

The presence of quartal harmony in the work Samba Urbano of Marco Pereira: the influence of Schoenberg, Debussy e Ravel.

Author: Julio Cesar Moreira Lemos / e-mail: julioczar10@gmail.com

Abstract

This article discusses the use of quartal harmony present in the solo guitar work, Samba Urbano, by Brazilian composer Marco Pereira. Regarding the use of quartal harmony, the composer mentions the possible influence of European classical music in his compositional style, citing composers Arnold Schoenberg, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. The fundamentals found in Arnold Schoenberg book's Harmony were used as an analytical resource. In conclusion, we observed the relationship of quartal harmony present in "Samba Urbano", and what type of compositional style relationships exists in the work of these composers.

Key words: quartal harmony, Marco Pereira, solo guitar, Schoenberg

INTRODUCTION

Amongst the many guitarists in activity in Brazil that have contributed to the enrichment of the solo guitar repertoire through the critical editing and publication of their works; three stand out the most: Paulo Belinati (1950), Althier Lemos Escobar (1950), also known as Guinga and Marco Pereira (1950), the latter is the focus of this research.

Marco Pereira is a renowned classical guitar player, and was a pupil of Uruguayan guitar legend Isaias Savio (1900-1977). He has won several international guitar competitions, and has written extensively on the works of Villa Lobos during the time he was pursuing his Master's Degree at Sorbonne University in Paris. Mr. Pereira has recorded over 19 albums, featuring solo and chamber music performances, as well as several of his exciting orchestral arrangements and compositions. He is currently a professor at the School of Music from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. As a performer, Marco Pereira is dedicated to the practice of Brazilian popular music, and shows in his performances the highest technical and interpretive elements which are rooted in his life-long studies of the classical guitar.

By researching the history of the Brazilian guitar, we noticed that the name of Marco Pereira is seldom cited. In a previous conducted study, we found the following academic researches citing Mr. Pereira: a dissertation by Brent Lee Swanson in 2004 "*Marco Pereira: Brazilian Guitar virtuoso*"; a dissertation written in 2012 by Julio Lemos entitled "*The compositional style of Marco Pereira: analyses at this work 'Samba Urbano'. An approach from their main influences: the Brazilian popular music, jazz and classical music.*" And a dissertation by Rafael Tomaz defended in 2014 entitled "*The musical and guitaristic language of Marco Pereira - a creative symbiosis of different strands.*"

The information about the main musical influences of the composer was obtained through an interview conducted at his residence in Rio de Janeiro, and several conversations via electronic mail. Through this interview the composer Marco Pereira mentions that he has listened to a lot of works from classical music composers and believes that he has been influenced by these composers, particularly on the use of harmonic structures formed by fourths he says:

"On the chords by fourth, I must say it was a certain "modal trend" that invaded the Brazilian "instrumental" music during the 1960s. The influence came directly from European music (Debussy, Ravel, Schoenberg, etc.) and indirectly from the "cool jazz". I dealt with this kind of sonority and ended up entering in some of my compositions. I must remind you that this was a natural process. I did not "think" to put this type of chords in my music. They were used from musical ideas that echoed inside of my head" (PEREIRA, electronic mail, 04/03/2012)

Quartal Harmony according to Schoenberg.

When describing the possibilities of chords from harmonic structures composed of overlapping fourth intervals Schoenberg makes the following statement:

The construction in fourths, however, makes it possible, as said, the accommodation of all phenomena of harmony; admitting that occasionally cease to occur also sounds belonging to the center of the complex - that, for example, a chord can be composed of sounds first, second, fourth and tenth - it is possible so to achieve also the chords of the system by thirds. The construction by thirds however- it doesn't matter if align only thirds of equal size or if it is chosen a particular sequence of thirds of different sizes -, cannot this result without immediately apparent repetitions of sounds (SCHOENBERG, 2001, p. 559).



Example 1: Overlap of fourths graduating 12 sounds without repetition. (SCHOENBERG, 2001, 558).

