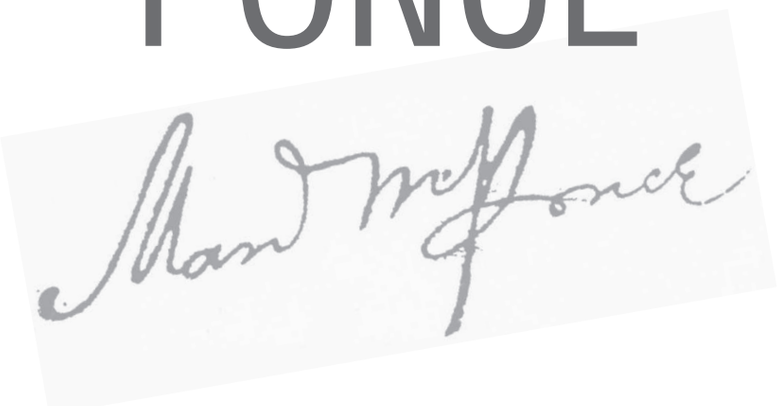
Manuel M. PONCE



Obras para guitarra

SUITE EN LA MENOR

Transcripción de la grabación realizada el 6 de octubre de 1930 por Andrés Segovia, comparada con una mínima historiografía de las ediciones de esta obra

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PREFACE

The *Suite in A minor*

The study of a work leads us, in general, to its text and the multiple sources it has generated throughout time. Since writing cannot express absolutely every intention of an author, and in view of the richness offered by every interpreter's reading in order to find that which is not written, we can consider that our musical tradition lives through copies and not originals. At the most, editions are a starting point. This concept is particularly significant for the *Suite in A minor* by Manuel M. Ponce, consisting of five movements (*Prélude*, *Allemande*, *Sarabande*, *Gavotte I-II* and *Gigue*). The manuscript Ponce sent to Segovia in 1929 was lost during the Spanish Civil War along with some other significant works, before being edited, and was never rewritten by the composer or the guitar player. What made possible the survival of the *Suite in A minor* is the recording by Andrés Segovia, dated October 6, 1930, only source of this work.

The letters

Unlike other works product of the relationship between these two artists, it is not possible to know the origin and development of the *Suite in A minor* based on the letters sent by Segovia to Ponce.[1] However, through the letters we may determine the date of composition, some elements of the deliberate game of anachronism and apocryphal attribution (the work was premiered as a *Suite* by Silvius Leopold Weiss), the series of concerts, criticism, attempts for publication, as well as the loss of the manuscript and the reaction of other musicians and composers facing the phenomenon generated by this work.

We may say that the work was composed towards 1929, between the completion of the *Romantic Sonata* (1928) and the beginning of the *XX Variations on the "Folia de España" and fugue* (1930). Despite the fact that many letters by Segovia are not dated, there are some elements that allow us to locate them in time. This is the first one referring to the *Suite*:[2]
[*December, 1929*][3]

My fingers already know the Suite by Julius Weiss. *It is beautiful and I want to play it in New York on the 8th, but I need another gigue… that which you composed is too naïve for me to close. Sit before the piano a quarter of an hour, and compose something full of arpeggios, with some melody little detached notes, now on top, now in the bass… Would you?*[4]

Probably, Ponce devoted that quarter of an hour to the piano, because the *Gigue* recorded by Segovia corresponds to the description of this letter. If that is the case, we have no record of any type, of the first version.

[*January, 1930*]

I am waiting for the three-voice chords variation and the ending. In order for you to think only about the concert and your other things, send me the gigue as well, and I will leave you alone for some time.[5]

Based on a letter dated February 1930, where he mentions the performance of the *Suite* and, since he does not insist any more with the sending of the *Gigue*, the second version of such must have been completed towards the beginning of that year:

[*February 10, 1930*]

I am in a hurry and won't write long today. In another letter I will tell you about the success of Silvius Leopold Weiss. I am fascinated by the success of such an old maestro. The most knowledgeable critics have mentioned, in their criticism, many picturesque details of his life, and its similarity to that of Bach has been appreciated. The Prelude, the Allemande and the Sarabande, above all, have been highly praised. I will keep all the newspapers for you.[6]

Segovia has an artistic objective and feels satisfaction in making everyone believe this *pastiche* is an original Baroque work. Success

[1] Miguel Alcázar (editor), *The Segovia-Ponce Letters*, Columbus, OH, Editions Orphée, Inc.
[2] Editor's Note: The translation used in this edition was expressly made for such use.
[3] Alcázar writes between brackets probable dates for some undated letters.
[4] Ibid., p. 47.
[5] Ibid., p. 60.
[6] Ibid., p. 61.

encourages him to ask Ponce for more works like this one and composers to whom such might be attributed. Segovia needed not only the music, but also the historical justification to allow the game to continue.

