

McGill University
Schulich School of Music

**Almeida Prado and his Extramusical Inspirations:
A Study Focused on Selected Piano Works**

**Marcelo Thys
2015**

ALMEIDA PRADO AND HIS EXTRAMUSICAL INSPIRATIONS:
A STUDY FOCUSED ON SELECTED PIANO WORKS

by

MARCELO GREENHALGH THYS

A paper submitted to McGill University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of D.Mus.
Performance Studies.

Montreal, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the people who contributed to this work. My piano teacher Prof. Kyoko Hashimoto, and the members of my committee, Prof. Eleanor Stublely, Prof. Robert Hasegawa and Prof. Ilya Poletaev for the valuable input, comments and sharing of ideas.

Special thanks for my former Masters supervisor and Almeida Prado expert, Prof. Salomea Gandelman, for allowing me access to her personal library and the constant support. To my former piano teacher Prof Luiz Senise, for sharing his vast knowledge on the repertoire.

To my colleagues, composer Nikolai Brucher and pianist Jeremy Chaulk.

To Ana Paula Reinoso for the loving support and inspiration during all stages of this Doctorate program.

Finally, to my parents and family.

THYS, Marcelo Greenhalgh. *Almeida Prado and his Extramusical Inspirations: A Study Focused on Selected Piano Works*. Doctorate Thesis. Schulich School of Music, McGill University. 2015.

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses works by Brazilian composer Almeida Prado that use different types of extramusical inspirations: *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, *Poesilúdios* (n. 2, 4, 6, 13 and 16) and *Sonata n. 10*. Besides quoting relevant bibliography, writings from the composer himself and recordings were used as sources. An overview of Prado's biography and piano works sets the context of the present study. The correspondences between the musical text and extramusical references were identified in order to examine how the composer musically conveys such references. Performance implications of the associations were analyzed, providing suggestions for pianists who wish to perform these works.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I.....	3
AN OVERVIEW OF ALMEIDA PRADO’S BIOGRAPHY AND PIANO MUSIC	3
Organized System of Resonances.....	16
CHAPTER II.....	25
ASTROLOGICAL EXTRAMUSICAL RELATIONSHIPS: <i>CARTAS CELESTES</i> VOLUME III (1981)	25
The Moon in different phases.....	31
“Constelação I – Orion, o caçador” (Constellation I – Orion, the hunter)	34
“Betelgeuse – a mais fulgurante estrela” (Betelgeuse – the most effulgent star)	38
“Algol – a estrela variável” (Algol – the mutating star)	41
“Constelação II – Touro” (Taurus Constellation)	46
“Marte” (Mars).....	49
CHAPTER II.....	52
ARTISTIC AND GEOGRAPHIC EXTRAMUSICAL RELATIONSHIPS: <i>POESILÚDIOS</i> (1983)	52
<i>Poesilúdio n. 2</i>	53
<i>Poesilúdio n. 4</i>	57
<i>Poesilúdio n. 6</i> – “Noites de Tóquio” (Nights of Tokyo)	60
<i>Poesilúdio n. 13</i> - “Noites do Deserto” (Night of the Desert).....	65
<i>Poesilúdio n. 16</i> - “As Noites do Centro da Terra” (The Nights of the Center of the Earth).....	69
CHAPTER III	74
POETIC EXTRAMUSICAL RELATIONSHIPS: <i>SONATA N. 10</i> “SONATA DAS ROSAS” (1996)	74
CONCLUSION	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88

LIST OF EXAMPLES

Example 1: Prado, <i>8 Variações sobre um Tema Nordestino</i> (mm. 1-5). Theme	5
Example 2: Prado, “Invenção a 2 partes” (mm. 1-6) - <i>8 Exercícios Polifônicos sobre Temas Folclóricos Brasileiros</i>	6
Example 3: Prado, “Momento 4” (mm. 34-40) – <i>Momentos Caderno I</i>	8
Example 4: Prado, “Momento 4” (mm. 1-6) – <i>Momentos Caderno I</i>	9
Example 5: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 1</i> – 3 rd movement, “Fuga” (mm. 1-20).....	10
Example 6: Prado, <i>Ad Laudes Matutinas</i> (mm. 1-5)	13
Example 7: Messiaen, <i>Mode de valeurs et d'intensités</i> (mm. 45-51).....	14
Example 8: Ascending harmonic series	16
Example 9: Zone of explicit resonance. “Via Lactea” (mm. 29-32) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I.....	17
Example 10: Descending harmonic series.....	18
Example 11: Prado, “Pequena Nuvem de Magalhães” (Small Cloud of Magellan) (mm.1-3) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I.....	19
Example 12: Prado, “Via Lactea” (mm. 23-26) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I.....	20
Example 13: Prado, “Via-Láctea” (mm. 6-12) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I.....	21
Example 14: Prado, “Scorpio” (mm. 1-9) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I. Zone of Multiple Resonance.	22
Example 15: Prado, “Via-Láctea” (m. 16) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I. Zone of Non-Resonance	23
Example 16: Prado, “Guaiamú” (mm. 1-3)- <i>VI Episódios de Animais</i> . Zone of Non-Resonance.....	23
Example 17: Prado, “Marimbondos” (mm. 2-3) - <i>VI Episódios de Animais</i> . The swarm of hornets buzz. Contrast with “Guaimú”	24
Example 18: The Twenty-four chords from <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume I	26
Example 19: Chords used in the Constellation of Orion – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III.....	30
Example 20: Excerpt of the first system of each phase of the Moon present in <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III by Prado. a) Lua Quarto Crescente (Crescent Moon); b) Lua Cheia (Full moon); c) Lua Quarto Minguante (Waning Moon) d) Lua Nova (New Moon).	32
Example 21: Prado, “ Lua quarto Minguante” – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> III (Page 1, 3 rd system). Long F, circled in red	33
Example 22: Prado, “Lua quarto Minguante” <i>Cartas Celestes</i> III (Page 1, 2 nd and 3 rd systems). Long Bb, circled in red	33
Example 23: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (1 st page, 1 st - 2 nd systems) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III. Suggestion of galloping horses	34
Example 24: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (1 st page, 1 st -system) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III. Depiction of horse gallops.	35
Example 25: Villa-Lobos, “O Cavalinho de Pau” – <i>Prole do Bebê n. 2</i> . Depiction of horse gallops.	35
Example 26: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (a: 2 nd page, 3 rd system) (b: 2 nd page, 6th system) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III. Depiction of horse kicks or snorts	35
Example 27: Villa-Lobos, “O Cavalinho de Pau” (a: mm. 47-50) (b: 69-72) – <i>Prole do Bebê n. 2</i> . Depiction of horse kicks or snorts.....	36
Example 28: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (mm. 19 – 31) - <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III.	37
Example 29: Villa-Lobos: “O Lobozinho de Vidro” (mm. 55-58) - <i>Prole do Bebê n. 2</i>	37

Example 30: Messiaen, “Regard de l’Esprit de Joie” – <i>Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus</i> , abrupt rhythmic, dynamic and pitch contrast.	37
Example 31: alpha chord	38
Example 32: Prado, “Betelgeuse” (mm. 1-2) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III.....	39
Example 33: Messiaen – “Le Merle Bleu” (mm. 18-19) – Catalogue d’Oiseaux Book 1	40
Example 34: Prado, “Betelgeuse” (a: mm. 10) (b: mm.13) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III. Unsynchronized metrics.	40
Example 35: Prado, Betelgeuse, “black and white” configurations.....	40
Example 36: Prado, “Algol” (mm.1-3) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> III.....	41
Example 37: Prado, “Algol” (mm. 27-33) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> III, rhythmical expansion through addition of notes.....	42
Example 38: Messiaen, “Regard de l’Eglise d’amour” (mm. 1-6) – <i>Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus</i> , rhythmical expansion through addition of notes and note values.	43
Example 39: Prado, a) “Agol” (mm. 17-18); b) “Orion” (mm. 47-48) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III, with Lopes’ modifications in red	44
Example 40: Chords used on the Constellation of Taurus – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III.	46
Example 41: epsilon (ε), omicron (ο) and theta (θ) chords	48
Example 42: Prado, “Constellation of Taurus” (mm. 29-31) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III, application of the chord epsilon (ε)	48
Example 43: Prado, “Constellation of Taurus” (mm. 34-35) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III, application of the chord omicron (ο)	48
Example 44: Prado, “Constellation of Taurus” (mm. 40-42) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III, application of the chord theta (θ).....	48
Example 45: Prado, “Marte” (mm. 5-15) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> III, metric modulation.....	50
Example 46: Prado, “Marte” (mm. 36-42) – <i>Cartas Celestes</i> III	51
Example 47: Prado – <i>Poesilúdio n. 2</i> (mm. 1-4)	54
Example 48: Prado, <i>Poesilúdio n. 2</i> – <i>Calmo; rápido; lento</i>	55
Example 49: Prado, <i>Poesilúdio n. 2 - Luminoso</i>	56
Example 50: Prado, <i>Poesilúdio n. 2, barrocammente</i>	56
Example 51: Prado, <i>Poesilúdio n. 4</i> , first theme.	58
Example 52: Prado, <i>Poesilúdio n. 4</i> , second theme, depiction of ants	59
Example 53: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 6</i> (mm. 2-6), left hand ostinatos accompanied by syncopated rhythms	61
Example 54: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 6</i> (mm. 1 / 4-5)	62
Example 55: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 6. (21 / 1-7)), Rápido, estelar</i>	63
Example 56: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 6</i> (mm. 19), <i>Lento, Sagrado</i>	64
Example 57: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 6</i> , gong effect on the base.	64
Example 58: Prado, “Noites do Deserto” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 13</i> (mm. 1), introduction.....	66
Example 59: Messiaen – “Regard de l’etoile” (mm. 6-9) – <i>Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus</i> , unison four octaves apart	66
Example 60: Prado, “Noites do Deserto” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 13</i> (mm. 2), depictions of a Bedouin chant	67
Example 61: Prado, <i>Rios</i> . Microtonal effects.	68
Example 62: Prado, “Noites do Deserto” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 13</i> (mm. 10), depiction of the desert wind.	69
Example 63: Prado, “Noites do Centro da Terra” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 16</i> (mm. 1-11).....	70

Example 64: Prado, “As Noites do Centro da Terra” – <i>Poesilúdio n. 16</i> (mm. 61-89), gradual omission of notes.....	72
Example 65: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 1 st movement, first theme	76
Example 66: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 1 st movement, second theme, “Canto das Rosas”	77
Example 67: Chopin, <i>Nocturne op. 72/1</i> (mm. 1-3).....	77
Example 68: Chopin, <i>Nocturne op. 9/1</i> (mm. 1-2).....	77
Example 69: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 1 st movement, <i>Um pouco mais rapido</i>	78
Example 70: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 1 st movement, <i>Sonoro</i>	79
Example 71: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 2 nd movement, "Scherzo" (mm.1-7)	80
Example 72: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 2 nd movement, <i>Trio</i> . (mm. 1-10)	80
Example 73: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 2 nd movement, <i>Coda</i> . (mm. 6), depiction of the bird Sabiá-Laranjeira	81
Example 74: Messiaen, “Le Merle Bleu” (mm. 99) – <i>Catalogue d’Oiseaux</i> Book 1, evoking Herring Gull using appoggiaturas	81
Example 75: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 3 rd movement, exposition of the theme	82
Example 76: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 3 rd movement, "Improvisação I".....	82
Example 77: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 3 rd movement, "Improvisação II"	82
Example 78: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 3 rd movement, "Improvisação III"	83
Example 79: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , 3 rd movement, the “wonderful F Major”, a Zone of Explicit Resonance of the harmonics of F.	84

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: “Orion” Constellation	31
Figure 2: The four phases of the Moon: Crescent, Full, Waning, and New Moon, respectively	31
Figure 3: Betelgeuse star.....	38
Figure 4: Algol Binary star complex.....	41
Figure 5: Planet Mars.....	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Overview of the first six volumes of Prado's <i>Cartas Celestes</i>	27
Table 2: <i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III, overview of the movements	28
Table 3: <i>Poesilúdio n. 2</i> , structure overview	53
Table 4: <i>Poesilúdio n. 4</i> , overview of sections.....	57
Table 5: <i>Poesilúdio n. 6</i> , overview of sections.....	61
Table 6: <i>Poesilúdio n. 13</i> , overview of sections.....	65
Table 7: <i>Poesilúdio n. 16</i> , overview of sections.....	70
Table 8: Prado, <i>Sonata n. 10</i> , overview of sections	75

INTRODUCTION

Born in Santos, Brazil, José Antonio de Almeida Prado (1943-2010) is regarded as one of the most prominent composers in the Brazilian music scene. He studied piano, composition and harmony with Dinorah de Carvalho, Osvaldo Lacerda and Camargo Guarnieri, respectively. In the 70s he studied in Europe with Nadia Boulanger and Oliver Messiaen, the latter having had a great influence on Almeida Prado's style and artistic personality.

Almeida Prado's output consists of more than 300 compositions for different instrumentation, among which over 100 are for solo piano. His music stimulates the listener's imagination, by using extensive extramusical inspirations such as images, nature themes, symbols and religion, which are often suggested by his pictorial titles, epigraphs, and expressive indications. For the purposes of this paper, I will examine three works that use different types of extramusical inspirations – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, selection from *Poesilúdios* and *Sonata n. 10* – to discuss how Almeida Prado manipulates different musical elements to convey such references. I will present a brief overview of Almeida Prado's biography and style. Then I will examine each work in detail. Wishing to stimulate the imagination of pianists who would like to perform those pieces, I will also reflect on possible implications these associations may have for the performer.

Since we are addressing extramusical elements, it is important to consider the issue of "synesthesia". The term derives from the Greek *syn*, meaning "union" or "joining", and *aisthánesthai*, meaning "sensation" or "perception". The term refers to the simultaneous perception of different senses, that is, synesthesia occurs when "the perception of certain stimuli

is accompanied by images from another sensory modality.”¹ Common cases are the relationships between vision and hearing and vice-versa.

With respect to the metaphorical influences of musical pieces' titles (just as happens in the pieces being studied here), Barbaresco points out that they have a “symbolic power of ‘saying’ something to the work, of suggesting, motivating and involving structures which allow its interpretation” for both the listener and the interpreter.² Some composers were extremely sensitive to synesthesia: Debussy, who put suggestive titles at the end of the Preludes; Scriabin used to see colors in each tonality; and Messiaen used to say: “I listen to the colors, I see the music.”³ Although Almeida Prado did not go as far as having a meticulous system for the correspondence of sound and color like Messiaen, it is notable how Prado's music also provokes and encourages our imagination. Although being subjective and discussible, imagination was and still is one of the engines of musical interpretation, and as such, worthy of discussion.

¹ Panizza, no date. “a percepção de determinados estímulos é acompanhada por particulares imagens próprias de outra modalidade sensitiva” (My translation).

² Barbaresco, Eduardo. O título como força polissêmica da obra artístico musical: um estudo do nome e suas interações significativas. *XVI Congresso da Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-graduação em Música (ANPPOM)*. Brasília, 2006. p. 862-867. “força representativa de ‘dizer’ algo à obra, sugerir, motivar, envolver estruturas que possibilitam sua interpretação” (M.t).

³ Navarro, Daniel Pérez. Escucho los colores, veo la música: sinestesias. El compositor sinestésico: Olivier Messiaen. *Revista mensual de publicación en Internet Número 48º - Enero 2004*.: [Http://www.filomusica.com/filo48/sinestesia.html](http://www.filomusica.com/filo48/sinestesia.html)

“Escucho los colores, veo la música” (M.t).

CHAPTER I

AN OVERVIEW OF ALMEIDA PRADO'S BIOGRAPHY AND PIANO MUSIC

Almeida Prado had a special interest in the piano. The high volume of compositions for the instrument – more than 100, including short and large-scale works – is a testament to his interest. Being a skilled pianist himself, he performed many of his own compositions. He had the habit of composing at the piano first, for later notation on paper.