By overlapping intervals of fourth in the sequence of C, F and Bb, for example, it is observed that there is an interval of perfect fourth, C-F, and an interval of minor seventh among

C-Bb. By inverting the minor seventh interval, it becomes a major second interval, with the possibility of building a chord comprised of (F-Bb-C), intervals of perfect fourth and perfect fifth in relation to the F, or (Bb-C-F), intervals of major second and fifth in relation to the Bb. Another possibility would be chords by fifths obtained from the inversion of fourth, for example, (C-F-Bb), if inverted could form the following chord of fifths (Bb-F-C). Naturally, it is also possible to cite chords created by overlapping fourths intervals by seven, eight, nine or more voices

Following this logic we observed that Schoenberg points to a possibility of harmonic combinations that would make use of all the 12 notes of the chromatic scale toward an "atonal" system. "Since I do not know this as a chords of fourth, although I have surely already written it, I omit myself from represent them in theory". (Ibid, 2001, p. 558). Even though Schoenberg did not present an attempt of systematization of harmony by fourths, he points out that the systematization of harmony by overlapping thirds is within the logic of the possibilities of combining the use of 12 tones obtained by overlapping of fourths. Schoenberg demonstrates in his book "Harmony" that even doing different combinations in relation to overlapping thirds you cannot get to the twelve tones without repeating notes. However, he indicates that by overlapping of fourths this is possible. We conclude then that the harmonic system composed by overlapping fourths can be considered more broadly, by also have all harmonic possibilities that are not contemplated by the tonal system formed by overlapping thirds.

Quartal harmony present in the music of Ravel, Debussy and Schoenberg.

We looked for some examples of excerpts of quartal harmonies present in the works of the composers mentioned by Marco Pereira: Schoenberg, Ravel and Debussy. We found some of these examples in excerpts of the following works: "Submerged Cathedral" and "Pour Les Quartes" by Claude Debussy, "La Mere de Loye" of Maurice Ravel and Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op. 9. Arnold Schoenberg.

Profondément calme (Dans une brume doucement sonore)

Example 2: "Submerged Cathedral" by Claude Debussy, first bars..

In the first measure of example 2, we observed a chord formed by D and G (intervals of fourth and fifth) located at the extremes, severe and acute, this chord lasts for the entire measure. Still in the first bar, the second time brings the following sequence of perfect fourths overlapped: (D-G, E-A and B-E) in different octaves, and in parallel movement upwards, these sounds blend with the first chord, creating a sound characteristic of overlapped fourths. In the second measure of example 2, the composer plays the interval as an arpeggio, D, G and D (fifth intervals, reversal of the fourth). On example 2, we can see the use of the following notes G, A, B, D and E, setting up the pentatonic scale of G major.

Example 3: "La Mere de Loye" de Maurice Ravel. 3 mov. Ladeironette.

In example 3, we observe the use of chords of fourth consisting of the following notes, (C# -D-G#,A#) and (F#-G#-C#-D#), both chords formed from the same types of intervals: major second, perfect fifth and major sixth. We can consider this as the inversion of the minor seventh intervals D#-C#, inverted for C#-D# and the minor seventh interval A#-G#, inverted to G#-A#, the same relationship happens with the second chord formed by (F#-G#-C#-D#).

Measure 3 brings a melody composed by the same notes that form the chords (C# and D#-F#-G#-A#), we also observed the use of leaps of fourths downward between notes (D#-A# and F# and C#).

Andantino con moto

The musical score for 'Pour Les Quartes' by Claude Debussy is presented in a grand staff with two staves. The tempo is marked 'Andantino con moto'. The music is in 6/8 time and begins with a piano (*p*) and dolce (*dolce*) dynamic. The upper staff features a melodic line with overlapping perfect fourths and augmented fourths, while the lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with similar intervals. The score includes various articulations and dynamics, such as *fp* and *f*.

Example 4: "Pour Les Quartes" study of Claude Debussy.

In example 4, Debussy makes intensive use of overlapped perfect fourths formed from the notes of the diatonic scale in F major, the fourths feature parallel movement between them. However, from the third bar of this excerpt we noticed the use of intervals of augmented fourths (Ab-D) and (A-D#) displaced by parallel chromatic movement of ascending augmented fourths.

Langsam

The musical score for Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op. 9 by Arnold Schoenberg is presented in a grand staff with two staves. The tempo is marked 'Langsam'. The music is in 4/4 time and begins with a piano (*p*) and forte (*f*) dynamic. The upper staff features a melodic line with overlapping perfect fourths and augmented fourths, while the lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with similar intervals. The score includes various articulations and dynamics, such as *fp* and *f*.

Example 5: Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op. 9. Arnold Schoenberg.