[*Saturday, 1931*]

[...] *Tell me to whom you want us to attribute the Preambulo.*[7] *I am afraid of those contrary motions of the maestoso. If you think those will be accepted, leave them as they are, if you think such might generate suspicion, modify them but, for God's sake, write to me as soon as possible, because I must urgently deliver the program. At any rate, send me the name of the composer by telegraph in order for me to send the list of composers for the posters.*[8]

[*April, 1931*]

My dear Manuel: yesterday I came back from Berlin. I went there to give a public recital to get in touch with the critics, musicians… and crooked businessmen.
The hall was small and full of people; success happened in capital letters. There were a lot of violin, cello and other instrument players applauding your work, that of Bach and Weiss… I am now waiting for the criticism.[9]

In a way, this put the guitar player side to side with important instrumentalists of Romantic tradition who made the same, as Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962) and, at the same time, he generated repertoire for his instrument equivalent to the traditional repertoire other instruments naturally enjoyed. Thanks to this tool, Segovia could manage the historical disadvantage of guitar, and critics lost part of their authority falling into the game.

[…] *In the last concert, Mengelberg was present from the beginning through the end, ardently asking for more. Then, he came to me, hugged me, and told me the Suite by Weiss and your Variations had been the best of the program, with the pieces by Bach I played as a tip… He was really charmed with the guitar.*

I have seen your work. I like it a lot; I like the prelude even more than the bailable. I am already in frenzy, working it. If the numbers of this Suite do not come between the Concerto and your others works, continue working on them, since the Suite shows promise to be of first quality.[10]

Segovia's insistence upon Ponce was constant regarding general repertoire. The shameless demand looks for works idiomatic for his instrument, such as studies, variations, remaking of popular materials, but, above all, lies on two elements which almost became an obsession for the Andalusian guitar player: historical references allowing the guitar to be even with other instruments –such as piano and violin– and their repertoire, particularly from that Baroque period in which guitar may show an origin with the instrumental tradition; and the *Concerto*, an affirmation of classical tradition, where the guitar is not isolated anymore from general musicianship and is presented with the same hierarchy as any other instrument. It is interesting to follow, throughout this epistolary relationship, the constant double request.

I want you to make an effort, in addition to completing the Concerto, to make two significant pieces for unaccompanied guitar. First, a suite in an antique style, signed by you, as homage to Bach, lute player. Then, the Hispanic Fantasy (right now, the latter is not urgent).

In the first one, I want you to show all you knowledge and your melodic tendency. I want a fugue among the movements of the Suite (not very long), showing your abilities. For the other movements of the Suite, you could find titles different from the typical Sarabande, Courante, etc. For instance, Ciaccona or Passacaglia, Baile, etc., etc. (The Allegramento *could be part of such Suite).*[11]

Among the works in Baroque style composed by Ponce after the *Suite in A minor* are: the *Suite in D* –attributed to Alessandro Scarlatti–, a series of pieces (*Preludio, Balletto* and *Courante*) and the *Suite Homage to Bach*, which was lost during the Spanish civil war.

[7] First movement of the *Suite in D*.
[8] Ibid., p. 90 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 49 and appears with date "Saturday, 1931", it is between letters Numbers 48 and 50 dated February and April 1931, respectively).
[9] Ibid., p. 91.
[10] Ibid., p. 102 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 57 and appears without date, as well as the two previous ones [55 and 56], the three of them are between letter Number 54 dated July 21, and letter Number 58, dated November 16, 1931. Probably, the *Prelude* and the *bailable* to which he refers are the *Prelude* -in *E major*- and the *Balletto*).
[11] Ibid., p. 127 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 73 and appears without date, as well as the following one [74], both of them are between letter Number 72 dated October 22, 1932, and letter Number 75, dated November 11, 1932).