When asked where his admiration for the instrument came from, he replied: “It comes from the fact that I love the piano, I think piano, like Chopin. I orchestrate like a big piano, and that is why [one sees] the presence of resonances in all my works.”⁴ He adds that the piano is the instrument that gives him the “possibility of creating high velocities, of vertiginous *accelerandos* and *rallentandos*” and “the only instrument that in its natural state (without the use of an amplifier) is able to produce an incredible amount of resonance.”⁵

During the early and mid-twentieth century there was a piano cult among the Brazilian middle and higher classes, especially in the states of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. A great number of families had a tradition of including piano instruction in their children's education, particularly for their daughters. Almeida Prado was raised in this context, and had a musical family environment. Both his mother and sister played the piano. His mother was an amateur pianist and pupil of Luigi Chiafarelli (1856-1923), one of the most prominent teachers of that time in Brazil, having had Guiomar Novaes (1894-1979) and Antonieta Rudge (1885-1974) among his students.

⁴ Grosso, 1997, p. 195. “Surge do fato de fato de amar o piano, eu penso piano, como Chopin. Eu orquestro como um grande piano, por isso a presença das ressonâncias em todas as minhas obras”.

⁵ Prado, 1985.

Prado started to demonstrate an interest and talent for music at an early age. He began composing small pieces at the age of seven, usually creating background music to accompany his sister Tereza Maria's puppet shows:

“Just as Mozart or Beethoven imitated Haydn, Handel and those who came before, I imitated Villa-Lobos. Villa-Lobos of *Cirandinhas*, the pieces I heard my older sister Tereza Maria practice while I was playing.”⁶

When he was 14 years old, he began lessons with Camargo Guarnieri (1907-1993) and Osvaldo Lacerda (1927-2011). At that time, a trend among Brazilian composers was to follow the nationalist ideals of the musicologist, poet, writer and music critic Mario de Andrade (1843-1945). Andrade strongly advocated that Brazilian composers should incorporate Brazilian culture and folklore into all their music. Guarnieri and Lacerda were among his most dedicated followers. With them Prado received solid training in harmony, counterpoint and the application of Brazilian folk music or folk music rhythms in variations, fugues, and inventions. His pieces from this period have predominantly tonal characteristics and reflect the nationalistic influences he received from these mentors. He wrote a number of variations on Brazilian folk songs, one of the compositional processes that Guarnieri emphasized in his teaching, such as the *14 Variações sobre o Tema Afro-Brasileiro Xangô* (1961) and *8 Variações sobre um Tema Nordestino* (1961). The latter (Example 1) shows direct influences of Guarnieri, such as the use of counterpoint, as well as hints of tonality and modality.⁷ The theme is presented in the right hand mainly in the key of G major, while the left hand plays foreign notes to that key, such as E_b, F, and C_#. This “play” with tonality is a feature

⁶ Coelho, João Marcos. “Um Músico Erudito Desce da Torre”. Folha de São Paulo (São Paulo, Brazil), Newspaper. July 1978, Folha Ilustrada, p. 1.

⁷ The Greek modes – in particular the Mixolydian and Dorian – are very common in Brazilian popular urban music. This use of modes later became common among Brazilian nationalists.

used often in later pieces by Almeida Prado, such as the *Noturnos* (1985) and the *Sonata n. 10* (1996) which will be discussed later.



Example 1: Prado, 8 *Variações sobre um Tema Nordestino* (mm. 1-5). Theme

Other examples of short pieces that Prado wrote under Guarnieri's guidance are the 8 *Exercícios Polifônicos sobre Temas Folclóricos Brasileiros* (8 Polyphonic Exercises on Brazilian Folk Themes, 1962, 1963 and 1964). These pieces are composition exercises of traditional baroque forms in the style of J. S. Bach, such as two- or three-part *Inventions* and *Fugues*. The pieces are strongly rooted in tonal or Greek modes. For instance, in the first piece, “Invenção a 2 Partes” (1962, Example 2), Prado wrote an Invention using mainly the Mixolydian scale on C.⁸

⁸ The Mixolydian scale is consisted of T-T-st-T-T-st-T (T= Tone; st = Semitone).



Example 2: Prado, “Invenção a 2 partes” (mm. 1-6) - 8 *Exercícios Polifônicos sobre Temas Folclóricos Brasileiros*

About his time with Guarnieri, Prado says:

Camargo Guarnieri was the only Brazilian composer who had an official composition school in his studio. Koellreutter, another great master of that time, was always absent (...) It was a privilege to have been his student (...) I worked hard on counterpoint, fugues, chorales, countless books of variations. Guarnieri used to say that the variation is the most interesting exercise for the composer because it forces him not to think of the great forms - sonata and rondo - and to write short pieces with 25 to 50 bars, and that these exercises would gradually teach the *métier*, so that, then, he could arrive at the sonata form and the symphony.⁹

Koellreutter, the other composer mentioned above by Prado, was a German composer who moved to Rio de Janeiro and there tutored many Brazilian composers of the time, among the most notable: Claudio Santoro, Edino Krieger and Gilberto Mendes. Koellreutter introduced the

⁹ Lecture Recital, 1999. Quoted in Corvisier, 2000. “Camargo Guarnieri era o unico compositor brasileiro que tinha uma escola de compos if do oficial em seu estudio. Koellreutter, outro” grande mestre da epoca, estava sempre ausente, (...) Foi um privilégio ter sido aluno dele. (...) Trabalhei muito contraponto, fugas, corais, inúmeros cadernos de variacoes. Guarnieri dizia que a variacao é o exercício mais interessante para o compositor porque fazia com que ele não pensasse nas grandes formas sonata e rondo e ficasse a fazer pequenas peças de 25 a 50 compassos e que aos poucos estes exercclcios ensinavam o metier para depois entao se chegar a forma sonata e a sinfonia.”

principles of serialism to them, a technique that Guarnieri strongly opposed. For Guarnieri the twelve-tone technique and the new contemporary European trends were a confrontation and degeneration of the nationalistic ideals of Mario de Andrade. He went as far as writing an “Open Letter to Music and Critics of Brazil” in 1950 to oppose Koellreutter’s methods.

Almeida Prado’s personality did not match that of his mentor Guarnieri. His natural curiosity and eclecticism led him to search for new musical ideas and even to try out some of Koellreutter’s approach. That led to a rupture with his teacher. He recalls an episode when performing his *Variações sobre um Tema do Rio Grande* for piano and orchestra:

This piece had a cadenza with two serial bars. A common thing nowadays. Guarnieri made a scandal, saying that, in this, there were influences by Koellreutter and Gilberto Mendes. Guarnieri tore up my manuscript. I then decided to write four additional serial bars, but I did not tell him anything. I was going to play the work at the São Paulo Municipal Theater, with Guarnieri himself conducting. Since there was not enough time to rehearse the cadenza, he only heard it during the concert. Today, it is something "classic", but at that time, it sounded as a "false Boulez". Guarnieri was petrified. At the end of the concert, I already knew that I would not study with him anymore, that Guarnieri would no longer want to give me lessons. In the end, I said good-bye to him with these words: "Maestro, I want to follow the path of this cadenza." After this concert, Guarnieri did not speak to me for five years.¹⁰

In 1965 he then began to have informal lessons with Gilberto Mendes, who introduced Prado to the music of Stockhausen, Boulez, Messiaen, Nono, Berio, and Brazilian avant-garde composers such as Willy Correia de Oliveira and Olivier Toni. In that year he wrote his first “Caderno” (Notebook) of *6 Momentos* and his first *Sonata*. The *Momentos*, according to the composer, were

¹⁰ Neves, 1981, p 361. “Esta peça tinha uma cadencia com dois compassos seriais. Uma coisa bobal hoje em dia. Guarnieri fez um escandalo, dizendo que all havia influencias de Koellreutter e de Gilberto Mendes. Guarnieri rasgou minha partitura. Decidi entao escrever mais quatro compassos seriais, mas nao the disse nada. Eu ia tocar a obra no Teatro Municipal de Sao Paulo soba regencia do proprio Guarnieri. Como nao havia tempo para ensaiar a cadencia, ele so a ouviu na hora do concerto. Hoje em dia é algo "classico", mas na epoca soava um "falso Boulez". Guarnieri ficou petrificado. Ao acabar o concerto eu já sabia que nao teria mais aulas com ele, que Guarnieri nao la mais querer me dar aulas. Ao final me despedi dele dizendo: "Maestro eu quero seguir o caminho desta cadencia." Depois deste concerto Guarnieri ficou cinco anos sem falar comigo.”

“experiments” or “sketches” of compositional ideas that he might later use in larger works.¹¹ Even though some elements of tonality are usually present in Prado’s works, in *Momentos* one may see a departure of traditional tonal mechanisms and even atonal passages. Prado also explores more freedom with the notation of rhythm.

The fourth *Momento* presents features not commonly seen in his previous works. In this piece, Prado explores the instrument’s resonance by the use of a wide range of the keyboard and dissonant intervals, already announcing the new path the composer was taking. The final measures (Example 3) are notated in four staves, which was uncommon in Prado’s previous works. The rub between B and C in the bass provides the background for other dissonant harmonic constructions: superimposition of the interval of ninths on third staff (E \flat , G, E natural, A); tritones and the interval of seconds on the second staff (F, B, C, E); and quartal constructions on the first staff (A, D, G). Prado also experiments with changing meters by adding the count of eight-notes (2/8, 3/8, 4/8, 5/8, 2/4).



Example 3: Prado, “Momento 4” (mm. 34-40) – *Momentos Caderno I*

¹¹ Costa, 1998.

In the opening of this piece, (Example 4) Prado creates *accelerando* effects by shortening the duration of repeated pitches: quarter note triplets, four eighth-notes, and then eighth-note quintuplets.



Example 4: Prado, “Momento 4” (mm. 1-6) – *Momentos Caderno I*

As seen in *Momento 4*, pianist and musicologist Fernando Corvisier observes that another piece of that same year, *Sonata n. 1* (1965), presents a wider use of register in his motives and constant changes of meters. The third movement Prado is a two-part fugue in a “post-Webernian style”. Corvisier points out that the dynamics also have a role in the structure of the movement. As we may see in Example 5, Prado writes a different dynamic marking for each group of eighth-notes separated by rests. The dynamics initially range progressively from *fff* to *ppp*, “[emulating] a terraced [*decrescendo*] of the Baroque period”. When the subject moves to the right hand (mm. 11), Prado inverts the dynamics, ranging from *ppp* to *fff*, “creating a palindrome structure à la Webern.”¹²

¹² Corvisier, 2000. P. 44-46.

Energico ($\text{♩} = 124$) III (FUGA)

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of staves. The tempo is marked *Energico* with a quarter note equal to 124 beats per minute. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score includes various dynamic markings: *pff*, *ff*, *f*, *mf*, *pp*, and *fff*. The notation features complex rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and frequent use of slurs and ties. The piece is in 3/4 time and ends with a double bar line.

Example 5: Prado, *Sonata n. 1* – 3rd movement, “Fuga” (mm. 1-20)

In 1969, Prado won the first prize at the Guanabara Festival with his *Pequenos Funerais Cantantes*, for mixed voices, choir, soloists and orchestra. The prize was substantial, and enabled him to go to Europe to pursue studies with Nadia Boulanger and Oliver Messiaen.

About his experience in Europe, Almeida Prado says:

Messiaen was a revelation to me in the rhythmic sense. His rhythmic conception is total, almost cosmic. Nadia Boulanger is more classic, more interested in form, in harmony, in counterpoint. (...) Boulanger was concerned about the past, the Renaissance, the Middle Ages. Her approach to music was concerned with tonal organization in a wide and not restricted concept. I studied simultaneously with these two different personalities for four years.¹³

From this period on Almeida Prado developed a mature style. Corvisier says that his piano works started to exhibit greater complexity, including a more often use of asymmetrical rhythms, complex polyrhythmic structures and the employment of unusual time signatures (such 17/16, 6/64, 100/128).¹⁴ He wrote his first *Cartas Celestes*, arguably his most important work, which impacted several others.¹⁵

An “ecological phase” followed, to use the composer’s term, in works that allude to various natural elements. This includes *Ilhas* (Islands. 1973) and *Rios* (Rivers. 1976), the latter being likely his most virtuosic piece. On this stage in his life, Prado comments:

I tried to compose works that combined that entire nationalist basis, which already breathed another air, with what I apprehended and with my roots. It was then that I began to look towards the Brazilian fauna and flora as sources of inspiration, not utilizing the folklore any longer, but, rather, the inspiration from the animals, the flowers, the orchids of the Amazon. At this moment, I also got inspiration from Villa-Lobos, especially his works from the 1920s, such as *Prole do Bebe* n. 2.¹⁶

¹³ Silva, 1994.

¹⁴ Corvisier, 2000.

¹⁵ More details of *Cartas Celestes* will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹⁶ Prado, lecture-recital, 1999. In Corvisier, 2000.

Prado is not considered a nationalistic composer, as his language alludes to several universal elements and compositional tendencies. That does not mean that he neglected his country or his origins. Musicologist Salomea Gandelman, who had close contact with the composer, says that Prado believed that “the simple fact of being Brazilian and living in Brazil makes him permeable to the hearing of his surrounding environment”, and that this hearing is influenced by “all his past experiences and reprocessed according to [Prado] peculiarities.”¹⁷

When asked if he considered nationalism a viable thing, he replied:

No. But [what] I consider viable is to gather more knowledge of the richness and natural things that we have [in Brazil]. When I say this, I think about the urban folklore, never about picking up a northeastern music and dressing it up with an atonal chord – that for me is nothing. Nationalism as an “ism” no longer exists, is dead. Nevertheless, feeling oneself as Brazilian, the fact of being here and feeling that being here will influence you – that is not dead; and it will not be, ever. Being here, you end up doing Brazilian music.¹⁸

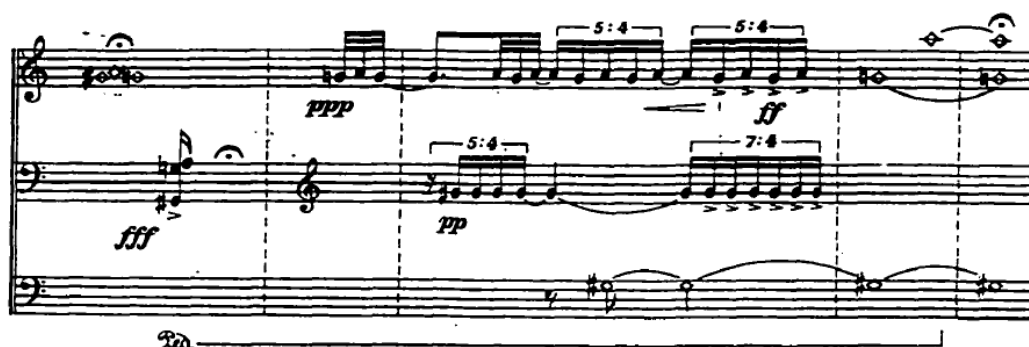
At a similar time, just like Messiaen, the composer had already developed a deep love for God and religious consciousness. From this period, Corvisier mentions *Ad Laudes Matutinas* (1972), a work inspired by the Benedictine Liturgy. Prado evokes the singing of the monks, using what Corvisier calls a “serialization” of intensities – possibly a technique acquired from Messiaen.¹⁹ One may question the term “serialization” to describe Prado’s work. In *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités* (1949), Messiaen writes every pitch with a different dynamic, duration and articulation. The texture is a superimposition of three levels, each notated on its own staff and

¹⁷ Gandelman, 1991, p. 14. “(...) pelo simples fato de ser brasileiro e viver no Brasil, é permeável à escuta do ambiente que o cerca. (...) é submetida às demais escutas de suas vivências prévias e reprocessada segundo as suas peculiaridades”.

¹⁸ Carneiro, 1976, p. 27. “Não. Mas considero viável você ter mais conhecimento das riquezas e das coisas naturais que a gente tem aqui. Quando falo isso, penso no folclore urbano, nunca em pegar uma música do nordeste e vesti-la com um acorde atonal – isso para mim não é nada. O nacionalismo como ‘ismo’ não mais existe, está morto. Mas o sentir Brasileiro, o estar aqui e sentir que estar aqui vai te influenciar – isto não está morto. Não está nem vai estar, jamais. Estando aqui, você acaba fazendo música brasileira”.

¹⁹ Corvisier, 2000.

covering the treble, middle and bass registers, respectively (Example 7). Like Messiaen, Prado also constructs the texture of *Ad Laudes Matutinas* (Example 6) in three levels, each notated on its separate staff and covering a specific register of the keyboard. However, Messiaen's system of notating a specific dynamic for each pitch is not seen in Prado's work. As seen in Example 6, the same pitches may be presented with different dynamics. The G natural on the first staff, for instance, is marked *ppp*, *crescendo* hairpin, and then *ff*. Therefore, Prado did not make a "serialization" of intensities – in the strict sense as Messiaen did –, but rather a superimposition of varying dynamics, registers and attacks. This is a clear example of how Prado appropriates ideas from his masters, but rarely adhere to any strict system of composition.



