and though they have assimilated much of the culture of the Spanish in the past five centuries, a certain amount of their indigenous cultural tradition has survived. Much blurring of cultural lines has taken place as well with the evolution of a large *mestizo*, or mixed-blood population in these regions.

The remote regions where there has been less cultural mixing have preserved more of the indigenous musical traditions, while the music of the *mestizo* peoples shows more of a mixture of indigenous and *criollo* musical elements.³⁶ The term *andino* is used here to refer to musical characteristics typical of the mountainous northwest of Argentina. These characteristics pertain to music of indigenous origin, or to *mestizo* music of the region showing strong indigenous influence.

A common type of song popular with the people in the northwest region is the *canto de caja*. These songs, usually for solo singer, are accompanied only by the *caja*, a small drum.³⁷ The oldest of this type is the *baguala*, literally "primitive" or "rough," whose melodies usually only use the three notes of a major chord,

³⁶Aretz, "Argentina: Folk Music," *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Sir Stanley Sadie, vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1980) 566-71.

³⁷Aretz, *Música tradicional de La Rioja* (Caracas: Biblioteca Inidef, 1978) 165.

usually very slow, in duple time.³⁸ The *baguala* is common among the various indigenous peoples of the Calchaquí valley in northwest Argentina, though it can be heard outside of this region as well.³⁹



Fig. 11. *Baguala* from Isabel Aretz, *Música tradicional de La Rioja* (Caracas: Biblioteca Inidef, 1978) 176.

Another category of music encompasses songs with the following characteristics: strict use of ternary meter and use of hexatonic scales with the raised 4th, usually the mode of F. These songs, when not for solo singer, are typically harmonized in parallel thirds, not infrequently in a bimodal fashion, in which the principal voice uses the raised 4th while the accompanying voice, singing a third below the main voice, uses the natural 4th. The cadential phrase nearly always descends in a stepwise fashion.⁴⁰ The basic ternary rhythm also occurs in three contracted forms, with two variations.⁴¹

³⁸Aretz, *Musica tradicional de La Rioja*, 167.

³⁹Aretz, "Argentina: Folk Music," 568-69.

⁴⁰Vega, *Danzas y canciones argentinas*, 96.

⁴¹Vega, *Panorama de la música popular argentina*, 164.



Fig. 12. Typical ternary rhythmic variations in *andino* music from Carlos Vega, *Panorama de la música argentina* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1944) 164.

Like the *baguala*, these songs were originally accompanied only by the *caja*, or small drum. It is now common for guitar to be used for accompaniment also, either instead of or in addition to the *caja*. The use of guitar is an example of external *criollo* influence.⁴² Frequently the guitarist will incorporate a type of *tambora* technique, beating on the strings of the instrument, in imitation of the original drum accompaniment.⁴³ These songs usually are moderate in tempo.⁴⁴

The most distinctive characteristic of these songs is the use of the raised 4th. There has been some speculation that this may have been the result of the influence of Gregorian church music introduced at the time of the conquest, but modal scales incorporating the raised 4th are known to have existed in Argentina before the advent of the Spanish, as they can be detected on pre-Colombian musical instruments.⁴⁵ The use of the raised 4th is very much localized in the northwest region. This characteristic sound is so ingrained in this area that songs which originated outside the area can be spontaneously altered to have the

⁴²Vega, *Panorama de la música popular argentina*, 173.

⁴³Ana Serrano Redonnet, *Cancionero musical argentino* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1964) 17.

⁴⁴Vega, *Panorama de la música popular argentina*, 175.

⁴⁵Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 31.

raised 4th; conversely, melodies from this region tend to have the natural 4th substituted when transported to other parts of the country.⁴⁶

The genre that most typically reflects these characteristics is the *vidala*, common in the music of the *mestizo* peoples of the northwest.⁴⁷ The Spanish word *vida*, meaning "life," is used as a term of endearment, and the suffix *-la* is a Quechua diminutive.⁴⁸ The Quechua Indians are one of the *andino* peoples of the region encompassing the northwest of Argentina, Bolivia and Peru. Some of these songs even retain parts of the text in the Quechua language.⁴⁹



Fig. 13a. *Vidala*, showing use of raised 4th, from Isabel Aretz, *Música tradicional de La Rioja* (Caracas: Biblioteca Inidef, 1978) 215.



Fig. 13b. *Vidala* with altered rhythm, from Isabel Aretz, *Música tradicional de La Rioja* (Caracas: Biblioteca Inidef, 1978) 216.