In the first measure of example 5, Schoenberg writes a chord built of fourths played in arpeggio form containing the notes (Bb-Eb-Ab) and on the bass line he writes a chord containing the notes (G-C-F-Bb). Thus utilizing two different structures of chords of fourth. Through the resolution of the fourth (F) into the third (E) in the second bar to the third, in the bass clef, then there is the dominant chord of C7 (b5, b13) / Gb (C major with minor seventh and minor sixth, with fifth diminished on bass, introduced in the second inversion).

At the first beat of the fourth bar it happens a resolution on the chord Fm(11). He soon becomes the triad of F major (second beat in the fourth bar), through the movement chromatic upward of minor third, Ab, for major third, A, in the high voice (treble), and the movement of fourth, Bb, for major third, A (on the bass), it is evident the contrary movement of the notes in this passage.

We observed in this example that Schoenberg uses the chromatic movement of the notes of chords by fourths, leaving the atonal character, and from these notes movements, it form a chord Fm(11), which transforms into a tonal chord of F major.

Analysis of “Samba Urbano”

We find in the work "Samba Urbano", some passages in which occurs the use of harmonic structures by fourth, about which we shall present the related descriptions.

Example 6: “Samba Urbano”(bars 39 to 45).

In ex. 6 we observed in the first bar a interval of fifth between the notes E and B, followed by a chord formed by fourths between the notes (B-E-A-D-G-C) all notes of the scale natural A minor. We observed that the composer uses scales of Mixolídio and Lídio mode, combining in the same stretch a sequence of notes by fourths, with modal scales.

Example 7: “Samba Urbano” (bars 45 to 49). Parallel movement downward of fourth overlapped.

On ex. 7, the use of chords formed by perfect fourth overlapped formed on the high notes, G, F, E, D and G, which represent a melodic stretch. We note that circled chords are formed by the notes of the diatonic scale of natural A minor, except for the chord (C#-F#-B-E), which presents the C# and F# notes in order to maintain the relationship for perfect fourths on E note

In the ex. 9, music coda, there is a succession of chords formed by fourth parallel moving. It appears in the third bar, the chord by fourth (F-B-E-A) with an augmented fourth interval between F and B notes. This augmented fourth interval, found among the other chords that are a perfect fourths, shows a concern of the composer in keeping the harmonic structures by fourth within the tonal system, with the notes belonging to the natural A minor scale.

In the compass 9 ex.9, there is the use of a chord formed by fourths overlapping (D-A-E-B), which forms the chord E7sus, this resolves at the chord Am7(9) arpeggiated form. With this resolution of a dominant chord with the third suspended in a A minor chord, the composer ends the song featuring tonal character, with the resolution in A minor.

Conclusion

It should be noted that Marco Pereira was influenced by European composers and that also appropriates the use of quartal harmony as it was possible to perceive in the examples presented in its composition Samba Urbano. It was possible to observe, in ex. 9 and ex. 8, which the Composer uses chords by perfect fourth in most stretches with intention of keeping the notes within the system.

In ex. 6, occurs the use of notes C# and F#, and in ex. 7, we find the notes Bb, Eb, Ab and F#, fleeing from the harmonic field established as A minor, in this passage the sequence of fourth overlapped arises from the technical resource idiomatic of guitar known as parallelism, as was exposed by the diagrams in the examples. In these passages we observed a harmonic expansion with the establishment of harmonies that suspend the relations harmonics generated from the system tone through the quartal harmony.

We conclude that "Samba Urbano", has therefore stretches with harmony by fourths intervals that sets up a possible influence of three European composers mentioned by Marco Pereira, but we found that approaches more of Ravel and Debussy, because in both occurs the use of quartal harmony with specific sound textures that are characterized by fourth overlapped that move through parallel movements.

Already in the example of Schoenberg we observed the quartal harmony without concern to identify the texture characteristic caused by the use of fourths overlapped in parallel movement. But toward the holding of 12 sounds generated from the combinations of notes that constitute the system harmonic due to the overlapping of fourths, with chords formed by fourth who move by movements oblique or contrary. We also find in the example of Schoenberg, chords

formed by thirds featuring a sound that characterizes the system. So in the example of Schoenberg observes that the composer uses structures that uses the possibilities generated by the system by fourth, formed by 12 notes of the chromatic scale.

Therefore, from the comparative analysis of these passages we conclude that in "Samba Urbano" coexists the influence from Schoenberg, Ravel and Debussy, because the harmonic structures formed by fourths with notes belonging both within and outside the tonal music system, but without the intention to be characterized as a atonal work, but a work that can explore possible audible phenomena arising from the combinations of 12 notes that arise from the overlap intervals of fourths.

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