Example 6: Prado, *Ad Laudes Matutinas* (mm. 1-5)



Example 7: Messiaen, *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités* (mm. 45-51)

Almeida Prado then entered into a “free-tonal phase” that lasted until his death.²⁰ During this phase, he began to expand his style, using re-readings, collages, and free combinations of tonal elements with atonal ones.

Other important piano works from this last phase are the *Prelúdios* (1983), *VII Cadernos de Momentos* (1983), *Le Rosaire de Medjugorjie* (1987), *15 Flashes de Jerusalém* (1990) and his *Sonatas n. 8, n. 9* and *n. 10*.

Prado often used the term “transtonal” to describe his musical language, referring to the employment of tonal elements deprived of any specific tonal function, including an awareness of the overtones.²¹ Prado explained that musicologist Yulo Brandão first mentioned the term

²⁰ Almeida Prado’s personal handwritten catalogue of piano works. Author’s archives.

²¹ Prado, 1985

“transtonal” during a conversation with the composer. Brandão listened to *Cartas Celestes*, Volume I and used the term to refer to the transfigured use of tonal elements.²² Prado then adopted the term himself. According to the composer, transtonalism would be the “utilization of tonal elements, but without concern the tonal structure, the tonal chord therefore becoming a sound figure as independent as an atonal chord.”²³ Interestingly he adds that all elements should interact with freedom and fantasy.²⁴

²² Prado, 1985.

²³ Prado. In Gandelman, 1991.

²⁴ Prado, 1985.

Organized System of Resonances

An appreciation of resonances is a trademark of Almeida Prado's music. In his doctoral thesis on his *Cartas Celestes*, Prado presents four main "Zones of Resonances" that relate to the use of ascending and descending harmonics and the dimensions of instrumental and timbre richness and variety. These zones give us insight into how the composer thinks of and uses resonances. Although they are clearly distinguishable in certain pieces or passages, they are not used in *all* his music, as he welcomed a plurality of possibilities in his compositional processes.

1) "Zone of Explicit Resonance"

This zone is where "the rational and organized use" of the superior or inferior harmonics "is taken into consideration."²⁵ The harmonic notes of the ascending series (Example 8) are within the following intervals in relation to the fundamental note: Octave, perfect fifth, octave, major third, perfect fifth, minor seventh, octave, major second, major third, augmented fourth, perfect fifth, minor sixth, minor seventh, major seventh and octave.



Example 8: Ascending harmonic series

One may see the application of this zone on "Via Lactea" (Milky Way), from *Cartas Celestes* Volume I, where he uses notes of the ascending harmonic series of C. In Example 9, Prado writes

²⁵ Prado, 1985. p. 560 and 561.

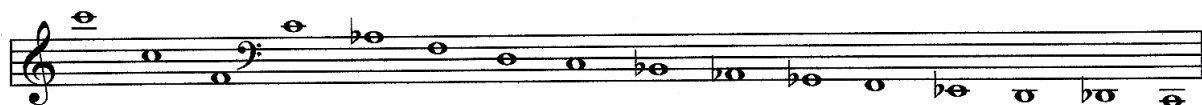
the note C in different registers, a tremolo between C and G (the octave and perfect fifth of the series), B \flat (the minor seventh), and five-note clusters on C in the bass.



Example 9: Zone of explicit resonance. “Via Lactea” (mm. 29-32) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume I

Prado lists both ascending and descending harmonic series as if they were equivalents. However, it is important to remember that the ascending series is a natural phenomenon of harmonic sounds. A fundamental frequency is capable of producing harmonics, which vary in intensity depending on the acoustic characteristics of the instrument and materials through which the sound vibrates. The descending series (Example 10) is an artificial construction and, as such, does not provide the same resonance effect. The concept is to mirror the same intervals of the ascending series. A newly presented harmonic note would then resonate with one or more notes

played before. Therefore, in Example 8: the second C would resonate with the first C, as they are one octave apart (an interval presented in the “natural” ascending series); the third note, F, resonates with the first C (the perfect fifth of the ascending series); and so on.



Example 10: Descending harmonic series

The use of the notes of the inferior harmonic series may be seen on *Pequena Nuvem de Magalhães* (Small Cloud of Magellan), from *Cartas Celestes* Volume II (Example 11). In measure 1, one does not clearly hear this passage as an inferior harmonic series of C, as there are both C and B present. In measure 3 one may see the inferior harmonics (already considering repetition in different registers): C, F, A \flat , D, B \flat , G \flat , E \flat , D \flat . Prado does not specify if the harmonic notes in the Explicit Zone are meant to always be written in their proper register within the series. Judging by his vague explanation and tendency to not strictly adhere to preconceived systems, one could possibly infer that the Bs in measures 1 and 2 belong to the descending harmonic series, but were transposed to higher octaves. The dissonant resonance generated by the harmonic rub between C and B result in a more tense and “dirty” atmosphere if compared to “Via-Lactea” (Example 9).



Example 11: Prado, "Pequena Nuvem de Magalhães" (Small Cloud of Magellan) (mm.1-3) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume I

Prado explains that “any note outside the fixed spectrum of harmonics is considered an intruding element or ornamental sound, not altering the explicitness of the basic elements of the series.”²⁶ In *Via Lactea* (Example 12) the tremolos establish the resonance of the ascending harmonic series of C, by presenting the fundamental (C) and its perfect fifth (G). The tremolos are interspersed with fast ornamental passages, including black and white key constructions. These passages (marked in red in Example 12) are then considered ornamental or intruding elements, not affecting the explicitness of the resonance of the tremolos between C and G.

²⁶ Prado, 1985. P. 562. "Qualquer nota estranha ao espectro fixo dos harmônicos é considerada elemento invasor, sons ornamentais, não alterando a explicitidade dos elementos básicos das series."

Intruding elements (in red)

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff has a red rectangular box around a section of music, with the text 'Intruding elements (in red)' above it. The bottom staff has three red rectangular boxes around specific sections of music. The music includes dynamic markings like *fff*, *ff*, and *pp*, and articulation marks like 8 and 16.

Example 12: Prado, “Via Lactea” (mm. 23-26) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume I

2) "Zone of Implicit Resonance"

Prado defines this zone with these words: “when in the use of an atonal sequence, some hinting notes (or insinuating notes) impose themselves as constituent elements of resonance from the spectrum of descending or ascending harmonics.”²⁷

In these cases, the harmonics are not clearly presented as in the zone of explicit resonance. In these “atonal” passages, these occasional harmonic notes are applied to add resonance to merely suggest the harmonic series. In Example 13, Prado marks with a “+” the notes that implicitly suggest the ascending harmonic notes of C.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 563. "Quando, em se usando uma sequência atonal, insinuam-se algumas notas que se impõem como elementos constituintes de Ressonância do Espectro dos Harmônicos Inferiores ou Superiores."



Example 13: Prado, “Via-Láctea” (mm. 6-12) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume I

3) " Zone of Multiple Resonance:"

Prado notes that this zone occurs:

“When the employment of simultaneous or sequential chords, constitutes mixed resonances, that create a whirlwind rush of resonances, making it almost impossible for the ear to distinguish them. This cumulative process has an incredible sonorous power due to the uneven beating of the simultaneous vibrations.”²⁸

Found throughout his literature, this is arguably the most used type of resonance by Prado. It usually translates into thick textures, encompassing a wide range of pitches. On the piano, a long pedaling mark is frequently notated.

In “Scorpio” (Example 14) Prado used a superimposition of black and white key clusters, dissonant chord constructions and changing registers. The result is a power sound mass of “multiple resonance”, being then impossible to distinguish any particular overtone series.

²⁸ Ibid., 565. “Quando o uso de acordes simultâneos ou sequenciais, constituídos de ressonâncias misturadas, criam um turbilhão de ressonâncias, - tornando quase impossível a distinção pelo ouvido. Este processo acumulativo de notas é de incrível poder sonoro devido ao batimento desordenado das vibrações simultâneas.”



Example 14: Prado, “Scorpio” (mm. 1-9) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume I. Zone of Multiple Resonance.

4) The "Zone of Non-Resonance"

The "Zone of Non-Resonance" occurs “when rationally employing the use of chords, or melodic elements, simple or polyphonic, which generate a minimum resonance, creating a necessary opaque zone, neutrality, that becomes a vital contrasting element.”²⁹

This zone is typically applied to generate different effects, such as quiet, resting moments, or to depict drier atmospheres – both loud and quiet – that generally serve as the “contrasting element” between outer sections. In measure 16 of “Via Lactea” (Example 15), Prado provides a calm eight-note ostinato in *ppp* with minimum resonance to contrast with the loud descending sequences of sound conglomerates of the previous sections.

²⁹ Ibid., 566. "Quando emprega racionalmente o uso de acordes, ou de elementos melódicos, simples ou polifônicos, os quais resultam em pouca ou mínima ressonância, criando uma necessária zona de opacidade, neutralidade, elemento também vital de contraste com os outros."



Example 15: Prado, “Via-Láctea” (m. 16) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume I. Zone of Non-Resonance

In “Guaiamú” (Crab), from his *VI Episódios de Animais* (VI Episodes of Animals, 1977) for piano duet, one may observe the Zone of Non-Resonance to help depict the harsh physique of the crab, and its dry habitat (Example 16). According to the composer, the movement of two crabs is depicted: one in the right hand, and the other the left hand.³⁰ The predominance of stepwise motion rather than skips is justified by the animal’s limitations: crabs cannot jump. Curiously, one may notice the influence of Messiaen in the use of a non-retrogradable rhythm³¹ in measure 1:

(♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩).



Example 16: Prado, “Guaiamú” (mm. 1-3)- *VI Episódios de Animais*. Zone of Non-Resonance

³⁰ Informal communication. Quoted in Thys, Marcelo. A prática do piano a quatro mãos : problemas, soluções e sua aplicação ao estudo de peças de Almeida Prado e Ronaldo Miranda. Masters Dissertation. UNIRIO, 2007.

³¹ Non-retrogradable rhythms are rhythms that, if reversed, generate the exact same rhythmic pattern.

In *VI Episódios de Animais*, the dry atmosphere of “Guaiamú” serves as a contrast to the largely resonant “Marimbondos” (hornets. Example 17), the previous piece in the cycle. In “Marimbondos”, a swarm of hornets is depicted by using completely chromatic figures in rapid ostinatos combined with use of polyrhythms, which result in an accumulated sonority suggestive of the insect buzz.



Example 17: Prado, “Marimbondos” (mm. 2-3) - *VI Episódios de Animais*. The swarm of hornets buzz. Contrast with “Guaimú”

CHAPTER II

ASTROLOGICAL EXTRAMUSICAL RELATIONSHIPS: *CARTAS CELESTES* VOLUME III (1981)

The long cycle entitled *Cartas Celestes* (Star charts) is perhaps the composer's best known and most performed work. For this chapter I will examine the chord structures in which the whole cycle is grounded. Then I will isolate and discuss the different movements in *Cartas Celestes* Volume III to show how the essential nature of the extramusical inspirations is brought to sound as well as to consider the performance implications for each.

The first volume of *Cartas Celestes* (Volume I, 1974) was composed as background music for a planetarium exposition. The success of the event inspired Prado to turn it into a concert piece, and there followed a total of fourteen volumes of *Cartas Celestes* for a variety of instruments.

The first six volumes of *Cartas Celestes* were written for piano and may be grouped as one large-scale work in six parts. The *Atlas Celeste* made by Rogério Mourão, a detailed map of the sky as seen from Brazil in different months of the year, served the composer as an inspirational guide for the whole cycle. For *Cartas Celestes* Volume I, Prado created 24 chords (Example 18) that would correspond to each star in a constellation. The chords are named with Greek letters, the same ones used by astronomers to identify the stars. Each volume presents some of those original 24 chords, transposed to different intervals. Table 1 provides an overview of the first six volumes.

α β γ δ

ε ζ η θ

ι κ λ μ

ν ξ ο π

ρ σ τ υ

φ χ ψ ω

Example 18: The Twenty-four chords from *Cartas Celestes Volume I* ³²

<i>Cartas Celestes</i>	Year	Duration in minutes (approximate) ³³	Depiction of the Brazilian Sky in the months of:	Transposition of the original chords
Volume I	1974	15:00	August and September	Original
Volume II	1981	22:00	October and November	Ascending minor third
Volume III	1981	19:25	December and January	Descending minor third
Volume IV	1981	30:00	February and March	Descending perfect fourth
Volume V	1982	18:00	April and May	Ascending major third
Volume VI	1982	24:00	June and July	Ascending perfect fourth

Table 1: Overview of the first six volumes of Prado's *Cartas Celestes*

In each volume, Prado selected a subset of these 24 chords, that he used in the “constellations” movements. The movements depicting other space entities such as planets, asteroids, comets, single stars, among others, provide variety. Although Prado did not explain how his selection of chords was made for each constellation, it is arguable that his choice was related to the brightness quality of particular stars and the corresponding sound quality of the chords. I will discuss some of these possible correspondences during the analysis of Volume III.

In *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, the composer depicts the sky of Brazil “in the hot nights of December and January.”³⁴ Table 2 shows an overview of the movements included in this volume. The constellations of Orion and Taurus, very visible during the months in question and are in the center of the work, alongside with the stars Betelgeuse, Algol and the planet Mars. The four phases of the Moon punctuate the work. This volume features compositional elements commonly seen in Prado's works, such as sound clusters, exploration of resonances, rhythmic ostinatos,

³² Source: Prado, 1985. Gaphic edited by Ferraz, 2009.

³³ Durations suggested by Gandelman, Salomea. 1997.

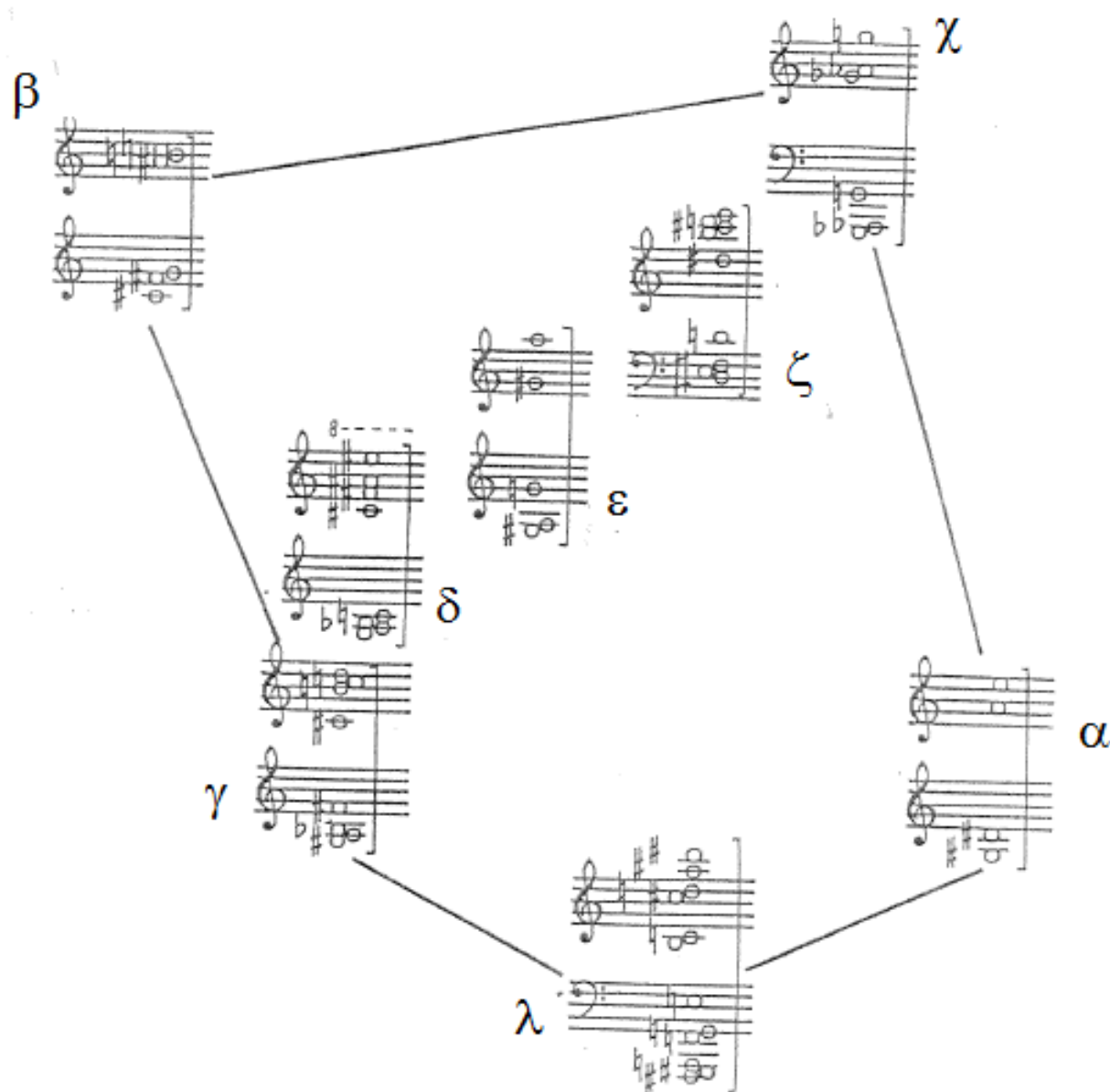
³⁴ Preface to the score

desynchronized metrics, polyrhythms, rhythmic cell additions or subtractions, and “black and white keys” constructions, among others.

<i>Cartas Celestes</i> Volume III, Movements	Included chords³⁵	Zone(s) of Resonance	Key Compositional Elements
I. Lua quarto Crescente (Crescent Moon, 1 st quarter)	—	Multiple	Cluster ostinatos ranging from E-B (Right Hand), E _b -B _b (Left Hand). Basses F and B _b
II. Constelação I – Orion, o caçador (Constellation I – Orion, the hunter)	α β χ γ ζ δ ε λ	Multiple / Non-Resonance	Depiction of horse gallops by rhythmic ostinatos. Sudden dynamic contrasts
III. Betelgeuse – a mais fulgurante estrela (Betelgeuse – the most effulgent star)	α	Multiple	Constant and fluent rhythmic motion; desynchronized rhythmic patterns; juxtaposition of white and black key
IV. Lua Cheia (Full Moon)	—	Multiple	Cluster ostinatos ranging from E-C (Right Hand), E _b -B (Left Hand). Basses F and B _b
V. Constelação II – Touro (Constellation II – Taurus)	ζ ε γ ο λ θ α	Multiple	Depiction of the bull’s mooing by rapid ascending and descending arpeggios in 64th notes; Frightening atmosphere
VI. Marte (Mars)	—	Non-Resonance / Multiple	Build-up of intensity, texture and tempo; polyrhythms; metric modulation; Fiery atmosphere
VII. Lua quarto Minguante (Waning moon)	—	Multiple	Cluster ostinatos ranging from E-B _b (Right Hand), E _b -A _b (Left Hand). Basses F and B _b
VIII. Algol – a estrela variável (Algol – the mutating star)	—	Multiple	Depiction of states of light and shadow; glissandos; rhythmic expansion; frequent changes in dynamics and register
IX. Lua Nova (New Moon)	—	Multiple	Cluster ostinatos ranging from E-A (Right Hand), E _b -A _b (Left Hand). Basses F and B _b

Table 2: *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, overview of the movements

For Volume III, Prado chose 10 chords out of the 24 used in Volume I, all transposed a minor third below the original. He displays them at the beginning of the score, as seen in Example 19 and Example 40 (page 46). Prado's graphic disposition of the chords is mere illustrative: it is not related to the order in which the chords are presented in the piece, nor does it affects the form of the movements. The resemblance to the respective constellations is also unclear. Prado's illustration of the chords used the constellation of Taurus, for instance, do not look like the actual constellation. The illustration in Example 19, however, resembles the center portion of the actual Orion constellation, (circled in red in Figure 1).



Example 19: Chords used in the Constellation of Orion – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III

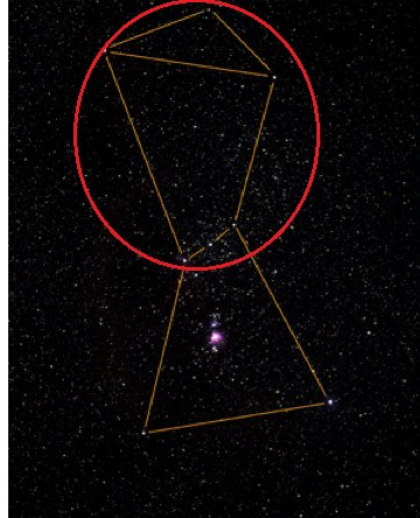


Figure 1: “Orion” Constellation³⁶

The Moon in different phases



Figure 2: The four phases of the Moon: Crescent, Full, Waning, and New Moon, respectively³⁷

The four phases of the moon, illustrated by calm, steady rhythm and pitches, serve as four interludes between the presentations of the different constellations. “Offbeat” clusters in the left hand balance the regularity and monotony of the ostinato clusters in the right hand, helping to convey the slow, but steady movement of the Moon. A regularity of pulse is required by the

³⁶ Orion Nebula Unveiled - PowerPoint & Script. Nasa Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology..[no date]. https://nightsky.jpl.nasa.gov/download-view.cfm?Doc_ID=136

³⁷ Edited image. Dunford, Bill. Moon Phases. [no date]. Courtesy of NASA/JPL, Caltech.

performer, as any tempo variations in the ostinatos may not convey this steadiness of movement. As seen in Example 20, Prado changes the range of pitches slightly within clusters to differentiate among the phases of the Moon: Crescent Moon, from E-B (Right Hand) and E \flat -B \flat (Left Hand); Full Moon, from E-C (RH) and E \flat -B (LH); Waning Moon, E- B \flat (RH) and E \flat -A \flat (LH); New Moon, E- A (RH) and E \flat -A \flat (LH).

The image displays four musical staves, each representing a different phase of the Moon. Each staff is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The right hand plays a cluster of notes, and the left hand plays a cluster of notes. The notes are marked with 'ppp' (pianissimo) and 'Ped.' (pedal). The word 'simile' is written above the right hand cluster. Below each staff, the text 'até o fim deste movimento' is written.

- Crescent Moon:** Right hand cluster: E, B. Left hand cluster: E \flat , B \flat .
- Full Moon:** Right hand cluster: E, C. Left hand cluster: E \flat , B.
- Waning Moon:** Right hand cluster: E, B \flat . Left hand cluster: E \flat , A \flat .
- New Moon:** Right hand cluster: E, A. Left hand cluster: E \flat , A \flat .

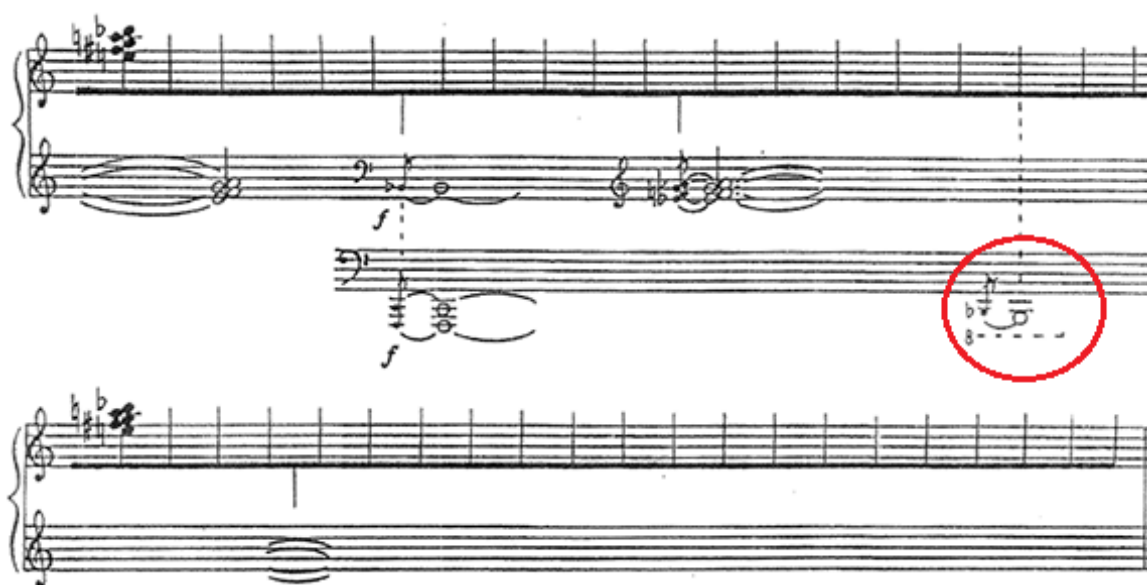
Example 20: Excerpt of the first system of each phase of the Moon present in *Cartas Celestes* Volume III by Prado. a) Lua Quarto Crescente (Crescent Moon); b) Lua Cheia (Full moon); c) Lua Quarto Minguante (Waning Moon) d) Lua Nova (New Moon).

For the performer, it is important to be aware of these small changes as he may then nuance the overall balance within the clusters. I chose, for instance, to slightly highlight the upper B of “Crescent Moon,” to convey a bright, but still increasing moonlight. In “Full Moon,” I chose a slight highlighting of the upper C, since it depicts the phase with the brightest moonlight. In “Waning Moon” and “New Moon” I chose a more intimate and soft approach, with a more even balance, to reflect the least amount of light.

Two long bass notes punctuate each phase of the Moon: one F at the center (Example 21) and a lower B \flat that gradually fades with the right hand ostinatos (Example 22). That immediately makes us picture the daily moonrise/moonset: at the end of its daily cycle, no moonlight is seen. A gradual *descrescendo* applied to those last ostinatos after the B \flat bass – even though not notated – would help create this mental picture.



Example 21: Prado, “Lua quarto Minguante” – *Cartas Celestes* III (Page 1, 3rd system). Long F, circled in red



Example 22: Prado, “Lua quarto Minguante” *Cartas Celestes* III (Page 1, 2nd and 3rd systems). Long B \flat , circled in red

“Constelação I – Orion, o caçador” (Constellation I – Orion, the hunter)

In “Orion – The Hunter”, the repetition of rhythmic cells in a pulsating motion (“as a clatter of horses of fire” - according to the composer’s indication)³⁸ is interrupted by rests or long note values which separate the sections (another resource also used by Messiaen). The rhythmic ostinatos resemble the gallop of the horses as they draw closer (Example 23).



Example 23: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (1st page, 1st - 2nd systems) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume III. Suggestion of galloping horses

As these “gallops” repeat 23 times progressing in a *crescendo*, it is important for the performer not to fall for the usual temptation of intensifying the dynamics too early, as this would diminish the power of the long *crescendo*. At moments, the melodic contours of the ostinato suggest horse kicks, or even snorts. These motifs resemble many of the depictions of horses by fellow Brazilian composer Villa-Lobos, in his *O Cavalinho de Pau* (the little wooden horse). One may observe Villa-Lobos’ depictions of the gallop in groups of three sixteenth-notes (Example

³⁸ Preface to the score.

25), as compared to two textural layers sixteen and thirty-second-notes of Prado's piece (Example 24). Prado's gallops sound more dense and aggressive. Horse's kicks are depicted by both composers with the fast grace notes and intervals of sixths and sevenths (Prado, Example 26; Villa-Lobos, Example 27):



Example 24: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (1st page, 1st-system) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume III. Depiction of horse gallops.



Example 25: Villa-Lobos, “O Cavalinho de Pau” – *Prole do Bebê* n. 2. Depiction of horse gallops.



Example 26: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (a: 2nd page, 3rd system) (b: 2nd page, 6th system) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume III. Depiction of horse kicks or snorts

The image displays two musical excerpts from Villa-Lobos' 'O Cavaleiro de Pau'. Excerpt (a) is marked 'Muito animado' and measures 47-50. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat. The music consists of rapid, repeated eighth-note patterns in the treble and a more rhythmic, accented bass line. Excerpt (b) is marked 'Vivo e alègre' and measures 69-72. It also features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of two flats and a 2/4 time signature. The bass staff has a key signature of one flat. The music consists of rapid, repeated eighth-note patterns in the treble and a more rhythmic, accented bass line. Both excerpts are labeled with red letters 'a)' and 'b)' respectively.

Example 27: Villa-Lobos, “O Cavaleiro de Pau” (a: mm. 47-50) (b: 69-72) – *Prole do Bebê n. 2*. Depiction of horse kicks or snorts

Frequent and sudden contrasts in dynamics and pitch contribute to the rough atmosphere associated with the image of the mighty hunter Orion. In Example 28 we see toccata-like 32nd note cells in *p*, repeated with alternating hands, violently interrupted clashing chords, attacked on both higher and lower pitches, almost as if suggesting a frightened animal targeted by the hunter. The distance at which the hand attacks the piano may aid to highlight this contrast: a close and active attack for the fast repeated 32nd notes, and another attack with more distance and speed for the accented 16th note chords. This passage again invites comparison to Villa-Lobos and Messiaen. In Villa-Lobos’ “O Lobo do Vidro” (The little glass wolf), a similar atmosphere is suggested, as if the animal in question (the wolf) is being hunted (Example 29). In Messiaen’s “Regard de l’Esprit de Joie”, from *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus*, the inspiration is different from that seen in Villa-Lobos and Prado, although we find similar abrupt contrasts of rhythmic motives, dynamics and pitch. Dissonant chords – in these case ninths – are also used to break the 16th note cells, suggesting the similarly “violent” atmosphere marked by Messiaen himself (Example 30).



Example 28: Prado, “Constelação de Orion” (mm. 19 – 31) - *Cartas Celestes* Volume III.



Example 29: Villa-Lobos: “O Lobozinho de Vidro” (mm. 55-58) - *Prole do Bebê* n. 2.



Example 30: Messiaen, “Regard de l’Esprit de Joie” – *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus*, abrupt rhythmic, dynamic and pitch contrast.

“Betelgeuse – a mais fulgurante estrela” (Betelgeuse – the most effulgent star)

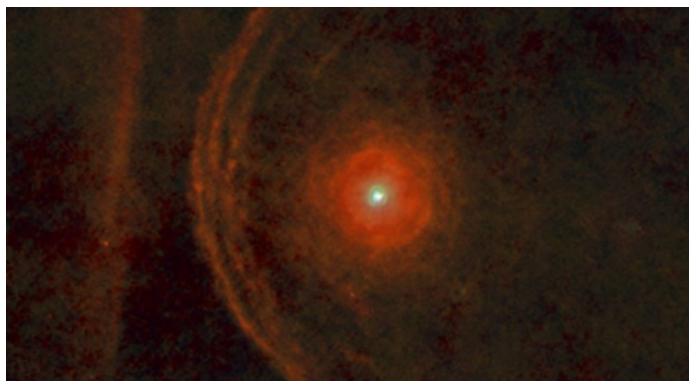


Figure 3: Betelgeuse star³⁹

Betelgeuse is a supergiant red star of the Orion constellation, and is one the brightest and most luminous stars of its class.⁴⁰ To depict such luminosity Prado applies a full pedal for the entire movement, exploring the maximum possibilities of the resonances and overtones. Prado uses the *alpha* (α) chord in various ways: changing registers, contour and directions of the cells, or adding “intruding elements.”⁴¹ According to the composer, in the alpha chord one hears the tritone in the center followed by the vibrating sound of the upper fifth (A-E).⁴² He calls it “corola de uma flor”: the body formed by the group of petals of a flower (Example 31).



Example 31: alpha chord

³⁹ Decin et al. Betelgeuse Star Braces for Crash with Strange Bar. ESA/Herschel/PACS/L. 2013. <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?feature=3666>

⁴⁰ Davis, Kate. Alpha Orionis (Betelgeuse). http://www.aavso.org/vsots_alphaori. 2013.

⁴¹ Prado, 1985, p.243.

⁴² Prado, 1985.p 11.

The composer says this “movement sounds very luminous” and where the “new elements happen imperceptibly,”⁴³ which makes one imagine the living star in constant expansion and contraction due to its many fluid gases. This is important for the performer to have in mind, as there are many contrasting dynamics, with the *forte* sections suggestive of the “effulgent” star. The performance should avoid sudden changes of timbre or touch to smoothly progress from one element to the other.

The piece starts with the notes of *alpha* in a written trill, followed by intruding elements in measure 2 (Example 32). It is interesting to observe the rhythmic unison between the hands in measure 2, and the superimposed pitches creating clashing intervals such as seconds and sevenths – another compositional feature commonly seen in Messiaen’s literature. In *Le Merle Bleu*, from *Catalogue d’Oiseaux* Book 1, Messiaen uses similar fast figures in descending and tremolo shape, rhythmic unison and dissonant superimposed semitones one octave apart. Messiaen was depicting the “water”, another fluid element (indication *l’eau*. Example 33).



Example 32: Prado, “Betelgeuse” (mm. 1-2) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III

⁴³ Ibid, p. 243.



Example 33: Messiaen – “Le Merle Bleu” (mm. 18-19) – *Catalogue d’Oiseaux* Book 1

Some of the composer's common compositional resources are present here, such as desynchronized rhythmic patterns between hands (Example 34) and sonorities based on the juxtaposition of white and black key configurations (Example 35).



Example 34: Prado, “Betelgeuse” (a: mm. 10) (b: mm.13) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III.
Unsynchronized metrics.



Example 35: Prado, Betelgeuse, “black and white” configurations.

“Algol – a estrela variável” (Algol – the mutating star)

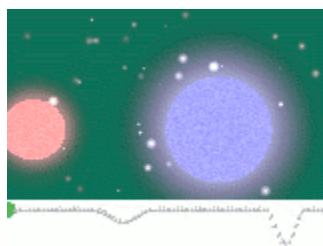
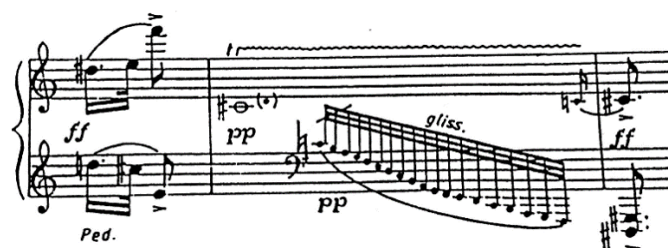


Figure 4: Algol Binary star complex⁴⁴

Algol is actually a three-star system, in which each circles around the others, providing different cycle colorations and eclipses.⁴⁵ Prado uses many contrasting elements to allude to these variations. From the very beginning, dynamics in *ff* are followed by a downward glissando (Example 36), suggestive of dimming light or the regular eclipses of the star. Prado says the elements transition from states of “light and shadow.”⁴⁶ Curiously, the composer does not use rests between the elements, which makes one wonder if this is because the star never completely loses its light while completing its orbital cycle.



Example 36: Prado, “Algol” (mm.1-3) – *Cartas Celestes* III

⁴⁴ Stanlekub (user). Eclipsing binary star animation 2.gif. 160 × 120. 24 June 2005.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eclipsing_binary_star_animation_2.gif

⁴⁵ Price, Aaron. Variable Star Of The Month. Beta Persei (Algol). January, 1999.
<http://web.archive.org/web/20060708092301/http://www.aavso.org/vstar/vsots/0199.shtml>

⁴⁶ Prado, 1985.

Dynamic changes are also usually followed by changes of register, which creates different timbre effects. In Example 37, Prado uses increasing repetition of cells (the 16th note triplets) to create a sense of rhythmic expansion, another resource borrowed from his master Messiaen. In “Regard de l’Eglise d’amour”, from *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus*, Messiaen creates a rhythmic expansion by adding notes and note values on two different motives (Example 38).

Example 37: Prado, “Algol” (mm. 27-33) – *Cartas Celestes* III, rhythmical expansion through addition of notes

Presque vif (♩=132)
 8^{ma}

f *ff* *f*

Ped.
(en gerbe rapide)

3 (amplifié à gauche) (et à droite)
ff

5 (amplifié à gauche) (et à droite)
f *ff* *f*

Example 38: Messiaen, “Regard de l’Eglise d’amour” (mm. 1-6) – *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus*, rhythmical expansion through addition of notes and note values.

In Prado’s passage (Example 37), one notes a transfigured, but clear use of tonal elements. Descending scales in the right hand hint at F, D and Bb Major keys, while the left hand five-finger position clusters evoke C, A and F Major, respectively – an example of his “transtonal” behavior. That high contrast of pitch of the fast notes figurations, in *legato*, and in the *ppp* descending scales, in *staccato*, are a clear allusion to the “light and shadow” (Example 37). The approach for each element should enforce that difference. Along with an obviously varied type of attack and touch, one should breathe and allow some time when moving from one element to the other, so that the

resonances from one element do not overlap with the other. A simple change of pedal, as noted by the composer may not be sufficient for that goal. Naturally, this timing will vary depending on the quality of the instrument and acoustics of the hall.

While listening to the recording of Fernando Lopes playing this piece, one wonders how much freedom the performer may have. Prado has been at times outspoken about how “creative” or “free” the performances of his work may be, specifically in regards to timing and agogics.⁴⁷ In several passages of the recording, Lopes changes the rhythm, especially altering long notes or rests. Nevertheless, overall he is very successful in conveying a colourful and engaging performance. We could highlight, for instance, these passages in Example 39 where Lopes changes the notated rhythm, changing the first eight-rest into a quarter-rest, or even introduces fermatas. My notations in red indicate the actual rhythm performed by Lopes.

The image shows two musical excerpts. Excerpt (a) is for 'Agol' (mm. 17-18) in G major, 2/4 time. It features a piano (p) and fortissimo (ff) dynamic range. A red squiggle above the first measure indicates a modification. A red 'Ped.' marking with a quarter note is shown below the first measure. Excerpt (b) is for 'Orion' (mm. 47-48) in G major, 2/4 time. It features a fortissimo (ff) and piano (p) dynamic range. Red markings above the first and second measures indicate modifications. A red 'Ped.' marking with a quarter note is shown below the first measure.

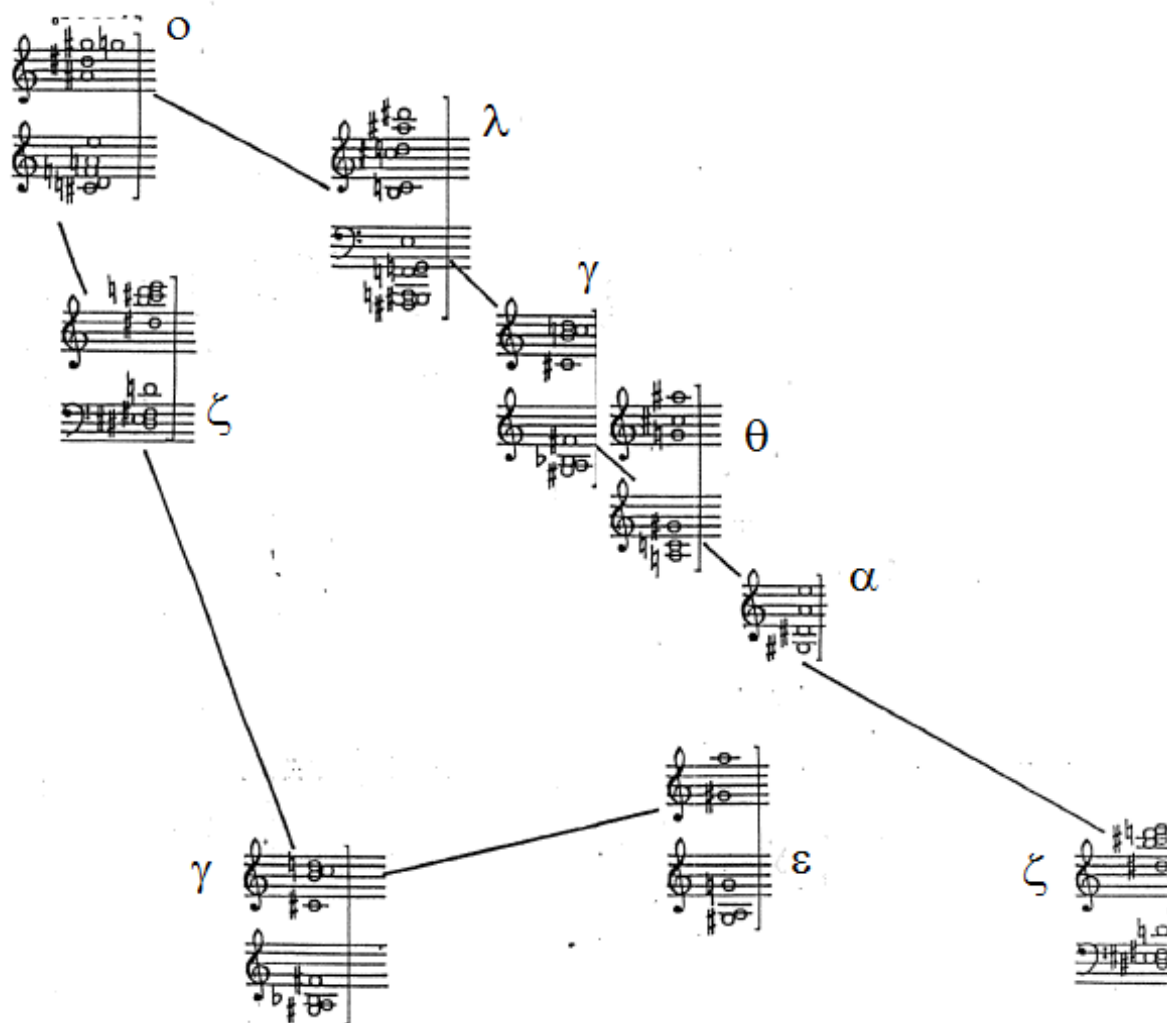
Example 39: Prado, a) “Agol” (mm. 17-18); b) “Orion” (mm. 47-48) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, with Lopes’ modifications in red

⁴⁷ Moreira, Adriana. Flashes de Almeida Prado por ele mesmo. Opus: Revista da ANPPOM – Ano 10, n10, december 2004.

Fernando Lopes and Almeida Prado were colleagues at Universidade Federal de Campinas, where both held professor positions. Fernando Lopes recorded *Cartas Celestes* Volumes I to VI, and Prado was also involved in that project. It is natural that they had established a strong communication with one another, and even if Prado did not endorse the taking of such liberties with his scores, he was apparently not bothered enough to ask that Lopes remake the recording. Prado often said he wanted the “sound” and the “character” of the piece to be transmitted.⁴⁸ Lopes does exactly that. The changes shown in Example 39, for instance, allow more time for moving from one element to the other, making the contrasts clearer to the audience. In those cases, since I have not had the chance of performing these pieces to the composer as Lopes have, even having some flexibility with the text, I chose not to allow myself the same liberties.

⁴⁸ Moreira, Adriana. Flashes de Almeida Prado por ele mesmo. Opus: Revista da ANPPOM – Ano 10, n10, december 2004.

“Constelação II – Touro” (Taurus Constellation)



Example 40: Chords used on the Constellation of Taurus – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III.

The composer opens the constellation of Taurus with the “terrifying atmosphere” of the bull’s “mooing-arpeggio”⁴⁹ – a rapid ascending and descending arpeggio in 64th notes. Having that mental picture, the interpreter may be free to imply agogic nuances when moving up and down to better convey the animal’s sound, which may intensify slower but fade out quicker.

⁴⁹ Prado, 1985. P. 73.

In a soft dynamic, but still somehow “terrifying” motives, the *epsilon* (ϵ), *omicron* (\omicron) and *theta* (θ) chords are presented. Regarding these chords (shown in Example 41) the composer writes that the openness of octaves combined with the semitones of ϵ produces a fast and intense vibration reflective of the “blue-violet brightness of a star”, and that is “always used with a lot of intention of brilliance and light”.⁵⁰ In \omicron , the resonance of the seventh is predominant and the other sounds “only give an aura of luminosity. [*Omicron*] has a beautiful coloration, with a tendency to the superior harmonics.”⁵¹ Prado mentions that the chord θ has a minor third (low A-C), which is clearly heard along the vibration of the semitone G and G \sharp . He adds that this chord is more “opaque, ideal to moments of contrast of shadow and light.”⁵²

The performer may choose to highlight these differences to provide a more colorful setting. In Example 42, ϵ could be approached more openly and intense, nuancing the outer notes in both the bass and treble. Even though \omicron (Example 43) and θ (Example 44) are marked with the same *pp* throughout this movement, a slight highlight of the seventh in the right hand of \omicron , will create a contrasting timbre with θ , played with a more intimate approach, without stressing any particular note. In my practicing, I also experimented playing without nuances, letting the pitches speak for themselves. Both effects were satisfying, but the former seemed to convey a closer connection to what the composer said about his chords.

⁵⁰ Ibid. p.13.

⁵¹ Ibid, p.17.

⁵² Ibid, p.14.



Example 41: *epsilon* (ϵ), *omicron* (\omicron) and *theta* (θ) chords



Example 42: Prado, “Constellation of Taurus” (mm. 29-31) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, application of the chord *epsilon* (ϵ)



Example 43: Prado, “Constellation of Taurus” (mm. 34-35) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, application of the chord *omicron* (\omicron)



Example 44: Prado, “Constellation of Taurus” (mm. 40-42) – *Cartas Celestes* Volume III, application of the chord *theta* (θ)

“Marte” (Mars)



Figure 5: Planet Mars⁵³

Inspired by Greek mythology – Mars the God of War – Prado sets a martial and fiery atmosphere. On a macro-scale, Mars develops a gradual build-up of intensity, texture and tempo. The piece is mainly conceived in the Zone of Non-Resonance and therefore pedaling should be applied with prudence.⁵⁴

The center theme (Example 45) starts “as an eerie procession.”⁵⁵ Three-note clusters in the bass set the tempo for a funereal melody in the right hand. Fernando Lopes convincingly evokes this feeling in his performance by playing the left hand clusters *non-legato* in a very *pesante* approach. The sections are connected by measures containing the polyrhythm of 5 against 4 quarter

⁵³ PIA01249: Hubble's Sharpest View Of Mars. Photo. Instrument: WFPC2. NASA/JPL. March 10, 1997. Copyright Free. <http://photojournal.jpl.nasa.gov/catalog/PIA01249>.

⁵⁴ Prado, 1985. P.250

⁵⁵ Notation on the score. “como um cortejo lúgubre”.

notes. The speed of the quarter note inside the quintuplet then becomes the speed of the regular quarter for the next section. This process is called “metric modulation” by Prado and creates a long *accelerando* effect.⁵⁶ The effect is intensified by gradually adding more notes to the clusters and widening the registers. Control in keeping the slow tempo in the beginning is required by the interpreter, so that there is enough intensity and energy left for the final measures in *presto*.

Handwritten musical score for "Marte" by Prado. The score is written on three systems of grand staves. The first system includes a handwritten note "COMO UM CORTEJO LÚGUBRE" and a tempo marking "♩=160". The music features dense clusters of notes, with a "Ped." marking and a "sem. pedal" instruction. The second and third systems continue the dense, low-register clusters. A handwritten note "8" is visible below the first system, and a "p" marking is present below the second system.

Example 45: Prado, “Marte” (mm. 5-15) – *Cartas Celestes* III, metric modulation.

In measure 36 (Example 46) the melody of the funeral procession stops and only dense clusters remain, played repeatedly with both hands. The wide register and large amount of

⁵⁶ Prado, 1985. P. 250 Original: “Modulação rítmica”.

dissonances of this section, alongside with the pedal indication, strongly suggest that the movement switched to the Zone of Multiple Resonance. Performers may choose to gradually apply more pedal towards the end of this section (mm. 36-55) to aid with the build-up effect.

The image shows a musical score for a piano piece. It consists of two systems of music, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clef). The music is characterized by dense, dissonant chords and complex rhythmic patterns. There are several 'Ped.' (pedal) markings below the staves, indicating where the sustain pedal should be used. Fingering numbers like '5' are also present, indicating specific fingerings for certain notes. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score is for measures 36-42 of the piece 'Marte' from 'Cartas Celestes III' by Prado.

Example 46: Prado, “Marte” (mm. 36-42) – *Cartas Celestes* III

CHAPTER II

ARTISTIC AND GEOGRAPHIC EXTRAMUSICAL RELATIONSHIPS: *POESILÚDIOS* (1983)

The title *Poesilúdios* is a play on the words “poetry” and “prelude”. The cycle is divided into two groups of short pieces. The first group is inspired by paintings (*Poesilúdios n. 1* to 5). The second one alludes to the nighttime in different geographical locations (*Poesilúdios n. 6* to 15). The pieces are very descriptive of their respective extramusical references. Here we find a more simplistic style when compared to the long cycle of *Cartas Celestes*, for instance. In this chapter, I will examine *Poesilúdios n. 1*, 4, 6, 13 and 16. First, I will identify the main thematic elements of each piece to discuss how they relate to the respective images or places that inspired the works. Then I will reflect upon the possible performance implications of these correspondences.

