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A Stylistic and Compositional Analysis of Ciranda das Sete Notas by Heitor Villa-Lobos

Paulo H. Siqueira

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COLUMBUS STATE UNIVERSITY

A STYLISTIC AND COMPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS OF *CIRANDA DAS SETE NOTAS*

BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
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MASTER OF MUSIC IN PERFORMANCE

SCHWOB SCHOOL OF MUSIC

BY
PAULO H. SIQUEIRA

COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

2019

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BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

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ABSTRACT

Heitor Villa-Lobos created his idiosyncratic Brazilian style in *Ciranda das Sete Notas* by using Bach's compositional numbered alphabet idea. The intention is to help musicians, and more specifically bassoonists, have a clearer understanding of the construction of Villa-Lobos's *Ciranda das Sete Notas* by providing context for the composer's choices and compositional process. The central argument focuses on the interrelationship between the compositional intention and post-composition analyses with regard to Brazilian stylistic foundations. Beyond this process, with a nod to Bach's numerical approach, the errors found on the only printed version in 1961 have been leading bassoonists to misguided performances, resulting in a misinterpretation of tempo, style and phrases. In sum, the intent is to provide bassoonists, or any musician interested in the piece, greater clarity for artistic decisions in performance. The analysis was based on a table explaining his symbolic tools including the letters and numbers represented.

INDEX WORDS: *Ciranda das Sete Notas*, Heitor Villa-Lobos, numerology in music, Brazilian music, bassoon

DEDICATION PAGE

I dedicate this work primarily to God and the following important people in my life: João Batista Siqueira (in memoriam), Maria Adélia Albonette Siqueira, and Janet Grice.

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Introduction

Ciranda das Sete Notas in C major is of great importance in the bassoon repertoire, especially considering its popularity in concert rooms around the world. First, Heitor Villa-Lobos (1888-1959) was a Brazilian composer, conductor and multi-instrumentalist who played guitar, piano, and violoncello. As a creative composer, he wrote roughly 2000 works (The Villa-Lobos Museum is still in the cataloguing process) including orchestral, chamber, instrumental and vocal works (Brandão 2019). His works are typically influenced by a mix of Brazilian folk music and European traditional music (Béhague 1994, 15-16). For example, in his *Bachianas Brasileiras* he used Bach's ideas as a structural element. Within this form he created an imaginary representation of the Brazilian cultural environment. Additionally, Villa-Lobos is well known for his etudes for guitar (1929) dedicated to Andrés Segovia. Also, for guitar his *Five Preludes* (1940) honor his spouse Arminda Neves d'Almeida, (nicknamed "Mindinha"). Both are considered seminal works in the guitar literature. Furthermore, it is important to mention that Villa-Lobos dedicated over 50 pieces to his second wife, including *Ciranda das Sete Notas*.

Created by Brazilian visual artists in 1922, The Modern Art Week is a landmark of modernism in Brazil and served as a venue to introduce artists' new and extravagant ideas. This event can trace its roots to similar festivals in Europe. Lucinda Hawksley in her article describes the European scenario that had direct influence on this artistic movement:

In Europe at that time, art had moved from the ages of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism through to Vorticism, Futurism, Cubism and the earliest stirrings of Surrealism. World War I had crushed sentimentality and ushered in the Machine Age. In 1922, Europe was still attempting to rebuild itself after years of conflict, and each country was attempting to salvage its own cultural identity, trying to work out what was real and what had been created by the propaganda of wartime (Hawksley 2014).

Villa-Lobos was the only composer invited to be part of the Modern Art Week that year and was fortunate to hear a number of his pieces performed. The next year he was invited to travel to Paris for a similar series of performances of his works. During his visit to Paris he had contact with great French bassoonists who deeply impressed him with their technique and musical ideas. In particular, he was overwhelmed by a few works by the composer Igor Stravinsky, most notably *The Rite of Spring* and its overture exploring the high range of the bassoon (Justi 1992, 179-181).

At this point, Villa-Lobos started to consider not only writing for the bassoon but expanding his voice to include both these European techniques on all instruments and decided to bring deeper Brazilian folk elements into his works. Paulo Renato Guérios, a historian, discusses these sociocultural details in Villa-Lobos's music and sees them as an outgrowth of his immersion into the Parisian environment:

It is also easy to perceive the changes that have occurred in his compositions. Villa-Lobos finally began to use widely in his compositions the rhythms of popular music, with which he lived outside theaters in Brazil, but which he had not incorporated into his creations due to the negative value attributed to popular aesthetics by the Brazilian musicians --one of the characteristics most striking of his works would be from then on the rhythmic wealth, little used previously. Soon after returning from Paris in 1924, he also searched for indigenous songs, listening to the phonographs recorded by Roquete Pinto during the Rondon expedition in 1908 (Guérios 2003, 98, translated by the present author); Candido Mariano Da Silva Rondon collected information about the indigenous culture in the Amazon forest and was responsible for the creation of the indigenous governmental rights institution in Brazil (Diacon 2004).

The title "*Ciranda*" came from a traditional Brazilian folkloric play. This would serve as the main idea of the work to be analyzed. Additionally, he wrote a series of *Cirandas* for piano solos and a considerable number of other instrumental ensembles using the same folk reference.

Ciranda is a circle dance game involving all who wish to dance in the circle. The game features

movements that change direction, add body movements interrelated with specific lyrics, or change both direction and body gestures based on traditional rhythms played by percussionists using traditional instruments such as the *berimbau*, *cuica*, *repinique*, *surdo*, and *pandeiro* (varying depending of the region). If the number of people playing and dancing is considerable, a new circle would be created inside of the original circle. This kind of game play is common in preschools in Brazil and is thought culturally to create strong social interactive opportunities. This brings a democratic sense of humanity and equal value, which are important in the Brazilian culture (Oliveira 2007). This idea of game play would be applied to all of the *Cirandas* Villa-Lobos composed, and specifically to *Ciranda das Sete Notas*.

Chapter 1

Editorial Issues

This particular piece has compositional contradictions affecting performance accuracy since it was published in 1961. One of the clear problems is the tempo indications between movements. Luis Carlos Justi interviewed Noel Devos (a French bassoonist who emigrated to Brazil and played *Ciranda das Sete Notas* with Villa-Lobos and had a close friendship with him and his wife and additionally created a Brazilian bassoon school and personally influenced Francisco Mignone on his 16 Waltzes for Solo Bassoon dedicated to Devos) who anecdotally shared his experience playing with Maestro Villa-Lobos and their attempt to correct the publisher's edition without results:

That's really a problem, the tempo. In this ciranda, for example, he wrote at the end - singing - where a half-bachian theme appears, and before of this there are several episodes especially one - a kind of waltz (metronome =136), "più mosso", and then appears "singing" (metronome = 80) interesting, and after that reason to 80, comes a Portuguese dance, you know, a Ronde, with indication of Less, and ends up getting very slow. When I played, he interrupted me. vehemently and said, "No, this is happy, not sad, it's the same time. It's because they have forgotten that this Less refers to the previous Più Mosso and not to previous time. It is really better faster. I sent a letter then explaining to the publisher and those who recorded it, including Milan Turkovic who also plays in a slow way. Because they obey, of course, what is written, but it is wrong. Villa himself said that in the publishing house (Ed. Max Eschig, Paris) they did not want to correct because it was already printed. There he has to correct, he said, but they did not correct. Funny, they have no interest in doing right. You can even try to do this! (Justi, interview with Devos, 2007, 87, translated by the present author).

Another error concerns several notes for the bassoon in the second movement. The bassoonist should rely on the score (strings or piano reduction) of the 1961 edition and the bassoon solo manuscript to correct this particular passage (Arruda 2016, 60). Below is a

comparison of the solo part between the manuscript and the printed edition, including the circled notes in question:

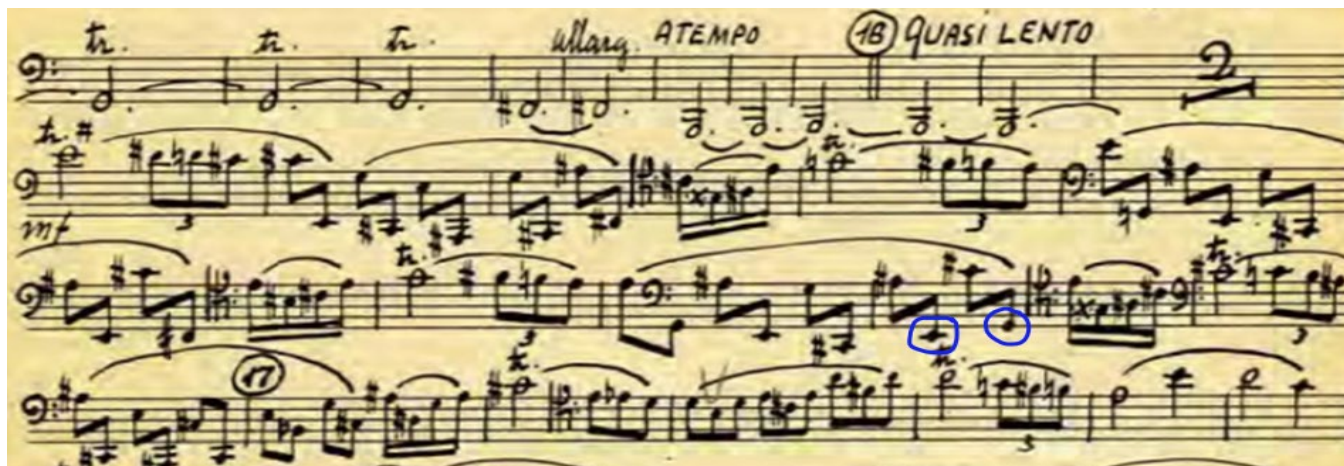


Figure 1. Heitor Villa-Lobos, “Ciranda das Sete Notas,” manuscript, 1933, m131-159. Felipe dos Santos Arruda, “Habilidades técnico-interpretativas ao fagote para a performance da *Ciranda das sete notas* (Fantasia para fagote e quinteto de cordas) de Villa-Lobos” (Dissertação, Mestrado em Música). Goiânia: Universidade Federal de Goiás, 2016. Notes in m151 circled by the present author.



Figure 2. Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Ciranda das Sete Notas*, m130-155. New York: Southern Music Publishing, 1961. Notes in m151 circled by the present author.

Note that the tempo differs from *quasi lento* to *quasi Andante* on rehearsal 16.

Chapter 2

Hidden Meanings

At the beginning of the piece, Villa-Lobos exposes seven notes that will be distributed and circled during his work. (It is recommended that the bassoonist analyze the statements of notes before a performance.) He writes a one-measure introduction with seven notes ascendant in octaves, adding a descendent chromatic movement in parallel 11ths (3rds) on the lower voices reaching the chord low C, E and A, E and high A (creating an ambiguous chord that could be analyzed as Am or C6 without 5th).

Figure 3. *Ciranda*, m1-5.

Hence, the confirmation of tonality with the bassoon begins with the 5th of the chord, leaving the clear melodic statement of the seven notes unadulterated. He also represents the number seven on the first bassoon's note since G is the seventh note of the alphabet (counting from the pitch A). Villa-Lobos creates the idea of opening a circle (first measure) without clearly exposing the seven notes, especially because of the chromaticism in the lower voices. It is important to observe that Villa-Lobos plays with two circles in this particular measure: the circle of seven notes on top and the chromatic circle (12 notes) on the bottom. Both materials are representative

of the circle movement found further in *Ciranda das Sete Notas*. He also confirms the tonality in measures 7 and 8 by a deceptive cadence (V-vi). The number seven is emphasized by the dominant chord in the seventh measure, which takes place at the end of the bassoon phrase. The ternary movement plays an important role since the composer does not change the time signature through the entire piece. He transposes the folkloric version of the *Ciranda*, which is in quaternary in structure, to ternary meter, generating the circular movement.

Right after exposing the seven notes in the 3rd measure, he transposes a sixth above using the same rhythm pattern of seven arriving in a long C (confirming the tonality). The pattern emphasizes the third beat by connecting with the triple (3 inside 3, circle inside circle) and generating the characteristic circle movement relating to the humor of happy and playful children distributed by the fugato.

Figure 4. *Ciranda*, m6-10.

In the first five measures, Villa-Lobos writes his name; the notes in the first measure have a V shape in horizontal dimension. In the second measure, the notes represent I since it is the first chord; third and fourth measures represent number 7 (exposition of 7 notes), that is, L upside down:

Figure 5. *Ciranda*, m1-5 (VILLA).

The interesting thing is that he represents the letter A on the rehearsal number 1 (m5) as the first letter of the alphabet. His ideas of numbers, shape movements, and notes reveal the word VILLA.

The fugato here leads to a vi chord in measure 12 ($1+2=3$):

Figure 6. *Ciranda*, m11-15.

In this measure, Villa-Lobos ends the previous idea and emphasizes the measure by adding the first ornament of the piece on the violin on note A by introducing the returning statement of the bassoon. The soloist plays seven notes in measure 13 to begin a seven-measure phrase. In measure 16 ($1+6=7$) Villa-Lobos adds the first ornament on the bassoon solo followed by the second statement of the seven notes in measure 17 ($1+7=8$) on the note B. As the analysis develops, it is clear that the note B has great importance:

Figure 7. *Ciranda*, m16-20.

Additional spelling comes into view with the first letter of his name, Heitor, represented by the note B (H using European solfeggio). Analyzing his full name, HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS, shows three (3) LLL (7 upside-down) and three OOO (8 horizontal). Adding the number of letters results in the number 16, and by adding $1+6=7$ and dividing 16 by $2=8$, making the connection with the letter H which represents numbers 7 (note B) and 8 (letter 8).

Chapter 3

Personal Connection to Numbers and Letters

The number seven is connected with his life since he was a premature birth at 7 months:

In the first week of March 1887, Noemia Villa-Lobos, seven months' pregnant, went into labor. On March 5 a boy was born. Noemia wanted to call him Tulio, but Raul (his father), insisted on calling him Heitor (Appleby 2002, 4).

Additionally, the folkloric *Ciranda* has seven letters, and the first letter C represents tonic and letter H, considering H as 8th letter and C as 8th note (octave). The number of letters in the title is 19, and $1+9=10$, $1+0=1$ (C and H) creating a loop. Considering this numerical relationship that Villa-Lobos must have recognized, he would work with the circle of numbers that resulted from the connection among letters and notes:

Alphabet	3	4	5	6	7	1	2
	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

It is interesting that these numbers are correlated with the relative minor keys since C and A have the same number. He also creates a relationship between the alphabet and notes by adding these numbers resulting in 4,6,8,10,12,7,9 and consequently the letters D,F,H,J,L,G,I:

Table 1. Relationship between numbers and letters

Alphabet	3	4	5	6	7	1	2
	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Added	4	6	8	10	12	7	9
	D	F	H	J	L	G	I

Heitor Villa-Lobos was influenced by Bach's compositional ideas that correlated numbers with the alphabet. In her book, *Bach and the Riddle of the Number Alphabet*, Ruth Tatlow discusses previous studies by Friedrich Smend (1893-1980) on Bach's alphabet/numerology and the mathematical puzzles correlated to Bach's works. Tatlow explains:

Smend's number-symbolism scheme includes the idea that Bach incorporated traditional biblical numbers into his music: numbers such as 3 to symbolise the Trinity, 10 to symbolise the Commandments and 12 to symbolise the Apostles (1991, 4).