After premiering, many works of such Baroque repertoire were published in various publishing houses under the apocryphal attributions made by Segovia and Ponce, by guitar players that made their own versions based on Segovia's recordings, presenting them as their own transcriptions. However, there was no version by Andrés Segovia, even though that repertoire became, successfully, part of his constant programs and he published in Schott many of the works composed for him by Ponce. In a letter dated August, 1930, Segovia explains how and why he should propose publication of the works to Schott:

[*August 23, 1930*]

Every time I write to you I feel tempted to explain why I haven't proposed Schott the prelude, the Folias *and* the Fuga*, and then I forget it or I'm in a hurry. I will do it today. Of all the works you have composed for the guitar, what I love the most –and I do imply a higher sentimental difference from* I like it*– is that work. As it is, in whole. After that, the Sonata to Schubert, the Suite by Weiss… then, everything else. Among which I like the less, and which I prefer from other composers, there is still a wide gap in your favor. Having made this statement, which you did not need, since you've known this for a long time, I'll explain to you why such work hasn't been edited. In the first place, Schott wants to wait between publications of difficult works. The Sonata by Manen was proposed two years ago and will be published in a few days. A work such as yours, which is even more difficult technically and musically speaking, shall wait for some time… […]*[12]

However, in contrast with the *Folia from Spain* or the *Sonata to Schubert*, the *Suite in A minor* had, as a difficulty in addition to the criteria of the publishing house and competition from other composers also providing Segovia with works for his repertoire, the problem of its apocryphal nature. After being premiered and recorded, this work became very popular and Schott was interested in publishing it, under the name of Weiss, which involved owning a well identified manuscript, with the double purpose to make a careful edition and keep hold of rights or, at least, a precise attribution reference, which Segovia did not have.

I have also proposed the edition of the Suite by Weiss. *I haven't told him it is entirely his, but that it is* attributed. *That, since I have a unique manuscript, it will be necessary to have conditions different from those of the editions he makes of Bach's works. Let's wait for his answer and, if he accepts and offers a reasonable amount, you would meet them to make some home improvements. Just in case, give me advice on how to present the edition. In fact: On which documents or reasons could we rely on to attribute the Suite to Weiss? What to say? Think and provide me with something…*[13]

In a subsequent letter, there is a postscript making reference to the answer by Strecker, Schott's editorial director:

I enclose Strecker's letter, answering regarding Weiss. What shall we do?[14]

Probably, Schott answered with an open willingness to publish the work, but Segovia did not have an admissible manuscript nor was he willing to publish it under Ponce's name.

[…] *And don't think I haven't thought about playing the Suite by Weiss under your name, but it is already pressed and there might be trouble* […][15]

The fact that Segovia had the music recorded (or pressed, as it was said then) under the name of Weiss takes the audacity of this game to a dead end. Not that Segovia zealously kept the secret of authentic authorship, since there are letters in which he confesses to have revealed it to several people, but he never acknowledged the fact in an official manner. A year after Strecker's answer, the *Suite* had not been published yet:

[…] *With the crisis, Schott is very reluctant. I have proposed the Sonatina, the Suite by Weiss, for which he asked insistently not even a year ago, and now he replies with excuses. He argues the circumstances are*

[12] Ibid. p. 77.
[13] Ibid., p. 100 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 56 and appears without date, as well as the previous one [55], and the following one [57], the three of them are between letter Number 54 dated July 21, and letter Number 58, dated November 16, 1931).
[14] Ibid., p. 104 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 59 and appears without date, as well as the following one [60], both of them are between letter Number 58 dated November 16, 1931, and letter Number 61, dated January 11, 1932).
[15] Ibid., p. 127 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 73 and appears without date, as well as the following one [74], both of them are between letter Number 72 dated October 22, 1932, and letter Number 75, dated November 11, 1932).

very bad, and that the difficult works I send are rarely sold.[16]

But neither the crisis nor the difficulty were obstacles for publishing the *Suite* –the *Sonatina* was edited by Schottt in 1939–, but the lack of material –considering it as a work by Weiss– which might allow making a proper edition. The deliberate game of anachronism and apocryphal attribution created by Segovia, generated edition difficulties against the work and the composer. As with *Estrellita*, Ponce did not have the performance or edition rights, nor he legally received royalties of one of his most popular works for guitar[17] and, the manuscript being lost, we depend on the recording dated October 6, 1930 to rewrite it. Apparently, the *Suite in A minor* was lost together with some other works for guitar during the Spanish Civil War, when Segovia abandoned his home in Barcelona which, as he tells us, was robbed in 1936:

[…] *My home in Barcelona, with my library, music, tapestries, engravings, paintings, abundant silverware of Paquita and mine, souvenirs from far East, our jewelry, etc., etc., has been, in accordance with an expression of a relative of Paquita who gave us the news in a veiled way, CLEANED*.[18]

Of course, the reflection on the editorial fate of lost manuscripts lost there, already published by Schott, is quite interesting but, for the purposes of this edition, the comment by Segovia regarding those not published yet is more important.

