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Songs Of The People:

the use of folkloric and traditional Brazilian music styles by contemporary Brazilian composers

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ABSTRACT

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Master of Fine Arts in Musicology

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This thesis investigates the influence of folkloric and traditional Brazilian music genres in the work of contemporary Brazilian composers. It demonstrates that traditional Brazilian music styles are an intrinsic element of contemporary Brazilian music and that they inform compositions in a multitude of contemporary genres. It begins by presenting a historical overview of the cultural and socio-economic forces that have shaped Brazilian music and society starting from the early modern period, with particular emphasis on the role of the transatlantic slave trade in Brazilian music. This is followed by a foundational framework of post-colonial theory as it pertains to a project of decolonization in musicology. Finally, it presents a series of transcriptions and analyses of Brazilian pieces and songs from a wide range of artists and genres to illustrate the influence of folkloric and traditional Brazilian music genres in the work of contemporary Brazilian composers at a rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic level. These analyses are further supplemented by several transcriptions of Brazilian folkloric styles to be used as comparative reference.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is both a building block and a stepping stone within an expansive and complex topic and part of an academic trajectory that aims to combine performance, scholarship, the role of body movement, and pedagogy. I have attempted to create a self-contained work that can stand on its own academic and musical merits while, at the same time, serving as a springboard for more expansive research. There are several topics addressed in this thesis - syncopation and its perception according to cultural context, the importance of socio-economic factors in determining musical identities and expressions, the concept of bio-efficiency, the limitations of standard notation and what that entails for musicology during this technological revolution, the role of colonization in determining music trends and developments - topics that I intend to further develop and research in my continuing academic work. Brazilian music is a vast, intricate universe that both reflects and transforms Brazilian society and, to a certain degree and according to certain cultural filters, societies in other geographical areas.

A few remarks regarding structure. For this thesis, I have chosen not to describe instruments at length or to trace their genealogy in great detail. We have crossed a threshold in the information era in which a simple online search will provide much more ample resources than a rudimentary word-based description in an academic text could ever offer. With surface-level information being so readily available, we can now use our research and our publications to provide more detailed and nuanced information about the topics we study - and we can do that by expecting that interested readers and serious academics will take the time to look up the instruments and genres that they are unfamiliar with. Also, as you will see throughout this thesis, I frequently address the limitations of standard notation when it comes to transcribing groove-

based music. You could make the case that those limitations are true for all types of human-produced music. After all, music notation is shorthand for real music and can never convey the actual physical sensation of sound. But these limitations are particularly true when it comes to music that has such fluid distribution of notes within grooves and so frequently manipulates our perception of how a beat is subdivided. The rudimentary essence of standard music notation is, on the one hand, a severe handicap. But if we're aware of that handicap, it can also function as a constant reminder that it is only an approximation of sound, and, therefore, one of many equally relevant tools for understanding music.

Thirdly, the ubiquity of Brazilian folkloric and traditional styles in (almost) every genre of music created in Brazil is such that attempting to produce a comprehensive list of such occurrences is, quite literally, a Sisyphean task. In fact, that prevalence is such that even attempting to identify - in broad strokes - what musical genres borrow, adapt, or recreate from traditional Brazilian styles is too voluminous a task. Of course, the solution to this problem is not, as one sees frequently in current trends of musicology and ethnography, to over-circumscribe research to such narrow samples that the results from such research become unusable in any other context. To reiterate Said's point, one has to make sure to avoid both the kind of inaccuracy produced by too dogmatic a generality and too positivistic a localized focus."[1] Ultimately, one has to accept that this type of research is inherently paradoxical on multiple levels. It will always be too broad to truly address the specific and microscopic nuances of performance from region to region, neighborhood to neighborhood, individual to individual. At the same time, it will always be too specific to truly encompass all the aspects that contribute to

[1] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York:Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 17.

the essence of every style - not only the notes played but also the instruments used; the dancing; the inflections in the singing; the socio-economic context; the elements of religion and superstition; the importance of that other religion, soccer; the influence of foreign genres and aesthetics; the food; the weather; the love and the hate between human beings.

One also has to accept that all research into Brazilian music, by the time it is published, is already outdated. Music exists only in the present. Sound waves travel a finite distance before they dissipate. Whether it is the low thump of a surdo, the harmonic complexity of a guitar chord, or the voice of the Iyátebexê[2] calling a deity down to the *terreiro*, music is ephemeral and research can only address a simile of that event. If this is true at a molecular level, it is also true at a cultural one. Genres and trends move quickly and transform at a much faster pace than the research that deals with those same genres. In the end, all research into musical phenomena is historical in the sense that it can only deal with the past. It is necessarily through performance that one engages with music in the present and is able to have it inform the research that happens subsequently.

It is with all of this in mind that one can better understand that - from the quasi-anthemic songs celebrating the lives and people of the Brazilian favelas in pagode baiano, to the historical engagement with Brazilian history in the lyrics of the samba-enredos, through the politically-invested content of the MPB, Tropicália, and hip-hop movements, and in countless other styles and contexts - Brazilian music genres are an inherent part of the social fabric and symbolic self-identification at multiple levels: class, race, gender, heritage, profession, political engagement.

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[2] Female singer in the ceremonies of candomblé Ketu. D`Giyan, Sérgio. “Hierarquia no candomblé Ketu.” September 2, 2013. http://awure.jor.br/home/hierarquia-no-candomble-ketu/

I am particularly indebted in this work to all my teachers, masters, and co-musicians who have so generously shared their knowledge with me. Knowledge that very often goes back hundreds, if not thousands, of years and spans multiple continents. I know I have an obligation to this music and to these traditions - an obligation to study, present, and perform it as deeply and accurately as possible. Anything less would be to diminish and relativize the talent, the struggle, and the generosity of those who came before us.

CHAPTER 1: Origins of contemporary Brazilian society

Pedro Álvares Cabral reached the coast of Brazil in 1500, two years after Vasco da Gama had sailed from Portugal along the Western coast of Africa, passed the Cape of Good Hope, and made his way to India.

Da Gama's journey had been the culmination of the naval discoveries that Portugal had been engaged in since the early 14th century, all with the purpose of establishing a maritime route that would allow them to reach India, at the time the origination point of the much-coveted spice trade. Previous attempts by Portugal to control the spice trade by conquering trade markets and outposts in the north of Africa had proved costly and nearly pointless (the Arab populations had defended their cities fiercely and the trade caravans had simply changed their routes to avoid the areas under Portuguese control).

Having as their main concern the highly lucrative spice trade in Asia, the Portuguese did not begin a serious colonization of Brazil until the 1530s. Nonetheless, by 1550, sugar cane plantations in Brazil were in full operation, as sugar was an important commodity in the 16th century. Initially, to provide labor for this enterprise, indigenous peoples were enslaved and forced to work in the sugar cane plantations.[3] However, after a campaign of genocide and expulsion of those indigenous peoples, the colonists turned to another source of slave labor.[4] From the *feitorias* (garrisons) that they had built along the coast of Africa, the Portuguese began to ship African slaves to Brazil in order to keep up with the demand for labor. And, though slavery had existed previously in both Africa and Europe, the slave trade that the Portuguese and

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[3] Beeman, Richard R. "Labor Forces and Race Relations: A Comparative View of the Colonization of Brazil and Virginia." *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 86, no. 4, 1971, pp. 609–636.

[4] *Ibid.*

the Spanish started in the 15th century, and that was quickly taken over and expanded by almost every other European country, uprooted and forcefully exiled an unprecedented number of people of African origin. Recent estimates place the number of African slaves forced to work in Brazil at around 6 million, roughly 40% of the 15 million slaves in the American colonies in 1800.[5]

This massive importation of slaves to Brazil resulted not only in present-day Brazil having "the largest population of African descent of any country outside those of Africa itself" but also, due to slaves being taken from different regions in central and southwestern Africa, in Brazil being home to many "variations in Afro-Brazilian practices" that stem from the "linguistic and cultural differences" of those regions.[6]

Even though Brazil shared (and still does share) certain characteristics with other American colonies, colonization in Brazil was shaped by several factors that, throughout the centuries, produced a *sui generis* society.

Race relations at the time, although defined by relations of power and of subordination, were not as socially strict as in other colonies, with examples of white men marrying black women, their offspring sometimes granted the same rights as free whites.[7]

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[5] Horton, James Oliver and Lois E. Horton. *Hard road to freedom: the story of African America* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2001). Previous estimates indicated around 3.6 million slaves.

[6] These include Senegambia, Benin, Angola and the Congo. *Ibid.* and Skidmore, Thomas E. *Brazil : Five centuries of change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[7] Not only regarding personal freedom but also the right to private property. Freyre, Gilberto. *Casa-Grande & Senzala: formação da família brasileira sob o regime de economia patriarcal*. (Rio de Janeiro: Maia & Schmidt, 1933).

This general "ambiguity in applying racial categories – i.e., blurring the distinction between white and non-white – has continued into the modern era and has made Brazilian race relations especially complex."[8]

Brazilian music: a product of cultural syncretism

Much like its socio-economic structure has been shaped by a confluence of diverse factors and peoples, so is Brazilian culture, in particular its music, the result of several different traditions combined with each other.

From the early 14th century onwards, Lisbon was a multi-cultural metropolis where different ethnic groups and cultural expressions intermingled. The influences of Arabic and Sephardi Jewish music are notorious in traditional Iberian music, such as Portuguese fado and Andalusian flamenco.[9] This fusion of Iberian traditions and styles was brought to the colonies of the American continent by immigrants from Portugal and Spain, at a time when the two countries had laid legal claim to those territories. Facets of immigrant culture then eventually intertwined with the cultural elements of the indigenous peoples and with the cultural traditions of West Africans brought in by the millions in the transatlantic slave trade.

This combination of diverse elements of culture, identity, and religion was complex and reflected the struggle endured by different peoples. It came from the plight of indigenous Brazilians being driven from their land, of enslaved Africans forced to work the sugar cane plantations, of indentured servants from Europe desperate to escape poverty, all sharing a space

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[8] Skidmore, Thomas E. *Brazil : Five centuries of change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999)

[9] Ballesteros, Carmen and Mery Ruah. "Os Judeus Sefarditas entre Portugal, Espanha e Marrocos" (Évora: Edições Colibri, 1998).

both real and imagined in a society where the separation of different groups of people was enforced brutally by the owners of plantations and mines. In different degrees, that synthesis of different expressions of human creativity came to be and evolved into myriad forms of cultural output.

Brazilian music, as well as its overall culture, is therefore deeply influenced by Native Brazilian, African, and Portuguese traditions. In all of its main coastal cities, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Recife, São Paulo, the use of drums and the importance of rhythm are paramount and the many types of music are defined by the rhythmic essence of their specific groove. Those different styles have come about as attempts at recreating the types of African music and dance that were brought to Brazil by African slaves and then combined with the traditions of Native Brazilians and of Portuguese immigrants.

The traditional drums played by Brazilian musicians are themselves an attempt at approximating the drumming traditions of West Africa. The African dunduns, typically in a group of three in descending size and ascending pitch, are recreated similarly in the surdos of samba[10] and samba-reggae, and in the alfaias of maracatu.[11] The *djembe* has evolved into the atabaque, the caxambu, and the timbau. The riq from North Africa, Portugal, and the Middle East became the pandeiro, perhaps the most iconic of Brazilian drums. And the snare was taken from its militaristic march context and incorporated into samba, maracatu, and frevo.