⁴⁶Vega, *Danzas y canciones argentinas*, 97; *Panorama de la música popular argentina*, 186.

⁴⁷Aretz, "Argentina: Folk Music," 569.

⁴⁸Vega, *Danzas y canciones argentinas*, 291.

⁴⁹Aretz, *Musica tradicional de La Rioja*, 153.

As previously mentioned, the nomenclature for popular music is by no means consistent. The type of song described here as a *vidala* occurs in many parts of Argentina, sometimes called other names. For example, in the region of Jujuy it is referred to as a *yaraví*, not to be confused with another totally different folk song type of that name.⁵⁰ On the other hand, other song types with completely different characteristics are sometimes called *vidala* as well.

The characteristics described here are not hard and fast rules; it is possible to encounter songs which do not fit cleanly into a particular musicological category, yet which clearly show characteristics of more than one grouping. Some examples are very slow, more like the *baguala*, but otherwise showing all the characteristics of the *vidala*.⁵¹



Fig. 14. Slow Vidala from Isabel Aretz, *Música tradicional de La Rioja* (Caracas: Biblioteca Inidef, 1978) 213. Aretz commented that this example was notated in eighth-notes in order to be consistent with other notated examples of the *vidala*, despite the fact that it was slow enough to be notated in quarter notes. The lower staff shows an equivalent representation in 3/4 time.

⁵⁰Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 123.

⁵¹Aretz, *Musica tradicional de La Rioja*, 212.

It is common to find *vidalas* that lack the characteristic raised 4th outside of the northwest region, and some *vidalas* mix the natural and raised 4th.⁵²



Fig. 15. *Vidala*, showing raised and natural 4th, and typical cadential procedures, from Isabel Aretz, *Música tradicional de La Rioja* (Caracas: Biblioteca Inidef, 1978) 129.

This example also shows the typical cadential formulas of stepwise descent ending on 4-3 or on 2-1, with the masculine ending usual in *bagualas* and *vidalas*.⁵³

⁵²Aretz, *Musica tradicional de La Rioja*, 216.

⁵³Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino*, 35.

Ginastera's Use of *Andino* Folk Elements

The B section of the *Esordio* is described by the composer as "a song which was inspired by Kecua music."⁵⁴ Ginastera's term "Kecua" is evidently his own alternative version of Quechua, one of the tribes of indigenous peoples of the northwest of Argentina. The music shows clear *andino* characteristics typical of certain types of folk music from that region.



Fig. 16. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Esordio*, B Section.
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The first phrase of this section manifests many *andino* characteristics typical of the *cantos de caja*. The overall feel is much like the *baguala*, very slow, with a drum-like accompaniment. There are also many characteristics of the *vidala*, which, as previously mentioned, derives its name partly from the Quechua language, and whose texts still occasionally contain fragments of that language. Note the ternary rhythm, with the dotted figures typical of the *vidala*. The melodic line begins on F, and incorporates the distinctive raised 4th, a typical characteristic of the *vidala* in the northwest. Note also the typical stepwise close of the phrase, followed by a *tambora* effect imitating the *caja*. This imitation

⁵⁴Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar*, introductory remarks.

of the drum accompaniment is also typical of folk guitar accompaniments to *vidalas*. The very slow tempo, typical of the *baguala*, is less common with *vidalas*, though occasionally a *vidala* will also use a slow tempo.

Though this phrase clearly shows characteristics of *andino* folk music, it is also clearly Ginastera's own creation. It is interesting to note that the melody, in addition to its affinity with *andino* folklore, is a partial whole-tone scale, which conforms well with Ginastera's propensity for quartal harmony.

Though the first chord, a second inversion Db major triad, evokes the typical parallel thirds of the *vidala*, the harmonization evolves into quartal harmony.

An interesting development occurs in the repetition of this opening phrase. The first half of the opening melody is restated, and then expanded. Ginastera continues up the F modal scale, but at the very end alters this, ending not on F natural, but on F#, in order to mirror the whole-tone scale fragment of the first part of the phrase.

The restatement of the whole tone melody in the B' section indicates percussive *golpes* rather than *tamboras* for the imitation of the *caja*. Keeping in mind the evocation of the small drum, the performer would do well to give these *golpes* a very soft and dark tone, using the flesh of the thumb, rather than the sharper sound of the knuckles.

