

Manuel M. Ponce

24 Preludios

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Preludio Nr. 6/No. 6 (Edition Miguel Alcazar)

Preludio Nr. XI/No. XI (Polyphone Darstellung / *poyphonic illustration*)

EXTRA (3 x 12 pages)

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Preface Angelo Gilardino

During his years in Paris, Manuel María Ponce worked intensively for Segovia. The affectionate tyranny that the great guitarist exerted on his composer friend manifested itself in a series of nagging requests for new works. Segovia was insatiable and, in his letters to Ponce, not only did he push him to obtain continuous supplies for his repertoire, but he described the characteristics of the compositions he expected with such precision that we wonder why he did not compose them himself.

While Ponce followed the prescriptions of his illustrious client working on the Sonatas, Variations and Suites, there is one case in which he departed from Segovia's directions. We do not know whether this was a deliberate gesture or the result of a sort of misunderstanding, which fortunately for posterity had very happy consequences. Segovia intended - more due to the publishers' pressure than for his own will - to write a method for guitar. He turned to Ponce and asked him to compose some small pieces to be included in his pedagogical project, and the composer - probably in 1928, or perhaps at the beginning of 1929 - accepted the invitation and wrote the 24 Preludes. In an undated letter, certainly written in the early 1930s, the guitarist gave his verdict:

"The Preludes are surely not feasible in the sense in which they were conceived. Their difficulty is for the most part incompatible with the character of elementary studies assigned them by each preceding scale, and others are totally impossible. I thought then to propose Schot [sic] to publish them in four sets with six Preludes each and without a tonal relation. He accepted. Yesterday I sent him the six Preludes from the first notebook, which are these: F sharp minor, A major, B major, D minor, F sharp major and B flat minor, which I had to raise to B natural because it was not possible in the original key. I removed the scales. Do you agree with this? I'll take the other ones with me to Paris to show them to you and see if they can be modified. I'm sorry to give you more work for this, but there's no other way. If we'd been close together while you were composing them, everything would have come out all right."

Segovia considered "totally impossible" pieces that were very possible instead: in particular, the Prelude in B flat minor is perfectly playable in the original key. However these judgments - understandable when compared to Segovian aesthetics - are not the ones that surprise us in Segovia's letter, but the evidence that he had missed the value of the collection. In fact, while for every other work by Ponce his comments are overflowing with praise, here he does not say a word to show that he had understood this to be one of the highest points touched by the composer. On the contrary, diverging from his plan to publish the 24 Preludes in four notebooks, he selected only twelve of them to be published in two collections, sacrificing the others. Strangely enough, after his observations about the difficulty of the pieces, in the catalogue of the collection headed to him by the German publisher Schott, next to the title of the surviving Preludes, published in 1930, appears the definition "Série faciles": it is possible that the publisher added it for commercial reasons.

It was only in April 1954 that Segovia recorded a selection of six Preludes for Decca in New York: from this we can argue that his attention was above all focused on the individual characters of some of the pieces and that he never perceived the collection as an articulated succession of moments belonging to an organic and complete collection, similarly to the 24 Preludes for piano by Chopin. A careful examination of the Mexican master's work leads instead to the conclusion that it is a unitary work, and that the only way to do it justice is to perform it in its entirety, capturing and enhancing not only the individual pieces, but also the relationships that exist between them.

Only in 1981 Tecla Editions published in London the volume entitled *Manuel M. Ponce / Twenty-Four Preludes for Guitar / Edited by Miguel Alcázar*, giving rise to a recovery of fundamental importance for the guitar repertoire of the first half of the 20th century. The Mexican guitarist and musicologist Miguel Alcázar, having had access to the archive containing Ponce's manuscripts, recovered the autograph texts of twenty-three Preludes. In his edition, the missing Prelude in G major was replaced, with a credible result, by a small piece of vocal polyphony also found among the documents in the archive.

The most unusual aspect that arises for today's reader and interpreter is that of the succession of the pieces that make up the collection: in fact, in the manuscript sheets, the author proceeds in the usual order of the tonal system starting from the key of C major (and relative key of A minor) to the pair D flat major-Si flat minor; from there, he moves on to the keys of F major-D minor, B flat major-G minor, E flat major-C minor, A flat major-F minor. In his revision published by Tecla Editions, Alcázar modified this succession, proceeding with the circle of fifths and ending with the Prelude in D minor (*Chant populaire espagnol*): a respectable but not obligatory choice, which in fact the same scholar abandoned in the volume *Obra completa para guitarra de Manuel M. Ponce / de acuerdo a los manuscritos originales*, published by Conaculta in 2000, where the composer's order was faithfully re-established, since it was not motivated by theoretical reasons, but by the will to follow an expressive itinerary.