The melodic material that informs Brazilian music is also a combination of different cultures. It includes pentatonic and hexatonic West African scales, commonly found in

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[10] Appendix A. Transcription of percussion patterns in samba of Rio de Janeiro.

[11] Appendix B. Transcription of percussion patterns in the maracatus of Recife.

candomblé, samba, maracatu, and ciranda.[12] Baroque-like melodies and counterpoint from European salon music, evident in choro and samba-choro. Scales with Phrygian elements in baião and Mixolydian elements in samba de roda.[13] Expanding beyond folkloric tradition, Brazilian music has since incorporated jazz and classical harmonies into its forms of popular expression.

In many instances, Brazilian music and dance styles have been taken from sacred and religious settings and brought into secular ones. Examples abound from candomblé, a Brazilian syncretic religion that is a combination of African religious myths with Portuguese Catholic traditions and Native Brazilian religions.[14] Candomblé ceremonies incorporate the quintessential elements of Brazilian cultural expression: music and dance - specifically, the use of drums and singing to accompany the dance movements that honor and call forth the presence of the candomblé deities, the *orixás*.[15]

An example of sacred rhythms being brought to the secular realm is the rhythm ijexá - traditionally played for the feminine *orixá* Oxum - that has been borrowed from religious ceremonies and incorporated into festive street celebrations by all-male groups of dancers in what is called afoxé. The same rhythm is also frequently played in capoeira, the Brazilian martial art developed by African slaves in Brazil.[16] These are progressive concepts of interchange and

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[12] Appendix C. Transcription of the vocal melody in the candomblé song "Bravum for Oxumaré."

[13] *Samba de Roda do Recôncavo Baiano* (Brasília, DF: Iphan, 2006).

[14] Harvard Divinity School. "African-Derived Religions in Brazil." Available: https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/faq/african-derived-religions-brazil

[15] Simas, Luiz Antonio. *Pedrinhas miudinhas: ensaios sobre ruas, aldeias e terreiros*. (Rio de Janeiro: Mórula Editorial, 2013).

[16] Appendix D. Transcription of percussion patterns in the *ijexá* rhythm.

interconnection, which include also fluidity of gender and of sexual identity, and are common in the candomblé tradition. For instance, the *orixá* Oxumaré is described as alternating between male and female genders throughout the year.[17]

Syncopation in Brazilian music

Syncopation is one of the most characteristic elements of Brazilian music. It informs every genre of Brazilian music in some way, whether in the low register that determines the beat, the middle registers that provide the groove, or the melodic phrases that occupy the higher registers**.** In maracatu, it is found in the patterns of the alfaias that determine the beat for the rest of the ensemble and for the dancers.[18] In samba and partido alto, it is performed as rhythmic melodies by the tamborim and the pandeiro.[19]

Syncopation is so essential to Brazilian music that one must classify it and attempt to understand it and its respective sensorial perception outside of reductive definitions. In order to do that, it is important to address common misconceptions and inexact theoretical models of interpretation of the source material. The notion that "the *first beat* of a measure — the downbeat — is the strongest beat, *where the most rhythmic emphasis*, or weight, *is felt*"[20] and that "*syncopation shifts this emphasis*, or, to put it another way, it places the accent on the wrong syllable"[21] is limiting in scope as it misunderstands the ability for different polyrhythmic

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[17] Verger, Pierre Fatumbi. *Lendas Africanas dos Orixás* (Salvador: Corrupio, 1997)

[18] Appendix B. Transcription of percussion patterns in the *maracatus* of Recife.

[19] Appendix A. Transcription of percussion patterns in *samba* of Rio de Janeiro.

[20] Hoffman, Miles. *The NPR Classical Music Companion: Terms and Concepts from A to Z* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997) [my emphasis]

[21] *Ibid.*

syncopation levels to exist simultaneously.

An even more problematic approach is one that puts forth the hypothesis that "because syncopated rhythms have an accent structure in opposition to the pulse, listeners have more difficulty in maintaining an internal representation of the pulse in the presence of even moderately syncopated rhythms."[22] While it has been demonstrated that performing syncopated patterns activates a greater number and extent of regions in the brain,[23] and research may eventually lead to a real understanding of the processes underlying the performance and understanding of syncopation, it is speculative to assume a connection between syncopation and difficulty of accurate pulse perception.

Moreover, this hypothesis is in direct contradiction with clear, observable evidence that heavily syncopated and polyrhythmic devices exist in a multitude of musical cultures with its respective performers exhibiting no signs of particular difficulty maintaining internal or external representations of underlying pulse. It is a heavily biased concept reliant on the widely disseminated misconception that syncopation equals increased difficulty and complexity. It completely disregards the social and cultural contexts that tend to determine the level of facility that individuals will demonstrate when asked to perform specific rhythmic patterns.

It is important to note that Brazilian music is informed by syncopation as a process that is not a creation of tension that must be resolved but rather a natural contour of rhythmic patterning that engenders continuous forward motion. An analysis of rhythmic procedures in partido alto

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[22] Fitch, W. Tecumseh, and Andrew J. Rosenfeld. "Perception and Production of Syncopated Rhythms." *Music Perception: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2007, pp. 43–58.

[23] Jantzen, Kelly J., et al. "Brain Networks Underlying Human Timing Behavior Are Influenced by Prior Context." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, vol. 101, no. 17, 2004, pp. 6815–6820.

reveals that the pandeiro and tamborim patterns are never played on the first beat. While the two eighth notes on the second beat seem to lead to a resolution on the third beat, that resolution is immediately demonstrated to be deceptive with the accent on the upbeat of beat three.[24]

When the tamborim does plays on the downbeat of beat one in samba, the first sixteenth note is much less important than accented the second sixteenth. In fact, the one inescapable rhythmic figure in Brazilian music is the sixteenth-eighth-sixteenth pattern that permeates every genre of music in Brazil, with the eighth note occupying the second and third sixteenths of the beat always being accented.[25]

Understanding this definition of syncopation allows for the beginning of a true comprehension of the numerous folkloric styles of Brazil and allows for a deeper analysis of the work of Brazilian composers and of their respective connection to the folkloric materials that inform their oeuvres.

One such composer, Egberto Gismonti, explained the differing perceptions of beat and syncopation between the Brazilian tradition and the German tradition to a non-academic audience thus:

> If this is one beat. One, two. You can divide it in four: one, two, three, four. These are sixteenth notes, four for each beat. If you take away one, you get this, which is the basis of Brazilian music, for everything: Sixteenth note, eighth note, sixteenth note.
> Now, that is our culture. Where the strong beat is beat two. In Germany, the strong beat is beat one. Which isn't better or worse. Just defines that the basis for their music is the

[24] Appendix E. Tamborim Patterns Ex. 2.

[25] Appendix E. Tamborim Patterns Ex. 1. Furthermore, *tamborim* patterns are often started on the fourth beat to lead into the syncopation on the first beat.

march. That's their strong beat.[26]

Observations and perspective

Brazilian syncopation presents a number of challenges for outsiders of its musical and socio-cultural context. It upends established notions of perception and performance of syncopated rhythms, as well as defying exact visual representation with standard methods of musical notation. These limitations have been compounded by significant hurdles of a linguistic nature that have often resulted in inexact research and documentation.

Realizing the limitations of certain procedural habits when approaching these many facets of musical expression will allow for the development of a more comprehensive, more integrative approach to documenting, analyzing, and ultimately accessing at a deeper level of understanding this vast body of cultural expression.

[26] Gismonti, Egberto. "Workshop at the Vozes de Mestres Festival." Natal, 2013. Available: https://youtu.be/ya9ktxu11ew.

CHAPTER 2: The role of macro-level socioeconomic and historical contexts in post-colonial musicology

Recognizing that, as Said states, "ideas, cultures, and histories cannot seriously be understood or studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied,"[27] a study of the configurations of power that shape the social contexts in which musical expressions take place must necessarily be a fundamental part of musicology.

This section aims to provide an analysis of (post-)colonial configurations of power that will inform the current thesis and a future dissertation on expressions of Brazilian folkloric and popular music. This thesis is substantially built on the notion that if one is to understand and analyze musical/artistic expression as, among other functions, a form of cultural and ideological resistance, then it is necessary to understand the systems of oppression and exploitation that necessitate and foment that resistance. Therefore, it is necessary to not only understand and document the localized, specific contexts in which these musical expressions take place but also to delineate the structural mechanisms by which post-colonial, capitalist systems of social organization aim to determine and control the lives, bodies, and intellects of the individuals living within those systems.

As Trouillot points out, "theories of history […] grossly underestimate the size, the relevance, and the complexity of the overlapping sites where history is produced, notably outside of academia."[28] Correspondingly**,** theories of music, musical historiography, and

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[27] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 14.

[28] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, [1995] 2015), 45.

(ethno)musicology must combat this same deficiency within their scope in equally engaged terms in order to determine truly pertinent parameters of subject matter and methodologies. Within the last few decades, a relative democratization - with certain limitations according to socioeconomic status that are necessarily defined by purchasing power - of the resources available for documenting and archiving cultural expressions (digital cameras, digital audio recording devices, smartphones, personal computers, internet use, data storage) has transformed the concepts of field recording and music archive. As a result, that transformation has made available a multitude of sources and narratives regarding popular and folkloric musical expressions. To a certain degree, the pursuit of profit that defines the current trend of capitalist globalization has generated the conditions for a concurrent social mondialization[29] at a cultural level, as corporations have increasingly targeted the markets of the Global South for consumer electronics.[30] If globalization can be seen as the perpetuation of the colonial power structure that now exists beyond the borders of nation-states in the form of the transnational corporation model,[31] then mondialization seems to be partially happening at the cultural level as performances, rehearsals, and sharing of information become more and more commonplace. To a large extent, we can see the process of historical production as it pertains to music currently being transformed at an exponential rate. And yet, an overarching issue remains. As Trouillot points out, "sources imply choices" and "silences are inherent in history because any single event

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[29] Here I am using Mignolo's definition of "mondialization" to signify a social globalization that occurs at the cultural level. See Mignolo, Walter. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[30] See Pinheiro-Machado, Rosana. "The right to pleasure: poverty, politics, and consumption in neoliberal Brazil." *Development and Change*. [under review]

[31] Mignolo, Walter. *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 158.

enters history with some of its constituting parts missing."[32] Meaning that, while the process of documenting, archiving, and analyzing music is becoming more immediate and accessible to a wider number of individuals - and, as a result, transforming the relationships of power between individuals and institutions that have frequently acted as gatekeepers and censors of archived information -, the choices we make as scholars, researchers, and performers continue to inevitably generate silences within the narratives we establish. Trouillot defines four crucial moments in which silences enter the process of historical production: "the moment of fact creation (the making of sources); the moment of fact assembly (the making of archives); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of narratives); and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of history in the final instance)."[33] The first two are being redefined with the aforementioned increased access to resources for documenting and archiving musical expressions. But the "moment of fact retrieval" and the "moment of retrospective significance" remain problematic. If we attempt to understand the process of "making narratives" and, subsequently, of "making history" without taking into account "the play of power in the production of alternative narratives,"[34] we continuously run the risk of relying on overly generic statements and essentialist discourses that only muddle our object of study. It is true that one of the main perils when studying a field that continuously generates so much non-discrete data is falling into one of two extremes of the spectrum while determining the scope of our research: either being too broad and coming up with overly generic, essentialist descriptions of the

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[32] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, [1995] 2015), 74-75.