Among the things I regret the most to have left in Spain, which have been destroyed, are your manuscripts. I beg you, please, recopy them slowly, based on your notes, and send them to me once more. Above all, those which are not published yet, such as the first Sonata you composed for me in Mexico, the first movement of the sonatina homage to Tarrega, the sarabande in E major which should follow the masked prelude, another Sarabande in A minor and the whole Homage to Bach, which fugue I was recently transposing to play it. I would also like, if I'm not asking you too much, to compose something under your name and another suite attributable to Weis, Scarlatti, etc. Castelnuovo has already exhausted his genius with the five great works he has composed for me, and I don't know how to renew my repertoire, now that you have stopped me. Understand my situation and help me. You could compose the Homage to Albéniz, under your name, based on the popular themes appearing in his own works… That would be delightful.[19]

In this description, two things must be noticed: First, that in such list, Segovia does not mention the *Suite by Weiss*, even though it is not one of the published works. There are: the first *Sonata*, the first movement of the *Homage to Tárrega*, the two *sarabands* (in *E major* and *A minor*) and the *Homage to Bach*, but not the *Suite in A minor*. This might be due to the confidence he feels about it, as he included it regularly in his programs, and to the fact that he had already recorded it.[20] Second, the request for replacement of manuscripts (with the difficulties that might involve). The way in which Segovia asks for more works with the same features is worth noticing. We should not be amazed that Ponce wanted to keep distance, as it is revealed by the epistolary gap between 1935 and 1936, of which Segovia deeply complains in two letters.

That frame of mind also determined the fate of the *Suite in A minor*, since the distance Ponce needed to interpose between himself and Segovia was intended, among other things, to devote some time to his personal projects, not to comply with the requests made by the Andalusian guitar player from Linares. Not to mention that Ponce did not write those works or sent him copies of the lost manuscripts.

The composer did not leave a single copy of the *Suite in A minor*. In January, 1941, he completed the *Concerto* the guitar player wanted so vehemently since 1928, and that was their last successful collaboration. In his letters, Segovia only mentioned the *Suite in A minor* again when he talked about an evening with Villa-Lobos where, once more, he

[16] Ibid., p. 130 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 74 and appears without date, as well as the previous one [73], both of them are between letter Number 72 dated October 22, 1932, and letter Number 75, dated November 11, 1932).

[17] It is true that throughout this epistolary, Segovia constantly offers and sends money as a compensation for not having commissioned and paid for the works and for the lack of royalties generated by such type of repertoire. However, such indemnity was only governed by Segovia's possibilities and was discretionary. In my opinion, this financial generosity generated a lot of vices and distance between these two artists who are portrayed throughout the epistolary.

[18] Ibid., p. 165 (In numbering of the letters by Alcázar, in his edition, this is letter Number 89 and appears without date, as well as the following one [90], both of them are between letter Number 88 dated May 15, 1936, and letter Number 91, dated February, 1937. The letter makes reference to the events immediately after July 19, 1936).

[19] Idem.

[20] Miguel Ablóniz states, in one of his editions of this *Suite*, that Segovia confessed to have lost the manuscript during the war and that he had not made any copy whatsoever.

had the satisfaction to achieve the invention of a Baroque that might be comparable to that of Bach and in which he expresses, through this work, the great gift Ponce's work for the guitar repertoire was.

[*October 22, 1940*]

[…] *Then, I couldn't help sharing with him the suite in A minor you composed for me… I waited for some time, in order that comparison was not so violent.*[21] *In the meantime, I played Castelnuovo's concerto, accompanied by Paquita; then, I played the Suite, without previous explanations. Passage by passage, number by number, it caused a continuous pleasure and surprise gesture on him. He repeated: "there is nothing like Bach. It is admirable, delicious," etc. When I finished, I asked him: Do you know who composed this? And he, very surprised that someone other than Bach could have composed that, asked: "Who?" Well, Manuel Ponce, I told him inadvertently… He was truly amazed and he didn't make an effort to hide it… Then, I played several works of yours I'm working on: the First movement of Sonata III in D, the variations on the Follia, the Mazurca, two preludes, etc. We finished playing more than seven times, one after the other, the section of your Concerto… And, literally, he said: Castelnuovo's is very good, but this is a work by a musician who has knowledge and, at the same time, has a big heart of an artist.*[22]

Minimal historical account of Suite in A minor publications

The editions of the *Suite*

One of the purposes of any publication is to clearly establish its source. In this case, neither the original manuscript nor a single copy of the text has survived. However, we have a significant list of editions of the work which, based on Segovia's recording of 1930, purported to have made the transcription of a non-existent manuscript in order to sell a fictitious text as an authentic one (as is happens with the relics of many cathedrals). While it is true that among such publications there are significant differences and shared influences, and that they did not aimed at being faithful to the text or the composer, it is also true that, in a considerable way, thanks to such editions the *Suite in A minor* could be interpreted by other guitar players as a reference to work on the music and was spread regardless of Segovia, his concerts or his recording. Reviewing the history of some publications is to review the path of a mechanism which has allowed this *Suite* to survive the loss of its manuscript.