Preludio VII

Vivo

Manuel M. Ponce

8

7

13

20

26

32

39

p *m* *i* *p* *i* *m* *p* *p*

sf

rall.

p *m* *i* *p* *i* *p*

Ossia: *V*

Alternate fingering:

Alternate fingering:

Preludio XII

Un po' animato

Manuel M. Ponce

The musical score consists of eight staves of music, each starting with a measure number (1, 3, 6, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 2/4. The music is primarily composed of eighth-note triplets. Roman numerals (IV, II) are placed above the staves to indicate chord positions. Fingering numbers (1-4) are written below notes, and circled numbers (3, 4, 5, 6) indicate specific fingering patterns or techniques. A circled 'X' appears above a note in measure 11. The score concludes with a circled '22' at the bottom left.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN (DEUTSCH)

Analysen und Kommentare zum Manuskript

Preludio I

Tonart: C-Dur Takt: 3/4

Der Zyklus der 24 Préludes wird von einer Komposition eröffnet, die einen stark introductiven Charakter hat. Musikalisch geprägt ist sie vor allem von Sequenzierungen. Man erkennt in ihrem Aufbau - wie bei fast allen anderen Préludes auch - eine dreiteilige ABA' Form, wobei jeder Teil verschieden gegliedert in Erscheinung tritt.

- A Takte 1-15 gegliedert in T. 1-5 und 6-11 / 12-15 (mit Unterteilung in 5 + 10 Takte).
- B Takte 16-30 gegliedert in gespiegelter Form T. 16-21 + 22-25 / 26-30 (also mit 10 + 5 Takten).
- A' Takte 31-42 gegliedert in T. 31-35 und 36-42 (also zwei Phrasen mit 5 + 7 Takten).

Der A-Teil wird mit 5 Takten eingeleitet, in denen sich zwei absteigende Tonleitern in Imitation, zunächst im Bass, dann im Sopran wie in einem Bogen fusioniert auf das *gis* des dritten Taktes stützen, welches sich dann enharmonisch verwechselt im Akkord f-moll (Takt 4) wiederfindet um im Takt 5 nach G aufgelöst zu werden. Die Kadenz auf der Dominante, die man durch die aufsteigende Basslinie erreicht, verleiht diesem "Incipit" auch durch den Gebrauch der langen Noten eine schwebende Atmosphäre, die ein märchenhaftes „es war einmal“ assoziiert.

Die folgenden Takte (6-7) zeichnen Arpeggienmuster auf der Tonika und der Subdominante. Diese scheinen das Motiv anschwellen zu lassen, um es auf der Variante der Subdominantparallele in Dur (T. 9) zu wiederholen. Der Bass oszilliert zwischen erster und zweiter Stufe und bewegt sich abwärts im Gegensatz zur aufsteigenden melodischen Linie, um sich erneut auf die Note *gis* (T. 11), dem Leitton von A zu stützen. Dieser Ton verzögert den Höhepunkt der Sequenz und bringt den Bass zum Orgelpunkt A (Mollparallele), über den elegante, chromatisch absteigende Sequenzen neue Energien sammeln. In diesen letzten Takten, die verzaubert scheinen, empfiehlt sich ein Campanella-Fingersatz oder zumindest der Gebrauch von mehreren Saiten. Es entsteht so eine größere Leichtigkeit.

Im B-Teil ist die Figur der modulierenden Sequenz (T. 16/17) im ersten Takt identisch zu T. 6, nur einen Ton höher (T. 16), während im zweiten Takt das Arpeggio sich in eine Tonleiter verwandelt (wie in den beiden Anfangstakten, dort absteigend). Sie erhöht so die antreibende Energie der folgenden Sequenzen (T. 18-25) und verstärkt dadurch die aufsteigende Bass-Stimme. Die Takte 22-25 entsprechen den T. 12-15, ebenso wie diese auf dem Orgelpunkt, variieren sie nur leicht das melodische Modell der Sequenzen und scheinen ein Schweben auf dem Leitton verlängern zu wollen, bis in Takt 24/25 die beiden Töne *as* den Schwung dieser langen Sequenz ausbremsen. Alles erscheint nun in einem anderen dämmrigen Licht bevor es zum Absturz in die Takte 26-30 kommt, einer Passage, die mit Beginn des C-Dur-Dreiklanges - dem Höhepunkt der vorangegangenen Sequenzen - als absteigende Basslinie nach E-Dur, der Dominante von a-moll (Ende T. 30), führt.