Additionally, she talks about the alphabet that Bach used in his compositions and gives another example from Smend's analysis:

His next example is of the *Canon a 4 voce* (BWV 1073) written in 1713 for his second cousin Johann Gottfried Walther, into which, according to Smend, Bach incorporated his own surname as the number of bars:

$$B A C H = 14$$

$$2+1+3+8$$

and Walther's surname as the number of sounding notes:

$$W A L T H E R = 82.$$

$$21+1+11+19+8+5+17$$

Smend points out that Bach's full name is exactly half that of Walther's surname:

$$J. S. B A C H = 41$$

$$9+18+2+1+3+8 \quad (\text{Tatlow 1991, 8-9}).$$

Considering the previous table, it's also possible to represent the first ornament of the piece on note A, number 7, and also played by the violin, that is, VIOLINO in Italian: note that it contains seven letters and the letter L (7 upside-down) in the middle of the word (vioLino). Presuming that he represents the same number in several ways, Villa-Lobos presents this idea in his music educational system called *Manossolfa* where he created the meaningful connection among letters, hand-formats, and notes (Santos 2012, 196-197).



Figure 8. *Manosolfa* of Villa-Lobos.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Manosolfa_de_Villa-Lobos.jpg accessed 5/7/2019.

The initials of his name HVL were used as a slogan on several of his score editions.

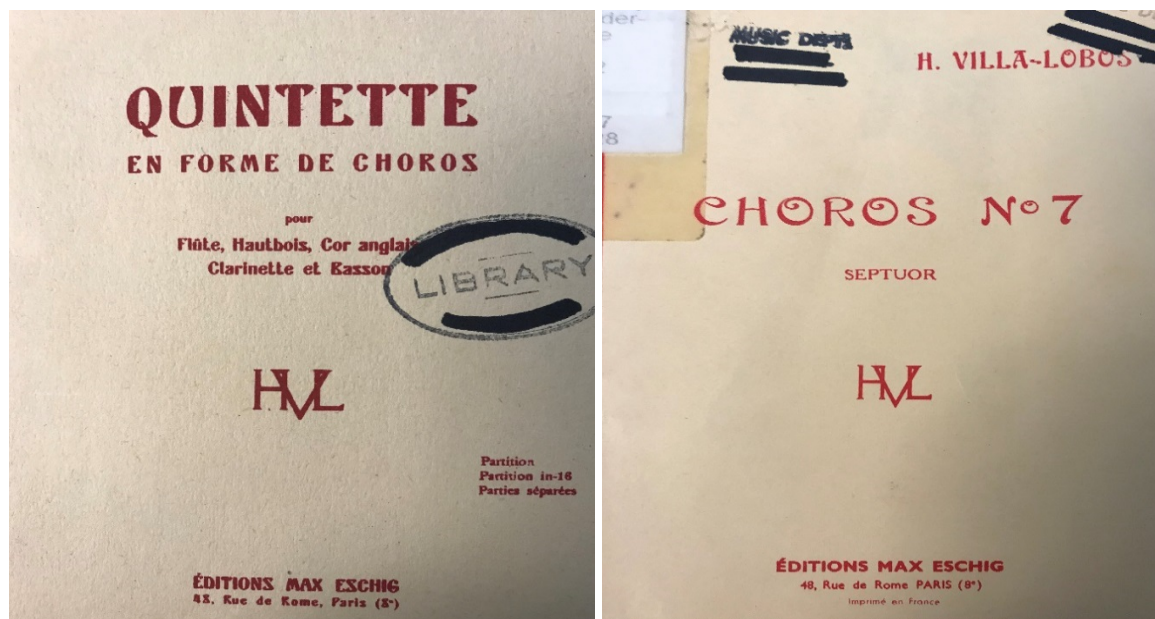


Figure 9. *Quintette en Forme de Choros*, 1953 and *Choros No.7*, 1928. Paris: Max Eschig.

Considering the author's intentions and returning to the first measure, at the first beat he connects the C and B to represent H, the lowest note G refers to 7 and is also the first note of the bassoon solo. Here, the seven notes in octaves also represent 7 and 8. The shape formed for the opening circle V would be his last initial piece, forming HVL in tout.



Figure 10. *Ciranda*, m1-4.

Note that letters are interconnected by the letter V on his slogan and would be the connector for HVL and VILLA in the first five measures.

The third statement of the seven notes occurs in measure 18 on the note B followed by a restatement of the motif that begins in measure 16, but this time without the ornament (see Figure 7). Here, Villa-Lobos writes a phrase of seven measures (13-19), including three statements of seven notes ending on the note B. Villa-Lobos utilizes the same idea connecting measure numbers with notes to represent the circularity found in the folkloric *Ciranda* and in his name (circles inside circles).