[33] *Ibid.*, 52.

[34] *Ibid.*, 55.

sociocultural contexts being studied; or being too specific and ending up with an overly narrow analysis of such a minuscule body of data that any sort of theoretical extrapolation becomes impossible. To quote from Said, "my two fears are distortion and inaccuracy, or rather the kind of inaccuracy produced by too dogmatic a generality and too positivistic a localized focus."[35] That is why being able to understand that "power is constitutive of the story"[36] can help guide us when selecting sources and analyzing data. It can also help us be mindful that musicology can easily fall into the trap of attempting to apply methodologies and concepts that are not only inadequate to the genres being analyzed but in fact perpetuate a normative discourse built on Eurocentric concepts of tonal and rhythmic organization. In particular, one must take into account how the use of European notation to document non-European genres frequently erases essential elements of rhythm, articulation, micro-tonality, and tuning from the genres it purports to document.

As Said has demonstrated, colonial powers have relied on the notion of 'otherness' when defining the colonial subject and its context, and particularly on the concept that the colonial 'other' was unable "to represent itself."[37] Research that aims to study the musical output of colonial and post-colonial regions must take into account the many mechanisms of social manipulation put in place by the colonizing powers with the objective of exploiting the (post-)colonial subject. Particularly, since many of those mechanisms either remain in place or have morphed into systems of exploitation/social manipulation that are directly connected to the

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[35] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 17.

[36] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, [1995] 2015), 54.

[37] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 229. See also pages 8-11 of this paper.

colonial contexts in which they first developed. These varied and multifaceted mechanisms through which colonial and post-colonial powers have exerted their control and furthered their exploitation of the post-colonial subject can be organized into three main categories.

Manipulation of spatial and social organization

Firstly, colonial and post-colonial control is implemented through the manipulation of spatial and social organization by the colonizing powers on the basis of race and class to promote competition and a sense of enviousness/otherness[38] in order to delineate a "geography of hunger."[39] While oppression takes many forms, the overarching concept that informs current post-colonial, global capitalistic oppression is that of an opposition based on perceived and artificially constructed differences. These differences are presented as axiomatic and developed so as to be internalized by both dominant and, most importantly, by oppressed and marginalized groups. Following a European Enlightenment tradition of simplistic opposition based on the power dynamic of dominant vs. subordinate, the post-colonial capitalist system of oppression relies not only on physical violence but also on psychological manipulation through propaganda, by which "the dominant elites try to conform the masses to their objectives."[40] This manipulation by the dominant elites is built on fabricating and fomenting a sense of inferiority/superiority among certain sections of the population in order to create divisions and negative competition within and across sections. Lorde labels this manipulation and ensuing competition among

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[38] DuBois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1903] 2007), 133, 150.

[39] Fanon, Franz. *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, [1961] 2004), 118.

[40] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum [1973] 1993), 145.

oppressed classes "*horizontal hostility*"[41], in which certain groups and individuals internalize the notions of superiority/inferiority and subsequently become less likely to perceive the struggles of other groups as sharing commonalities of oppression. This artificially created horizontal hostility develops along and within multiple social subdivisions: race, gender, age, cultural background. Observing the "devaluation of women's social position with the advent of capitalism", Federici points out that the "sexual hierarchies" reinforced by that devaluation are "at the service of a project of domination that can sustain itself only by dividing […] those it intends to rule."[42] And even within these social subdivisions we see intersectional developments of the manipulation of "horizontal hostility", by which certain subsections of one group are portrayed as superior/ inferior to the other subsections. As stated by Lorde, "the oppression of women knows no ethnic nor racial boundaries, true, but that does not mean it is identical within those differences."[43]

Freire puts forth, in tandem with the strategies of divisive tactics and manipulation, the concept of "cultural invasion", which "serves the ends of conquest and the preservation of oppression, always involves a parochial view of reality, a static perception of the world, and the imposition of one world view upon another."[44] Freire explains that cultural invasion is carried out by the dominant elites by imposing "their own view of the world upon those they invade"

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[41] Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg: Crossing Press, 1984), 40. Freire defines it in similar terms: "horizontal violence." Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum [1973] 1993), 60.

[42] Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2004), 9.

[43] Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg: Crossing Press, 1984), 55.

[44] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum [1973] 1993), 158.

and by inhibiting "the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression."[45] Finally, Freire reiterates, "for cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their *intrinsic inferiority*."[46]

Another prong of the strategy of exploitation and control of social organization is tokenistic representation combined with essentialism. In order to further divide the oppressed sections of the population and prevent solidarity, the "structure at the top"[47] allows for symbolic representation of certain groups while shutting others out and emphasizing individualism. This emphasis on individualism serves the purpose of limiting class and group solidarity and of atomizing the social fabric of the oppressed classes, as part of a strategy of "depositing myths indispensable to the preservation of the status quo"[48] and "inoculating individuals with the bourgeois appetite for personal success."[49] Within this broad concept of appetite for personal success, Freire singles out the myth of entrepreneurship, which he describes as the "myth that anyone who is industrious can become an entrepreneur—worse yet, the myth that the street vendor is as much an entrepreneur as the owner of a large factory."[50] Lorde defines this tokenism

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[45] *Ibid.*, 150.

[46] *Ibid.*,151. [my emphasis]

[47] Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg: Crossing Press, 1984), 42.

[48] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum [1973] 1993), 137.

[49] *Ibid.*, 147.

[50] *Ibid.*, 137.

as a "false sense of security fed by a myth of individual solutions"[51] that is used to court individuals within certain groups, in order to generate an elite compliant to the status quo.

Cultural domination and the epistemic violence of 'otherizing'

Secondly, colonial and post-colonial powers have also exerted their control by creating a structure of cultural domination and by 'otherizing' colonized people through epistemic violence. The European colonial project imposed this epistemic violence on the territories it occupied by developing a "remotely orchestrated, far-flung, and heterogeneous project to constitute the colonial subject as Other."[52] It accomplished this by imposing a normative discourse that was based on the notion of 'otherness' when defining the colonial subject and its context, as well as on the concept that the colonial 'other' was unable "to represent itself."[53]

Moreover, this "Other" was and has been defined as not only different, but as too limited to take care of itself and needing the constantly watchful eye and decisive force of the colonizer in order to be kept on the right path. And thus, the colonial project of domination and control was always framed as for the benefit of the occupied nation because colonized people have been systematically portrayed as not being able to self-govern. If we build on Said's notion that European colonialism, in its many variants, has relied on the "theme of Europe teaching the

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[51] Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg: Crossing Press, 1984), 104. See also Lorde's definition of the "master's tools", in which she demonstrates the impossibility of transforming a system of oppression by relying on mechanisms developed by that same system of oppression. *Ibid.*, 82.

[52] Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University press, 2010), 7.

[53] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 229.

Orient the meaning of liberty, of scientific reason, of civilization"[54] by having the concept of 'Orient' function as a synecdoche for regions under European colonial control, we can see that the European colonial project created a "formidable structure of cultural domination"[55] that made use of the "culturally sanctioned habit of deploying *large generalizations by which reality is divided into various collectives*: languages, races, types, colors, mentalities, *each category being not so much a neutral designation as an evaluative interpretation*."[56] This structure of cultural domination has the objective of implementing a *de facto* reeducation of the colonized population who is then expected to accept Eurocentric values and intellectual methods as superior while rejecting its own intellectual and cultural heritages – the latter portrayed as "inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity."[57]

As Said points out, "culture, of course, is to be found operating within civil society [schools, families, and unions], not through domination but by what Gramsci calls consent."[58] So that even in contexts where military force is not used to achieve domination, the structure of cultural domination can still fulfill its objective of 'otherizing' and diminishing the cultural and intellectual status of those living in colonial and post-colonial regions. By ensuring cultural hegemony, in which certain cultural forms predominate over others, colonizing powers aim to

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[54] *Ibid.*, 181.

[55] *Ibid.*, 34.

[56] *Ibid.*, 236. [my emphasis]

[57] Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University press, 2010), 7.

[58] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 16.

impose a narrative based on the epistemologically violent concept that the inferiority of the colonized justifies their subaltern role in relation to the colonizer. In fact, capitalist and (post-)colonialist systems rely on perpetuating cultural hegemony through propaganda in order to obfuscate their inner contradictions. Defining the "other" as subaltern (while justifying that definition under the guise of reason) is dependent on "denigrating the 'nature' of those it exploits: women, colonial subjects, the descendants of African slaves, the immigrants displaced by globalization."[59] Specifically in the case of the European colonial project, the narrative that supports that hegemony and, by extension, the structure of cultural domination, is the "idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures."[60]

An integral part of this structure of cultural domination is the use of certain social elites as purveyors of propaganda, as these elites help perpetuate the notion that "the essential values - meaning Western values - remain eternal despite all errors attributable to man."[61] The colonial and post-colonial powers achieve this by raising the profile and importance of intellectuals and of the colonized bourgeoisie who are groomed by the colonialist power to act as buffers and diffusers of rebellions and revolutions among the colonized population. The propaganda generated by these groups focuses not only on the present and future but reaches back and manipulates the past of the colonized nation when it "turns its attention to the past of the colonized people and distorts it, disfigures it, and destroys it [in an] effort to demean history

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[59] Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2004), 18.

[60] Said, Edward. *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, [1978] 1994), 16.

[61] Fanon, Franz. *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, [1961] 2004), 76.

prior to colonization."[62] These elites and their propaganda are not located exclusively in the colonial/post-colonial regions that they aim to affect. In fact, the structure of cultural domination is reflected in the many institutions that perpetuate this idea of European superiority; and the strategy aimed at the 'reeducation' of the population includes the academia and the intellectuals of the North, who export Eurocentric concepts and intellectual trends, including postmodernism and multiculturalism, to generate an approach to post-colonial studies "with an academicist and culturalist stamp devoid of [a] sense of political urgency."[63] As Spivak points out, the 'benevolent' "first-world appropriation and reinscription of the Third World as an Other is the founding characteristic of much third-worldism in the US human sciences today."[64]

Population as material resources: bio-efficiency vs. commodity-oriented efficiency

Thirdly, colonial and post-colonial powers have furthered their exploitation of the (post-)colonial subject by treating individuals and communities as "material resources"[65] that are used and discarded in order to maximize profit above all else. Capitalist elites implemented a system in which specific socio-economic conditions allow for a more efficient exploitation of the working class. The implementation of this optimized exploitation requires discrediting and minimizing all possible alternatives to the positivistic, Eurocentric narrative of a reason-based

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[62] *Ibid.*, 214.

[63] Cusicanqui, Silva Rivera. "Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization [2010]," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 111:1 (Winter 2012), 4.

[64] Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Can the Subaltern Speak?: Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University press, 2010), 11.

[65] DuBois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1903] 2007), 104.

and (purportedly) efficient system of labor. This allows the elites to present capitalism as a 'natural' social structure.