In the same way that the open chord of the guitar provoked the use of E as an important pitch center, this "imaginary *vidala*" reinforces F and F# as important pitch centers. The B' section leads into the short coda of the first movement, marked *Lento*, which re-emphasizes the F of the *vidala* before returning to E and the open strings of the guitar. This F-E conflict can be seen as a symbolic distillation of the *andino* versus the *criollo*. This contrast is a symbolic

recapitulation of the entire first movement; the lyricism of the *andino canto de caja* of the B section contrasted to the *criollo* folk guitar influence in the A section.

The importance of F and E as pitch centers in the *Scherzo* is evident right from the start, with F against E and D#, and can be seen in various places in the movement. Note that the Beckmesser parody in the coda is introduced by F at the end of the previous section. There is little other overt influence of *andino* elements in this movement, with the possible exception of certain very prominent whole-tone scale fragments, as in measures 43-44 and 45-46. These fragments are derived from the whole-tone melodic line of Ginastera's quasi-*vidala* of the *Esordio*.

Ginastera refers to the third movement, *Canto*, as "lyrical and rhapsodic, expressive and breathless like a love poem."⁵⁵ This kind of intense emotion is typical of the text of the *vidala*.⁵⁶ As noted earlier, the formal structure of the *Canto* mirrors that of the *Esordio*, developing ideas presented in each section of the first movement. F# is the starting pitch center for this movement, presented in the opening chord and trills. This F# center then spawns important areas centered on C#, in the second part of the A section, and B, in the B section itself.

As in the *Esordio*, it is the B section of the *Canto* that most obviously manifests distinct *andino* elements, though in this case drawn from the B section of the first movement.

⁵⁵Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar*, introductory remarks.

⁵⁶Vega, *Danzas y canciones argentinas*, 296.

rall. ----- // **Più lento e poetico** ♩ 50
 tastiera naturale
 p dolce mp contemplativo

Fig. 17. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Canto*, B Section.
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Marked *Più lento e poetico*, the section begins with a descending whole-tone melody b'-a'-g'-f', taken from the second half of the *vidala*-like phrase which began the B section of the *Esordio*, harmonized with parallel descending lines resulting in four three-note chords making up a twelve-tone set. The melody continues down to e', against which is set the Db triad first seen at the beginning of the *Esordio vidala* phrase. Once again we see the conflict of E and F, *criollo* and *andino*. Ginastera repeats the opening phrase of this section with an arpeggiated accompaniment, and after a brief interlude leads up to a transposed restatement, at the *tempo rubato fortissimo ardoroso*.

Tempo rubato
 ff ardoroso dim. a tempo II pp

Fig. 18. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Canto*, end of B Section.
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Here the descending melody is transposed to begin at E, descending to A, and is repeated twice, though the final repetition is truncated. Note the recurrence of the second-inversion Db triad after the octave E in the second phrase; this refers back to the transition from the end of the A section of the *Esordio* to the B section, again manifesting the conflict of E and F. Finally, at the very end of the movement, the B' section restates this melody one last time, transposed to begin on F#, and descending to the open-string chord A-d-g-b. This is followed by a brief coda consisting of a slow series of arpeggiated chords, once again a typical folkloric gesture. The final chord, a bitonal combination of F major and E dominant seventh, provides a sort of phrygian cadence into the following movement, one last instance of E-F tension for the *attacca* into the *Finale*.

CRIOLLO FOLK DANCE ELEMENTS

The *Malambo* and other *Criollo* Folk Dances

Ginastera made constant use throughout his career of the strong rhythms of *criollo* folk dances. The chief source of material and inspiration was the *malambo*, though other folk dances, such as the *chacarera*, and the *milonga*, also have been used.

In describing his use of elements drawn from the complex and sophisticated popular traditions of the guitar in Latin America, Ginastera spoke of the rough, violent nature of life in the *pampas*, and made particular mention of the *malambo*.⁵⁷ This fast and vigorous dance has been called "the archetypal dance of the *gauchos*."⁵⁸ A late-nineteenth-century account described the *justa* or "joust," the competitive manner of dancing the *malambo* :

In the matter of dances, none is comparable to the *malambo*. It is the *gaucho's* "tournament" when he feels the urge to display his skill as a dancer. Two men place themselves opposite each other. The guitars flood the *rancho* with their chords, one of the *gauchos* begins to dance; then he stops and his opponent continues; and so it goes on. Many times the *justa* lasts from six to seven hours. In the Bragado in 1871 we saw a *malambo* that lasted nearly the whole night, consisting of seventy-six figures by each of the dancers. The spectators are fascinated by the dancer's feet, which go through complicated tapping, shuffling, stamping, doubling, and criss-crossing, at times barely seeming to touch the ground with the soles of their boots. The onlookers applaud, shout, and make bets on one

⁵⁷Carlos Barbosa-Lima, "Remembering Alberto Ginastera: The Evolution of a Guitar Sonata," *Guitar Review* 87 (1991): 6-8.

⁵⁸Chase 454.

dancer or the other, while even the women and children are swept along by the frenetic enthusiasm engendered by the vertiginous motion.⁵⁹

The performance of the *malambo* made for a notable spectacle. Sometimes the dancer would fasten a knife to each foot, and in dancing add rhythmic accents by clashing the blades together. Other times, four knives would be set up around the dancer, pointing inwards, delimiting the small square in which the dancing was done. Alternatively, four candles were used, illuminating the dancer, who had to avoid extinguishing them or knocking them over. The dancer also merited higher status if he performed without removing his spurs.⁶⁰ Despite these manifestations of rough peasant vigor, the style of dancing retained a certain dignity; it was not considered proper to indulge in violent leaps, contortions, or acrobatics.⁶¹

Musically, the basic form of the *malambo* originally consisted of two measures of 6/8 time, the first measure containing the subdominant and dominant chords, and the second measure, the tonic chord. This basic pattern would be repeated continuously as long as the dancers wished to continue, with different rhythms and variations imitating their movements.⁶² A typical guitar

⁵⁹Ventura R. Lynch, *La provincia de Buenos Aires hasta la definición de la cuestión capital de la Republica* (Buenos Aires, 1883). This quote from Lynch's well-known book is reproduced in Carlos Vega, *Las danzas populares argentinas*, 55-56. I have given Gilbert Chase's translation as it appears in the MQ article referenced above.

⁶⁰Vega, *Las danzas populares argentinas*, vol. 1 (Buenos Aires: Instituto de Musicologia, 1952) 53-54.

⁶¹Vega, *Las danzas populares argentinas*, 76.

⁶²Aretz, *El folklore musical argentina*, 182.

accompaniment shows the characteristic hemiola between the 6/8 emphasis of the first measure and the 3/4 emphasis of the second measure.



Fig. 19. *Malambo* guitar accompaniment from Brian Hodel, "The Guitar: Alive and Well in Argentina," *Guitar Review* 60 (1985): 6.

Generally taken at a fairly fast tempo, the *malambo* can incorporate many varied syncopations and rhythmic patterns, and the contrast between 6/8 and 3/4 can appear within one measure as well as in sequential measures.

In addition to the striking characteristics of the *malambo*, other *criollo* folk dances of interest here are the *chacarera* and the *milonga*. The *chacarera*, literally a "farm dance," was a popular dance for couples in the rural areas in the nineteenth century, and is one of the few folk dances that is still danced.⁶³ Fast and vigorous, it is closely related to the *gato*, differing in choreography, and musically in the rhythmic accents of the typical guitar accompaniment and the characteristic syncopation between melody and accompaniment.⁶⁴ Like the *gato*, the *chacarera* is also sometimes purely instrumental: solo guitar or harp, or violin or accordion with guitar accompaniment. A solo *chacarera* shows the typical syncopation between the melody and accompaniment.

⁶³Vega, *Las danzas populares argentinas*, 703.

⁶⁴Aretz, *El folklore musical argentina*, 202-7.



Fig. 20. Solo guitar *Chacarera* from Isabel Aretz, *El folklore musical argentino* (Buenos Aires: Ricordi, 1973) 204.

A typical guitar *rasgueado* accompaniment gives accents on the third and fifth eighth notes of the measure, suggesting 3/4.⁶⁵

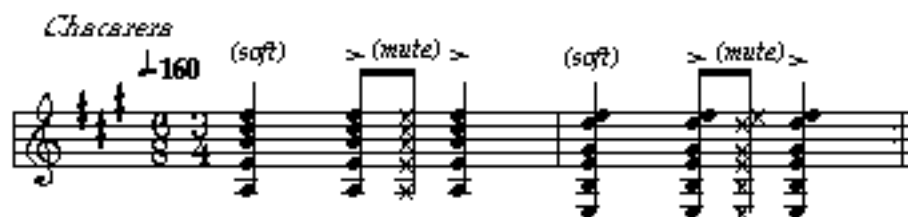


Fig. 21. *Chacarera* guitar accompaniment from Brian Hodel, "The Guitar: Alive and Well in Argentina," *Guitar Review* 60 (1985): 6.

