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# African Rhythms in Brazilian Popular Music

*Tango Brasileiro, Maxixe and Choro*

Richard Miller

*As diferenças entre o maxixe e o tango brasileiro se definem mais claramente nos padrões de acompanhamento do violão. Este estudo define esses padrões e mostra a importância de entender as sutilezas das heranças Africana e Europeia na música brasileira. Uma análise da evolução desses padrões de acompanhamento ilumina o desenvolvimento da música brasileira entre o fim do século XIX e os meados do século XX. A compreensão desses padrões influencia a interpretação das obras de Villa-Lobos e outros compositores brasileiros, e facilita uma maior apreciação da música popular e erudita brasileira.*

What is the difference between the *tango brasileiro* and the *maxixe*, and why does it matter? Not knowing the answer to the first question is far from an indication of musical ignorance: musicologists, historians and practicing musicians have generally suggested that there is no consistent difference. Both genres emerged in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and both combined the typical harmonies and structures of the European polka with a syncopated Afro-Atlantic<sup>1</sup> rhythmic pattern most commonly known as the *tresillo*. The absence of recordings from this period coupled with imprecise and inconsistent designations in subsequent decades has made it difficult to distinguish between them, and the two terms are often used interchangeably. A composition labeled as a *tango brasileiro* in one compilation might be labeled as a *maxixe* in another.

But a close examination of musical practices in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century reveals that the *tango brasileiro* and the *maxixe* incorporate the *tresillo* in different ways. The *tango brasileiro* takes its typical bass line from a variant of the *tresillo* known as the *habanera*, a repeating

pattern of four notes of unequal length (although sometimes the second and third note in this pattern are “tied” together, as shown below). The maxixe preserves the tresillo in its most typical form, as a set of eight 16th notes broken into three unequal groups, 3+3+2, with strong emphasis placed on the first note in each group.

The difference between tango brasileiro and maxixe is most salient in rhythmic guitar accompaniment: more precisely, the guitar, because of its combination of harmonic and percussive qualities along with its portability, was perhaps the most important instrument in the invention and distillation of these genres, and the memory of their formative characteristics has been preserved in patterns of guitar accompaniment passed from one guitarist to another over the past century. In the predominant guitar pattern for tango brasileiro, the tresillo can be felt primarily in the habanera bass line: a tango brasileiro can be thought of as habanera from the waist down and polka from the waist up. In the predominant guitar pattern for the maxixe, polka and tresillo are similarly intertwined; the tresillo can be felt in the upper part of the accompaniment and the polka in the bass line: a maxixe can be thought of as the tresillo from the waist up and the polka from the waist down.

This leads to the second question: why does the difference between tango brasileiro and maxixe matter? In part because it helps to illuminate the workings of a particularly fertile period in Brazil’s musical history, and the various ways in which broad Afro-Atlantic influences could surface in Brazilian forms. In part because these genres became two of the most important strains in the subsequent rise of choro, and good choro guitarists regularly incorporate both the tango brasileiro and maxixe patterns into their accompaniment. In part because a deeper understanding of the tresillo in Brazilian music reveals the subtleties and deep roots of the music of Heitor Villa-Lobos, Brazil’s most famous erudite composer, as well as other Brazilian erudite composers. And in part because explaining the way the tresillo is played in tango brasileiro and maxixe helps explain what gives these genres their Brazilian feel, and what musicians mean when they use a term like Brazilian feel.

## Afro-Atlantic Music

The emergence of tango brasileiro and maxixe was part of a broader phenomenon—in the nineteenth and early-twentieth century, the habanera spread from the port of Havana, as its name suggests, throughout the Atlantic World and beyond, adding decisive rhythmic fuel to a hemispheric process of musical innovation that witnessed the consolidation of the ha-

banera itself along with the *danzón* in Cuba, the *tango brasileiro* in Brazil and its cousin in Argentina (which eventually became so famous as to lay sole claim to the name) and ragtime in New Orleans. The habanera spread one version of the *tresillo* throughout the Atlantic World. At the same time, polka and marches also spread throughout the region, facilitated by the rise of easily reproduced sheet music. This simultaneous process of diffusion yielded many compelling combinations.

In Rio de Janeiro pianist and composer Ernesto Nazareth became the foremost innovator in this respect—some of Nazareth's best-known compositions are classic examples of the *tango brasileiro*, with melody and harmony strongly influenced by polka, anchored by a habanera bass line. The combination is smooth and irresistible—through the habanera bass line, the *tresillo* pattern pulls the melody in a new direction: when played correctly, the melodic emphases in *tango brasileiro* fall in different places than they would if these compositions were played as polka, as explained below. This is what gives them their swing.