Poesilúdio n. 2

This piece is Prado's musical view of the abstract painting of Bernardo Caro, which features vivid and contrasting colors. Prado calls the interpreter's attention to the painting with the words "with multiple colors and intentions, eloquent". The composer alludes to the varying colors by contrasting intensities, use of different registers, textures, rhythm, and a number of expression markings (*calmo*; *rápido*; *lento*; *vivo*; *barrocamente*; *distante na memória*; *luminoso*). Table 3 provides an overview of the structure of the piece.

Measures	Tempo/ Expression markings	Dynamics markings
1-2	---	<i>f</i> / <i>crescendo</i>
3-4	<i>Calmo</i> (calm)	<i>sub. pp</i>
5	<i>Rápido</i> (fast) / <i>Calmo</i>	<i>crescendo</i> / <i>f</i>
6	<i>Rápido</i> / <i>Calmo</i>	<i>f</i>
7-10	<i>Rápido</i>	<i>sub. f</i>
11-14	<i>Lento</i>	<i>p</i>
15-21	<i>Barrocamente</i> (baroquely. LH) / <i>Cantando</i> (RH)	<i>pp</i>
22-23	<i>Vivo</i> (lively)	<i>mf</i> (LH) / <i>f</i> (RH) / <i>crescendo</i>
24-25	<i>Eloquente</i> (Eloquent)	<i>crescendo</i>
26-	<i>Distante, na memória</i> (distant, remembering)	<i>ppp</i> (LH) / <i>pp</i> (RH)
27-28	<i>Luminoso</i> (luminous)	<i>f</i>
29-30	[<i>Barrocamente</i>] ⁵⁷	<i>pp</i> (LH) / <i>p</i> (RH)
31	[<i>Rápido</i>]	<i>sub. P</i> / <i>crescendo</i>
32-33	[<i>Calmo</i>]	<i>f</i>
34-40	[<i>Barrocamente</i>]	<i>pp</i>
41-42	----	<i>p</i> / <i>pp</i>

Table 3: *Poesilúdio n. 2*, structure overview

⁵⁷ Prado did not notate tempo/expression markings when the same thematic section appeared a second time. The square brackets indicate which thematic section is being repeated.

One may see this variety of musical elements from the opening statements (Example 47). The broken fast atonal arpeggio in the beginning, covering a wide range of the keyboard has been conceived in the aforementioned Zone of Multiple Resonance. The “D” on the bass provide a background to the ascending arpeggio, covering a multitude of pitches, thus being impossible to distinguish a particular harmonic series.



Example 47: Prado – *Poesilúdio n. 2* (mm. 1-4)

Brazilian pianist Adriana Moreira recorded a CD with the *Poesilúdios* in 2002, which was then attached to her master's dissertation about these pieces.⁵⁸ Her research was developed at University of Campinas, the same institution where Prado held a professor position. The close proximity allowed her to interview the composer to aid in her research and recording. French American pianist Amy Lin recorded live the *Poesilúdios n. 1* to 5 in Stadtmuseum (München, Germany). Lin is a professor at the Conservatory of Strasbourg, France. She spent six-months in

⁵⁸ MOREIRA, Adriana L. da C. A poética nos 16 poesilúdios para piano de Almeida Prado. Master Dissertation. Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2002.

Brazil as a visiting professor and performed throughout that country.⁵⁹ She published the recordings online in 2015.⁶⁰

Lin and Moreira recordings provide different interpretations, especially considering touch and pedaling, which the composer does not specify. On *rápido* (Example 48), Lin uses no pedal, and plays the melody with non-legato articulation. Moreira uses more pedal and a legato touch on the melody. The same can be said for each interpreter in *Luminoso* (luminous. Example 49). Both pianists, however chose to avoid the pedal and give a more rhythmic approach in *Vivo* (mm. 22-23), a choice that coincides with mine, to highlight the rests between the fast motives. My performance is more closely related to Moreira, perhaps due to the fact of my contact with the composer and knowing his usual appreciation for resonance. Most light effects in Almeida Prado's music, as seen in *Luminoso*, are closely related to resonance and pedaling. Lin's reading does provide a contrasting and convincing rendition of the piece, yet matching the piece's original idea of being a multitude of colors.



Example 48: Prado, *Poesilúdio n. 2* – Calmo; rápido; lento

⁵⁹ Lin's personal website. Amy Lin, *Concert Pianist*. 2013. <http://www.amy-lin.com/>

⁶⁰ Amy Lin, piano. Live recording at Stadtmuseum München, Germany. 2015. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc8XwIL_II5h68zWYdvDuGw/videos.



Example 49: Prado, *Poesiludio n. 2* - Luminoso

The piece presents also an allusion to the baroque style. When asked what he intended by asking the pianist to play *barrocamente* (baroquely), the composer explained he had the left hand in mind, as gamba or cello in a *basso continuo*, supporting the melody while proving some regularity (Example 50).⁶¹



Example 50: Prado, *Poesiludio n. 2*, *barrocamente*

⁶¹ During an informal talk with this author in 2006.

Poesilúdio n. 4

*To Benerice Toledo and the little ants of her paintings*⁶²

The painting by Berenice Toledo presents two separate ideas: a) a portrait of Almeida Prado writing on the right side; b) the ants walking on the table. The pastel yellow tones in the background provide a calm ambiance. This *Poesilúdio* also presents two main thematic ideas in a “Calm” setting and predominantly soft dynamics, as seen in Table 4.⁶³ There is no time signature, and the measures are subdivided by dashed bar lines, indicating only the motivic sections, phrasing and/or changing directions of movement.⁶⁴

Measures / sub-measure	Thematic idea	Dynamic markings
1 / 1	First	<i>p</i>
1 / 2	Second	<i>ppp</i>
2 / 1	First	<i>p</i>
2 / 2	Second	<i>ppp</i>
3 / 1	First	<i>mf</i> (RH) / <i>pp</i> (LH)
3 / 2	Second	<i>ppp</i>
4 / 1	First	<i>mf</i> (RH) / <i>pp</i> (LH)
4 / 2-5	Second	<i>pp</i>
4 / 6	First	<i>p</i>
4 / 7	Second	<i>p</i>
5 / 1	First	<i>pp</i>
5 / 2	Second	<i>ppp</i>
6 / 1-2	First	<i>ppp</i>

Table 4: *Poesilúdio n. 4*, overview of sections

The first theme of this *Poesilúdio* (Example 51) consists of slow half-note chords in a general descending direction. Its conclusion with the long held bass sets the background resonance for the

⁶² Dedication marked on the score.

⁶³ Notation on the score.

⁶⁴ Lopes, 2002.

entry of the ants. Since the theme seems to have no direct reference to ants, it suggests the painting's first idea: Prado peacefully writing.



Example 51: Prado, *Poesilúdio n. 4*, first theme.

Pianist Adriana Moreira chose a slower tempo for this element, $\text{♩}=45$ instead of $\text{♩}=60$ as marked, which usually would make a fine shaping of the phrase more challenging. Amy Lin's performance follows the marked tempo.⁶⁵ She does, however, successfully convey the atmosphere. Moreira picks up the suggested tempo in later appearances of this theme. I chose to play the tempo as marked because, as mentioned before, it facilitates the shaping of the phrases.

The second theme (Example 52) is formed by steady rhythm of 32nd notes in ascending and descending motion (often chromatic) evoking the “walking” of the ants. With the image of these insects in mind, the pianist immediately resorts to a lightness of touch to depict them. Performers should be cautious to avoid performing the 32nd note cells with wave-like effects, which does not match the steady movement of the insect.⁶⁶ A gentle, but active, articulation of the fingers on the notes would more appropriately convey the slow and paced walking of the ants.

⁶⁵ Amy Lin. *Poesilúdio n.4*. Live recording at Stadtmuseum München, Germany, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5HZk4USPFLA>. Date of access: 10/nov/2015.

⁶⁶ The effect of constant *crescendo* and *decrescendo* when playing a fast ascending or descending scale.



Example 52: Prado, *Poesilúdio n. 4*, second theme, depiction of ants

Poesilúdio n. 6 – “Noites de Tóquio” (Nights of Tokyo)

In “Noites de Tóquio” Prado presents a stylized version of Japanese elements, such as the use of modes resembling pentatonic scales and allusions to Japanese instruments.

Noites de Tóquio is a *cromo*, a silk, a [color] half tone; it is as delicate as Japanese painting and porcelain. This *Poesilúdio* depicts through its [different] atmospheres the meditation of traditional Japan and “flashes” of modern Japan.⁶⁷

Notice that when I get into nationalism, even without meaning to, I repeat a mannerism of Guarnieri, Santoro, Mignone or Villa-Lobos. Moreover, when I leave nationalism and I’m going to make Japanese music – which has nothing to do with me – I change the texture. In other words, I do not have a previous alibi; I am totally free to do whatever I want. I imagined a Japanese scale and worked on it. This is a Japanese mode (I [just] do not know which [one it is])⁶⁸

As a performer, it was not clear, however, which elements provided the distinction between the traditional and modern Japan. The notation of this *Poesilúdio* includes changes in dynamics, time signatures, and use of both traditional barlines and dashed-barlines. Table 5 provides an overview of the structure of the work.

Measures / sub-measure	Tempo / Expression Markings	Dynamics
1 / 1	<i>Tempo Livre</i>	<i>p / crescendo / decrescendo / f</i>
1 / 2-3	<i>Lento</i>	<i>p / crescendo / f</i>
1 / 4-5	<i>Rápido</i>	<i>mf, pp (RH) / pp (LH) / f</i>
2 -12	<i>Calmo, Noturnal</i>	<i>pp (RH) / f (RH)</i>
13	<i>Calmo / Acel... Rall...</i>	<i>pp / crescendo / decrescendo</i>
14	<i>Lento</i>	<i>pp</i>
15	<i>Calmo / Acel... Rall...</i>	<i>pp / crescendo / decrescendo</i>
16	<i>Lento</i>	<i>pp</i>
17	<i>Calmo / Acel... Rall...</i>	<i>pp</i>

⁶⁷ Almeida Prado in interview to Rocha. In Rocha, 2004.

⁶⁸ Almeida Prado in interview to Moreira. In Moreira, 2002.

18	[<i>Lento</i>]	<i>pp</i>
19	<i>Lento, sagrado</i>	<i>mf</i> (RH) / <i>p</i> (LH, chord) / <i>pp</i> (LH, sixteenth-notes)
20 / 1	<i>Tempo livre</i>	<i>p</i> / <i>crescendo</i> / <i>decrecendo</i> / <i>f</i>
20 / 2	[<i>Lento</i>]	<i>f</i>
21-22	<i>Rápido, estelar</i>	<i>f</i> and <i>ff</i> (overall) / <i>f</i> , <i>p</i> (RH) / <i>p</i> (LH) / <i>crescendo</i> / <i>decrecendo</i>
23-28	<i>Acel... rall...</i>	<i>f</i> (RH) / <i>p</i> (LH) / <i>p</i> (RH) / <i>pp</i> (LH)
29-35	<i>Tempo livre</i>	<i>p</i> / <i>pp</i>

Table 5: *Poesilúdio n. 6*, overview of sections

In *Calmo, Noturnal* (calm, nocturnal) one may already observe the Japanese modes and the short descending *acciaccaturas* typical of the country's music. The use of accompanying ostinatos, a common compositional resource of Prado, are also present in the left hand (Example 53)



Example 53: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – *Poesilúdio n. 6* (mm. 2-6), left hand ostinatos accompanied by syncopated rhythms

In the *Rápido* (fast) section, Prado utilizes pentatonic scales and a *pizzicato* articulation to allude to the Japanese instrument, the *koto* (Example 54).



Example 54: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – *Poesilúdio n. 6* (mm. 1 / 4-5)

The same idea is then developed in *Rápido, estelar* (fast, stellar) but with offbeat notes in the left hand. The passage may be challenging to perform at a fast speed, considering the repeated notes, and dynamic markings (Example 55). Pianist Junia Rocha suggests changing fingers on each repeated note to facilitate execution.⁶⁹ During my practice, I also realized that changing the fingers made the passage considerably technically less demanding. Nevertheless, when applying the same finger on each repeated note the sound became more clear and bright – closer to the *estelar* marking. It also allowed the hand to travel in a more organic position to shape the phrasing. This choice, however, may result in more muscle fatigue due to the fast attack and release of the notes.

⁶⁹ Rocha, Junia. 2004.

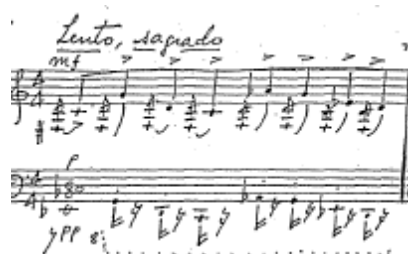


Example 55: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – *Poesilúdio n. 6. (21 / 1-7)*), *Rapido, estelar*

Brazilian pianist Junia Rocha wrote her masters dissertation about the *Poesilúdios* in 2004, which includes a live recording of the pieces.⁷⁰ Like Moreira, she also had the opportunity to interview the composer. Rocha and Moreira’s researches and recordings offer us some insight to performance decisions. For instance, Prado does not indicate a pedal in *Rapido, Estelar* (Example 55), but in an informal correspondence to Rocha he advised her to apply the pedal richly. In *Lento, Sagrado* (slow, sacred. Example 56), Moreira does not seem to apply any pedal, mostly likely to bring out the staccatos in the left hand. Rocha’s interpretation, in contrast, applies full pedal for the passage, resulting in a rich and warm resonance. Rocha says that the composer confirmed this intent,⁷¹ which leads one to conceive the staccatos more as touch nuances than dry articulation.

⁷⁰ Rocha, 2004.

⁷¹ Personal communication with composer. Rocha, 2004.



Example 56: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – *Posilúdio n. 6* (mm. 19), *Lento, Sagrado*

Prado creates the effect of gongs with a four-note cluster in the bass (Example 57).⁷² As Rocha remembers, the use of accompanying clusters was used in other pieces by Prado, such as in *Cartas Celestes* Volume III (refer to the phases of the Moon, Example 20, p. 32); they open the timbre for a large resonance.⁷³ The visual image of one playing a gong may change the physical attack of the pianist. Before knowing this reference, I had chosen to play these gong-clusters in a much more intimate manner. After reading about the reference, I opted to attack with a larger arm movement. The physical aspect of this attack may influence the resulting timbre and the reception by the audience.



Example 57: Prado, “Noites de Tóquio” – *Poesilúdio n. 6*, gong effect on the base.

⁷² Prado, In Rocha, 2004.

⁷³ Rocha, 2004.

***Poesilúdio n. 13* - “Noites do Deserto” (Night of the Desert)**

This *Poesilúdio* was not inspired on a painting, but rather on the conversations that he had with his friend Maria Aparecida Pacca, who had Lebanese ancestry. Prado said he made a reference to an Arabic flute in a “false Arabic mode.”⁷⁴ Prado often uses the expression “false mode” to refer to the choice of notes that resemble the sound of a certain culture or style, but without any concern of being accurate or faithful to the original source of inspiration. The piece is constituted of three basic thematic ideas: an introduction; a depiction of a Bedouin chant; and a musical representation of the desert wind (Table 6).