Das fünftaktige Gebilde besteht aus einem Vier-8tel-Modell, das sich aus dem Thema von T. 6 entwickelt hat und eine harmonische Beschleunigung innerhalb einer Hemiolie schafft, einer metrischen Unterteilung in 2/4. Das Prinzip einer kompositorischen Verdichtung, wie wir es hier erfahren, erinnert ein wenig an Bach, zum Beispiel an das Prélude BWV 998 (genauer an die Kadenz der T. 38/39).

Der Schlussston von Takt 30 (eigentlich die Quinte von E-Dur) fungiert auch gleichzeitig als Leitton zu C und führt somit zurück in die Grundtonart. Angesichts dieser harmonischen "Transformation" sollte man die Pause mit Fermate (Takt 31) nicht unterschätzen, sie ist im Gegenteil von großem Ausdruck: eine mit Spannung gefüllte Stille, die der Reprise neuen Atem schenkt (diese ist übrigens identisch mit den ersten Takten). In Takt 38 dreht sich allerdings die Richtung des Stückes unerwartet zur Schluss-Kadenz mit einem eleganten auf- und absteigenden Arpeggio. Die versteckte Pentatonik bestätigt die Zweideutigkeit von Tonika und Moll-Parallele. Das Ende ist schwebend, hoch auf dem Ton der

Dominante. Ein Echo des abschließenden C-Dur-Dreiklanges stellt das Gleichgewicht wieder her und versiegelt mit einem klaren Punkt eine faszinierende Erzählung.

Anmerkungen zum Manuskript:

- Hier erscheinen die Takte 24 und 25 als Wiederholung (Takte 22 und 23 mit Wiederholungszeichen), mit Anweisung "zweite Version mit As".
- Die beiden Themenkopftakte 36/37 in der Reprise hat der Komponist zunächst nochmal als Wiederholungstakte 38/39 vorgesehen, später jedoch wieder gestrichen.

Preludio II

Tonart: a-moll Takt: 3/4

Das zweite Prélude ist trotz seiner offensichtlichen Schlichtheit von großem musikalischen Pathos beseelt. Es ist zudem eine ausgezeichnete Tremoloübung.

Die Struktur ist zweiteilig:

- A Takte 1-8
B Takte 9-19 (9-12 und 13-19)

Das Stück lebt vom Modell des Halbsatzes, es ist zweitaktig aufgebaut und hat immer die gleichen, hohen Noten im Tremolo. Der Anfangsbass (notiert als 4tel) sollte über zwei Takte gehalten werden, während das melodische Motiv auf dem zweiten 4tel des ersten Taktes (ebenfalls im Bassregister) beginnt, sich auf den Schwerpunkt des zweiten Taktes stützt um auf dem dritten Schlag zu enden. So beschrieben, durchlaufen wir zweitaktweise eine Grundkadenz auf der ersten, vierten, fünften und wieder ersten Stufe, durchgehend mit dem Grundton A als Orgelpunkt.

Am Anfang des B-Teils gleitet das Motiv in die Harmonie der tiefen Molldominante, die fünfte Saite wird dabei von der sechsten abgelöst (Takt 9-12). Ab Takt 13 wird die vorherige zweitaktige Struktur eintaktig komprimiert (man erkennt dies auch an den Bass-tönen A auf jedem Schwerpunkt der Takte 13 bis 18). Es findet also eine harmonische Beschleunigung statt. Spannung und Unruhe steigern sich zu einem Höhepunkt, der schließlich in einer weichen pikardischen Kadenz zerfließt (Takt 17-19).

