

SYNCOATED MELODIC AND RHYTHMIC STRUCTURE OF ABEL CARLEVARO'S CAMPO

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Abstract

Preludios Americanos is among the well-known classical guitar compositions of Abel Carlevaro (1916-2001). Number three of these preludes is titled as "Campo". The melodic and the rhythmic applications formed by the syncopated structures within the body of the piece are very substantial in the context of musical expression. These musical elements are presented as a whole in the piece. In this study, syncopated structures that form the musical texture of Campo were examined. Definitions of syncope and its importance in musical texture is emphasized. The effect of these structures and applications on Campo has been discussed and shown through the score.

Keywords: Classical guitar, Campo, Carlevaro, syncope, Preludios Americanos.

1. Introduction

Abel Carlevaro is a classical guitar composer and performer who was born in Montevideo, Uruguay (1916-2001). In several aspects, it is convenient to mention that he is one of the important figures of classical guitar. He has various substantial works not only as a guitarist and composer, also as an educator in the history of guitar. Particularly, his guitar method *Escuela de la Guitarra* (School of Guitar) is a substantial guide with the sections related to placement of the Guitar, detailed examination of left and right hand techniques, Major and Minor Diatonic scales and their performing on guitar, applied theory and musical mind of a guitar player. He has contributed significantly to the development of the classical guitar with his methods, arpeggio books and compositions.

As a composer, Carlevaro's most commonly known and often performed composition is *Preludios Americanos*. This piece consists of five preludes. These are *Evocation*, *Scherzino*, *Campo*, *Ronda* and *Tamboriles*. *Preludios Americanos* first was published in 1969 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Shortly after its publication, it became an often performed piece of the guitar repertoire. Abel Carlevaro was an active concert guitarist. Thus, Carlevaro's inclusion of this work in his concerts' repertoire has also been efficient on the popularity of the piece. First, third and fifth preludes are dedicated to Andres Segovia (1893-1987) who has played a major role in making the classical guitar a concert instrument and who has enabled it to be included in the curriculum in conservatories and academies.

The third prelude of *Preludios Americanos* titled as *Campo* is distinguished with others and becomes prominent with its syncopic structure on texture and its contribution to the melodic sequence of the piece.

1. General Review of Campo in the Scope of Its Musical Texture

It has been observed that, in time, *Campo* started to perform as a singular piece in the classical guitar concerts. One of the reasons for this is the exclusive melodic extent of *Campo*. The basis of this melodic being is the systematic presentation of its rhythmic structure through the syncops. This

layout presents its effect throughout the Campo, has been observed on both rhythmic and melodic parts. In other words, they regularly have an interactive relation over syncopes. Musical formation of Campo creates its own musical dialectic with the systematic implementation of irregularity. As can be seen from this formation of Campo, irregularity can generate an impressive transmission. As a result of this transmission, a way of communication emerges. It is the point that this communication reaches is reactivity. This interaction and reactivity has different effects on both transmitter (performer) and transmitted (listener).

The regulations due to interaction, transmission and communication create the fundamental of musical texture. It is comprised of the sound and time. These are the two elements that are the basis of the presentation of music. In this content, Campo is an efficient example of the syncopical musical texture which consists the formation of melody and rhythm.

Rhythm is a whole in this context and it is one of the fundamental factors of music. As London (2007) indicates "Rhythm is an important parameter of music, defined in terms of the way that sequences of inter-onset intervals of a group of tones are put together and perceived" (as cited in Keller and Schubert, 2011:143). Syncope is part of the rhythm and is a substantial expression in the context of rhythm's domain. Gülgen's explanation is effective on the brief definition of syncope. According to Gülgen "composers use strong tense that is constantly repeated with equal intervals. They have developed various ways to get away from monotony. The most known technique is syncope where the usual order of vigorous time is deliberately modified and disrupted the condition. The emphasis is on the weak time and continues in the strong beat." (2015:7). It is also described by Fitch and Rosenfeld's article. As Fitch and Rosenfeld (2007) mentioned "it is a rhythmic phenomenon in metered music that occurs when a weak metric position is accentuated by a note onset, but no onset happens on the subsequent strong metric position" (as cited in Hoesl and Senn, 2018:1). Addition to this, according to London (2004) "A syncopated rhythm produces a momentary violation of a listener's (schematic) temporal expectancies and should therefore evoke emotion because emotion is generated when expectancy is delayed or inhibited" (as cited in Keller and Schubert, 2011:144).

In line with all these definitions, it can be mentioned that syncopes have an important place in campo's musical expression. Syncopated practices have a great place in the musical integrity of the work. In this direction, in order to approach the musical comprehension of the piece for both of the transmitter (performer) and the transmitted (listener), it is important to examine melodic texture formed over the syncopical rhythm and melody which are among the main features of Campo.