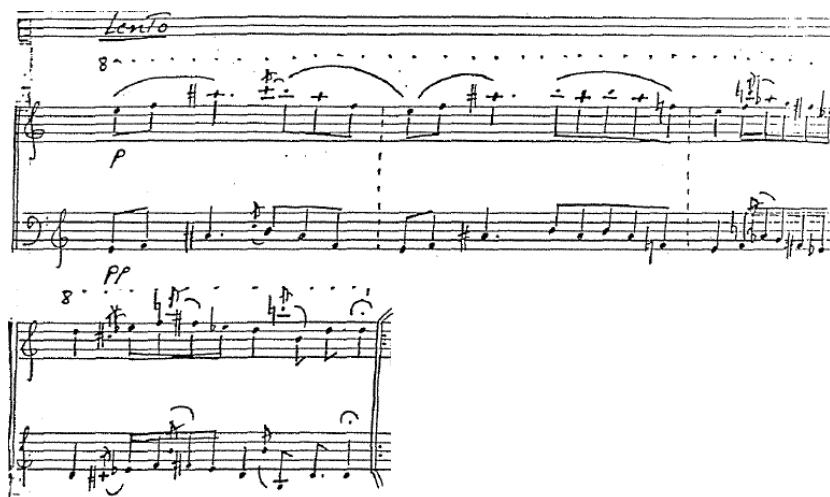
Measures / sub-measure	Tempo / Expression Markings	Dynamics
1 / 1-4	<i>Lento</i>	<i>p</i>
2 (constituted of 6 systems)	<i>Como um canto beduíno</i> (like a Bedouin chant)	<i>ppp / f</i>
3-9	[Transitional elements]	<i>p / crescendo / ff</i>
10-18	<i>Tempo livre, muito lento – como o canto do vento no deserto</i> (Like the sound of the wind blowing in the desert)	<i>p</i> (RH) / <i>pp</i> (LH) /

Table 6: *Poesilúdio n. 13*, overview of sections

Rocha stresses the importance of tempo rubato to successfully convey the sinuous character of Arabian music.⁷⁵ In Example 58, attention should be given so that these agogic nuances do not disturb the shaping of the larger unit.

⁷⁴ Prado, In Rocha, 2004.

⁷⁵ Rocha, Junia. 2004.



Example 58: Prado, “Noites do Deserto” – *Poesilúdio n. 13* (mm. 1), introduction

In Example 60 it is interesting to note the placement of the melody in unison two octaves apart, which gives a different color to the high-pitched Arabian flute. Taffarello observed that spreading the melodies more than one octave apart is a feature first seen in Prado’s music after his studies in Europe with Messiaen.⁷⁶ In “Regard de l’etoile”, for instance, Messiaen goes as far as separating the unison by four octaves (Example 59).



Example 59: Messiaen – “Regard de l’etoile” (mm. 6-9) – *Vingt regards sur l’enfant-Jésus*, unison four octaves apart

⁷⁶ Taffarello, 2010.

A remarkable use of compositional elements is found in this *Poesilúdio*, in which the composer uses what he calls a special kind of “unison” with “harmonic dirt” to imitate Arabic instruments, which “may sound out of tune to the Western ear” (Example 60).⁷⁷ Arabic instruments have commas in their tuning which are absent in piano temperament. In order to create the effect of octaves slightly “out of tune,” Prado places all voices in unison, except for the bass, which remains one semitone apart. The result of the dissonance and the reverberation of the damper pedal creates the cited “harmonic dirt”. Prado himself says that he “took a very long time to make this effect and [it] is something that other composers don’t use.”⁷⁸ The interpreter must be sensitive to the resonances generated and the kind of touch required to capture this effect.



Example 60: Prado, “Noites do Deserto” – *Poesilúdio n. 13* (mm. 2), depictions of a Bedouin chant

⁷⁷ PRADO in; ROCHA, Júnia Canton. “Entrevista com o compositor Almeida Prado sobre sua coleção de Poesilúdios para piano solo”. Per Musi - Revista Acadêmica de Música – n.11, Belo Horizonte p. 130-136. January – June, 2005.

⁷⁸ PRADO in; Rocha. (2005). Cited above

Rocha says that given the guttural aspect of the Bedouin chant, the melody should sound more sustained and *molto cantabile*.⁷⁹ I opted to apply a touch with the tip of the finger in the upper voice (as opposed to the pulp of the finger, applied to the other voices), so the chant would not sound too refined.⁸⁰

Even though the composer mentions that the out of tune effect was first seen in “Noites do Deserto”, Sergio Monteiro mentions in his master’s dissertation that in *Rios* (1976) the composer achieved a similar “microtonalism” effect, as seen in the Example 61.⁸¹ The passage is considerably less melodic than the Bedouin chant in the *Poesilúdio*, but one still observes the process of superposing fast cells (the 32nd notes in the right hand) under longer note motives (the 8th and 16th notes in the left hand).

The image shows a musical score for piano, consisting of two systems of staves. The top system has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a rapid, continuous sequence of notes, with markings for 'accel.' and 'fz p'. The bass staff has longer, more sustained notes, with markings for 'Ped.' and 'p'. The bottom system also has a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has markings for 'a tempo', 'accel.', and 'p'. The bass staff has markings for 'Ped.' and 'p'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings, illustrating the microtonal effects mentioned in the text.

Example 61: Prado, *Rios*. Microtonal effects.

Monteiro adds:

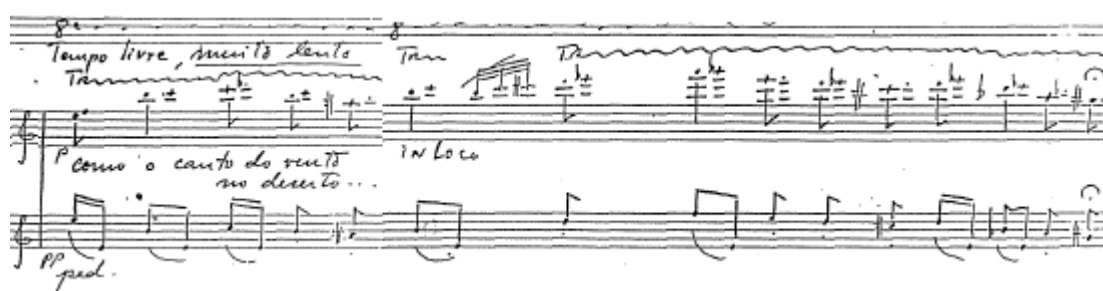
⁷⁹ Rocha, 2004.

⁸⁰ For reference, an excerpt of Bedouin chant may be found on: <https://youtu.be/Cd3g3o2Wq0Y?t=157>.

⁸¹ Monteiro, Sergio, 2000.

This effect reminds us of microtonalism, where the composer works with intervals smaller than semitones. Even though it is impossible [to achieve that] on the piano, the very fast and constant execution of ostinatos on white keys and intervals of 2nd and 3rd on black keys, or vice-versa, gives one the illusion of hearing microtonal intervals.

Tempo Livre is a musical reference to the desert wind. Just as the wind may diminish or intensify, it is important that the interpreter feels free to vary the dynamics and timing of this passage (Example 62). The trills could also vary in the speed of the revolutions within the same note, some starting slowly then quickly accelerating, or vice-versa, just as the wind would do.



Example 62: Prado, “Noites do Deserto” – *Poesilúdio n. 13* (mm. 10), depiction of the desert wind.

Poesilúdio n. 16 - “As Noites do Centro da Terra” (The Nights of the Center of the Earth)

“I found the difficult exercise that is memory...

Slow and erupted of Silences...”⁸²

Ending the cycle, we have “As Noites do Centro da Terra” (The Nights of the Center of the Earth). The piece is actually more inspired by a journey inside oneself. Prado comments that at the time of composition that he was seeing a Lacanian psychoanalyst for a form of therapy which:

⁸² PRADO, Jose Antonio R. De Almeida. *Modulações da memória: (um memorial)*. Campinas: Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 1985, p.4.

“...uses a lot of silences. The doctor of this kind of therapy may get in front of you suddenly, and say nothing. That makes one very anxious. When you ask: ‘what do you think?’ He keeps pushing you against the wall. You either scream, slap him if you will, or never come back. It’s a violent reaction that it provokes.”⁸³

The piece basically develops one main thematic idea: long chords separated by rests (Example 63). The bass is predominately grounded in F. Table 7 shows how the sections are articulated.

Measures	Section	Thematic Idea	Dynamics	Key elements
1-45	A	Main	<i>p</i>	Long chords separated by rests. Predominance of bass F
46-51	Transition	<i>Como um clarão – Súbito!</i> (like a flash of light – Sudden!	<i>pp</i>	Arpeggiated sixteenth notes.
52-88	A'	Main	<i>ff / p / pp</i>	Chords presented with less notes on each appearance. Predominance of the F major chord.

Table 7: *Poesilúdio n. 16*, overview of sections

The piece starts with a strong F minor chord in the bass register (Example 63):

Example 63: Prado, “Noites do Centro da Terra” – *Poesilúdio n. 16* (mm. 1-11)

⁸³ PRADO in; ROCHA, Júnia. (2005).

In an interview with Moreira,⁸⁴ Prado was very clear to state that the performer's awareness of the physical gestures were very important to this piece for properly conveying the long silences (by not moving too much for example) and the extremely slow tempo.

As Noites do Centro da Terra is the [*Poesilúdio* that is] the most avant-garde among all [the other *Poesilúdios*]. I use the silence as a musical entity, just like Beethoven in the *Pathétique Sonata*. [The silence] is not an absence of music, it is music too even it is not being played. The pianist cannot simply count. The acting – with a serious air – is necessary. He has to do a *mise en scène*. I demand that!⁸⁵

I support Rocha's advice that this music should be played by heart, as it would make one more conscious of one's body. She adds that filming or playing for another person could be very valuable in practice to perfect the physical aspect of the performance of this piece.⁸⁶

In interpreting this piece one questions the composer's request on the score of "holding the chords until the sound is completely gone". This may be an extremely long time to hold the chords, naturally depending on the instrument and hall characteristics. I opted to be faithful to the notation, but it is indeed difficult to keep the performance energy throughout the piece. The waiting for the sound to completely silence and following rests are so long that conveying a cohesive performance and organic unfolding of motives may be particularly challenging. Moreira's recording provides a deep, serious, and extremely convincing interpretation of the piece. She apparently holds each chord until its resonance is almost completely gone, and slowly releases the pedal towards the very end of the resonance. If opting to do so, one should be aware of the quality of the piano pedals and

⁸⁴ MOREIRA, Adriana L. da C. A poética nos 16 poesilúdios para piano de Almeida Prado. Master's Dissertation. Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2002.

⁸⁵ Ibid. p

⁸⁶ Rocha, 2014.

dampers, as some may produce unwanted harmonics when touching the strings slowly towards the end of the vibration.

Prado also described the Lacanian therapy sessions as a “deconstruction of oneself”. In this piece, the composer presents the idea of deconstruction by gradually making the texture thinner. As seen in Example 64, Prado repeats the F major chord, one of the most used in this piece, omitting notes on each appearance, until only silence remains.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for a piece by Prado. It consists of four systems of staves, each containing a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music is written in 7/8 time. The first system shows a full F major chord (F, A, C) in the treble and bass staves, with a piano (pp) dynamic marking. The second system shows the chord with some notes omitted, and the third system shows further omissions. The fourth system shows the chord reduced to a single note in the bass staff, with a final measure of silence. The score is written in a clear, legible hand, with notes and dynamics clearly marked.

Example 64: Prado, “As Noites do Centro da Terra” – *Poesilúdio n. 16* (mm. 61-89), gradual omission of notes.

The piece, which started in the serious and deep F minor chord, finds moments of peace in the final F major chords. In its last appearance, this chord is presented only with the fundamental and fifth notes, as if the chord had *found* its roots (Example 64). No distinction between major and minor is possible anymore. One could possibly relate this passage as a Lacanian patient finally discovering its inner-self. The choice of the F major is quite interesting, as it seems to have a strong emotional content to the composer. Prado chose the key of F major to conclude his *Sonata n. 10*, a work dedicated to the memory of his parents (see discussion in Chapter III).

CHAPTER III

POETIC EXTRAMUSICAL RELATIONSHIPS: *SONATA N. 10* “SONATA DAS ROSAS” (1996)

Sonata n. 10 (Sonata of the Roses) belongs to the aforementioned period which the composer calls a "free tonal phase." One may see the presence of features associated with tonal music, such as diatonic pitch collections or tonal harmonies. Even functional harmonies can be observed, in which he often explores many resources of conventional tonal language in a contemporary guise. In this chapter, I will identify and discuss some of the elements of each movement and their possible connection to extramusical elements. Finally, I will discuss performance issues as well as reflect upon how the overall mood and compositional elements may relate to the poem that prefaces the music.

As seen in Table 8, the Sonata is divided into three movements: “Intenso”, “Scherzo” and “3 Improvisações sobre um tema popular” (3 Improvisations on a popular theme). It has as its epigraph the verse XVI from the poem “The Roses,” by Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926):

Let’s not talk about you. You are ineffable by nature. Other flowers decorate the table that you transfigure. One puts you into a simple vase—, and everything changes; it’s perhaps the same phrase but sung by an angel.⁸⁷

Movement	Main Sections/ Thematic idea		Key elements
I. Intenso	First theme		Dissonant harmonies; tritons; depiction of the <i>Araponga</i>
	Second Theme. <i>Canto das Rosas</i>		Mostly tonal, in the key of E-flat major key; lyrical

⁸⁷ Rilke, Rainer Maria. Translation by Collignon, Barbara. Quoted in: Aynesworth, Michele (editor) *Beacons Volume X*. Literary Division of the American Translators Association. 2007. p. 197.

II. Scherzo	Scherzo		Rapid broken tonal triads, politonalism; changing and unusual time signatures (such as 6/64; 12/64; 6/64; 15/64; 69/64)
	Trio - Calmo		Rhythmic and textural variation of <i>Tema das Rosas</i>
	Scherzo		
	Coda	Calmo	Depiction of bells
		Tempo Livre	Depiction of the bird <i>Sabiá-laranjeira</i> . Performer chooses the number of repetitions of this section
III. 3 Improvisações sobre um tema anônimo popular	Theme		Melody with two layers of accompaniment. Calm and nostalgic ambience; time signature: 3/4 throughout
	Improvisação I		Dialog between eighth notes (LH) and quarter notes (RH); time signatures: 7/8; 10/8 and 12/8
	Improvisação II		Long note-values on the RH accompanied by eighth note ostinatos on the LH; time signature: 11/8
	Improvisação III		Rhythmic expanded ostinato from “Improvisação II” played by the RH. Fragments of “Theme” on the LH. Establishment of F major to conclude the work.

Table 8: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, overview of sections

In order to compare the poem the poem and the musical text one may look into some of the piece’s atmosphere, compositional language and the notes of Almeida Prado himself. The piece is set in a mainly nostalgic and multicolored ambience. The first theme (Example 65) opens with dissonant “Messiaen-like” harmonies, using tritones. Hartmann recalls the first chords’ construction as similar to Prado’s *Sonata n. 4*, where the striking and dissonant sound of an *Araponga*⁸⁸ is being depicted.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Bird found in Brazil.

⁸⁹ Hartmann, 2013.

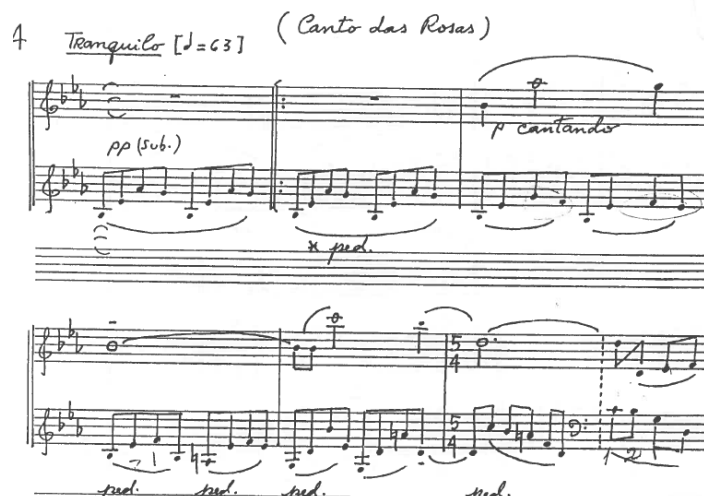


Example 65: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 1st movement, first theme

Having the call of the bird in mind, pianists may approach this opening section more with a more aggressive or direct approach, using more speed in the note attacks. In measures 3 and 4 (Example 65) one can already observe the melodic contours that anticipate the “Canto das Rosas” (Chant of the Roses, Example 66), but it is hardly clear to the audience at this point since it is masked with tritones.⁹⁰

The “Canto das Rosas” is mostly tonal, mainly reinforcing the key of E-flat major. It is extremely lyrical, similar to some of Prado’s *Noturnos*, and resembling the cantabile touch and nostalgic ambience of the Chopin *Nocturnes*. Coincidentally both Chopin *Nocturnes* op.9/1 (Example 67) and op.72/1 (Example 68) start with the same sixth interval.

⁹⁰ Corvisier, 2000.



