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4.6 Review of this chapter and additional remarks

The pieces composed and arranged by Beytelmann use traditional tango features in a new way while introducing materials and techniques alien to the genre's language. There is an intricate interaction between various forms of Western art music and tango music through which they merge into a new language, which has the composer's signature. Beytelmann created an organic, personal oeuvre that achieves continuity between the language of tango and his own language.²⁹⁶ Finally, in his compositions, he succeeds in integrating the emotional and intellectual realms in a conscious, coherent manner.

Below I will summarize the set of techniques found in the compositions and the arrangement by Beytelmann analyzed in this chapter.

Regarding formal, textural and melodic features

- Segmentation and interweaving of sections and phrases: these procedures appear in a revised form in Beytelmann's music, in which links or ruptures between contrasting sections are more structurally important than in traditional tango. Beytelmann preserves this established practice and develops it further by exaggerating links or breaks between sections. There are oftentimes elements (e.g., pitches, rhythms, registers, motives) that are maintained from one section to the next, interweaving them and making their segmentation more fluid. One example of this is the arrangement of *La bordona*, where a rhythmical base becomes the main melody, in a process opposite from that in Pugliese's arrangement of *La mariposa*, where the introductory main motive becomes the accompaniment in section A. The use of these techniques is systematic in Beytelmann's music and provides his compositions with a strong, natural drive.

- Irregular formal structures and phrases: Beytelmann's works introduce important formal variations in relation to the tango tradition. Even when large formal structures are maintained (for example, *Preludio N. 1*'s A-B-A'-B' form), phrases are frequently asymmetrical and unusually longer. In addition, phrases may also have irregular, ever-changing quantities of bars (usually odd numbers) that make segmentation unpredictable.

- Character of sections and formal segmentation through atypical features: Beytelmann oftentimes divides and distinguishes formal sections by making use of different textures. The alternation between these various textures has a formal role analogous to that traditionally played in tango by modulations, articulations,

²⁹⁶ García Brunelli, Omar: "El tango en la obra de Juan José Castro", *Revista del Instituto de Investigación Musicológica "Carlos Vega"*, 25, 2011, pp. 83-113. Brunelli quotes the opinion stated by composer Juan José Castro in his work "Sinfonía Argentina", which can be perfectly applied to Beytelmann's music: "[...] I believe that the true national voice will come very slowly, when all of its elements have been synthesized, translated into a modality, flavor or air, expressed with the most perfect technical elements. The Manuel Falla that composed *El retablo de Maese Pedro* and the Concerto [for harpsichord and chamber orchestra], Ravel, Debussy, Hindemith and Stravinsky all represent the culture of a country, and yet they have not built on popular or folk elements to transport them fully into their works. However, the essence of a country lies within them [...]."

character, tempo and thematic contrast. This new technique allows the return of sections to be perceived even without restating thematic features in full, be it either through thematic evocation or through a ‘textural’ recapitulation. In other cases, he uses specific interval classes in order to differentiate phrases or sections and to define their primary harmonic fields. These changes are usually gradual, like in other aspects. Lastly, the use of timbre is also associated with formal segmentation (as in *Encuentro*).

- Use of intervals and brief, non-repeated motives to form melodic lines: some melodic lines, though heavily fragmented, consist of the overlapping of different lines. In some pieces, such as *Preludio N. 1*, individual motives are frequently reorganized to make up different melodic lines that remain closely related with each other and create a sense of consistency. In other works, such as *Otras voces*, a limited set of intervals is used (both melodically and harmonically) to create different lines.

- Ostinatos: the use of ostinatos is now part of the tango language. Beytelmann, however, uses them with a formal function: for emphasizing climactic moments and closing sections (such as in the ending of *Encuentro*).

- Thematic generalization: the same structural materials (pitches, intervals, rhythm, articulations) are used to create different melodic lines throughout the piece, as in *Otras voces*. These lines are then presented in combinations exploring their possibilities of transformation: overlapped, out of phase, rhythmically varied, inverted, in imitation, in homorhythm and in free counterpoint.