But the habanera was not the only source of the *tresillo* form in Brazil. The *lundu*, a domestic Brazilian form based on West African antecedents, was also based on the *tresillo*. The *lundu* was initially a ring dance accompanied by percussion, performed by Brazilian slaves. But by the late 18th century and perhaps earlier, the *lundu* had already been transposed to the guitar and its close cousin the Portuguese viola, as well as piano. In this form, it re-crossed the Atlantic to Portugal, and itself becoming a key ingredient in broader Afro-Atlantic musical innovation. The piano scores for 19th century *lundus* show a prevalence of the *tresillo*'s 3+3+2 groupings, discussed in greater detail below. The *lundu* laid the groundwork for the subsequent emergence of the *maxixe*.

As one would expect, diffusion of the habanera and percolation of the *lundu* created a process of cross-fertilization and recombination. Ernesto Nazareth, foremost composer of *tango brasileiro*, also composed *maxixes*, sometimes alternating between *tango brasileiro* and *maxixe* in different sections of the same composition (as in his famous "Odeon," where the first section is *tango brasileiro* and the third is *maxixe*). A closer appreciation of the distinctions between those forms, particularly in their guitar accompaniment, helps reveal the workings of that process of cross-fertilization.

The guitar and Portuguese viola became the privileged instruments in the dissemination and distillation of these forms in Brazil. Because of its flexibility and the player's direct contact with the strings, the guitar has the ability to produce a range of effects and expressive nuances that create a percussive quality while still retaining the sonority that propels the harmony. The Brazilian guitar accompaniment consciously imitates the rhythms of percussion instruments and the peculiarities of African concepts of time

present in the *tresillo*. It also has the ability to imitate the bass and *cavaquinho* parts. This idiomatic facility of the guitar makes it an excellent functional substitute for percussion and all the instruments of the rhythm section.<sup>2</sup> In fact, during the first fifty years of *choro*, one of the first manifestations of a national Brazilian popular style, the guitar replaced percussion. The *pandeiro* only became standard in the *roda de choro* around 1920.<sup>3</sup>

The rise of the guitar as one of the defining rhythmic instruments in Afro-Brazilian music represented a variation in African practice, but one firmly within African traditions of instrumental flexibility. According to the Ghanaian ethnomusicologist J.H. Kwabena Nketia, instruments can be substituted in African music while still maintaining the African identity of the music and its musical elements.<sup>4</sup> In the Americas new sound sources and different aesthetic values accelerated this process of substitution.

In traditional African musical practice, improvised instruments are often used which become established as regular instruments. Sometimes they are used as substitutes for regular instruments out of necessity or because the quality of their sounds is preferred for the particular musical type . . . . Certain rhythmic structures may be shifted from the area of percussion to those of melodic instruments. Not only do the guitar and double bass, for example, belong to the rhythm section but also sometimes short ostinato patterns are assigned to other melodic instruments which play supportive accompaniment for an instrument that plays extended melodic lines. This gives one the impression of a formal organization closely akin to usages in African drum music.<sup>5</sup>

The focus here, then, will be on the guitar as the definitive accompaniment instrument of Brazilian popular music and how its patterns define the differences between the popular dances and music of Brazil, in particular those between *tango brasileiro* and *maxixe*. Before delving into the actual dances and the accompaniment patterns that define them, we need to gain a basic understanding of African rhythmic processes.

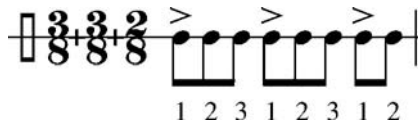
While a complete exposition of African rhythm is beyond the scope of this article, an attempt will be made to explore its main concepts, especially as they apply to Brazilian music. There is a tendency to highlight the differences between African and European rhythm and to make a case for the “exotic” nature of African rhythms. These tendencies have been criticized by Kofi Agawu and others. While Agawu, from his native African perspective, may be correct in toning down the rhetoric about the novelty of African processes—emphasizing the elements that European and African cultures have in common—and earlier musicologists, coming from a European perspective, found the study of the “novel” elements of African music to be a great revelation, I offer a third perspective: that of Brazilian music that exhibits a blend of European and African rhythms. The result is music that

is rooted in the choreography of dance with highlights and nuances largely governed by rhythms originating in Africa. When I was studying *choros* I found that the understanding and insights gained from undertaking the study of these African rhythms, whether we refer to them as *time lines* or *topoi*, were similar to the sensation of finally getting the right pair of glasses. The insights of writers such as G. Kubik, R. Brandel and A. M. Jones, while perhaps not offering a complete picture of African music, certainly do have relevance to the study of Brazilian popular music and to the nationalistic music that was inspired by that music in the works of composers such as Villa-Lobos, Gnattali, and Mignone. This study also confirms Agawu's criticism that these writers ignored the choreographic elements of the rhythm and hence missed one of the most salient aspect of its organization: the dance steps, which are rooted in divisive rhythmic organization rather than additive.