The next melodic idea (m20-21) is a statement of eight notes (it is the only place in the entire piece where Villa-Lobos does this) and he does this in measure 21 ($2+1=3$). Here Villa-Lobos presents an intricate idea by considering the statement of number 8= H that is also emphasized by the previous rehearsal number 3 (C) three measures before, showing the letter F in this measure, which is the 8th note stated (see Figure 7). The following measure represents G (that is also the first measure note on bassoon) with number 7, by counting the letters from the previous rehearsal number 3.

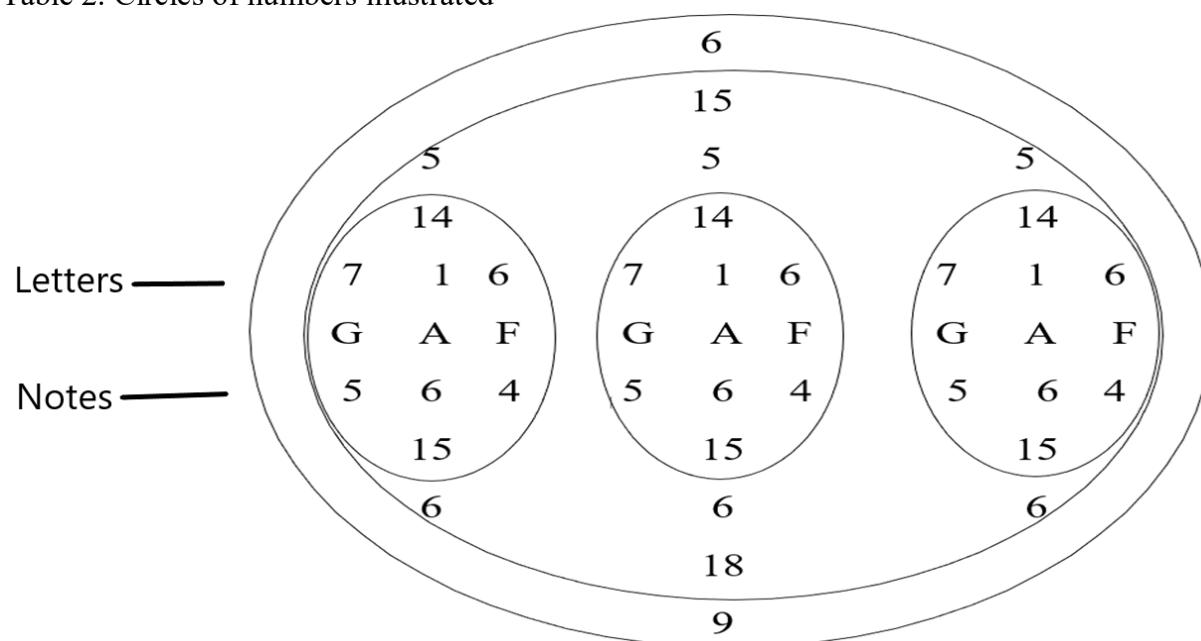
Figure 11. *Ciranda*, m21-25.

Additionally, Villa-Lobos writes the notes G, A, F, repeating the note G on the third beat, showing a meaningful importance especially by repeating the same motif three times.

Transcribing these letters to numbers yields 7,1,6,7 and adding the middle numbers $1+6=7$

reveals the circle 777, which is LLL inverted, that could represent the three Ls found in his name. It is interesting that, if added, these numbers (7+7+7) show the previous measure number 21. Hence, the conclusive measure 22 represents the letter V in the alphabet; as a result, this solves Villa-Lobos's puzzle of his signature, HVL. The G, A, F (7, 1, 6) motif repeats three times in two measures, concluding the idea with an impulse of 16th notes leading to the next idea in measure 24, where Villa-Lobos exposes the seven notes in fourths for the first time. Calculating the notes in the motif yields circles of numbers as seen in the table below:

Table 2. Circles of numbers illustrated



Tatlow refers to Smend's research that shows four proved techniques and the way numbers are used in Bach's systematization of symbolism:

The phenomena presented in this study provide proof of four techniques.

Significant numbers are enciphered:

- I. by repetition of a musical motive, and important word, a phrase [*Wendung*], a movement;
- II. in the notes struck [*Anschlagen*] by the continuo part;
- III. by the formation of sequences [*Reihenbildung*];

- IV. in the notes struck [*Anschlagen*] by the accompanying instrumental parts (Tatlow 1991, 25).

What must be systematised . . . is the way numbers are used in Bach:

- Numbers of movements, bars, parts,
 - of statements of a theme
 - of notes in a theme
 - of notes in the bass,
 - of notes in the instrumental voices in choral passages
- Rhythms, types of bars where words are repeated (Tatlow 1991, 26).

Despite the usage of fourths (circle), Villa-Lobos adds a rhythm that represents the *Choro* style in measures 22-31, specifically in the 16th notes, and also by the use of chords in these bars. The second beat is representative of the *Choro Samba* style. He also characterizes the *Choro* by starting the phrase idea with a pickup of three 16th notes in measure 23. Tadeu Coelho and Julie Koidin write about the melody characteristics of *Choro* and give examples of accompaniment as well:

The vast majority of choros begin with pick-up notes, usually starting in the second beat (in 2/4), with three 16th notes (Coelho and Koidin 2005, 39).

Ex. 6 Choro Samba Accompaniment



Figure 12. Example of *Choro Samba* Accompaniment. Coelho and Koidin 2005, 40.

It is important to note that in this particular passage Villa-Lobos writes a 2/4 time signature in a 3/4 score in measures 22-23 and a 4/4 signature in measures 24-31. This confirms that the ternary idea had to prevail mostly because of its symbolic meaning, since he could have written in the respective phrase time signatures. Additionally, the repetition of the same chords in

measures 24-31 proves the emphasis is on the beat instead of in the harmonic movement (see Figure 11).

In measures 32-33 the motif of the first ornament in measure 16 appears again and ends the time signature superposition:

Figure 13. *Ciranda*, m31-35.

The notes are EDCD (3,2,1,2=8) (H) and letter numbers (5,4,3,4=16, 1+6=7) (L). He also gives extra importance to note E by stating it as the seventh note; additionally, the ornament repeats for the fourth time (since the first one in m16) on the same note in measure 33. The note E, in this instance the 3rd note, would represent $L5+N3=8$, that is, letter H; in this case, H represents 8 and 7. Additionally, E is letter M (since it is 3 in horizontal) and that is the letter created by the conjunction in the middle of his initials HVL:

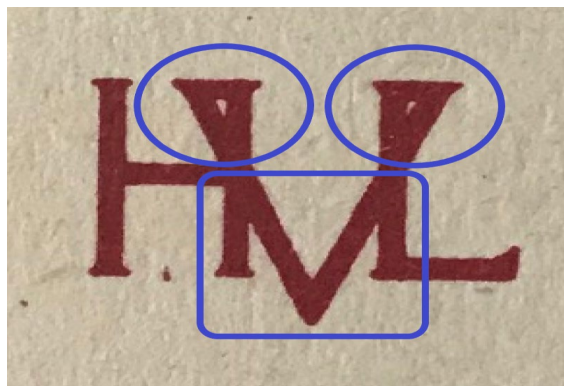


Figure 14. Slogan signature, *Quintette en Forme de Choros*, 1953. Paris: Max Eschig. (Note that the V is overlapping the first and last letter.)

In this passage Villa-Lobos creates a loop using three notes to represent his name and funnels his idea to close the circle on note E represented by his initials. Additionally, it shows the numbers represented by his initials 8,3,7. The note E would also represent the connector M from the *Manossolfa* (see low E in Figure 8).

Here Villa-Lobos relates three notes with the accompaniment, considering that he inserts harmonic movement by writing three chords (vi,iii,V) in fifths (changing from the previous chords in fourths, but continuing to represent the circle). It is interesting that his initials can be found in these chords as well by relating vi with A-1; in this case, C is related with 8 (that is, “H”), the iii is “M,” and here G is 7 (inverted “L”). These two measures work as connectors to the following measure 34 ($3+4=7$), where he gives emphasis to the iii64 chord and to the statement of seven notes that will conclude on the note B. The next m35 ($3+5=8$) begins the new statement on note C. As it can be seen, Villa-Lobos is referring numbers 3, 7, 8, in a synchronous view. The number 3 (M) appears again in measure 36 ($6-3=3$) emphasized by the low B (7)(H) on bassoon supported by the vii (7, L) chord in the strings. The end of the seven notes exposition is placed on the third part of measure 37 ($3&7$) on the note C (8, H). He writes a characteristic

choro phrase on bassoon in measure 38 going through measure 45, mostly related to flute and guitar phrases from the *choro* as shown here:

Figure 15. *Ciranda*, m39-40.

Figure 16. Bonfiglio de Oliveira, “*Flamengo*” (1947), m22-33. *Choro Songbook*, Vol. 2, by Almir Chediak (Irmaos Vitale, 2011), 104.

Figure 17. Jacob do Bandolim, “*Noites Cariocas*” (1970), m13-17. *Choro Songbook*, Vol. 2, by Almir Chediak (Irmaos Vitale, 2011), 150.

Villa-Lobos uses this because of his familiarity with the guitar. Thomas Garcia writes:

Donga, who was a well-known guitarist and friend of Villa-Lobos ... said of Villa-Lobos's guitar playing:

“Villa-Lobos was someone who could always improvise and who was also a very fine solo guitarist...He played difficult classical pieces that demanded a good technique, and he constantly worked to improve his playing” (Garcia 1997, 63-64, citing Brian Hodel, “Villa-Lobos and the Guitar,” *Guitar Review*, Winter 1988, 21).

Garcia confirms Villa-Lobos's influence by stating:

Villa-Lobos's affinity for the *choro* was an important motivating force in his compositions throughout his career. He once said that the two greatest influences on his style were the music of Bach and the *choro* (Garcia 1997, 64).

It is difficult to prove the existence of the seven-stringed guitar in 1930's Brazil; however, the counterpoint line that Villa-Lobos writes between bassoon and cello is closely related to this instrument.

The seventh notes would appear on note F on the third beat of measure 38 and C in measure 39, also on the third part. It is important to note that Villa-Lobos writes eight measures of chords in fourths through measures 24-31 and another eight measures of chords in fifths through measures 34-39, followed by the first low Bb on bassoon (m40), where he begins the counterpoint mentioned before. In relationship to this harmonic structure, Villa-Lobos refers to the primitive indigene aspect:

Igor Stravinsky used abundantly fourths and fifths parallels in his music, referring to barbaric Russians, based on traditional folkloric of his homeland. Repeated use of this feature built relations between this exotic sonority and the exotic people that it represents. Apparently, Villa-Lobos attached this musical representation to reflect the wild, indigenous people of Brazil (Moreira 2013, 25, translated by the present author).

The seventh notes appear on the cello on note D# on the second beat (m42) preceding the seventh note on bassoon also in D# on the third 16th of the second beat:

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: bassoon, viola/cello, and cello. The score is divided into measures 41, 43, and 44. Measure 41 is marked with 'm41'. Measure 43 is marked with 'm43 (7)'. Measure 44 is marked with 'm44 (8)'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and ornaments. Annotations include circled numbers (7, 8), letters (A, H, L, V, I), and a diamond shape containing '3rd & IIVL'.

Figure 18. *Ciranda*, m41-44.

In measure 43 ($4+3=7$) Villa-Lobos adds an ornament on the first beat on note A (7) on cello; he also lines up the statement of the seventh note on bassoon and cello on the third beat, D on bassoon and F on cello. It is interesting that he makes the same reference with the name of the instrument, since *violoncello* in Italian has three O's in its name and also three L's; these show the connection with his name. Additionally, the bassoon translated into Italian is *fagotto*; this has 7 letters as in English. In the following measure 44, he emphasizes the number 8 (C), supported by the note C on bassoon and the repetition of the first measure idea (beginning the opening idea on C and twice using seven notes in contrary movement). Here in this single measure, Villa-Lobos represents his initials and his second name condensed. The bassoon note C would be 1 (A). The beginning of the V shape would be (H), the two seven-notes statements (LL); the first chord would represent (I), a set of notes that he places the third of the chord on the second triple (where 3 is placed) and represents his initials as he does before by adding the ornament. Villa-Lobos uses the measure numbers and rehearsal numbers as landmarks for his hidden signatures. He repeats the same idea of measure 44 in measure 45, which represents his second name. The number 45 ($4+5=9$) represents I (9th letter on the alphabet), the rehearsal number six (F=6th letter) shows the beginning of the V shape idea by exposing two sets of seven notes (LL), and the

note C on bassoon is connected with letter A since both represent number 1 (notes, alphabet).

Adding letters, it shows VILLA:

Figure 19. *Ciranda*, m45-47.

In the second movement, *Il Più mosso (Valsa)*, Villa-Lobos characterizes his initials by the overlapping bassoon on note B and stating six notes instead of seven.

Figure 20. *Ciranda*, m104-143.

The note B is H and 7 (L), and also H represents the octave C, the 3rd letter in the alphabet, representing the connector M; that is also represented by the last statement of three notes at the end of this session. He also states the note B dotted half-note, concluding that the three beats inside of the note represent M as well. Concluding this passage, he syncretically connects his initials in the note B.

In the third movement, entitled *Cantando*, Villa-Lobos signs his initials on the lower string accompaniment at the very beginning of the III movement (m208). He shows this reference at rehearsal number 23=W, which is an M upside-down, which in turn is correlated with the shape of the accompaniment line:

Figure 21. *Ciranda*, m208-217.

The letter W in the *Manossolfa* represents the note E (see Figure 8), where he begins the idea by representing (HVL) as he does before with the ornament, by jumping a flat 9th ascendant (half step E, F, representing H since it is C and B) and returning to the low E; this can be analyzed as a major seventh interval F-E (7=L). (The half step in H generates a b9 and M7 creating a circle.) The shape of the bass line will create the M connector. It is important to note that Villa-Lobos gives reasonable importance to this signature, since it is represented in looping. The possible reason is the similar pitch movement found in the music of Brazilian Indians. Some tribes from the Amazon forest use a heavy piece of wood to hit the ground producing a deep low sound during their circle ritual. Additionally, the rattles attached on one of their heels produce the high pitch on the second beat (Caminhos 2015).

Mirroring this Indian folkloric material, the elevated singing bassoon line represents the Brazilian mermaid called Yara; this famous tale is told to elementary-age children to this day in Brazil (Munduruku 2013, 85). As part of this myth, Yara's beautiful singing acts as a lure for Indians, who fall into a trance and become attracted to follow the mermaid to the deeper river waters, resulting in their deaths. Because Villa-Lobos writes the accompaniment in *piano*, it sounds as if the ritual (bass line) is trying to get close to the mermaid (bassoon). Additionally, the bassoon line has similarities with *The Rite of Spring* and its bassoon introduction. Paulo Justi analyzed this particular connection in the first article written about this piece (Justi 1992, 180). The introductory material Stravinsky used represents the beginning of Spring, and for Villa-Lobos, metaphorically might represent a beginning of Brazil itself. Noel Devos talks about Villa-Lobos's ability to take any musical idea and transform it into Brazilian style:

I think that the biggest issue is that Villa-Lobos was influenced by both Brazilian music as Stravinsky was by his native music, so both are, in their own way, nationalists. Now it is true that some themes that appear foreign, appear as much for one as for another. But Villa-Lobos could take a French song and make Brazilian music with him, so what's the problem with it! The initial theme of the *Sacre* is also similar or practically the same as the theme of *Monte Calvo* by Mussorgsky (Justi, interview with Devos, 2007, 90, translated by the present author).

The image shows a musical score for the piece 'Ciranda' by J.S. Bach, measures 326-332. The score is arranged in six staves: Bassoon (Ba.), Violin I (Vlna.I), Violin II (Vlna.II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vcl.), and Contrabass (Cbs.). The Bassoon part is the focus, with a 'chord of 7 notes' at measure 327. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'dim.' and 'ppp'. Measure numbers m327 (3), m330, m331 (7), and m332 (8) are indicated above the staves. The score is numbered 492-30 at the bottom left.

Figure 22. *Ciranda*, m326-332.

The principal idea of the *Ciranda* concludes by extending the I chord on Coda to reach the seven-note chord at measure 327 ($3+2+7=12$, $1+2=3$). The bassoon plays the full seven-note scale prolonging the seventh note and concluding the piece with the tonic in the low octave, supported by octaves in the strings. This conclusive idea happens at measure 331 ($3+3+1=7$), and extends until measure 332 ($3+3+2=8$). Bach used the same application of measure numbers:

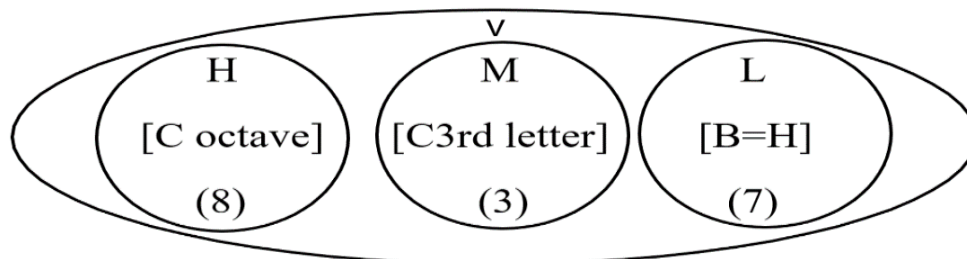
The theory of proportional parallelism shows that Bach consciously manipulated the bar structure of his collections so that they are related to one to another at different levels of their construction (Tatlow 2007, 52).

Noel Devos in his interview mentions the characteristic C octaves on Villa-Lobos's works:

... also has a scale, a kind of Coda: re, mi, fa, sol, la, si, do; but the scale ends in the high C, and was not the high. When you are reaching the high C, Villa-Lobos breaks the scale and jumps to the low octave. I thought it was very difficult, because when the cello plays C, it sounds very sweet; with the bassoon in the end you get a tired embouchure, especially after playing for so long, and my low C didn't come out so sweet and didn't match so well with the violoncello. Then I changed and played the high, very sweetly. He told me: -"you are all the same, the French want to change everything. I wrote in this way and I want it like that." So, then I found a key that helped and improved the C and it amalgamated better ... by the way this is a very interesting question from the end that Villa-Lobos does in many works. I even discussed this business from the end with Dona Arminda. As a recurring thing, this C in the end, a lot of people said: Ah! He always ends up with the same C. However, "everyone agrees in the end" (laughing) (Justi, interview with Devos, 2007, 86, translated by the present author).

Considering the previous analysis of *Ciranda das Sete Notas*, it is possible to consider this C in octaves with his initials:

Table 3. Initials' signature



Conclusion

Heitor Villa-Lobos writes his name through the entirety of *Ciranda das Setes Notas*, relating the symbolism of circularity of the *Ciranda* and the numbers correlated to his name. This idiosyncrasy happens with a variety of meanings that correlate with the Brazilian folklore. His connection with Stravinsky's music in the III movement (Cantado) shows Villa-Lobos's intention of connecting *The Rite of Spring* to represent the beginning of Brazil, and his numerology in the music is derivative from J.S. Bach in a clear manner. Furthermore, Devos's interview gives conclusive evidence that Villa-Lobos used recurring signatures in his music. It is the synthesis of all these influences into a voice that is uniquely that of Villa-Lobos which makes it a true work of timeless art.

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A STYLISTIC AND COMPOSITIONAL ANALYSIS OF *CIRANDA DAS SETE NOTAS*

BY HEITOR VILLA-LOBOS

A thesis submitted to the College of the Arts in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF MUSIC IN PERFORMANCE

SCHWOB SCHOOL OF MUSIC

by

Paulo H. Siqueira

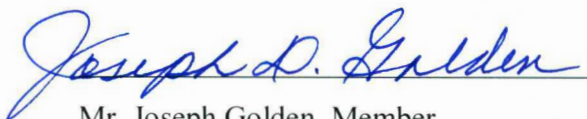
2019



Dr. Stephanie Patterson, Chair



Date



Mr. Joseph Golden, Member



Date