- Superimposition of contrasting thematic materials from different formal sections: fragments of one section are used in subsequent ones or, conversely, materials from one section are foreshadowed in preceding parts of the piece. The composer calls this technique a “polyphony of ideas”.

- Use of texture: in contrast to the melody and accompaniment typical of tango, Beytelmann systematically uses polyphonic passages, including free counterpoint. The use of different kinds of textures and their continuous alternation throughout his works render his music a much more complex structure, more connected to so-called Western art music than to the tango tradition. As with other aspects of his music, transitions between different textures oftentimes occur gradually.

- Motivic imitation: connected with his use of textures, in polyphonic sections he frequently uses free imitation. Imitative materials are usually presented with slight modifications through diminution, augmentation, reduction or variation in instrumentation or rhythm.

- Modulating melodic lines: Beytelmann composes melodic lines that contain, as part of their design or profile, a modulating structure that differentiates formal sections, as in *Encuentro*.

- Use of register: in some works, register is used as an independent parameter that can reinforce or work against formal segmentation, or occur as a thematic element (*Preludio N. 1*). In addition, Beytelmann develops further the use of all available registers and the frequent expansion or contraction of the tessitura, oftentimes in a

gradual manner. This procedure is complemented by textural and instrumental variations and is aimed – as are many other aspects in tango – at generating contrast and diversity.

- De-contextualization of tango materials: materials taken from the tradition are freely combined and spread over diverse formal sections, devoid of their usual connotations. This technique results in new, original figures that remain closely related to the tango language.

- Use of ornaments: in order to reinforce the articulated character of some passages, Beytelmann uses ornamental effects and sounds from the tango tradition, including passing notes and grace notes, acciaccaturas, turns, *látigo*, *tambor* and *strappata*.

- Polytonality: in works like *Preludio N. 1* and *Otras voces*, chords are sometimes presented simultaneously. They tend to maintain their harmonic functions and are perceived as either altered or extended chords. This use of polytonality contrasts with traditional tango, which is basically tonal.

- Organization of pitches: certain scales are altered in order to characterize some passages or sections (*Preludio N. 1*).

- Alignment of musical elements: this compositional strategy is used to feature climaxes by synchronizing changes in density of texture or register, dynamics, rhythm and other elements.

- Ambiguity between background and foreground: this occurs when a secondary line takes the forefront and the main theme is concealed, hidden or positioned as a background layer, or when a countermelody is heard as the main line. This is a variation technique typical of tango music already seen in previous chapters.

- Use of concept: Beytelmann's compositional process usually begins with a novel concept, which relate to materials, techniques or devices to use. His compositions can therefore be considered 'experimental', since they explore new paths and are in continuous development. In this respect, these new ideas put forward by the composer include the modulation between implicit and explicit beats and the formal segmentation through texture (*Otras voces*); the development of a melodic line through the use of register (*Preludio N.1*); or a melodic line whose profile is of a modulating nature and whose repetition therefore demarcates the form and defines new tonalities (*Encuentro*).

- Piano solos: in some of his compositions, he plays tango-like two-hands piano solos with a jazzy flavor. This is heard most clearly in his arrangement of *La bordona*.

Regarding orchestration

- Contrapuntal motion: in addition to enlivening the texture, this technique is used to enact changes in instrumentation and register (as seen in *Otras voces*). For example, when one line ascends, this is compensated for by a descent in another line. When instrumental density increases, this is compensated for by a decrease in the following

section (and vice versa). Beytelmann composes with an organic succession of materials that seems to be derived from some forms of Western art music. His materials are carefully organized by both register and connecting passages, by overlapping instrumentation, by pedal points, and by melodic similarity, always in a carefully-crafted manner. This helps to create smooth transitions between different elements and leads to a kind of fluency that strongly contrasts with sudden changes that are typical of traditional tango music.

- Changes in instrumental density: Beytelmann oftentimes uses a sequential process of instrumentation. Through a gradual accumulation or dispersal of instruments, he expands and contracts the orchestral mass.