Anmerkungen zum Manuskript:

- in Takt 16 sind Bassnoten retouchiert, d. h. beim aufgelösten Ton F findet sich das eine Terz höher gelegene A, während auf den dritten Schlag bei *Dis* ein F (ebenfalls eine Terz höher) auftaucht: die Noten F und *Dis*, die klar hervorgehoben sind, werden genauso in allen gedruckten Versionen wiedergegeben, übrigens auch in dieser. Wir können nicht wissen, ob Ponce von Anfang an einen Zweiklang im Sinn hatte, er hat es geändert, entweder aus ästhetischen Gründen oder aufgrund der leichteren Spielbarkeit.
- Was die Noten des Tremolos der dritten 16tel-Gruppe in Takt 16 angeht, diese sind im Manuskript nicht als c notiert, sondern als a, eine Unregelmäßigkeit, die die Ausgaben von *Tecla*, *Conaculta* und *Guitar Heritage* korrigieren (nach c). Wir halten uns an das Original, es könnte eine interessantere harmonische Bandbreite aufzeigen.
- Die letzten vier 16tel in Takt 17 sind fälschlicherweise als 8tel notiert, die 16tel-Balken fehlen.

Preludio III (kein Manuskript)

Tonart: G-Dur Takt: 6/8 Allegretto

Da man in den Manuskripten Ponces kein Prélude in G-Dur gefunden hatte, entschloss sich Miguel Alcázar, der erste Kurator der Gesamtausgabe, eine der Variationen, die am Anfang der "Variazioni su un Tema di Cabezòn" stand (und wahrscheinlich postum beigefügt wurde) als Prélude zu verwenden. Das Stück fügt sich angesichts der vorgefundenen Umstände sehr gut in den Kontext der anderen Préludes ein.

Die Struktur des Stückes ist zweiteilig:

- A Takt 1-11 (Mitte)
B Takt 11 (Mitte) - 21

ANALYTICAL SUPPLEMENTS (ENGL.)

Descriptive analysis of the manuscripts

Preludio I

Key: C major Time Signature: 3/4

Prelude I, that opens this cycle, has a strong introductory character. It is mainly built around harmonic progressions. It possesses an ABA' structure as most of the Preludes in this series despite of each section's different inner framework:

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| A mm. 1-15 | divided into 1-5 and 6-11 + 12-15
(with a subdivision of 5+10 measures). |
| B mm. 16-30 | symmetrically divided in 16-21
+ 22-25 and 26-30 (with a subdiv. of 10+5 mm.). |
| A' mm. 31-42 | divided in 31-35, 36-42
(as two phrases of 5+7 measures). |

The A section starts with an introduction of 5 measures, in which two imitating descending scales, first in the lower voice and then in the upper one, merge into a single arch leaning towards the *G sharp* in measure 3. The *G sharp* is repeated enharmonically in the F minor chord at measure 4, resolving then on a *G natural* at the end of measure 5. The cadence to the dominant - reached through the ascending scale in the bass - and the use of long notes provide a particularly effective sense of suspension to the *incipit*, which suggests the first lines of a classic fairy tale's opening such as "Once Upon a Time...".

In the following measures (6-7) a sequence of arpeggios of tonic and subdominant seems to inflate the theme, repeated in mm. 8 and 9 with a variation in major of the sub-dominant chord on the second scale degree. Initially the bass fluctuates twice between the first and the second degree of the scale, descending then in a contrary motion to the ascending melody. The bass line leads to a *G#* (m. 11), leading tone of the relative minor (A minor). The *G#* both supports the peak of the progression and creates a strong tension in the bass towards the pedal of A at mm. 12-15. Here the elegant descending chromatic passage prepares for the next event. In these last measures it feels natural to use a fingering with *campanelle* (cross strings) to create the effect of magical lightness and to preserve the enchanted atmosphere.

The modulating progression in the first measure of section B (mm. 16 and 17) is identical to the one in m. 6, just a step higher (m. 16). The arpeggio in the second measure is replaced by a scale (similar to the ones in the first two measures, but ascending), which increases the propulsive energy of the subsequent progressions (mm. 18-25), reinforced by the ascending scale in the bass. Mm. 22 to 25 are rooted on a pedal tone (similarly to mm. 12-15, with a slight variation on the melodic model): this allows to extend the suspension on the leading tone. At measures 24 and 25 the two notes *A flat* deviate the momentum created by this long sequence and suggest a different atmosphere with a hint of twilight, which anticipates a section in *precipitando* (measures 26-30). This section, apex of the previous long sequence, starts from the C major triad and ambiguously leads the listener to E major (dominant of A minor), through descending progressions. The bass line in this passage should be held for the duration of a half note rather than a quarter note as indicated in the original version.