### Division vs. Addition

One of the main differences between European and African music lies in the degree to which each uses divisive and additive processes. European music uses, for the most part, division to move from larger units of time to smaller units. African music includes divisive rhythms, but has a strong element of additive rhythms, "made from simple aggregates of a basic time unit."<sup>6</sup> The smaller units usually consist of duple and triple pulses, and serve as building blocks to arrive at complex structures.<sup>7</sup> These structures are superimposed over the regular divisive structure that is marked by the choreography. Sometimes the dance steps are as simple as an alternation between feet at regular intervals, as in samba or merengue. Although the steps may indeed be the underlying rhythmic foundation of the music,<sup>8</sup> the additive processes of the superimposed rhythmic patterns are important to consider. Understanding these processes allows for a more nuanced interpretation of the rhythmic aspects of music that arises from these influences, as will be shown below in the discussion of the music of Villa-Lobos.

The tresillo's 3+3+2 pattern, illustrated in Example 1, has become a ubiquitous rhythmic pattern in Brazil, and in most of the world. One does not need to be able to read music to follow the notation. Each note has equal duration, but the grouping makes the accentuation pattern clear. A performance of this rhythm should accent the first note of each group (marked with ">"). This rhythmic unit can be described as having three strokes (the accented notes) that are irregularly placed over eight pulses. The term tresillo refers to these three accented strokes, and was first applied prominently to Cuban music by the musicologists Argeliers León and Solomon



Example 1: the *tresillo* pattern

Minkowski.<sup>9</sup> The strokes divide the eight pulses into two units of three and one unit of two: 3+3+2.

This rhythmic structure is an example of *time line patterns*, a term first used by Nketia, as reported by Gerard Kubik.<sup>10</sup> According to Nketia, “The use of additive rhythms in duple, triple, and hemiola patterns is the hallmark of rhythmic organization in African music.”<sup>11</sup> High-pitched percussion instruments like bells, sticks, and the bodies of drums are used to convey these patterns, most likely because these instruments can cut through the sound of a large percussion ensemble. Often handclaps are used on the accented notes only—the stroke. The notes that fall in between are silent but felt by the performers as “ghost” notes.

As an organizational principle, the time line patterns are essential to African music:

Now as the claps never give way but preserve an inexorably steady beat, we see that it is the song which depends on the claps and not vice-versa . . . A whole song will consist of a multiple of two or three claps or clap-patterns, or of simple combinations of multiples of these numbers . . . It is quite extraordinary that these apparently free songs should be found to rest on such a strict mathematical foundation.<sup>12</sup>

The irregular and asymmetric structures that occur within regular cycles characterize the time line patterns. The example given above (Example 1) is one of the most common.<sup>13</sup> It plays an important role in the music of Brazil and specifically in choro as we shall explore below.

Delving a little deeper, there are other interesting aspects of the time lines that shed even more light on music based on these structures. According to Kubik: “Each asymmetric time-line pattern has both manifest and latent components. The auditory perceptible part is supplemented by a silent, unvoiced pattern.”<sup>14</sup> This relationship between manifest and latent components, between auditory and unvoiced notes, is key to understanding the rhythmic nuance of Brazilian music. In the metronomic regularity<sup>15</sup> of the elementary pulse of African-based music, the voiced and unvoiced pattern interlock in kaleidoscopic patterns that help create the “physical” appeal of

Five-stroke (voiced) pattern: x x . x x . x .

Three-stroke (unvoiced) pattern: . . x . . x . x

Example 2: Voiced and unvoiced aspects of the characteristic syncopation.<sup>18</sup>

this music. When played on guitar, this results in a pattern of strong notes interspersed with “ghost notes,” where the fingers on the left hand mute the strings rather than let the notes ring clear. The soft pull of the ghost notes allows the stronger attack of the accented notes to stand in relief. Also, the presence of the ghost notes aids in keeping a steady or metronomic tempo. In discussing the manifestations of these rhythms in Brazilian music we will see various examples of these interlocking patterns.