In 1951, Miguel Ablóniz published this work in *Bèrben*,[23] as his own transcription of the *Suite* by Weiss, under the title "Suite in la maggiore". There are few differences between this edition and Segovia's recording. His writing solutions are, however, quite interesting, and the Major mode in the title of the work, as well as the reference to Weiss, of whom he changes the order of his first names (Leopoldo Silvio), must be noticed.

In 1954, Abel Fleury published with *Ricordi*[24] his own version of the *Suite in A*. Though he might have probably been influenced by the edition of Ablóniz, he makes many decisions on his own, influencing his own transcription.

In 1971, Ablóniz made a new edition in *Bèrben*,[25] under the title *Suite in A*, with many differences regarding his first edition, which move him away from Segovia's recording. He changes various writing parameters, particularly on the bass lines which are incorporated into the rest of the rhythmic figure, loosing voice independence and reducing their lengths. What is most relevant of this publication, is the ending explanatory note added by Ablóniz: "UNA NECESSARIA SPIEGAZIONE", in which he makes clear why he said a nonexistent transcription was his own, after purchasing Segovia's albums: *I decided to copy it, knowing that, when a recorded piece is presented as a work several centuries old and it is difficult or impossible to consult it, anyone is free to copy it, provided the source is quoted*.[26]

Of course, in the version of 1951, Ablóniz did not quote any source, though in such recent explanation he makes clear that the title of the first edition, "SUITE IN LA MAGGIORE" was due to the fact that such title appeared on the label of the

[21] Segovia makes reference to a *Prelude* by Villa-Lobos played by the composer himself. The narration of the guitar player states that in such work (probably *Prelude No. 3*), Villa-Lobos intended to imitate Bach.
[22] Ibid., pp. 211-212.
[23] Casa Editrice Bèrben, 361-3328-501, Modena, 1951.
[24] Ricordi Americana S.A.E.C., B.A. 10981, Buenos Aires, 1954.
[25] Bèrben Edizioni Musicali, E. 1017 B, Ancona, 1971.
[26] Note by Miguel Ablóniz for the edition of the *Suite in A*; Ed. Bèrben, Ancona, Italia, 1971, p. 16.

album; however, *until someone authorized reveals the exact –original– title, I deemed it would be wiser that in this reprinting the mode was not specified*.[27] Thus, in the 1971 edition, it is entitled *Suite in A*.

The note also contains the narration of a meeting in Edinburgh, in 1948, between Ablóniz and Segovia, who told him that the original manuscript was lost during the civil war and that he never had the time or the intention to sit and rewrite it. Also in such text, he justifies the changes regarding the publication of its first version: *some notes and chord inversions are absolutely mine (they are not in the recording –I took that liberty knowing that the composer was not a guitar player)*.[28]

Apparently, Ablóniz does not take into consideration the changes he allows himself to make, *knowing that the composer was not guitar player*, were not made upon the composer's text, but on Andrés Segovia's version –who probably took himself the same liberty–, which invalidates Ablóniz's argument, making the unfortunate impression that he intends to correct both Ponce and Segovia. Ablóniz describes later other meeting with Segovia on September 11, 1956, during which the composer's name was revealed to him but, since Segovia wanted to make it clear in his memories, Ablóniz did not want to reveal the announcement, which allowed him to continue to edit the *Suite* under Weiss's name, without making a revision of the manuscript and benefiting from the publication.

In the same edition, a page later, appears an addition by *Bèrben* Publishing House, as the latest news –*Ultimissima*– which states to have received from Ablóniz, during the preparation of such edition, a note with a piece of Stamford Advocate newspaper, dated Wednesday, June 30, 1971, in which it is announced that many of the works attributed by Segovia to other composers were composed by Manuel Ponce. Carlos Vázquez is mentioned as the legal heir to the composer's work, who explained that *when he visited Segovia, in 1964, in Madrid, the guitar player promised to give Ponce credit of his own compositions in his memoirs, but he gave Vázquez permission to announce before, in Mexico, what he called his "joke"*.[29] Despite of this *Ultimissima* note, Bèrben publishing house did not edit the work under Ponce's authorship and continued to benefit from a careless publication.

In 1973, Manuel López Ramos was the first guitar player that recorded the work with the proper attribution, also based on his own transcription of Segovia's version. Though he never edited such, it is interesting to review his text, based on the double closeness such guitar player had with previous editions and Ponce's repertoire and manuscripts. López Ramos reviewed and wrote the fingerings for the *Suite in D major*, and from such he takes several writing solutions for the *Suite in A minor*.

In 1983, promoted by Robert Vidal, Editions Musicales Transatlantiques[30] published a version entitled *Suite en la mineur*, under Ponce's authorship, reviewed by José Luis González –Andrés Segovia's student–, and therein it is stated (through a Prologue by Corazón Otero), that such guitar player had a copy of the manuscript of the work made by Segovia himself.[31] While the manuscript may not be reviewed and dated between 1929 –when Segovia received the work– and 1936 –possible date in which it was lost–, I think it may not be considered as "*taken directly from a copy of the original given by his professor Andrés Segovia*", as it is asserted in the prologue. Among similarities and differences between itself and the recording, the lack of care in the writing of this publication must be noticed.

In 2000, Miguel Alcázar published the *Complete Works for guitar by Manuel M. Ponce, in accordance with the original manuscripts*",[32] with CONACULTA and Étoile. Alcázar entitled the work in such edition *Suite I*, and makes clear, from the beginning, that it is a transcription from the recording by Segovia in 1930, justifying the differences *considering, in a philological manner, that the work of the critic is to restore the text, as possible, to its original state*,[33] without explaining in detail his decisions for such writing.

[27] Ibid., p. 17.
[28] Ibid., p. 16.
[29] Ibid., p. 19.
[30] Editions Musicales Transatlantiques, E.M.T 1673, Paris, 1983.
[31] José Luis González and Robert Vidal are dead. Corazón Otero maintains he has never seen such manuscript. Angelo Gilardino replied, to an express question, that there is no manuscript, autograph or otherwise, of the *Suite in A*.
[32] Miguel Alcázar, *Obra completa para guitarra de Manuel M. Ponce, de acuerdo a los manuscritos originales*, México, CONACULTA-Ediciones Étoile, 2000, pp. 104-117.

Rhythm writing, repetitions in dances and articulation slurs

Rhythm writing

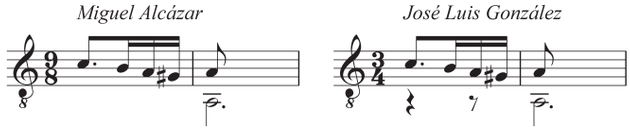
Rhythm writing of conventional dances in the *Suite* shows no more difficulties in the transcription of the recording by Andrés Segovia. Rhythm clarity of figures and predefined patterns for every movement make the work easier. However, three movements of the *Suite in A minor* show a peculiar difficulty in writing. The first is in the *Prélude*, since it is a *free form*, not related to a specific time signature, which may be solved in various ways in the transcription. The next difficulty appears in the *Sarabande*. On one hand, there is the melodic figure on the short note, in upbeat, which is repeated throughout the whole movement and may be interpreted as an embellishment or part of the melodic line; on the other hand, there is voice distribution and leading. Finally, in the *Gigue*, there is difficulty as measure 118, Part **B**, is different.

Prélude

This movement is evidently written in a three-accent time signature, with naturally ternary subdivided long passages. This might correspond to a 9/8 time signature. However, the first rhythm figure, appearing as upbeat in every phrase of sections from Measure 1 through 18 and Measure 34 through the end, seems rather binary, that is, proper for a 3/4 time signature. The definition of such figure determines in which type of time signature the *Prélude* shall be written.

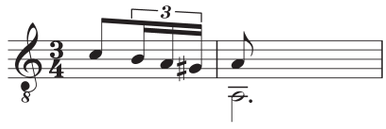
Such figure may be interpreted as a subdivision into two of a dotted quarter note in a 9/8 time signature. Such is the solution in the edition by Miguel Alcázar and José Luis González (though in the edition by González it seems rather a writing error, since the figure may not be repeated throughout subsequent measures):

Example No. 1



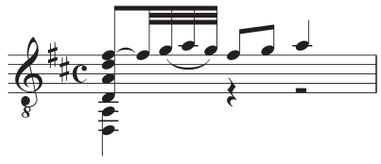
It may also be interpreted as the subdivision into two of a quarter note which second eighth note becomes a sixteenth note triplet. This is the solution in the 1951 and 1971 editions by Miguel Ablóniz, Albert Fleury and Manuel López Ramos:

Example No. 2



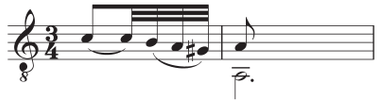
The phrase is rhythmically similar to the beginning of the *Préambule* of the *Suite in D major* by Ponce, work for guitar also composed in a Baroque style, attributed to Alessandro Scarlatti –in which, it must be mentioned, he also uses binary and ternary subdivision figures throughout the whole movement.

Example No. 3



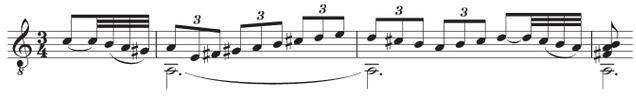
Thus, such upbeat might be a quarter note subdivided into eighth notes extending until the first note of the group of thirty-second notes on the weak beat.

Example No. 4



Probably, Ponce wrote a single figure in a Baroque style in the same way, which is the criterion for this edition. Therefore, the *Prélude* is in a 9/8 time signature, with the starting upbeat as a figure on the weak beat,[34] combining binary subdivision figures with eighth-note triplets, similarly as in the *Préambule* of the *Suite in D major*.

Example No. 5

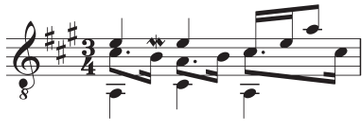


[33] Ibid., pp. 105, 106.
[34] When thinking of the upbeat like this, the similarity with that of the *Allemande* becomes evident, thus giving unity to the work.

Sarabande

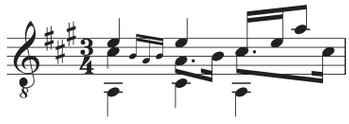
This movement, as *sarabands* in general, is written in 3/4. As in the *Sarabande* of the *Suite in D*, Ponce combines, in the melodic line, the eighth dotted note with the sixteenth note. The problem is that most of the sixteenth notes on the upbeat involve a melodic turn which may be interpreted as an embellishment. Ablóniz (1951) and López Ramos solve it in that way. In this type of embellishment, the last note is a little longer than the rest:

Example No. 6



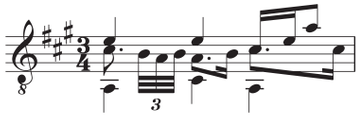
That is unclear in the recording, where, now and then, they appear to be all the same. Based on such idea, we can imagine these notes as a written embellishment:

Example No. 7



Other solution is to think of it as part of the melodic line, with the combination of dotted eighth note and thirty-second note triplet, as Fleury, Ablóniz (1971), and González did. In this writing, the three notes have the same length and the first one has a small accent, however, that is also unclear in the recording:

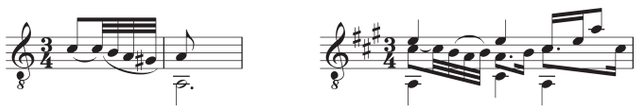
Example No. 8



Since it is similar to the upbeat of the *Prélude*, this figure can also be considered as an upbeat beginning on the weak beat, and it is logical to write it in the same way, thus giving thematic unity to the *Suite*.

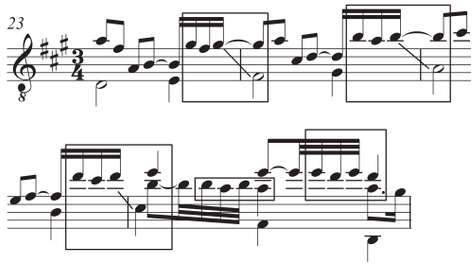
Example No. 9

Prélude *Sarabande*



Supporting this idea are the last beats of Measures 23, 24, and 25, in which melodic progression seems to be present the augmentation of this figure:[35]

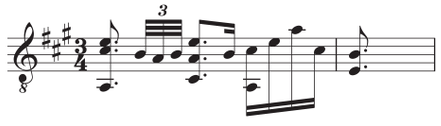
Example No. 10



Voice distribution and leading directly affect interpretation of the melodic line. As in the *Sarabande* of *Suite in D major* and other Baroque works, here we find a combination of textures in the polyphonic fabric. The problem is to determine to which passage corresponds a three-voice or two-voice writing.

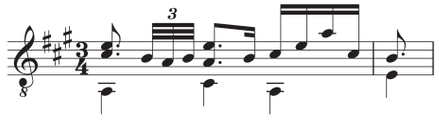
Such difficulty becomes evident if we compare the solution by Ablóniz (1971), who thinks of it as a single voice with chords accompaniment,

Example No. 11



with Alcázar's, who keeps it in two voices all the time,

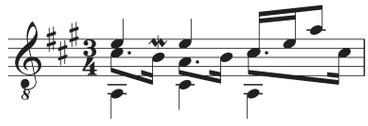
Example No. 12



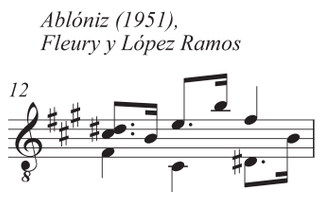
[35] As in the *Prélude*, when thinking of the upbeat like this, similarity with that of the *Allemande* becomes evident, thus giving unity to the work.

and the one by Ablóniz (1951), Fleury, López Ramos and González, who combine, in a different manner, the three-voice or two-voice writing.