This entire passage, with a binary subdivision in 2/4 (hemioia), is built on a model of 4 eighth notes - derived from the theme at measure 6 - which creates a harmonic acceleration: this recalls the compositional technique used by J. S. Bach in the *Prelude BWV 998* in the cadence at measures 38-39. The whole passage ends on B, which belongs to the harmony of E major and is also leading tone to C major. The resulting instability fills the next rest (m. 31) with tension, not to be underestimated but contrarily of great expressive value.

Its silence gives breath to the recapitulation, which in mm. 31-37 appears identical to the beginning. At m. 38 the piece unexpectedly leans towards its final cadence using an elegant pentatonic arpeggio, confirming the ambiguity between the tonic and its relative minor and ending with a suspension on the dominant. The echo of

the C major triad at the end of the piece re-establishes the harmonic balance, serving as a final statement for this fascinating tale.

Comments on the manuscript:

- mm. 24 and 25 are not written in full, but as a refrain of the two previous measures, with the indication "2^o vez la b" (*second version with A flat*).
- the manuscript presents two measures, following mm. 36 and 37 and identical to them, unequivocally erased, perhaps inserted at first for the sake of phrasing symmetry.

Preludio II

Key: A minor Time Signature: 3/4

Despite its apparent simplicity the second Prelude is embedded with a strong musical pathos. This composition is also a great technical exercise for tremolo. Its structure is bipartite:

- | |
|---------------------------|
| A mm. 1-8 |
| B mm. 9-19 (9-12 + 13-19) |

The piece starts with a semi-phrase of two measures, both with the same high note tremolo. Although the bass is notated with quarter notes it should be held for both measures. The melody in the middle voice starts on the second beat of the first measure and leans towards the downbeat of the second measure, ending on the third beat of the same bar. The same model is repeated every two bars, in tonic (mm. 1-2), subdominant (mm.3-4), dominant (mm. 5-6), tonic (mm. 7-8), always on a tonic pedal (A), drawing a big perfect cadence.

Starting section B, the motif sinks into the minor dominant harmony, and the sixth string replaces the fifth (mm. 9-12). The motif recovers then the A on the bass (m. 13), using the wave generated by the ascending progression, and contracts into a single measure (mm. 13-18), with increasing tension and restlessness that gently dissolves into the final Picardy cadence (mm. 17-19).

Comments on the manuscript:

- some of the notes in the bass at m. 16 are partially blurred: there is an A above the *F natural* on the second beat, and an *F natural* above the *D sharp* (again a third above) on the third beat. The notes on the bass (*F natural* - *D sharp*), which seem clearer, are printed in this edition as in all other published editions. We do not know whether Ponce decided to remove the initial chords due their difficulty in execution, or if he simply meant to replace them.
- in addition, still in m. 16, the last quadruplet of sixteenth notes of the tremolo passage shows a deviation in the melody in which an A interrupts the tremolo being held with a C note. Compared to the rest of the piece this seems to be anomalous, since the pitches never vary in the middle of a tremolo cluster. The previously published editions (*Tecla, Conaculta, Guitar Heritage*) consider this as a mistake, and substitute the notes A for C. We chose to keep them as in the original, considering they might serve a function of harmonic thickening.
- the last quadruplet of m. 17 misses the double horizontal grouping line, but presents a simple one, evidently an omission.

Preludio III (no manuscript)

Tonart: G-Dur Takt: 6/8 Allegretto

Ponce's manuscripts do not include a G major Prelude. In the first edition of the Preludes (Tecla, 1981) Miguel Alcázar chose to use one of the variations he previously published as an appendix to the *Variations on a theme by Cabezòn*, because of its uncertain attribution. The decision to include this piece in the set shows an excellent sense of intuition, since it fits very well in the context of the other preludes.