Implementing and maintaining such a system requires not only a frequent use of force but also a strategy aimed at the 'reeducation' of the exploited population so that said population not only endures the new system of exploitation but also is compelled to accept that alternatives to that system are not possible. In order to accomplish that 'reeducation', the capitalist system develops and relies on commodity fetishism: a process through which the necessary, naturally-occurring activity of human labor becomes its own entity and "something set apart from life and abstracted into the commodity of labor-time, which can be bought and sold on the labor market. This commodity appears to be substantial and real. No longer an abstraction, it appears to be something natural and immutable."[66]

These dual concepts of commodity fetishism and of purported efficiency are particularly relevant for a discussion of capitalist and (post-)colonialist systems and of how those systems affect the individuals within them. As Taussig demonstrates in his comparative research on peasant farmers and plantation workers in the Cauca Valley, Colombia from 1970 to 1976, large-scale farming is frequently less efficient than traditional peasant modes of production from the perspective of effort expenditure but instead relies on greater physical exertion on the part of the worker. Taussig points out that,

> If we were to make the comparison with the traditional peasant mode of production based on perennials, the capital efficiency of the peasantry would be infinitely better than that of

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[66] Taussig, Michael. *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 23.

> agribusiness since capital inputs are negligible. Large-scale farming here is not inherently more efficient than peasant farming—whether efficiency is defined as output over input, in currency, or in calories. [67]

This example brings us to a dichotomy of concepts that is worth exploring further: *bio-efficiency* vs *commodity-oriented efficiency*. Commodity-oriented efficiency is the pursuit of an ultimate goal of maximum productive output coupled with minimal expenditure on materials and workforce. Commodity-oriented efficiency therefore eschews any consideration of biological, affective, or ecological need and subjugates them to the demands of profit. Since it requires constant exertion from the worker in order to continuously maximize profit, it inevitably eliminates any empathy-based concerns that could hinder that objective. Commodity-oriented efficiency is, necessarily, an essential characteristic of a socioeconomic system that is controlled by the profit motive and that aims to optimize exploitation. Simultaneously, commodity-oriented efficiency is, and must be, presented by the ruling elites as 'efficiency' *tout court*. Any alternatives to such a system that fetishizes labor and transforms it into a commodity must be characterized as 'less efficient' in order to justify the "strictly materialistic concept of existence"[68] of an oppressor class that attempts "to "inanimate" everything and everyone it encounters, in its eagerness to possess."[69] As an integral part of the myth of capitalism as a system of labor that is simultaneously 'rational' and 'natural', commodity-oriented efficiency is presented as a rational approach to labor when, in fact, it both perverts rationality through

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[67] *Ibid.*, 90.

[68] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum [1973] 1993), 56.

[69] *Ibid.*, 57.

commodity fetishism and engenders 'dehumanization' - Freire's term for "a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human" and a historical reality derived from an "unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed."[70] Lorde builds on this concept by explaining, "for *within living structures defined by profit*, by linear power, by institutional dehumanization, our *feelings were not meant to survive*."[71]

Bio-efficiency, on the other hand, does not transform labor into a commodity because its primary concern is not profit. It does not require that human beings deny biological or affective needs in order to increase material output and, therefore, does not dehumanize or alienate the worker in order to exploit them as if they were material resources. Bio-efficiency is the maximization of human potential by taking into consideration human needs (biological, affective, ecological) rather than the needs of a system of exploitation. When relieved of the irrationality of commodity fetishism, the notion of efficiency can only mean bio-efficiency, which then becomes an essential concept in the process of preventing and reversing "dehumanization". And if, as Freire claims, dehumanization can be dismantled with the development of "critical consciousness (*conscientização*)", a process through which the oppressed are able to "perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality,"[72] then the concept of bio-efficiency – in opposition to commodity-oriented efficiency – must be a necessary part of that critical consciousness. Furthermore, bio-efficiency, because it does not define traditional knowledges as inferior to the

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[70] *Ibid.*, 42.

[71] Lorde, Audre. *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Trumansburg: Crossing Press, 1984), 33. [my emphasis]

[72] Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum [1973] 1993), 33.

Eurocentric, Cartesian concept of reason, allows for the coexistence of varied systems/tools for acquiring knowledge without misappropriating or mischaracterizing the elements of those systems in the service of profit. Embracing the concept of efficiency as bio-efficiency rather than commodity-oriented efficiency necessarily leads to a refusal of a system of exploitation that treats people as material resources. And by not defining human beings as material resources, bio-efficiency no longer promotes the irrational belief that "'inactivity', a stage that is as necessary as breathing"[73] should be viewed as shameful or devoid of worth. The development of this concept of bio-efficiency is partly indebted to the advances and progress made in feminist theory and movements by feminist intellectuals[74] who have "begun to revalorize the body", and, by extension, to "counter the negativity attached to the identification of femininity with corporeality, and to create a more holistic vision of what it means to be a human being."[75]

If one accepts that bio-efficiency is *real* efficiency and not the artificially constructed concept of a commodity-oriented efficiency that is meant to sacrifice biological, intellectual, and affective needs in the service of profit, then one can measure bio-efficiency by the degree to which an activity directly contributes to the well-being of the individual(s) engaged in that activity.

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[73] Anzaldúa, Gloria. *Borderlands: The New Mestiza = La Frontera* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books [1987] 2012), 32.

[74] Here I am using the concept of "intellectual" in the Gramscian sense of "organic intellectual": the "one or more strata of intellectuals" that "every social group […] creates together with itself [to] give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields." Gramsci, Antonio. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1971), 135.

[75] Federici, Silvia. *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2004), 16.

Observations and perspective

By defining and studying these mechanisms of control and exploitation, we can begin to better understand the processes that shape the configurations of power in post-colonial regions; and by understanding these configurations of power, music scholars and researchers are then able to develop more informed analyses of both the types and contexts of musical expressions and genres within post-colonial settings. The concept of manipulation of spatial and social organization allows us to understand the hybridization of certain musical styles and the cross-pollination between seemingly disparate genres. The concepts of cultural domination and of 'otherization' give us the tools to better grasp the significance of musical expressions based on cultural, racial, and ideological resistance to cultural domination. And the notion of bio-efficiency can inform our understanding of musical choices and constraints - from choice of tempi, to instrument and ensemble configuration, to performance techniques, to practice and pedagogical methods. By developing our research of musical expressions in connection with an understanding of these configurations of power, we can begin to better comprehend how diverse forms of artistic expression exist in symbiotic relation to one another. Moreover, we can also begin to better understand in what ways those expressions developed within - and frequently in opposition to - systems of social organization that rely on the exploitation of individuals and on the manipulation of social structures. This methodology can help us further develop an interdisciplinary approach within musicology – one that can be highly localized while placing the object of research in a context that takes into account the importance of social structures at the macro level.

CHAPTER 3: Note on the limitations of standard notation

"Our system of notation is incapable of representing any except the most primary divisions of the whole note."[76]

Standard notation, limited as it is for transcribing most genres of music, is even more so in regards to Brazilian music. Much like eighth notes are played with an underlying triplet feel in jazz swing, so does Brazilian music exhibit influences of the 6/8 and 12/8 rhythmic patterns from West Africa. While it has been accepted that transcriptions of Brazilian music are based on the sixteenth note subdivision of the beat, in reality, the placement of those notes in relation to downbeats does not fall neatly on a grid. The written sixteenths of every beat exist in the physical world somewhere between sixteenths and triplets, with differing placements depending on genre, stylistic choices, and even geographical location.

While the transcriptions in the following sections are presented as a visual aid to the concepts presented in this paper, it is important to note the limitations inherent to the medium. Transcriptions of Brazilian music are no substitute for experiencing the source material, both in recorded form and live performance.

[76] Cowell, Henry. *New Musical Resources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930).

CHAPTER 4: Analysis of musical examples

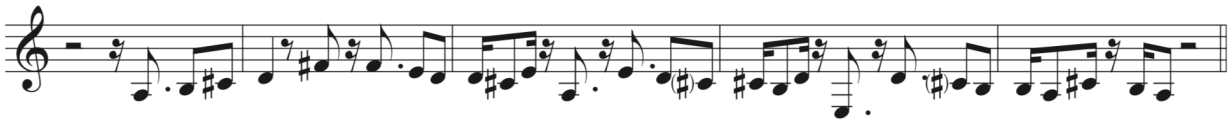
Egberto Gismonti - "Nó Caipira"

Gismonti's "Nó Caipira," from his 1978 album of the same name, outlines much of his aesthetic approach as a composer and improviser. The piece features traditional grooves and instrumentation combined with modern improvisatory concepts, as well as extended interplay between soloists and complex harmonic and and rhythmic arrangements. It is important to understand that many of of Gismonti's albums are informed by a specific concept to some degree. In the case of "Nó Caipira," the main thread is the sound and music of the interior of Brazil, as hinted at by the title of the album. Caipira is a word originally from the tupi language meaning "an inhabitant of the countryside/interior." It specifically refers to people living in the interior of the states of São Paulo, Paraná, Mato Grosso do Sul, Goiás, and Mato Grosso. In "Nó Caipira," Gismonti pays homage to not only many of the emblematic patterns and instrument combinations of Southern Brazilian music but, in typical Gismontian fashion, uses those elements as a springboard for both arranged and improvised explorations of other traditions and approaches, as well as of his own original musical concepts.

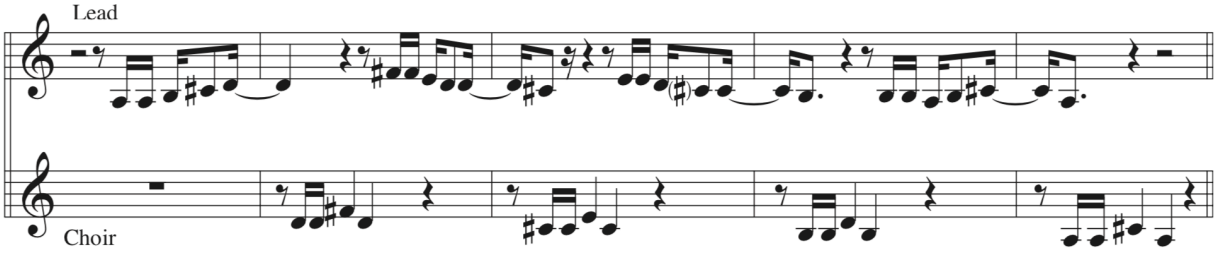
The first clear reference to those traditions is the use of a standard instrumentation of zabumba and triangle[77] while the guitar and flute perform the first melody of the piece. Later, these instruments are joined by an accordion that plays new melodic material over the contrapuntal line of the guitar and flute. As if to further emphasize the notion of referring to traditional styles, the melody that appears at 0:12 is a modified version of the song "Marinheiro Só." It is important to understand the importance of this musical quote as "Marinheiro Só" is a

[77] This is a standard rhythm section when playing baião. See Appendix F.

traditional song that is performed in different types of settings and across various socio-cultural contexts. It is sung during *rodas de capoeira* and given the same importance as songs written by capoeira masters. It is performed in the *terreiros* of the Umbanda religion, a Brazilian variation of the Yoruba religion that developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Rio de Janeiro and combines Yoruba traditions with Roman Catholicism, Spiritism, and Native Brazilian beliefs.[78] And it has been recorded numerous times by major artists in Brazilian music. Among these artists are Caetano Veloso (on his eponymous 1969 album), Clementina de Jesus (on her 1973 album *Marinheiro Só*), and Sergio Mendes (on his 1974 album *Vintage*), to name but a few artists.