Note how this accompaniment corresponds rhythmically to the bass line of the solo guitar version; it would be entirely appropriate for the solo to have this type of accompaniment.

The *milonga* is of fairly recent origin, and typically is in duple meter instead of the usual 6/8.⁶⁶ The *milonga* characteristically employs a 3+3+2 pattern; in 4/4 this would be represented by a measure containing a dotted

⁶⁵Hodel 6.

⁶⁶Serrano Redonnet 37.

quarter-note, a dotted-quarter note and a quarter-note. A typical guitar accompaniment in 2/4 shows a similar pattern.⁶⁷



Fig. 22. *Milonga* guitar accompaniment from Brian Hodel, "The Guitar: Alive and Well in Argentina," *Guitar Review* 60 (1985): 6.

In its original rural form, the *milonga* was rather slow, but over the years as it became more popular and urbanized, it absorbed influence from the *habañera* and Europe, and was sped up, the result being the quintessential Argentine urban music, the *tango*.⁶⁸ In either the fast or slow form, the irregular 3+3+2 pattern is an interesting contrast to the constant 6/8 of most of the *criollo* music.

⁶⁷Hodel 6.

⁶⁸Aretz, *El folklore musical argentina*, 157-59.

Ginastera's Use of the *Malambo* and other *Criollo* Folk Dances

Ginastera made extensive use of the *malambo* in many works, orchestral, chamber and solo, frequently as a source of inspiration and energy for the final movement of multi-movement works. Notable examples include the *Danza Final*, subtitled *Malambo*, from the ballet *Estancia*, Op. 8 (1941), the middle movement of the *Pampeana No. 3*, Op. 24 (1954),⁶⁹ the final movement of the *String Quartet No. 1*, the final movement of the *Piano Concerto No. 1*, and numerous solo piano works, including the *Danza del Gaucho Matrero*, from the *Danzas Argentinas*, Op. 2 (1937), the *Criollo* from *Tres Piezas*, Op. 6 (1940), the *Malambo* for solo piano, the fifth movement of the *Suite de Danzas Criollas*, Op. 15 (1946), and the final movement, *Ruvido ed ostinato*, of the *Piano Sonata No. 1*.

The image shows a musical score for a string quartet, specifically measures 116-19 of Alberto Ginastera's 'Danza Final (Malambo)' from the ballet 'Estancia'. The score is written for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The tempo is marked 'Al tempo di i malambo' and the dynamics are 'mf' and 'f'. The music features a characteristic Malambo rhythm with a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the lower strings and a more melodic line in the upper strings.

Fig. 23. Alberto Ginastera, *Estancia*, *Danza Final (Malambo)*, mm. 116-19.

⁶⁹Chase 454.

The earliest of these works present the most literal use of the folkloric material, as in the *Danza Final* from *Estancia*, where Ginastera quotes the essential qualities of the *malambo* directly. One of the principal themes from the movement presents both the IV-V-I harmonic progression and the characteristic contrast of 6/8 and 3/4.

In later works, Ginastera uses the simple folk elements in a more complex and imaginative way, creating a more sophisticated and personal music. In the fifth movement of the *Suite de Danzas Criollas*, Ginastera alters the metric structure by indicating measures of 5/8 and 7/8, expanding beyond a strict alternation of 3/4 and 6/8. The composer called the result a "sort of sublimated *malambo*."⁷⁰



Fig. 24. Alberto Ginastera, *Suite de Danzas Criollas*, movement V, mm. 16-25.

⁷⁰Wylie 108.

Note that this added metric complexity also causes Ginastera to use the 3/4 time signature, explicitly indicating the hemiola previously left implicit in 6/8. In the final movement of the *String Quartet No. 1*, the principal theme of the B section is a figure in 5/8, which is clearly derived from a truncation of the *malambo* 6/8 + 3/4, in which the final eighth-note of each measure is removed.



Fig. 25. Alberto Ginastera, *String Quartet No. 1*, movement IV, mm. 47-50.

A different transformation is applied in the final movement of the *Piano Concerto No. 1*, where at one point the *malambo* hemiola is displaced with respect to the bar line.