2. Syncopated Structure of Campo

As one of the effects that Carlevaro's being a classical guitarist, there is a sequence of positions that reveals the harmonic structure and possibilities of the guitar in the richest possible way in Campo. For this reason, it comes to the fore in the alignment of the left hand positions and its impact on the horizontal melodic layout of the piece. In classical guitar technique, there is an order based on the chord sequence especially on the left hand. That means the placement of the position on the left hand and the production of the melody on the right hand. This is basically how the melody is created on classical guitar. This approach is the basis of horizontal and vertical polyphony on the guitar. In this formation, right hand and left hand coordination have a particular importance. An essential part of this coordination is the rhythmic harmony between two hands. Campo is an impressive and clearly observable example of this structure.

In Campo, the musical texture that forms the main structure of the musical idea is a rhythmic expression. The musical formation of the work is A-B-A. Along with the first section (A), it is noticed that in contrast to the syncopical structure of the accompaniment part, there is a regular phrasing of the bass that is the main melody of the piece. This layout continues until the end of section A. Settlement of melody and accompaniment can be observed in the very beginning of the first measure. By this way, the syncopical melodic structure dominating a large part of the piece is

introduced to the listener. Among the musical data presented by the first sentence, it is observed that the melody which is in the bass that started with the upbeat. It also maintains a regularly phrasing with the accompaniment part that is opposite and includes syncopes. Both parties are showed below.



Figure No. 1¹

This accompaniment with syncopes is arranged in a way that it gives an impression of being out of order and irregularly distributed and located. When this application is examined, it is observed that all the groups with syncopes have a systematic settlement. One of the characteristic dynamics achieved in this approach is that the support of the accompaniment party becomes rhythmically effective. This effect is a formation. It is the kind of rhythmic effect that creates the listener into a state. In this regard, this perceives the accompaniment as a melody. One of the reasons for this effect is efficient that the melody part is more perceptible, while the accompaniment part has a more complex structure. The application of the syncope approach is based on disorder and irregularity. This irregularity formed an order by forming its own dialectic and made a constructive contribution to the work. There are two main factors behind this change that has an impact on the audience: Continuity and systematicity. Continuity affects the perception of the listener after a certain period of time. The listener absorbs the irregular rhythmic accompaniment with his own senses and reflexes and adds a new meaning to the rhythmic form of the piece. The supporter and creator of this reflex is the principle of continuity which becomes more prominent with the systematic order.

Syncope sequence of the first sentence is shown below.



Figure No. 2

Figure 2 shows the first six measures at the beginning of Campo. The use of syncope within these measures has been applied differently. For this reason the measures are numbered. Repeating syncopal ones are indicated with the same numbers. The first sentence of Campo consists of 16

¹All images are cited from the same source: Carlevaro, A. Preludios Americanos, Campo, (1969), Barry Editorial., Ind., S.R.L, Buenos Aires, Argentina

measures. As seen in the first six measures of these 16 measures, four different syncopes were applied.

During the following six measures, syncopes were not applied but due to the continuity of the melody in the bass, the impression of the continuation of syncopal structure is created on the audience. The reason for this is that the melody passed to the high-pitched and the melody figures continued for two measures, unlike the previous bass melody line. In addition, as can be seen in the ninth measure, the melody line loses its character and musical expression becomes common to both parts. In this way, sense of accompaniment and melody disappears for one measure. During the next three measures, the melody is represented without accompaniment through the double voices. Thus, the musical expression which is the first sentence comes to an end, is prepared and supported.

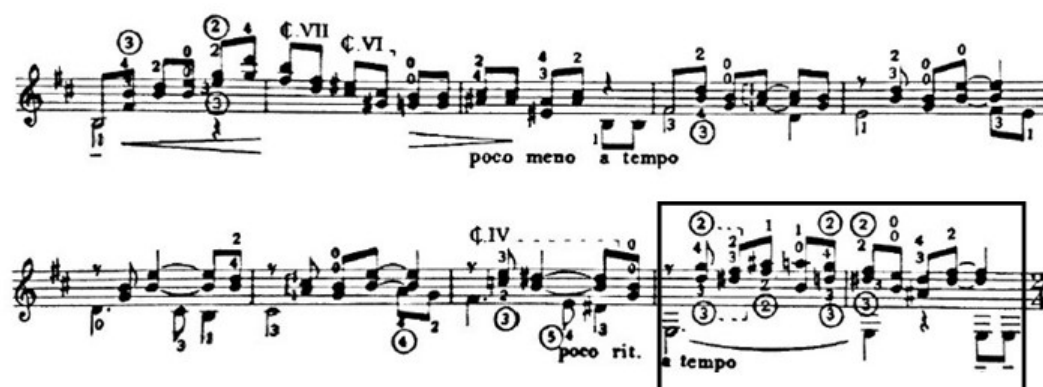


Figure No. 3

The melody part in the following sentence has similarities with the bass. In figure 3, as shown within the two measures, the melody is enriched. This addition takes place by the sequential presentation of half notes. These measures are one of the parts where melody and accompaniment structure are integrated.



Figure No. 4

There is no syncopal structuring during the next two measures, where melody and accompaniment parts begin together. In addition, it is observed with the change in the beat of the same measures, melody keeps its existence in the line with the principle of continuity. It happens through the half beat notes. This melodic structure is sort of presenting the chords with arpeggios that are frequently used in Campo. By this way, rhythmic feeling is emphasized and harmonic integrity and continuity is achieved. As seen in the first box marked in figure 4, the melody, which is included in the bass, is incorporating syncopes for the first time. Therefore the syncopal structure of the piece indicates its presence in both parts as affected by each other. As shown with the second

box, a different layout of the syncope application is observed from the beginning of the piece. This is marked as the fifth syncopal rhythm structure.



Figure No. 5

In figure 5, fourth syncope application is observed. It is applied in three measures. The melody takes place in the bass. That is the general approach that dominates the first part (A). Although the line on the bass part which is in the second box, gives the impression of a melody, actually chords made up of sequences creates the whole melody itself. However, it is observed that when the chords are presented in arpeggio in this way, the feeling of syncope is revealed through the bass part. That is the reason why the notes that make up the fundamental bass of the chord are used as unison and their tails are also downward. In addition, one of the reasons for using unison notes in previous measures is that the bass notes of the chords displayed as arpeggios are also a part of the melody.

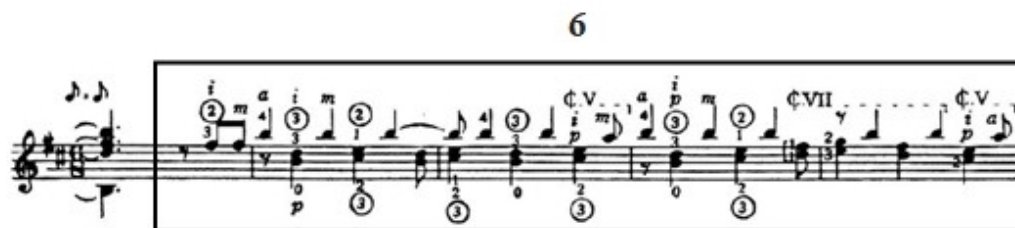


Figure No. 6

In the second section (B), there are several features from the rhythmic framework. They are more developed and complex rhythmic approaches from the first part. The syncopated structure is presented to the listener systematically in B. The first important change at the beginning of the second section is the change of time signature. However, this change does not affect the rhythmic dynamism that prevails in the first section (A).

Secondly, in the second part, it is noticed that syncopated building applications are systematically processed unlike the first section. This structure, shown in figure 6, has been applied between bass and melody parts. As a result of this systematicity, the sense of melody becomes common. The melody line takes the form of a single body through these two parts. This application creates the effect and impression of the imitation polyphony also comes to the fore as rhythmically.

The structure pointed out in the figure 6 is both poly-rhythmic and poly-melodic and it regularly incorporates syncopations.

A monophonic melody line was used in the upper part and a melody line consisting of two voices was applied in the part below. Thus, the perception of chord progression is created through the use of two voices bass. The double and monophonic melody structure forms a syncopated melody line that includes the harmony as well.



Figure No.7

As observed in the first box in figure 7, the same pattern was applied in box number six. But an addition has been made and the syncopated melodic line in the bass is presented with three voiced chords instead of double intervals. The same melodic expression is conveyed harmonically but this time more effective and expressive. One of the meanings of this change has added to this repetition is that these chords in the bass line come to the fore in a melodic perception of the listener. In the second box in figure 7, there is a third version of the same pattern applied in second section (B). In this application, there is a common melody and rhythm structure formed by mutual double intervals. This structure, which lasts for two measures, is then followed by two measures that are the opposite of each other. While the first of the last two measures of the second box includes three voiced chords in the bass line and emphasizes the melodic perception. In the second measure, the opposite is applied to create a melody line with the three voiced chords in the upper part. Thus, the systematic syncopal structuring applied in the second part is divided into the fractions within itself. This difference is marked with the little box in figure 7. The second box is the seventh syncopal structure applied in Campo.

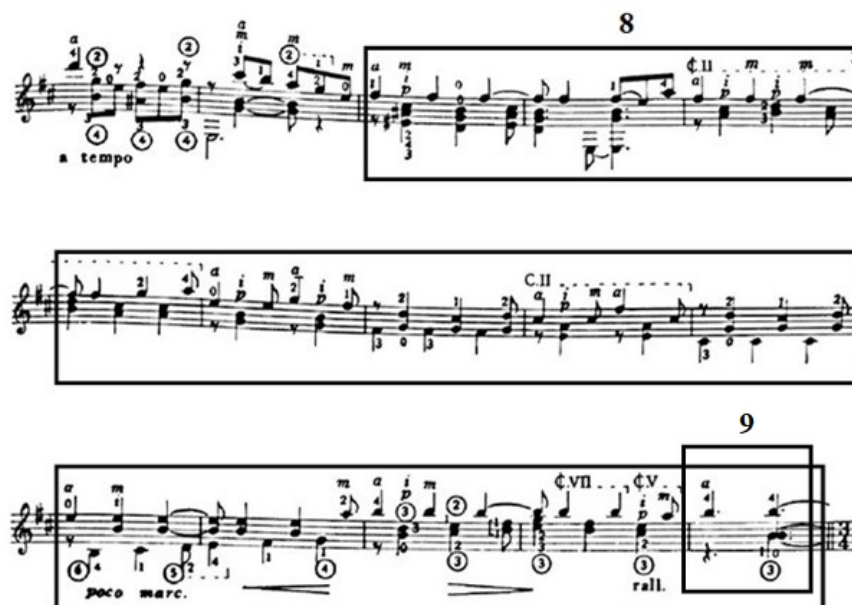


Figure No. 8

The last part of the second section (B) is shown at the figure 8. It involves the presenting of all syncopated structures within the body of B. The first measure of box number eight primarily contains the three voiced chords used in the bass as a melody line. In line with the sense that dominates the whole piece, this melody structure is also a common rhythmic order formed and embodied with the upper part. It is observed that the upper part in the second measure of the eighth box has taken over the melodic character by presenting it with melodic addition. This addition consists of half notes in the triple grouping. During the following three measures, two voiced intervals in the bass and monophonic line in the upper part consist the common and both melodic and rhythmic feeling. In the next two measures is the part where the double intervals pass to the high-pitched and then to the bass. Thus, the end of the second section is prepared also dramatically by increasing the sensation and perception of syncopes. There are syncope structures of opposite character, divided into three measures along the six measures at the end of B. This approach is also a continuation of the chaotic sensation that supports the end of B through syncopes. But the last measure has a syncopal structure that is applied for the first time in the piece. This measure includes the ninth syncopal structure applied in Campo. Through the application of this syncope, it is observed that the common melodic line ends in the upper part at the end of B.

The third section of the work contains almost complete repetition of the first section as mentioned before (A-B-A). At the end of the piece there is a three-measure final passage with 2/4 and 3/4 of time signatures. It is observed that there is no syncopal structure in that passage which is final of Campo.

3. Conclusion

As one can noticed that the types of syncopes applied in the first and second sections of Campo are different from each other. This difference is not only applied rhythmically but also affects the melodic structure. In this context, the syncope practices observed throughout the whole piece have melodic and rhythmic characters. It is also a proof that the syncopic structure is not just a rhythmic approach.

The syncopes observed in the first section (A) consist of musical figures of one measure each. Totally, five different syncopal figures have been determined and marked with numbers in the first section (A). In addition, these syncopes also take place with the sequential approaches as it can be

observed in the second marked box of figure 5. As stated before, this practice is to accommodate the syncopal structure during the presentation of chords.

The syncopes observed in the second section (B) applied with a systematic layout. On the contrary of those applied in A, these are wider musical ideas. Also as indicated in figure 6 at the beginning of B, first example of these syncopal ideas are presented in their simplest form. Then this application was developed and implemented systematically. One of these development paths has been determined as harmonically enrichment. The double voiced intervals converted to three voiced. The harmonic expression was strengthened. Another development approach is the regularly implementation of these two and three voiced textures in different parts. During these applications, the common melody structures that dominate the whole piece and are applied with a rhythmic approach are presented in more dynamic way over syncopes. Finally, as marked in figure 8, these developing syncopal ideas in B are presented in total. With this approach musically conclusion of B is prepared and provided.

These syncopal approaches which have an important place in the creativity portrait of Abel Carlevaro also play an important role on his often performed and well known composition Campo. Therefore determining the syncopal structures applied differently in both sections in Campo would be effective and substantial in terms of interpretation, examination and comprehension of the piece.

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