[First theme of "Nó Caipira”]

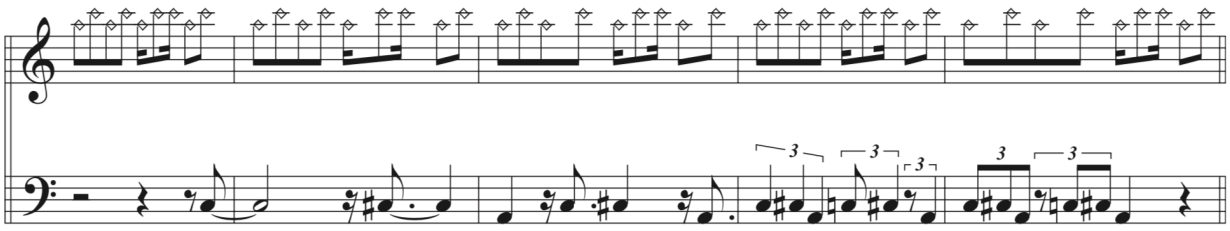


[“Marinheiro Só" as performed by Clementina de Jesus][79]

[78] Azevedo, Janaina. *Tudo o que você precisa saber sobre Umbanda - Vol. 1* (São Paulo: Universo dos Livros, 2008).

[79] Clementina de Jesus, “Marinheiro Só,” recorded 1973, track 1 on *Marinheiro Só*, Odeon.

The next reference - albeit a brief one - happens at 2:51 during a solo guitar interlude in which Gismonti plays a maracatu gonguê pattern on artificial harmonics in the upper register, while simultaneously developing an accompanying bass line in the lower register.[80]



[Gonguê pattern in "Nó Caipira"]

That solo guitar section then gives way to a section that includes the whole band and again offers a reference to a different tradition, the 1958 Miles Davis composition “Milestones” from the album of the same name.[81] After an improvised solo section in 7/4 by the saxophonist Mauricio Senise, as well as an extended duet between guitar and percussion, the main theme of “Marinheiro Só” returns to conclude the piece.

Egberto Gismonti - “Maracatu”

“I learned from them [Naná and Nené, drummers who worked with Gismonti] that maracatu, in order for it to be maracatu, the snare player has to be drunk. If the snare doesn’t

[80] The maracatu gonguê pattern can be found in recordings by other artists, notably in the intro to “Eita Mundo Bom” by Hermeto Pascoal. See Pascoal, Hermeto. “Eita Mundo Bom,” recorded 1980, track 8 on *Cérebro Magnético*, Warner.

[81] Not to be confused with a 1947 composition also titled “Milestones” whose author was jazz pianist John Lewis.

sound drunk, it's not maracatu. And that information helped me to think of maracatu like this [demonstrates on the piano]."[82]

This quote from Gismonti regarding his process of developing the sound and feel of maracatu at the piano - an instrument completely removed from the tradition of maracatu - encapsulates the elasticity of the sixteenth note distribution in performances of maracatu. The analogy itself is reflective of a socio-cultural context that references the celebratory and bibulous aspect of the carnaval celebrations in Pernambuco. In fact, Gismonti here uses not only rhythmic patterns specific to those played by maracatu ensembles but, equally important, his playing emulates the feel of a maracatu groove, particularly the fluidity of the distribution of the subdivisions of each beat. Specifically, the placement of the accent on the second sixteenth of each beat is not always consistent but, in fact, fluctuates within the subdivision grid in order to generate the groove that defines the maracatu style. That is to say that, while certain rhythmic patterns from differing genres could be perceived visually as equal when transcribed in standard notation,[83] they have enough discrepancy in the distribution of their subdivisions in performance that they cannot be considered as similar when analyzed from an auditory perspective rather than from a standard-notation-based visual approach. Here Gismonti uses 'arrasto' ('drag'), a specific alfaia variation performed by maracatu ensembles, as well as a pattern of repeated eighth notes on the right hand that imitates part of the ostinato played by the gonguê.

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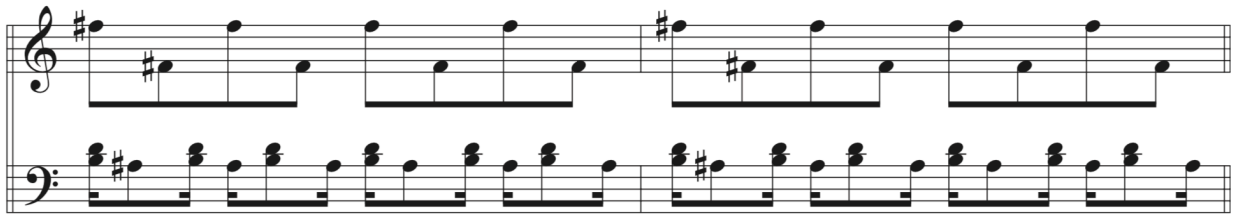
[82] "Aprendi com eles [Naná e Nené, bateras que trabalharam com Gismonti] que Maracatu, para ser Maracatu, tem que ter o sujeito que toca tarol bêbado. Se não tiver o "tarol" bêbado, não é Maracatu. E essa informação que eles me deram me ajudou a pensar num maracatu que tem[...] [mostrando ao piano as células características de sua composição]." Gismonti quoted in Tiné, Paulo José de Siqueira and Vinícius Bastos Gomes, "O maracatu de Egberto Gismonti." In proceedings of the XXV Congresso da Associação Nacional de Pesquisa e Pós-Graduação em Música, Vitória, 2015.

[83] The most obvious example can be found in the nuances in distribution on the subdivision grid of the 16th-8th-16th note pattern that is so prevalent in Brazilian music.



[Maracatu pattern as performed by Gismonti]

Nara Leão - "Berimbau"[84]

"Berimbau" was written by the seminal duo of guitarist Baden Powell[85] and lyricist Vinicius de Moraes and originally released in the 1963 Baden Powell album *À Vontade*, issued on the label Elenco.[86] In it, a main riff serves as an intro/outro and as a transition between the D Dorian modal A section and the more American Songbook-style tonal B section in the relative major key of F major. That riff is based on a specific berimbau *toque* (pattern) known as *Angola*. The rhythm of *Angola* is typically slow, fitting for the slower style of capoeira Angola. But the *toque* is also played in the faster style of capoeira Regional, where it is frequently modified into a variation known as *banguela*. In this specific song, the guitar imitates the *Angola* pattern of the berimbau, with the typical major 2nd interval of the pattern harmonized as part of a two-chord progression of F Major and G Major (bIII and IV in the original key of D minor).

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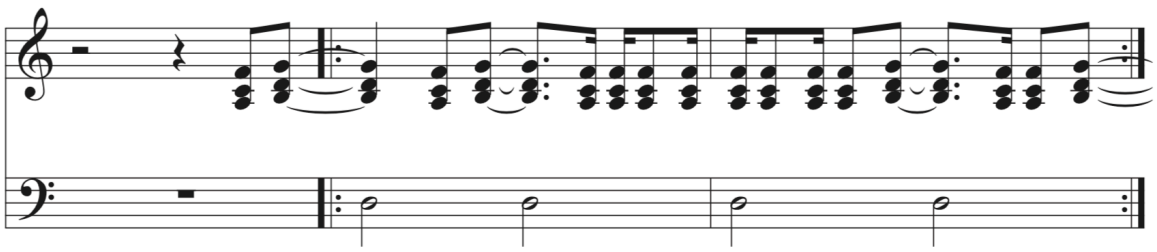
[84] Nara Leão, "Berimbau," 1985, track 3 on *Garota de Ipanema*, Philips.

[85] Important to note that Baden Powell had a connection to Afro-Brazilian traditions, specifically to candomblé and had been particularly inspired by a visit to the *terreiro* of Joãozinho da Goméia in the neighborhood of Caxias in Rio de Janeiro. Later, during a tour to the state of Bahia with singer Silvinha Telles, Baden Powell was introduced to capoeira master Canjiquinha, from whom he learned how to play berimbau and with whom he observed rodas de capoeira. See Santos, Gustavo de Medeiros. "Baden Powell À Vontade: recursos técnicos para arranjos de violão solo," (Master's thesis, Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Instituto de Artes, 2016).

[86] Baden Powell, "Berimbau," recorded 1963, track 2 on *À Vontade,* Elenco.



[Main riff of “Berimbau”]

In addition, there is an essential aspect of the playing of a berimbau that exemplifies the limitations of standard notation when discussing specificities of groove and feel and which allows us to better classify and understand the aesthetic choices made by these recording artists. In fact, while Baden Powell’s version imitates the rhythmic pattern of the *toque de Angola*, it does not necessarily imitate the feel of playing behind the beat that one can hear from an expert berimbau player. This distinction is essential and as relevant as the standard, widely-accepted classifications of the different elements of music: pitch, dynamics, key, etc. To be aware of the nuances of groove and of the elastic distribution of notes on a rhythmic grid is essential to understanding any type of music and certainly when dealing with music that is so intrinsically linked to its original purpose of symbiotic accompaniment for dance and for ceremonial performances.

I was made particularly aware of the importance of feel and of the elasticity of tempo and downbeat in Brazilian music (especially Afro-Brazilian music) years ago, during one of my trips to Brazil. In 2009, I spent several months living in the neighborhood of Garcia, one of the working class neighborhoods of the city of Salvador, in the state of Bahia. There, I practiced capoeira every day, studied percussion, and took part in the many cultural and social events of

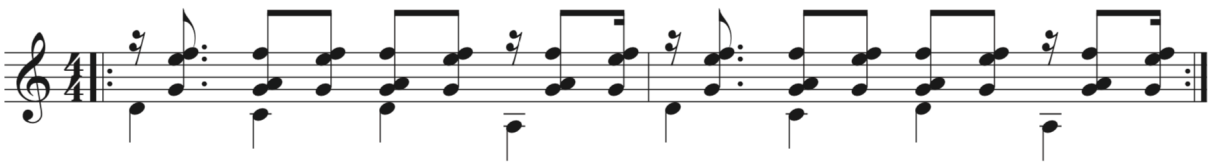
the neighborhood. Being exposed to a constant, daily input of heavily African-influenced music led to a significantly more accurate understanding on my part of the fluidity of beat and tempo. But it was when showing my capoeira master my developing skill on the berimbau - to a degree, this was an audition to be allowed to play the berimbau during the *rodas*, something usually reserved for more knowledgeable, more advanced practitioners - that I truly understood just how much I was missing the essence of the groove. I had been practicing the *toques* to a metronome to ensure that I was being rhythmically accurate and was, therefore, pretty confident that I was playing correctly. My capoeira master made it very clear, in fairly undiplomatic terms, that I was rushing and playing ahead of what he perceived as the beat. That if I were to play like that in front of one of the "old masters," I would be immediately told to relinquish my berimbau playing position. The downbeat in *capoeira* (and, by extension, in other genres) exists as a reference - and all the musicians, as well as the players fighting in the *roda* are aware of it - but the berimbau must be played consistently *behind* that downbeat.

The version by Nara Leão, in fact, does precisely this. Not only are the eighth notes already played fairly behind the beat but the "draggy-ness" becomes even more pronounced when the figure that follows, which is played somewhere between a group of triplets and a 16th-8th-16th note pattern, comes in. It's particularly interesting that Nara Leão's version includes an actual berimbau. Since this version exhibits a much more pronounced behind-the-beat execution of the berimbau pattern than the original Baden Powell recording, it is clear that a conscious choice was made to more closely emulate the feel of playing the berimbau pattern on the guitar for this performance.

João Bosco - "O Ronco da Cuíca"

João Bosco is an excellent example of a composer/performer who regularly and effectively fuses traditional Afro-Brazilian rhythms with modern jazz harmony without diluting or simplifying any of those elements. Arriving on the Brazilian music scene in 1972 as one of Jobim's protegés, João Bosco makes no concessions when it comes to using authentic Brazilian grooves, whether as a solo artist or accompanied by the highly skilled members of Nosso Trio: Nelson Faria, Ney Conceição, and Kiko Freitas.

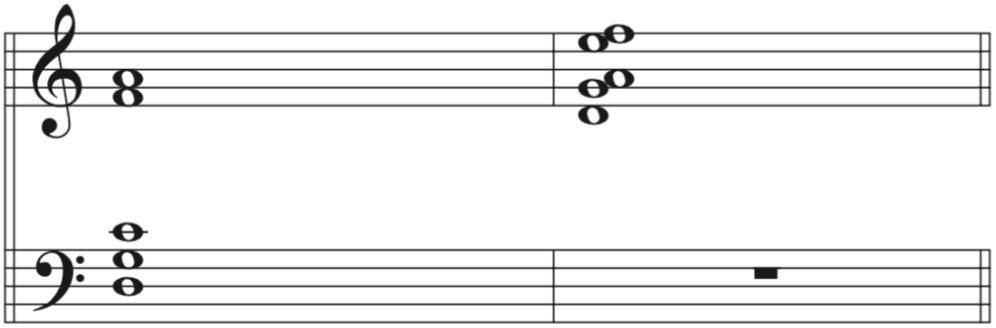
His signature guitar groove is based on the partido alto pattern[87] originally from the working class neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro and can be found in many of his compositions. In this specific example, "O Ronco da Cuíca," released in 1976 as part of the album *Galos de Briga*, Bosco emulates the percussion ensemble of partido alto by playing the bass line of the groove with lower, accented notes on beats 2 and 4, imitating the pattern of the surdo. While his thumb alternates between bass notes, his fingers perform the syncopated pattern typically carried by the pandeiro and by the tamborim. While this is not an innovation per se in an overall sense (other guitarists, notably João Gilberto, had previously synthesized percussion ensembles as guitar comping grooves), it is a move toward a closer connection to the Afro-Brazilian tradition of the samba ensembles of Rio de Janeiro.



["O Ronco da Cuíca" guitar comping pattern]

[87] Appendix A and Appendix E - Tamborim Patterns Ex. 2.

That move toward an African-derived heritage is further established by the use of open harmony inspired by the modal jazz of the late 50s and early 60s in the United States; it eschews, to a large extent, the tonal tradition of European art music and of the Great American Songbook - two essential influences in the creation and development of bossa nova - and embraces the modal traditions of West African, Middle Eastern, and Asian music. In fact, the similarities to the harmonic concepts present in Miles Davis' modal period, specifically to the tune "So What" from the 1959 album *Kind of Blue,* are present not only in the decision to use only one chord in the same key of D minor for the whole song but also in the choices made regarding that chord. Exhibiting similarities to the famous 'So What chord,' the chord in "O Ronco da Cuíca" is an ambiguous D minor that can be spelled in a few different ways: Dmi11 (9, no 7), or Dsus4 (add 9, add min10) or Dmi9 (11, no 7).



['SoWhat chord' as played by Bill Evans on Miles Davis' "So What."]

[Dmi11 (9, no 7) chord as played by João Bosco on "O Ronco da Cuíca."]

Lenine and Marcos Suzano - “Miragem do Porto”

The collaboration between Lenine and Marcos Suzano in 1993 that resulted in the album *Olho de Peixe* was a highly innovative moment in popular Brazilian music. While the use of Northeastern rhythms in Brazilian pop/rock was, at the time, not a new concept[88] - Alceu Valença had been combining different styles from Northeastern traditional music with pop/rock for decades - it marked a watershed moment in the Brazilian music scene of the early 90s. Following *Olho de* Peixe, in 1994, the band Chico Science & Nação Zumbi created the *manguebeat* movement that incorporated Northeastern rhythms with rock, ska, and funk grooves. In 1996, the heavy metal band Sepultura released *Roots*, their sixth studio album, that featured traditional Brazilian rhythms and a collaboration with the Xavante tribe from Mato Grosso.[89] While these were obvious examples of incorporating traditional styles in relatively mainstream genres, the Lenine-Suzano collaboration eschewed the strategy of adding supplemental instruments and vocals belonging to the traditions being borrowed from. Instead, the traditional rhythms are incorporated into grooves performed by a minimalist ensemble of guitar and percussion. In “Miragem do Porto,” the underlying groove is ijexá,[90] with the guitar doubling the eighth notes

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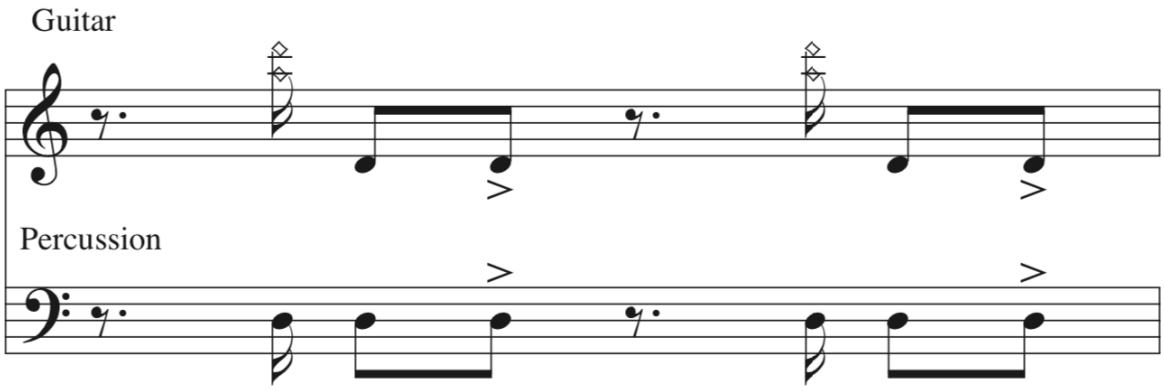
[88] “Olho de Peixe,” *Enciclopédia Itaú Cultural de Arte e Cultura Brasileiras* (São Paulo: Itaú Cultural, 2020). Available at: http://enciclopedia.itaucultural.org.br/obra69210/olho-de-peixe.

[89] The use of the Xavante song "Datsi Wawere" on the *Roots* album - under the title “Itsári,” meaning “roots” in the Xavante language - is particularly interesting as the band members traveled to a Xavante village to record with the villagers and were given clear limitations on the changes they could implement in the song when producing it for release. Also particularly interesting is the Xavante concept of “composing” music. As Laura Graham explains, “For them, music functions as a medium for entering into other realms -- whether they be other dimensions of existence or other cultures. […] part of their culture has always entailed that men engage the spirit world, especially through music. This happens in their dreams. […] One of the primary vehicles of that interaction is music. Not all, but most of their music is inspired -- you could say 'composed', although they say received -- in their dreams through encounters with other worlds.” See Reyes-Kulkarni, Saby. “Greetings From the Third World: Revisiting Sepultura's Genre-Changing ‘Roots,’” *PopMatters* (2016), https://www.popmatters.com/greetings-from-the-third-world-revisiting-sepulturas-genre-changing-roots-2495442037.html

[90] Appendix D. Transcription of percussion patterns in the *ijexá* rhythm.

of the percussion on a low D in DADGAD tuning. In addition, the accented guitar harmonics on the fourth 16th note of beats one and three help emulate the accented pattern of the atabaque in ijexá.



[Guitar and percussion recreating an ijexá pattern in "Miragem do Porto"]

Marcelo D2 - "Re-Batucada"

The most recent - chronologically - example on this list is perhaps also the most direct in its open tribute to the traditional patterns of samba from Rio de Janeiro. Marcelo D2 is an artist of immense stature in Brazil, including outside hip-hop circles. Originally from the seminal Brazilian hip-hop group Planet Hemp, Marcelo D2 has included traditional samba instruments and grooves in several of his songs. He also performed an all-acoustic hip-hop show[91] where several of his grooves, typically sampled from samba recordings, were performed by live percussionists. It's hard to convey just how significant this decision to perform an acoustic hip-hop show with live percussion really is. Hip-hop is traditionally a genre that relies heavily on sampling and, from its early inception in the Bronx of the 1970s, has functioned as a vehicle for

[91] Marcelo D2. *MTV Acústico*. Performed by Marcelo D2 (2004; Rio de Janeiro: Epic/Sony Music).

vocal expression and less so for instrument-based explorations.[92] To perform with live musicians in a hip-hop setting is usually reserved for highly successful hip-hop artists (who can afford a touring band) and very frequently happens in a hybrid setup that includes both live performers and sampled beats. To have a percussion section playing with a standard rhythm section of bass, guitar, piano, and drums, as well as background singers and a horn section, is a statement to how important Marcelo D2 perceives the use of percussion and live instruments to be as part of his aesthetic vision. Specifically in "Re-Batucada," the track analyzed here, we can hear a traditional samba school repique intro, followed by a combination of samba and hip-hop grooves that include caixa,[93] ganzá,[94] triangle, cuíca,[95] and a bass performing a pattern that emulates the pattern played by the surdo[96] in samba. In the outro, the guitar switches to a congo pattern[97] typically played by tamborins in a samba context or by the agôgô bell in a candomblé setting.

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[92] This is a result of the material conditions of the working class communities living in the Bronx in the 1970s. With limited access to instruments and to rehearsal space, hip-hop was an ideal genre to fill the vacuum created by the lack of traditional means of artistic expression in music. Aided by the 1977 blackout in New York City that saw stores looted and, as a result, easy access to cheap DJ equipment, hip-hop eventually became an international phenomenon. For more on this topic, see Chang, Jeff. *Can't stop, won't stop - A history of the hip-hop generation* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2005).

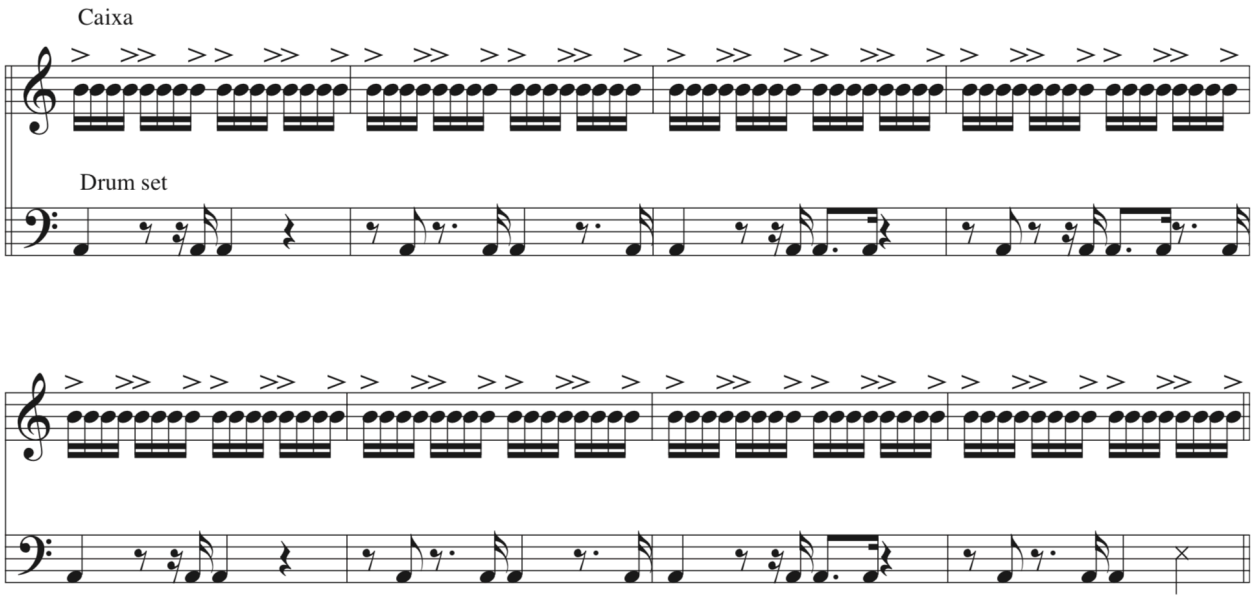
[93] Snare drum.