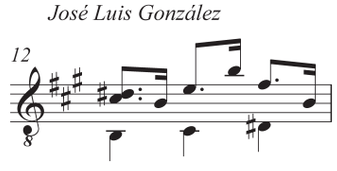
Example No. 13



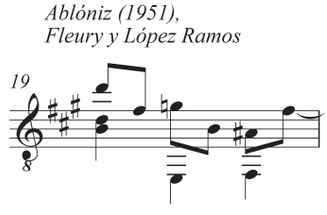
Example No. 14



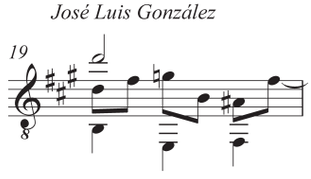
Example No. 15



Example No. 16



Example No. 17



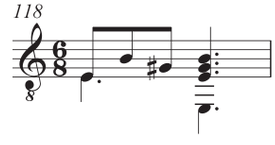
There is more than a single way to interpret it, but the clarity with which Segovia leads the three voices is only affected in the sequence of Measures 12 through 14, Part **A**, and, in **B**, throughout progression from Measures 20 through 25 and (as in **A**) in Measures 28 through 30, for which reason, for this edition, we decided to leave those measures in a two-voice writing.

Gigue

This *movement* has a marked rhythm in two ternary subdivided accents of the 6/8 time signature, which is common in works of this nature. The problem arises in Part **B**, a measure before arriving to the original key, corresponding to minute 2'26" of the recording (and 3'49", the repetition of such passage), where recapitulation shows the same figure of the beginning. In this measure, 118, concludes a sequence beginning in Measure 103, which harmonic progression appears in a three eighth note arpeggio in the first half and a dotted quarter note chord in the second half of the measure. In Measure 118, the harmony arrives to the dominant region both in the arpeggio and the chord; however, Segovia adds, after the chord, a dotted quarter note E^3, as upbeat on the dominant, which extends the measure. Probably, it is like that because the progression beginning in Measure 103 displaces the accent to the second half of the measure, so that 15 measures after that point it becomes natural to present an upbeat leading to the tonic.

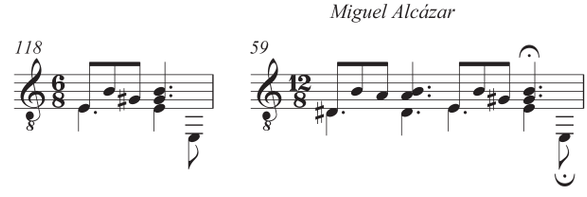
Three solutions may be considered.
The first is that by Ablóniz (1971), considering the chord with an E^3:

Example No. 18



The second one shows the E^3 as the last eighth note of the measure (in accordance with Alcázar, who adds a fermata both to the chord and the E^3, thus breaking with the pulse clearly defined in the recording):

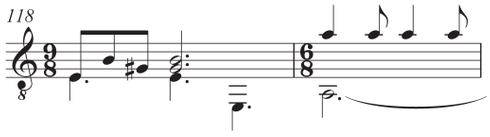
Example No. 19



However, the bass line is so rhythmic and natural, and works in such a logical way, that we may consider it –as Ablóniz (1951), López Ramos, González and this edition– only as an exceptional

measure with a 9/8 time signature in the *Gigue*, which is rare in Baroque dances, but here is hardly noticeable:

Example No. 20



Repetition in dances

Repetition of every section was part of the **A**-**B** structure in Baroque dances, and it is a common criterion in Ponce's repertoire recreating such period. In Segovia's recording, the repetition is present in every dance, excepting the *Sarabande*; however, in this edition we have decided to leave that movement, as the others, with the repetition bars in every section, and the whole work in the general style of writing of the Baroque *suite*. Most probably, the decision to play the *Sarabande* without repetition was Segovia's.

Articulations and slurs

Probably, in the original manuscript, Ponce used articulation slurs. In Segovia's 1930 recording there are several of such; however, since it is also probable that many of them are product of Segovia's interpretation, we decided to leave this edition without slurs, with the intention to reproduce a Baroque manuscript as they were known in 1929, leaving the possibility to take as reference the lute *suites* by Bach that Ponce might have studied.

Raúl Zambrano
Mexico City, January, 2012