The prelude has a bipartite structure:

- | |
|--------------------------|
| A mm. 1-11 (1st half) |
| B mm. 11 (2nd half) - 21 |

SCHEDE ANALITICHE (ITALIANO)

Analisi e osservazioni sui manoscritti

Preludio I

Tonalità: Do maggiore Tempo: 3/4

Il ciclo dei 24 Preludi si apre con una composizione di spiccato carattere introduttivo, costruita quasi interamente su modelli di progressione. Come del resto in gran parte dei preludi, è possibile riconoscere nella sua struttura una forma ternaria ABA', malgrado ogni sezione appaia al suo interno variamente articolata:

- A mis. 1-15 articolata in mis. 1-5 e mis. 6-11 / 12-15 (con suddivisione in 5 + 10 misure)
B mis. 16-30 articolata in modo speculare in mis. 16-21 + 22-25 / 26-30 (dunque con 10 + 5 misure)
A' mis. 31-42 articolata in mis. 31-35 e mis. 36-42 (dunque con due frasi di 5 + 7 misure)

La parte A comprende un'introduzione di 5 misure, in cui due scale discendenti ad imitazione, dapprima nella voce grave e poi in quella acuta, si fondono in un unico arco andando ad appoggiarsi sul *sol#* di batt. 3, che viene reiterato enarmonicamente nell'accordo di fa- di batt. 4, prima di risolvere sul *sol* naturale di fine batt. 5. La cadenza alla dominante - raggiunta attraverso la scala ascendente del basso - e l'utilizzo di note lunghe conferiscono a questo *incipit* un senso di sospensione particolarmente efficace, che suggerisce l'atmosfera del fiabesco "C'era una volta".

Le successive misure (6-7) presentano un disegno d'arpeggi su armonie di tonica e sottodominante, che sembrano voler gonfiare il motivo, poi ripetuto (mis. 8 e 9) con la variante dell'armonia di sottodominante sul II grado in maggiore; il basso, dopo aver oscillato per due volte tra primo e secondo grado della scala, scende per moto contrario rispetto alla linea melodica ascendente della progressione, fino ad appoggiarsi nuovamente sulla nota *sol#* (mis. 11), sensibile della relativa minore (*la*): il *sol#*, oltre a sostenere il culmine della progressione, crea una forte tensione nel basso in direzione del pedale di *la* delle mis. 12-15, dove eleganti disegni in progressione cromatica discendente consentono di raccogliere energie per un successivo slancio. Viene naturale utilizzare in queste ultime misure, che paiono incantate e sospese, una diteggiatura con campanelle o comunque con corde risonanti, per ottenere un effetto di magica leggerezza.

Nella sezione B, il modello della progressione modulante (mis. 16 e 17) è per la prima misura identico a quello di batt. 6, solo un tono più alto (mis. 16), mentre nella seconda misura all'arpeggio si sostituisce una scala (simile a quelle delle due misure iniziali, ma in direzione ascendente), la quale incrementa l'energia propulsiva delle successive progressioni (mis. 18-25), rafforzata dalla scala ascendente che si sviluppa nel basso. Le mis. da 22 a 25, corrispondenti alle precedenti mis. 12-15 in quanto anch'esse su pedale, presentano una leggera variante nel modello melodico della progressione e sembrano voler prolungare la sospensione sulla sensibile. A batt. 24 e 25, i *lab* incrinano lo slancio, frutto di tutta questa lunga progressione, e suggeriscono una luce diversa, più crepuscolare, che prelude ad una sezione in *precipitando* (mis. 26-30): a partire dalla triade di Do+, apice della lunga progressione precedente, essa approda di nuovo, ambigualmente, sull'armonia di Mi+ (dominante della relativa minore), attraverso un interessante disegno armonico di progressioni discendenti condotte su un basso che andrebbe tenuto per la durata di una minima anziché, come indicato nell'originale, di una semiminima. Tutto questo passaggio, che presenta una suddivisione metrica binaria in 2/4 (emiolia), si realizza su un modello contratto di 4 crome, derivato dalla testa del tema di mis. 6, che determina una decisa accelerazione armonica: essa richiama alla memoria la tecnica compositiva utilizzata da J. S. Bach, ad es. nella cadenza a mis. 38-39 del *Preludio BWV 998*. Tutto il passaggio termina sulla nota *si* che, come dicevamo, appartiene all'armonia di Mi+, ma è anche sensibile di Do+. L'instabilità che ne deriva riempie di tensione la pausa successiva (m. 31), che non è da sottovalutare ma, al contrario, è di grande valore espressivo.