Fig. 26. Alberto Ginastera, *Piano Concerto No. 1*, movement IV, mm. 14-17.

The *Finale* of the guitar sonata is clearly another example of a contemporary variant of the *malambo*.⁷¹ The movement is very quick, and though it begins with a *pianissimo* indication, a crescendo to *forte* occurs over the first eleven measures, and it maintains a frenetic and wild pace, in the true spirit of the *malambo*. The composer continually exhorts the performer to extravagant effort, with indications of growing intensity such as *sempre fortissimo sino al fine* at measure 24, *impetuoso* at measure 51, *feroce* at measure 76, *frenetico* at measure 102, and *delirante* at measure 118.

Presto e fognoso

raguaino

6

mf cresc.

raguaino

Fig. 27. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 1-10.
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⁷¹ Further confirmation of this can be seen in the comments of Carlos Barbosa-Lima, who commissioned and premiered the work, in Timothy Schmidt, "A Masterclass on the Ginastera Sonata by Carlos Barbosa-Lima," *Guitar Review* 89 (1992): 24.

The typical rhythmic characteristic of the *malambo*, the presentation of a 3/4 hemiola in contrast to the prevailing 6/8 meter, appears throughout the movement. Ginastera varies the metric scheme, with 7/8 and 5/8 measures altering the usual constant 6/8 meter, a procedure seen earlier in the *Suite de Danzas Criollas*. In most cases the contrasting 3/4 is explicitly indicated by a 3/4 time signature.

This characteristic 3/4 emphasis first occurs in the 3/4 measure at measure 5 then again in measure 10 and measure 23, closing the first section of the movement.

The image shows a musical score for guitar, measures 20-23. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked 'rasgueado'. The music consists of a series of chords and arpeggiated figures. The first three measures (20-22) are in 6/8 time, with a 3/4 hemiola indicated by a bracket over the first three chords. The fourth measure (23) is in 3/4 time, also indicated by a bracket. The score includes dynamic markings of *fff* and a trill marked 'T' in the final measure. The bass line is mostly rests, with some rhythmic notation at the end.

Fig. 28. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 20-23.
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This characteristic hemiola recurs throughout the movement, the typical 6/8 followed by 3/4 frequently varied via a metrically altered setting, as already seen in the opening measures of the movement.



Fig. 29a. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 27-28.
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Fig. 29b. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 84-85.
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Fig. 29c. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 97-98.
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Fig. 29d. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 109-110.
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In measures 37-40, the prevailing 9/8 meter gives the same feel as 6/8; in measures 45-46, the prevailing meter is 8/8.

Fig. 30. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 37-38.
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Fig. 31. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 45-47.
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Ginastera takes this idea of three strong beats in 3/4 as a contrast to the prevailing meter one step further in measures 73-75. Here the inserted measure is indicated in 7/8, in effect $3/4 + 1/8$, extending the duration of the last chord in the measure which marks the end of this section. However, another way of looking at this is to consider that extra eighth-note as taken from the previous 8/8 measure. Instead of a 9/8 measure followed by 3/4, we see that the three rhythmic accents have been shifted forward in time by the value of one eighth-note.

The musical score for measures 73-75 of the finale of Ginastera's Sonata for Guitar is presented in 8/8 time. The piece is marked 'rasgueado' (strummed). The notation shows a series of chords and rhythmic patterns. Below the staff, three specific chord diagrams are provided, each enclosed in a square box. The first diagram shows a triad on the first three strings (E, G, B). The second diagram shows a triad on the second, third, and fourth strings (D, F, A). The third diagram shows a triad on the third, fourth, and fifth strings (C, E, G).

Fig. 32. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, 73-75.

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This is reminiscent of the procedure used in the final movement of the first piano concerto, although in this case instead of displacing the rhythmic figure with respect to the bar line, the metric construction itself has been altered. Finally, at the very climax of the movement, Ginastera truncates the *malambo* rhythmic figure to generate a new rhythm, a technique seen in the last movement of the first string quartet. In measures 122-27, the two measures of 6/8 are followed not by a measure of 3/4, but by a measure of 5/8, which is constructed by removing the last eighth-note from a 3/4 measure. The three strong accents of 3/4 are present in this truncated measure, which is then insistently repeated to lead to the final chords.

The musical score for measures 123-25 of the finale of Ginastera's Sonata for Guitar is presented in 8/8 time. The piece is marked 'rasgueado' (strummed). The notation shows a series of chords and rhythmic patterns. Below the staff, five specific chord diagrams are provided, each enclosed in a square box. The first diagram shows a triad on the first three strings (E, G, B). The second diagram shows a triad on the second, third, and fourth strings (D, F, A). The third diagram shows a triad on the third, fourth, and fifth strings (C, E, G). The fourth diagram shows a triad on the second, third, and fourth strings (D, F, A). The fifth diagram shows a triad on the third, fourth, and fifth strings (C, E, G).

Fig. 33. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 123-25.

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In addition to the dominant influence of the *malambo* in the *Finale*, there are numerous short segments which can be linked to other Argentine folk dances. The *chacarera*, and the *milonga* are the sources of other *criollo* rhythmic elements in this movement.

In measures 90-93, Ginastera presents a fragment which is clearly based upon the *chacarera*.



Fig. 34. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 90-91.
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This fragment, in 6/8 time, contains the same rhythmic elements seen earlier in Figures 20 and 21, as well as a melodic contour similar to Figure 20, though the harmonic and melodic intervals are very dissonant, in contrast to the folkloric originals. The indicated fingering calls for the use of the right hand thumb to arpeggiate the chords falling on the third and fifth eighth note of the measure, providing a natural accent on these beats, as typical of a *chacarera* accompaniment. This is important to the performer as a clear indication that these measures should be accented in this manner of the *chacarera*, expressing the syncopations presented, and not simply stressing the first and fourth eighth notes, as might be assumed from the 6/8 time signature and lack of any explicit accent markings.

In the *Finale*, the metric indication of 8/8 usually precedes a *milonga* 3+3+2 rhythm. Given his propensity for shifting and uneven rhythms, it seems obvious that Ginastera is attracted to the *milonga* not only by its inherently asymmetrical character, but also by its potential for generating other rhythms. For example, the *milonga* could be thought of as a 6/8 measure with a 2/8 extension, an interesting contrast when mixed with 6/8 sections.



Fig. 35. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 77-78.
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Ginastera also alters the *milonga* to create other uneven rhythms in measures 68-70.



Fig. 36. Alberto Ginastera, *Sonata for Guitar, Finale*, mm. 68-71.
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By taking a 3+3+2 *milonga* pattern and reducing it to 3+2, the 5/8 measure is a natural extension of the previous 8/8 measures. The 5/8 measures which follow are a truncated version of the typical two-measure *malambo* phrase of 6/8 followed by 3/4, a rhythmic alteration previously seen in the final movement of the *String Quartet No. 1*. This type of alteration of the basic folk rhythms is a key technique in Ginastera's stylistic approach.

SUMMARY

Alberto Ginastera made extensive use of Argentine folk music in the construction of the *Sonata for Guitar*, taking folkloric elements as creative kernels for the development of an energetic and compelling work. The distinct essence of Argentine folk music is unmistakable in Ginastera's striking contemporary musical language.

Drawing from both the *andino* and *criollo* musical traditions, Ginastera utilized a diverse selection of folk elements, and used the essential differences between these traditions as further source of inspiration for the creation of musical tension in the *Sonata for Guitar*. From *criollo* music, the essence of the guitar itself comes through, with the imitation of many folk guitar techniques and effects, and additionally the use of the open-string chord of the instrument, which in turn is manipulated to generate important pitch relations. From *andino* music Ginastera drew upon the *andino cantos de caja*, the *baguala* and the *vidala*, to create his own imaginary folk song, which he then developed and extended in various ways. The contrast between the *criollo* and the *andino* served as a further creative nucleus, spawning points of harmonic tension and rhythmic contrast. Finally, the *malambo*, along with the *chacarera* and the *milonga*, provided material for the energetic closing movement. The *Finale* incorporates rhythmic characteristics of these *criollo* folk dances, transformed by Ginastera's imagination to produce a brilliant and exciting showpiece, filled with irregular rhythms and accents.

The *Sonata for Guitar* is acknowledged as one of the most important compositions in the instrument's repertoire, a position well-merited by the outstanding value of the work. Ginastera's marvelous ability to draw upon the

folk music of his native land for the creation of innovative and distinctive music is amply demonstrated here. It is to be hoped that this study will allow performers, teachers, and students to reach a deeper understanding of the essential nature of Ginastera's exotic and exciting music, and will stimulate further study and appreciation of Ginastera's works.

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