[94] Metal shaker played in samba.

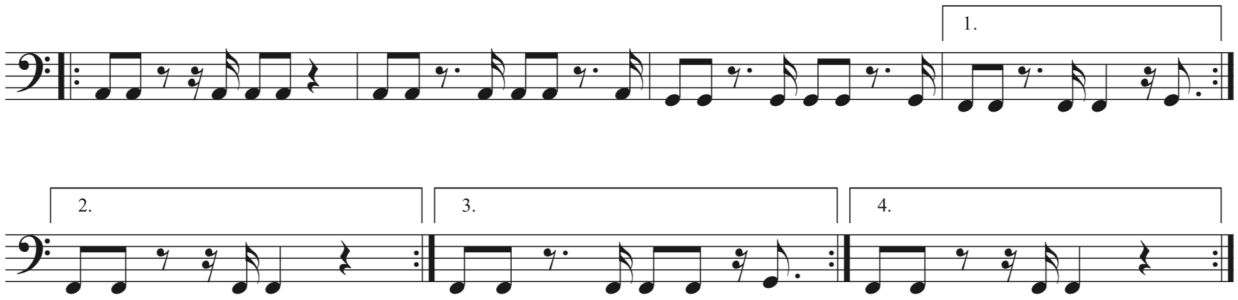
[95] Membranophone that generates sound through friction. Pitches are modified by applying pressure to the head of the drum.

[96] Bass drum in samba.

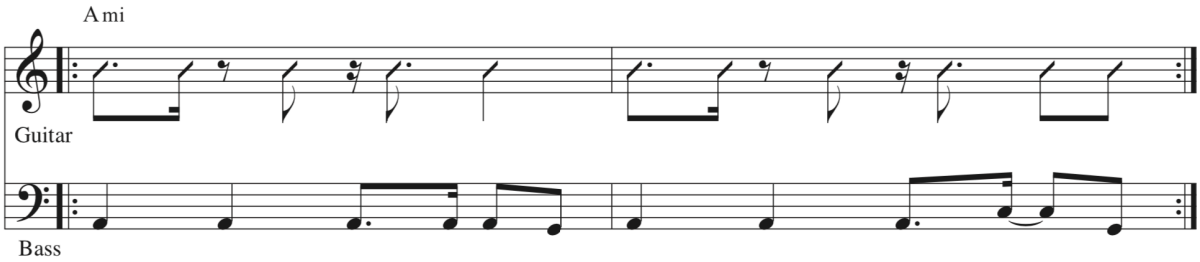
[97] In Cuba, the congo pattern is know as "son clave" in 3-2.



[Intro to “Re-Batucada” with caixa (snare) and drum set]



[Bass and kick drum pattern in “Re-Batucada”]



[Outro groove on “Re-Batucada"]

AFTERWORD

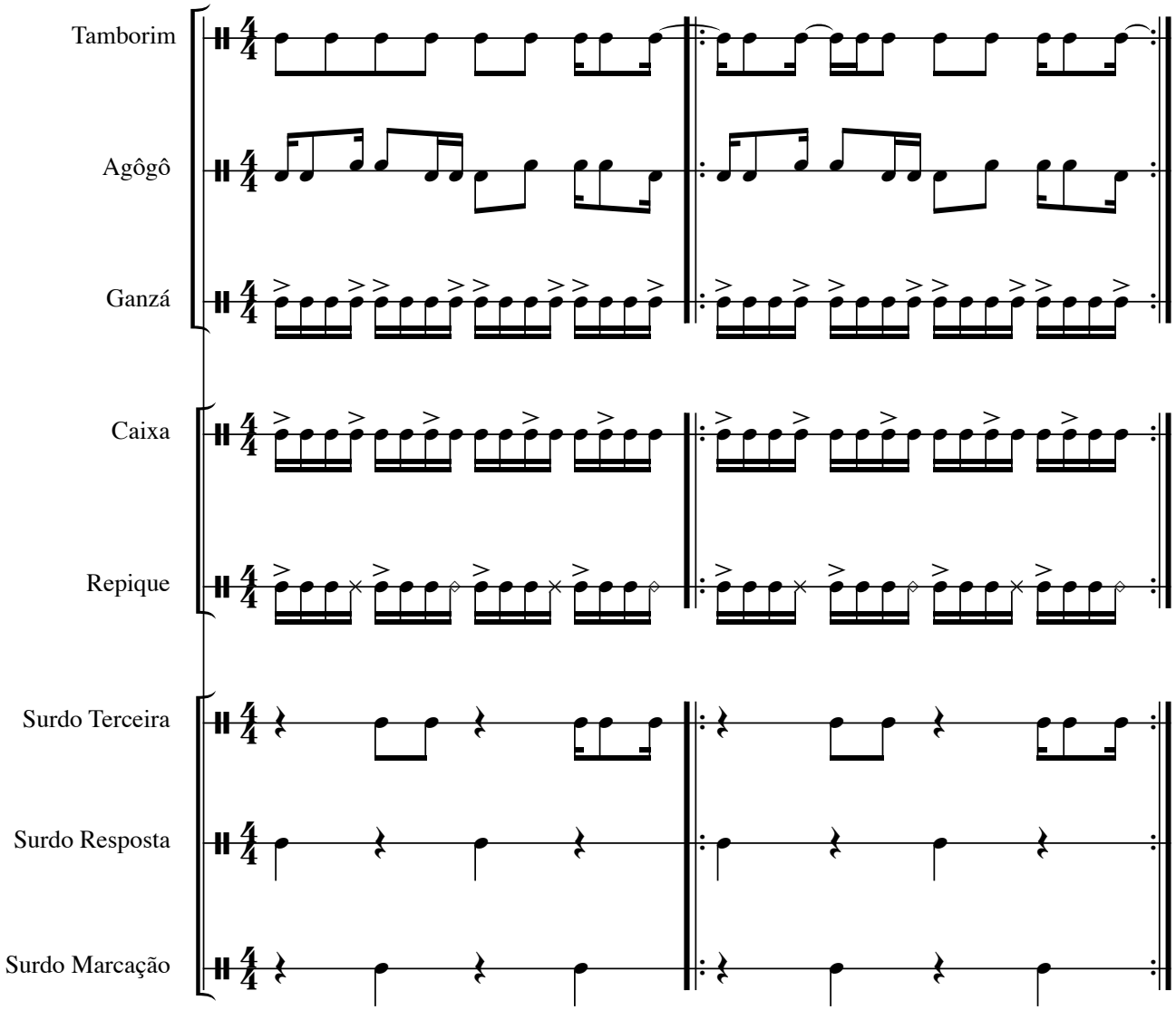
Brazilian music, like most music, is the product of a collective. We, as musicians and as scholars, inevitably rely on individual names and circumscribed genres - this thesis certainly does that - but it's important to remember that those examples are a shorthand for the immensely wide scope of human musical expression. Genres come and go, nomenclature is created and cast aside, theories and concepts get elevated and then torn down. The halls of power may inflict unrelenting oppression and the neocolonial project that exploits the Global South every day may be incessant in its demand for profit and for human sacrifice. The fact remains that through poverty, through hunger, through repression, through exploitation, the universe of Brazilian music remains ever vibrant and ever reflective of the multitude of lived experiences that is life in one of the most creative places on Earth.

The project of research and performance of which this thesis is a structural piece hopes to contribute to that vibrancy by being truthful to the creativity and innovation that originates in Brazilian music. It aims to understand and make understandable the many intricate aspects that make up different styles of Brazilian music so that knowledge of that music as an educational tool can be accurate and honest. If we can do that, then the musicians and scholars who follow will be able to further develop that knowledge and, by extension, their creativity at an exponential level. That is the ultimate goal of this pedagogical project.

Appendix A

samba

Transcribed by Joao Martins



- Primarily found in the Southeast of Brazil (Rio de Janeiro)

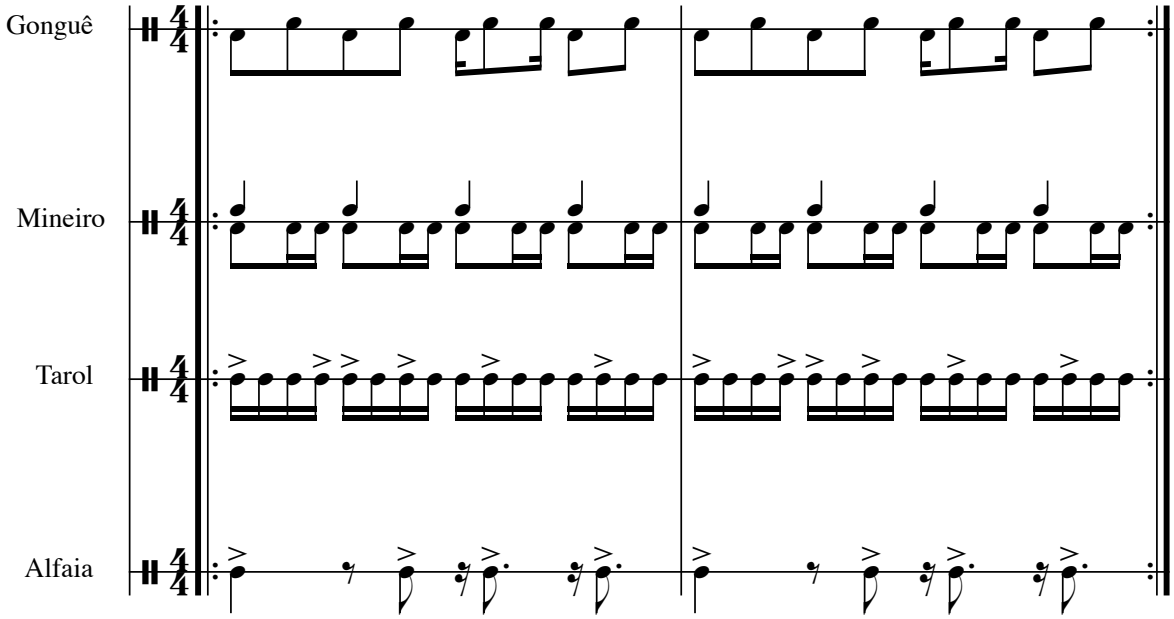
- Performed for carnaval and as a popular music style for parties

- Traditionally performed by ensemble of percussion, vocals, cavaquinho, and acoustic guitar

Appendix B

maracatu

Transcribed by Joao Martins



- Primarily found in the Northeast of Brazil (Pernambuco)