La pausa dà respiro alla ripresa, che per le mis. 31-37 si presenta identica alle prime misure. A mis. 38, invece, il brano vira inaspettatamente verso la cadenza conclusiva con un elegante arpeggio, discendente ed ascendente, dal sapore pentatonico, che conferma l'ambiguità tra tonica e relativa minore e che termina in sospiro, in acuto, sul suono della dominante. L'eco della triade di Do+ conclusi-

vo ristabilisce l'equilibrio nell'armonia e sembra suggellare con un punto fermo questo affascinante racconto.

Osservazioni sul manoscritto:

- le mis. 24 e 25 non appaiono scritte per esteso bensì come ritornello delle due precedenti misure, con l'indicazione "2^a vez *la b*".
- nel manoscritto si evidenziano due misure, identiche a 36 e 37 e ad esse successive, inequivocabilmente cancellate, forse inserite in un primo momento per ragioni di simmetria di fraseggio.

Preludio II

Tonalità: la minore Tempo: 3/4

Il Preludio II, nella sua apparente semplicità, è intriso di un forte *pathos* musicale, e rappresenta uno splendido esercizio per la tecnica del tremolo. La sua struttura è bipartita:

- A mis. 1-8
B mis. 9-19 (9-12 + 13-19)

Il modello della semifrase che dà vita al brano è costruito su due misure, che mantengono la medesima nota acuta tremolata: il basso iniziale, benché indicato col valore di semiminima, dovrebbe rimanere in vibrazione per entrambe le battute, mentre il motivo melodico della voce centrale parte sul secondo quarto della prima misura e va ad appoggiarsi sul battere della seconda, concludendo sul terzo movimento della stessa. Il modello appena descritto si ripete a coppie di battute, nelle armonie di tonica (mis. 1-2), sottodominante (3-4), dominante (5-6), tonica (7-8), tratteggiando così una grande cadenza perfetta composta, tutta su pedale di tonica.

All'inizio della sezione B il motivo sprofonda nell'armonia di dominante minore, con la sesta corda che si sostituisce alla quinta (mis. 9-12); successivamente, sull'onda generata da una progressione ascendente, il motivo recupera il *la* al basso (mis. 13) e si contrae in un'unica misura (mis. 13-18), con un crescendo di tensione e inquietudine che si stempera dolcemente nella cadenza piccarda conclusiva (mis. 17-19).

Osservazioni sul manoscritto:

- la mis. 16 presenta alcune cancellature nelle note del basso, per cui sul *fa#* del secondo movimento si intravede il *la* della terza sopra, mentre nel terzo movimento della misura sopra al *re#* si scorge un *fa* naturale (sempre la terza sopra): le note del basso (*fa#-re#*), che appaiono più marcate, sono quelle riportate correttamente in tutte le edizioni a stampa, e così anche in questa. Non possiamo sapere se Ponce abbia inizialmente ipotizzato dei bicordi ed abbia poi rinunciato al suo intento dopo averne valutato la difficoltà esecutiva, o se invece abbia fatto una semplice correzione.
- sempre a mis. 16 le note del tremolo dell'ultima quartina di semicrome sono indicate nel manoscritto come *la* e non come *do*, e questa è senza dubbio un'anomalia rispetto al resto del brano, nel quale le note del tremolo rimangono identiche per tutta la battuta: nelle precedenti edizioni a stampa (*Tecla, Conaculta, Guitar Heritage*) sono state corrette a *do*. Noi preferiamo mantenerle come appaiono nell'originale, ritenendo plausibile che possano invece avere una precisa funzione di inspessimento armonico.
- a mis. 17 l'ultima quartina non presenta la doppia linea di raggruppamento orizzontale, ma una semplice, evidentemente un'omissione.

Preludio III (no manoscritto)

Tonalità: Sol maggiore Tempo: 6/8 Allegretto

Non è stato trovato un Preludio in Sol+ tra i manoscritti ponciani, pertanto Miguel Alcázar, primo curatore dell'edizione integrale dei Preludi (*Tecla Editions*, 1981), ha scelto di utilizzare una delle variazioni da lui precedentemente pubblicate in appendice alle *Variazioni su un tema di Cabezòn*, in quanto postume e di non certissima attribuzione: pare davvero un'ottima intuizione, perché il brano si inserisce in modo molto naturale e coerente al contesto, seppur variegato, degli altri preludi.

La sua struttura è bipartita:

- A mis. 1-11 (1^a metà)
B mis. 11 (2^a metà) - 21

Il fraseggio presenta fin dalle prime note una certa ambiguità, che apre a due possibili visioni interpretative: