



"Ricardo Tacuchian" – A Brazilian composer ahead of his time

Prof. PhD Marcelo Henrique Andrade Courinho

Federal University of Rio de Janeiro - Brazil

Ricardo Tacuchian (1939-) is one of the most performed Brazilian composers today. Starting since the 1960s, his work has about 250 titles, according to the book *Ricardo Tacuchian e sua obra: catálogo e notas biográficas* (2014) edited by FBN (Fundação Biblioteca Nacional) and organized by Elizeth Higino and Valéria Peixoto. Tacuchian's catalog also contains 23 titles for voice and piano, written throughout his compositional career. They constitute a significant portion of his compositional universe and, therefore, deserve further reflection. The music-poetry complicity is evident in his production and, according to him, "a third is formed by music with texts. The choice to use poetry as the guiding thread of my music reflects the reading habit that I acquired in childhood and that accompanies me to this day" (TACUCHIAN, 2009). The very important Brazilian poets like Manuel Bandeira (1886-1968), Cecília Meireles (1901-1964), Carlos Drummond de Andrade (1902-1987) and Vinícius de Moraes (1913-1980) were set to music by him. Perceiving this interaction and the way the composer constructed it, manipulating the rhythmic, harmonic, melodic and musical expression elements, demands from the performer an analytical study that is configured as an initial stage for its interpretative elaboration.

Tacuchian himself acknowledges that, in all these years, his career as a composer has had three distinct phases: neo-nationalism, avant-garde and the postmodern. In an interview with the pianist Ana Paula da Matta Avvad (2007), the composer analyzes contemporary Brazilian music, in which, according to him, one can notice 3 main groups, disregarding electroacoustic music, which would correspond to a fourth group. The first group would be formed by the neoclassical composers. They are those who work with elements of tradition trying to modernize them: it is the updating of tradition. The concept of tradition used by Tacuchian is variable, including composers of different kinds, because, according to him, both Beethoven (1770-1827) and Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) represent a tradition.

At the end of the 1960s, he studies with Claudio Santoro (1919-1989). This orientation, which lasted about a year, was the gateway for Tacuchian into the second group, avant-garde movement. In the 1980s, the composer called himself a postmodernist, developing the T-System, with the aim of

organizing a system of height control and polarization. "All my work from the 1990s and the 1990s was written about the T-System. From then on, I began to use this system sporadically and concomitantly with other compositional resources and tools."

In the same interview given to Avvad, the composer says that "each and every classification of a musical movement has its ambiguity, so it is very relative and depends on a contextualization". And he concludes by saying that "it should be used as a communication strategy and interpreted according to the meaning it acquires in the context in which it is inserted" (AVVAD, 2010, n.p.). Undeniably, Tacuchian begins to revisit more frequently and in a more alternate way all the techniques and paths employed in the previous four decades (AMORIM, 2014, p.70).

Tacuchian has always sought new ways for his composition in aesthetic diversity, for the sake of the sound result of his works. This is a characteristic of the composer. Always look for new languages. This search led Tacuchian to an aesthetic, cultural and social pluralism, which is reflected in his composition and, consequently, to a freedom in his way of conceiving music. For the composer, his music does not belong only to him, but to those who perform it and to those who listen to it and conclude:

"I think that all music has three finishes: the first is when the composer puts the double bar at the end of the piece; But it's not finished yet. The second is when the interpreter performs it in public, contributing with his private reading; Each performer will find a different way, without disrespecting what the composer has written. Even so, the composition is not yet finished. It will have to be decoded by each listener according to their worldview, their previous life experience, their state of mind at the time of listening. Only then will the composition be completed. So there are three creators of a work of art: the composer, the performer, and the listener."

REFERENCES

1. AMORIM, Humberto. **Ricardo Tacuchian e o violão**. Rio de Janeiro: ABM, 2014.
2. AVVAD, Ana Paula da Matta Machado. *As Tendências Neo-Românticas na Música Brasileira Contemporânea para Piano*. **Revista Eletrônica de**

Marcelo H.A.C., "Ricardo Tacuchian" – A Brazilian composer ahead of his time

Musicologia. Universidade Federal do Paraná, Curitiba, 2007. Disponível em: http://www.rem.ufpr.br/REM/REMV13/07/10_mattamachado/tendenciasneoromanticas.htm. Acesso em: 10 mai. 2018.

3. AVVAD, Ana Paula da Matta Machado. **A influência das peças de caráter do Romantismo em obras para piano de Carlos Gomes, Leopoldo Miguéz, Henrique Oswald, Alexandre Levy e Alberto Nepomuceno.** Tese de Doutorado. Programa de Pós-Graduação em Música da Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 2009.
4. AVVAD, Ana Paula da Matta Machado. As Tendências Neo-Românticas na Música Brasileira Contemporânea para Piano. **Revista Eletrônica de Musicologia**, vol. XIII. Rio de Janeiro: UNIRIO, 2010.
5. TACUCHIAN, Ricardo. Interview with Marcelo Coutinho. Rio de Janeiro, September 19, 2018, and via email on May 18, 2018.