- Textural rhythm: the entrances of different textural layers are organized in such a way that those moments establish a rhythm.

- Distribution of the melodic line: melodic lines are divided amongst different instruments, creating a sense of discontinuity. In addition, discontinuous musical fragments played by different instruments can be perceived as a single, timbrally fragmented melodic line.

- Use of instruments in unusual registers or combinations: Beytelmann expands the possibilities of instrumentation in terms of register and combinations. For instance, the bandoneon plays in its highest octave; the usual registral distance between textural layers is expanded; the double bass together with the left hand of the bandoneon function as a main textural layer; the clarinet, piano and violin are used in novel combinations; the addition of the vibraphone²⁹⁷ to a typical tango ensemble; and the use of atypical ensembles.

Regarding variation

- Application of techniques typical in certain forms of Western art music: Beytelmann systematically uses variation techniques such as permutation, inversion, modulation, extension, and rhythmical augmentation and diminution.

- Free development of materials: Beytelmann often composes progressive variations, each new fragment being a variation of another variation and not of an original fragment. This represents a strong contrast with tango tradition, in which themes are organized through the repetition or combination of motives. Instead, in Beytelmann's music this kind of motivic construction is rarely found, and melodic and rhythmical figures usually do not repeat.

- Complexification of the tonal plan: Beytelmann's pieces present more modulations than traditional tango. These include foreign tonalities in addition to the usual closely-related tonalities.

²⁹⁷ This instrument, in other combinations, had been previously introduced into the world of tango by Osvaldo Fresedo and Astor Piazzolla.

- Unifying processes: Beytelmann utilizes gradual unifying processes that progress throughout multiple phrases and formal sections. In *Preludio N. 1*, for instance, he connects the various superimposed melodic lines by steadily increasing the rhythmical density, dynamics and tessitura.

Regarding rhythm and meter

- Use of beat as a compositional technique: in *Otras voces*, Beytelmann structures some sections with implicit beat (derived from certain forms of Western art music) and others with explicit beat (derived from the tango tradition). He moves back and forth between them gradually. The composer defines this process as “beat modulation” and uses it primarily to draw the work closer towards or further from traditional tango music. He also uses this technique to distinguish textural layers.

- Fragmentation of rhythmical accompaniment: in traditional tangos, rhythmical patterns in the accompanying base usually change by semi-phrase, phrase or section. In Beytelmann’s music this can occur in passages that are briefer or that do not strictly align with formal segmentation. Oftentimes, the ever-changing rhythmical figures are organized in such a way that they do not constitute patterns. Also, as is the case in the ending of *La bordona*, accompaniments are interspersed with the typical chords of the *marcato*, thematic passages, fragments of the *variación* and new variations based on traditional *marcatos*, as in *Preludio N. 1* and *Otras voces*.

- Mixed meter and polyrhythm: in many of Beytelmann’s works, meter is not applied as in traditional tango, but results from the organization of pitches, rhythm, accents and articulations. Both mixed meter and polyrhythm (the latter closely related to his usage of polyphonic textures) are used to enliven the rhythmical structure, which therefore becomes unpredictable. In addition, through emphasizing, counteracting or blurring the steady pacing he plays with the listener’s perception of the beat. In this way, Beytelmann makes his works more complex and presents an alternative to the binary organization (*S-W*)²⁹⁸ that is a core trait of tango.

- Metric and accentual divergence-convergence: Beytelmann developed a finely-crafted way of using rhythm and accents. Accents are performed with a strong, percussive effect, and they may either emphasize or work against the metric structure, oftentimes giving profile to passages where the meter is no longer recognizable. Through contrasting, superimposed accentual patterns that cause the textural layers to diverge with each other, the steady beat is sometimes blurred and a more complex texture is achieved.

- Thickening the piano bass line: in some accompanying *marcatos*, Salgán reinforces accented beats by thickening the bass line of the piano left hand, generally with intervals of a perfect fifth. Beytelmann integrates this technique into his music in a more free manner.

²⁹⁸ See The Fundamentals.