Example 66: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 1st movement, second theme, “Canto das Rosas”



Example 67: Chopin, *Nocturne op. 72/1* (mm. 1-3)



Example 68: Chopin, *Nocturne op. 9/1* (mm. 1-2)

About this theme (“Canto das Rosas”), Prado writes:

It was a Nocturne that I composed in May, 1994 (to avoid the denomination ‘Nocturne’, I put ‘Canção das Rosas’). It is a very tonal theme, in E-flat major and it was inspired by an academic painting – a vase with red roses that my mother had left with me as an inheritance, and it is with my daughters today. My mother passed away in August of that same year of ‘94 and my father had passed away in ‘86, so I decided to compose a Sonata in their memories. I placed an introduction with almost a bellbird singing, and the “Canto das Rosas” ended up as the second theme, in the first movement’s sonata form. The second movement is a Scherzo. In the third movement, I placed a waltz from Jaú [Brazilian town] that my father used to sing for me to put me

to sleep. I didn't remember the lyrics, but I transcribed this song from memory, in F major and harmonized in a "transtonal" way, with an accompaniment that is from waltzes (so it dilutes a bit), and I did no variations, but improvisations around this theme, seeking an oneiric feeling between waking up and sleeping, seeing my father, and at the same time, he is not there. The Sonata ends serenely, in a wonderful F major.⁹¹

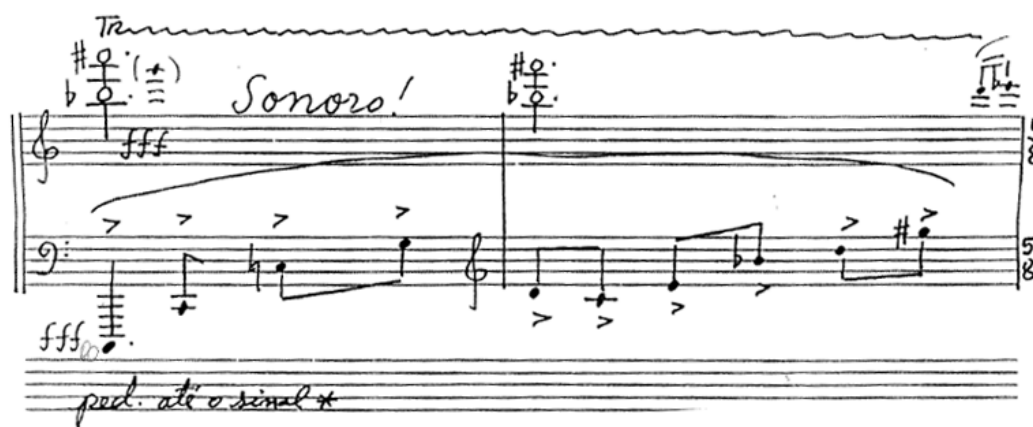
In some moments, one may observe reminiscences of his period of studies with Guarnieri. In *Pouco mais rapido* (Example 69) Prado uses the typical Brazilian syncopated rhythms that are seen in some of Guarnieri's *Ponteios*. The rhythmic character of this section contrasts greatly with the lyricism and nostalgia of the previous one (*Canto das Rosas*). Given these characteristics, performers could conceive this passage within the Zone of Non-Resonance, approaching it with a more rhythmic articulation and a drier tone. This transition prepares for the re-exposition of the first theme, the *Araponga* chords (last measure of Example 69).



Example 69: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 1st movement, *Um pouco mais rapido*.

⁹¹ ALMEIDA PRADO apud MOREIRA, 2002, p. 55)

The section *Sonoro* (Sonorous. Example 70) stresses in *fff* the low C, sustained by a long trill in the background, a feature also seen in Prado's *Cartas Celestes*. This is also one example of the Zone of Explicit Resonance. Notes of the ascending harmonic series of C are presented in the left hand: C (4 times), G, E, B \flat , D and G \sharp . A fast attack on the bass keys may help bring out the harmonics.

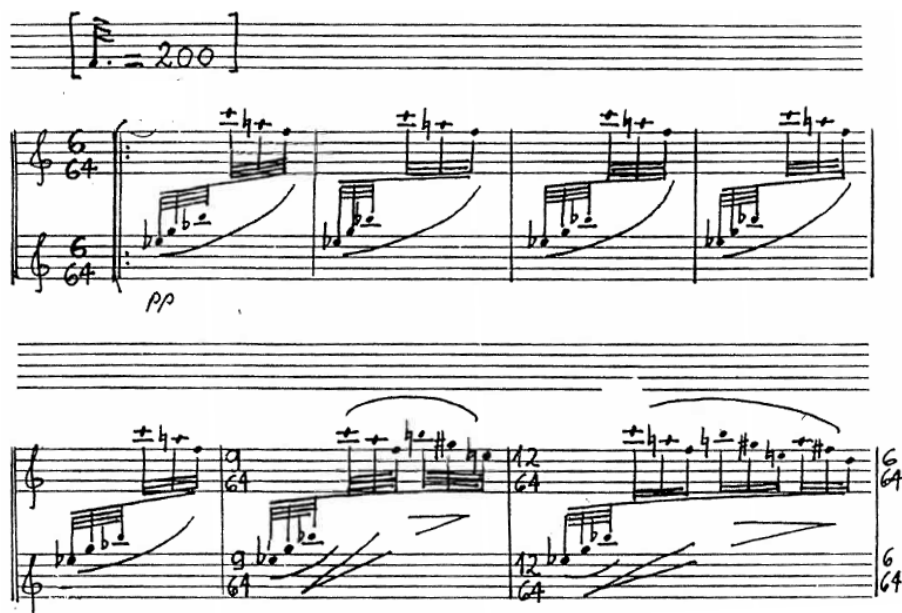


Example 70: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 1st movement, *Sonoro*

The second movement *Scherzo* is constructed with rapid broken tonal triads, placed freely without any traditional harmonic functional – another transtonal behavior (Example 71). This movement's overall mood resemble other pieces. Corvisier relates this section to the opening of Ravel's Piano Concerto.⁹² Pianist Ilya Poletaev mentioned the resemblance to Debussy's *Pour les huit Doigts*.⁹³ The fast repeated cells may also resemble the *moto perpetuo* style of the last movement of Chopin's Sonata n. 2.

⁹² Corvisier, 2000.

⁹³ In informal communication.



Example 71: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 2nd movement, “Scherzo” (mm.1-7)

In the *Trio* (Example 72), one sees an expanded rhythmic and textural variation of *Tema das Rosas*:

Example 72: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 2nd movement, *Trio* (mm. 1-10)

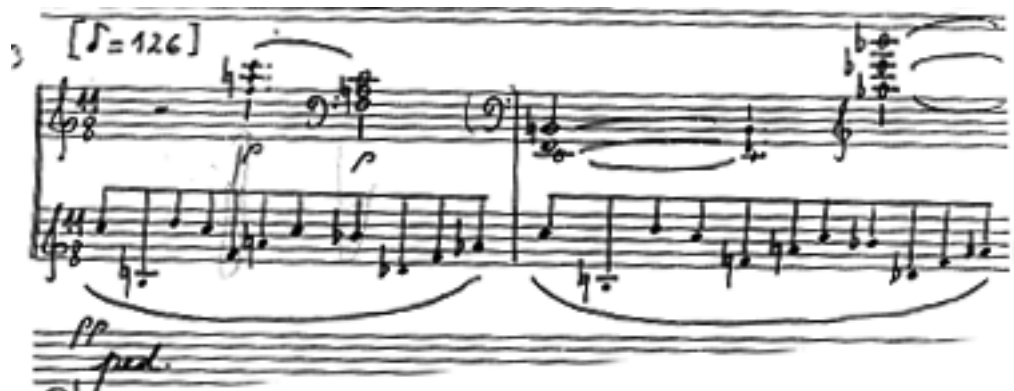


Example 75: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 3rd movement, exposition of the theme

Part of the thematic material presented in “Improvisação I” (Example 76) becomes an ostinato in the left hand in “Improvisação II” (Example 77). With full pedal and soft dynamics, a dream-like atmosphere is suggested.



Example 76: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 3rd movement, “Improvisação I”



Example 77: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 3rd movement, “Improvisação II”

The ostinato of “Improvisação II” (Example 77) is then expanded and transferred to the right hand in “Improvisação III” (Example 78):



Example 78: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 3rd movement, “Improvisação III”

The Sonata concludes with the establishment of the F major key: the “wonderful F major” Prado mentioned earlier. One observes the Explicit Zone of Resonance. The following notes presented belong to the ascending harmonic series of F (highlighted in red in Example 79): F, C, A, E_b, G, B, E.

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the 3rd movement of Prado's Sonata n. 10. The score is organized into three systems of staves. The first system features a treble and bass staff with a piano (*mp*) and *sonoro* marking. The bass staff contains several notes circled in red. The second system continues the melody with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) marking. The third system shows a grand staff with piano (*p*) and *in loco* markings. The score is handwritten and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 79: Prado, *Sonata n. 10*, 3rd movement. The “wonderful F Major”, a Zone of Explicit Resonance of the harmonics of F.

From this information, pianist and theorist Ernesto Hartmann discusses how Prado’s distinct use of tonality in this piece, particularly when associated with two themes that carry emotional value for the composer, may be related to the nostalgia of his childhood (the popular theme, in the last movement) and his parents (Canto das Rosas). Hartmann asks whether the “you”

referred to in the poem could be the “tonality” itself. In this case, it would be this (the tonality) that is transformed - the other harmonic idioms applied in this work being then ornamentations. The fact that Prado used the word “wonderful” to refer to the tonality of F major also leads us to this interpretation, which is supported by the reiteration of all the tonal structures throughout the piece and the final statement of tonality in the outer movements of the work.⁹⁴

By having this as a parting idea, we may move on to other passages. “One puts you into a simple vase” (the theme), “and everything changes” (the principle of variation inherent in the “improvisations”). “It’s perhaps the same phrase” (once again the concept of variation) “but sung by an angel”. The Angel may be represented by the “wonderful” F major triads, presented in the final measures of the third movement (Example 79).

It is interesting to observe that F major is the same key used Prado to conclude his last *Poesilúdio* (refer to Example 64, p.72). As mentioned in the previous chapter, *Poesilúdio n. 15* has a deep emotional meaning to Prado, as it inspired in a journey to one-self’s discovery. Corvisier also points out, after analyzing another work by Prado (*Rosário de Medjugorjie*), that the composer often used the key of E-flat major to refer to light and F major for the sublime or angelic: allowing thus a perfect analogy with this Sonata. Going from the light to the sublime is directly related to the passing of his parents, the original purpose of the Sonata. “Other flowers decorate the table that you transfigure”, being “you” the tonality and the “other flowers” his so-called “transtonality” and dissonances.

⁹⁴ Hartmann, 2013.

CONCLUSION

During the course of this research I could observed how Almeida Prado was constantly inspired by extramusical elements. These inspirations ranged from natural elements, religious or spiritual beliefs, to other forms of art.

In *Cartas Celestes* Volume III Prado brings the performer and listener on a journey through the cosmos. Chords representing the stars provided structure to the work. Rhythmic variations and black and white key constructions provide contrast in the work, alongside a special concern for resonance and pedaling. The analysis of the work revealed possible influences by other composers, mainly Messiaen and Villa-Lobos.

In a similar way, Prado creates musical images of paintings in *Poesilúdios*. The trip across the nights in different cities was achieved by searching transfigured *modes* of their respective regions. Harmony, rhythm and texture were manipulated to generate particular effects of local instruments and chants.

Finally, in *Sonata n. 10* a simple yet profound and delicate poem was chosen to express the nostalgic feeling of the memory of his parents. In this work, Prado remembers not only his beloved ones, but also musically recalls resonances of *Cartas Celestes*, his appreciation for tonality, and the influence of his former master Guarnieri.

The search for a composer's references and treatment of compositional elements, alongside his declarations, affect our interpretative decisions in varying degrees. The recordings provided different insights especially in regards to the relative freedom dealing with timing and rhythm. The

views presented were by no means the only possible interpretations of the elements, as Prado's music explores many sound possibilities of the instrument, and will continue to stimulate the imagination of both performers and listeners.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AYNESWORTH, Michele (editor) *Beacons Volume X*. Literary Division of the American Translators Association. 2007, p. 197

COELHO, João Marcos. Um Músico Erudito Desce da Torre. *Folha Ilustrada*. Newspaper. Folha de São Paulo (São Paulo, Brazil), p. 1, 1978.

CORVISIER, Fernando C. *The Ten Piano Sonatas of Almeida Prado: The Development of his Compositional Style*. Doctorate Thesis. University of Houston, 2000.

COSTA, Regis Gomide. *Os Momentos de Almeida Prado: Laboratório de Experimentos Composicionais*. Master Dissertation. Porto Alegre: UFRSG, 1998.

FERRAZ, Maria Helena Peixoto. *An overview of Almeida Prado's "transtonal" system in his Cartas Celestes, first six volumes, for piano solo*. Doctorate Thesis. School of Music, University of Arizona. 2009.

GANDELMAN, Salomea. A obra para piano de Almeida Prado. *Revista Brasileira de Música*, Rio de Janeiro, v. 19, p. 115-120, 1991.

GROSSO, Hideraldo. *Os Prelúdios para piano de Almeida Prado – fundamentos para uma Interpretação*. Master Dissertation. Porto Alegre – UFRGS, 1997.

HARTMANN, Ernesto. A Sonata n. 10 para Piano de Almeida Prado: relações intertextuais e composicionais entre a obra e o poema As Rosas de Almeida Prado. *Revista Música Hodie*, Goiânia, V.13 - n.1, p. 175-191, 2013.

LIN, Amy. *Live recording at Stadtmuseum München*, Germany. 2015. Recording. Piano. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc8XwIL_II5h68zWYdvDuGw/videos, accessed: 12/12/2015

MONTEIRO, Sergio. *Rios de Almeida Prado: Contribuições para uma interpretação pianística*. Masters Dissertation, 2000.

MOREIRA, Adriana L. C. *A poética nos 16 Poesilúdios para piano de Almeida Prado*. Masters Dissertation. Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2002.

Moreira, Adriana. Flashes de Almeida Prado por ele mesmo. Opus: *Revista da ANPPOM* – Ano 10, n10, december 2004.

NAVARRO, Daniel Pérez. Escucho los colores, veo la música: sinestesias. El compositor sinestésico: Olivier Messiaen. *Revista mensual de publicación en Internet Número 48º - Enero 2.004*. [Http://www.filomusica.com/filo48/sinestesia.html](http://www.filomusica.com/filo48/sinestesia.html), accessed: 02/02/2007.

NEVES, José Maria. *Música Contemporânea Brasileira*. São Paulo: Ricordi Brasileira, 1981.

PANIZZA, Livio. *A sinestesia na narrativa dannunziana*. (no date). [Http://www.filologia.org.br/viiicnlf/resumos/asinestesiananarrativa.htm](http://www.filologia.org.br/viiicnlf/resumos/asinestesiananarrativa.htm), accessed in 12/12/2015.

ROCHA, Júnia Canton. Entrevista com o compositor Almeida Prado sobre sua coleção de *Poesilúdios* para piano solo. *Per Musi - Revista Acadêmica de Música* – n. 11, Belo Horizonte p. 130-136. January – June, 2005.

PRADO, Almeida José R. de. *Cartas Celestes: uma uranografia sonora geradora de novos processos composicionais*. Doctorate Thesis. Campinas / UNICAMP. 1985.

PRICE, Aaron. *Variable Star Of The Month. Beta Persei (Algol)*. January, 1999. <http://web.archive.org/web/20060708092301/http://www.aavso.org/vstar/vsots/0199.shtml>, accessed in 12/12/2015.

ROCHA, Junia Canton. *Decisões Técnico-Musicais e Interpretativas no Segundo Caderno de Poesilúdios Para Piano de Almeida Prado*. Masters Dissertation. Belo Horizonte, UFMG, 2004.

SILVA, Elizabete Aparecida. *A Tematica Religjosa em Le Rosaire de Medjugoie – Icone Sondre pour piano" de Almeida Prado*. Masters Dissertation. UFRJ, 1994.

TAFFARELLO, Tadeu Moraes. *O percurso da intersecção Olivier Messiaen-Almeida Prado: Momentos, La Fauvette des Jardins e Cartas Celestes*. Doctorate Thesis. Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Instituto de Artes, 2010.