- Performed during carnaval

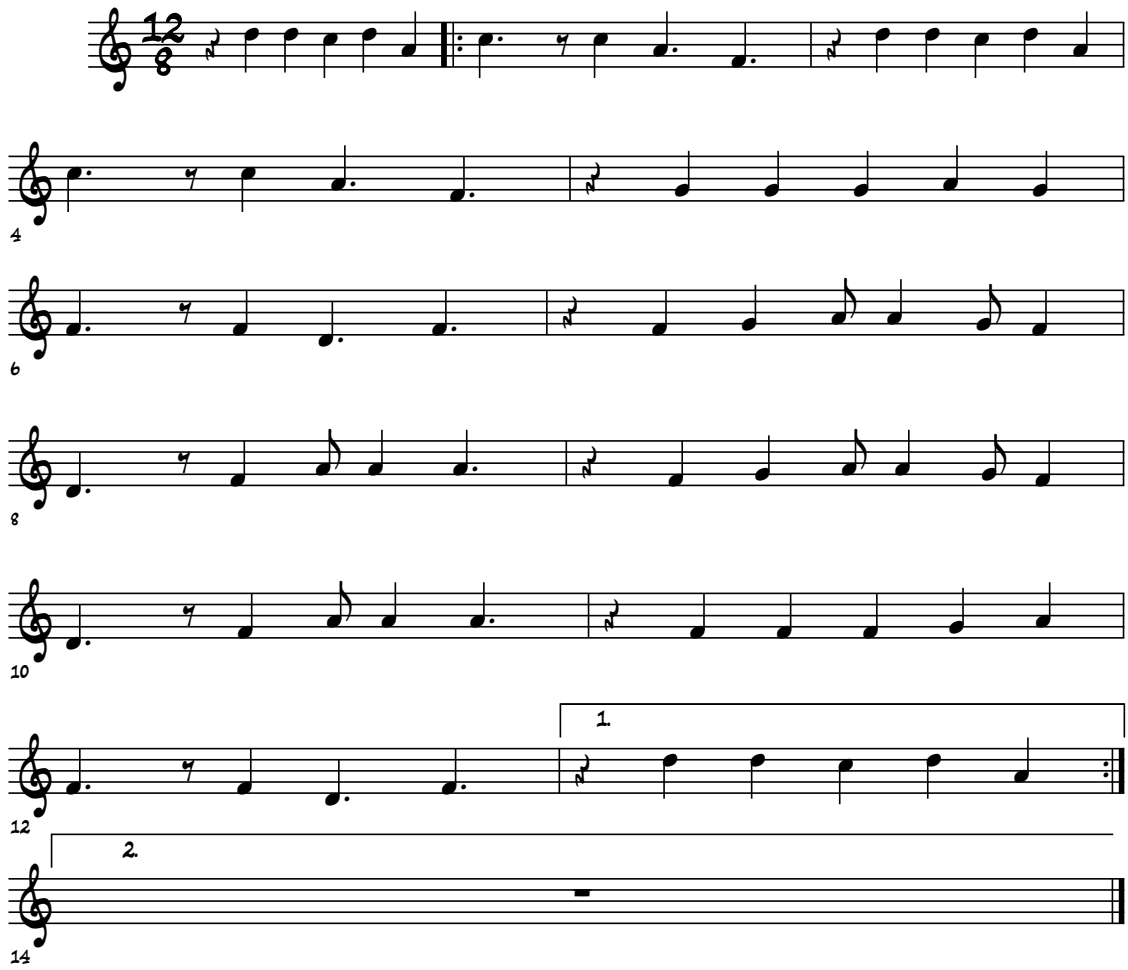
- Traditionally performed by ensemble of drums and vocals

Appendix C

Bravum for Oxumare

Performed by Jorge Alabe

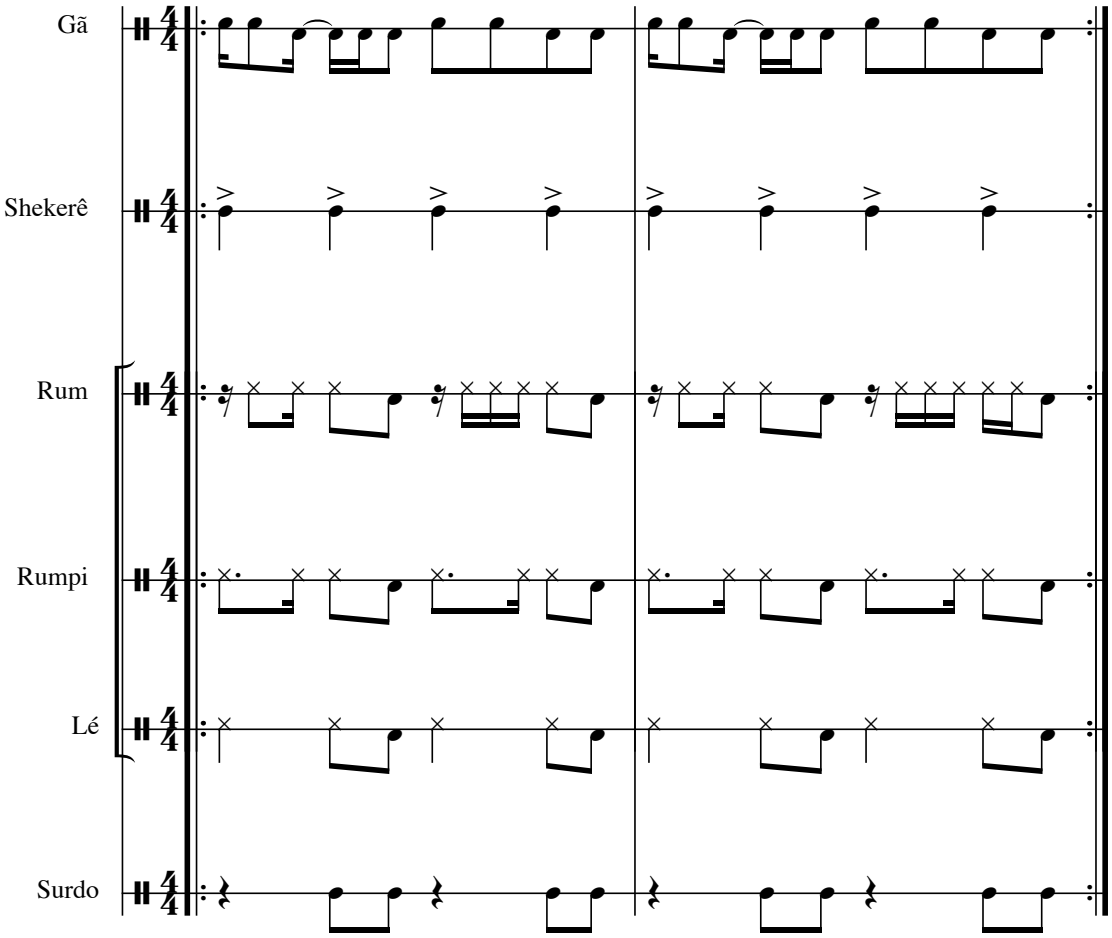
Transcribed by Joao Martins



Appendix D

ijexá

Transcribed by Joao Martins



- Primarily found in the Northeast of Brazil (Bahia)

- Performed in religious (candomblé) and profane (carnaval) settings

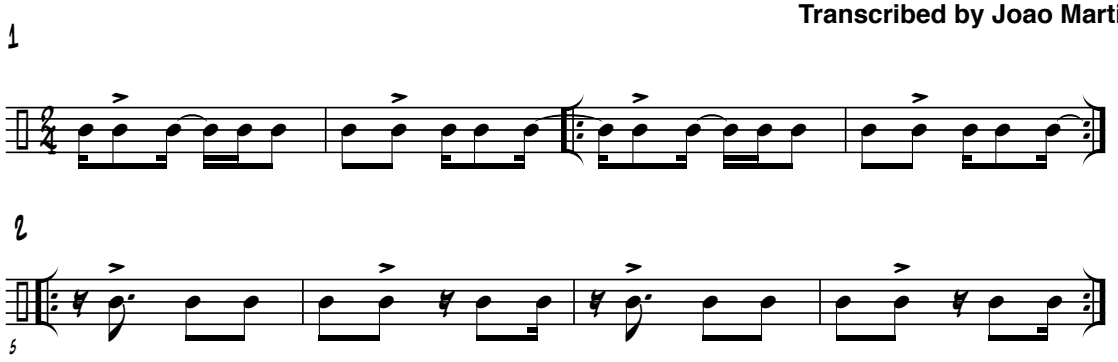
- Traditionally performed by ensemble of drums and vocals

Appendix E

Tamborim patterns

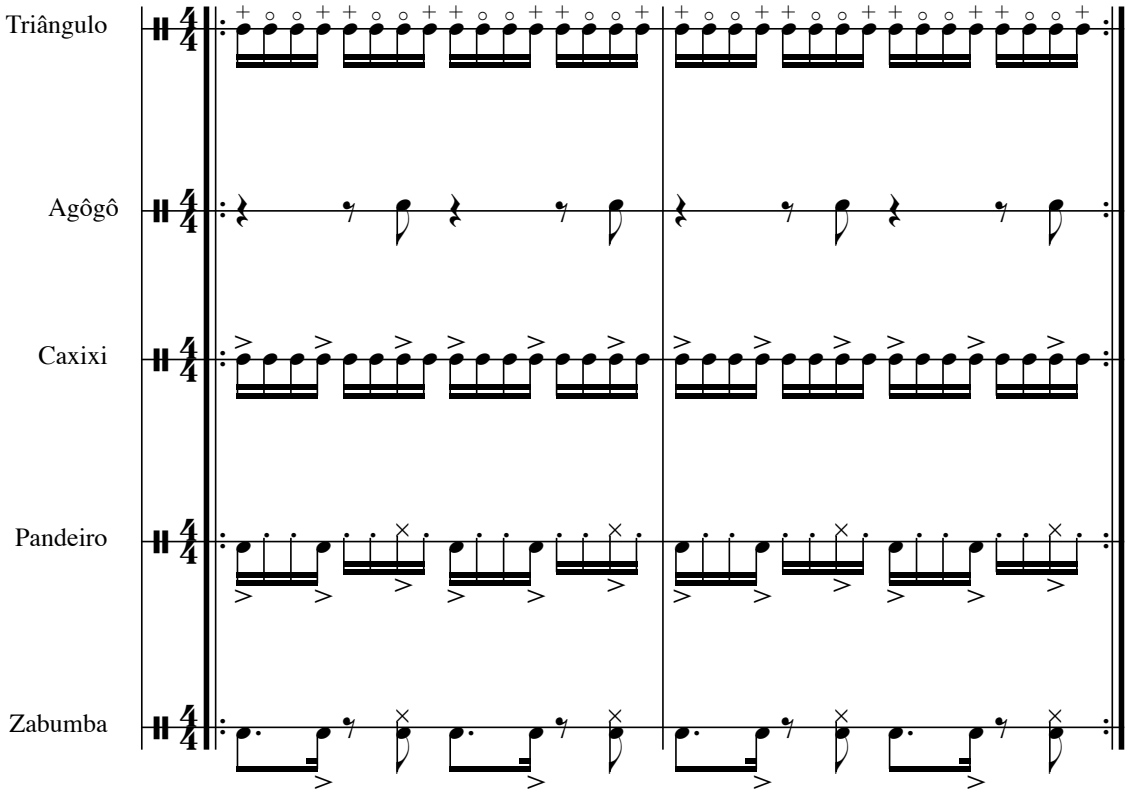
Samba and Partido Alto

Transcribed by Joao Martins



Appendix F

baião



- Primarily found in the Northeast of Brazil (Pernambuco)

- Originally performed for dance settings in rural areas

- Ensembles typically include accordion, percussion, and vocals

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