The 8-pulse pattern of Example 2 (which has been traced directly to the Bantu tribes of West Africa)<sup>16</sup> is one of the most prevalent time lines in Brazil. Mário de Andrade called this rhythm the “characteristic syncopation of Brazilian music.”<sup>17</sup> Example 2 notates this pattern in a way used by Kubik to avoid the connotations of strong and weak beats that arise in notating music in staves with meters.

An effective way to familiarize oneself with this concept of time line is to tap the above rhythm with two hands—one per part. Such simple performance already produces an interesting rhythmic pattern. Brazilians are constantly tapping these patterns absent-mindedly. Often others begin to join in and an impromptu “batucada” or rhythmic “jam” results.<sup>19</sup> Two aspects of this rhythmic organization are important to keep in mind when considering the different dances of Brazilian music and their characteristics. First, as the exercise of tapping Example 2 illustrates, a time line will appear as a constant stream of notes of equal value—usually sixteenth notes—that on paper can obscure the interlocking pattern of their complementary parts, voiced and unvoiced. Second, the timelines are frequently found in the accompaniments of the music, either in the percussion or the guitar parts.

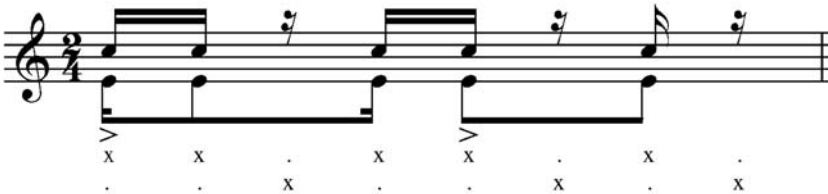
The fact that the characteristic syncopation derives from the tresillo has decisive implications for interpretation of Brazilian music based on this pattern: interpretations that obscure the tresillo and stick too closely to an interpretation based on European notation lose their groove. As Example 3 demonstrates, writing the characteristic syncopation in European notation can lead to an erroneous pattern of accentuation. Examples 3a and 3b show European notation above and the tapping pattern of voiced and unvoiced notes, as in “xx.xx.x.” below. Example 3a, shows how the metric connotations of European notation can lead performers to accent the fourth note (marked with an “>” underneath the staff) of the pattern because this note occurs on the second beat of the measure, a stronger pulse than the notes



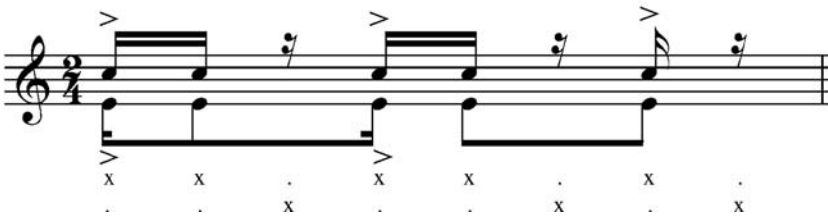
that fall on the subdivisions of the beat. But a performance preserving the tresillo accentuation of this time line should accent the third note of the pattern, creating a very different feel. Example 3b shows the same notes with tresillo accentuation, with the strongest accent, signaled by the “>” under the staff, falling just before the second beat of the measure. Playing this music according to the emphasis suggested by 3a ignores the tresillo and loses the groove. Playing it according to the emphasis suggested in 3b privileges the tresillo and preserves the groove. This accentuation was decisive to the tresillo in all its Afro-Atlantic forms, including tango brasileiro and maxixe (as well as to subsequent forms like choro and samba).

Example 3 illustrates that rendering time lines into traditional musical notation can generate errors in musical nuance. The “x” notation bypasses the metrical connotations of metric notation, but becomes too unwieldy to express anything more than rhythm. The dance steps are also not illustrated in this example, and they would probably fall on beats (accents in 3a), although they would not necessarily be expressed as accents in the musical interpretation (or they would be expressed by a different type of accent). Nevertheless, both traditional and novel notations elucidate some aspect of the music we are discussing and have their own validity, albeit incomplete. I will continue to use both in subsequent examples to illustrate the musical nuance of the rhythmic patterns of Brazilian dances.

a. Accentuation that highlights the symmetry of the meter that results from using European notation



b. Accentuation that preserves them 3 + 3 + 2 time line.



Example 3: the characteristic syncopation in European notation leads to different accentuation patterns

## The Lundu

There is strong agreement in the literature that the *lundu* originated from the influence of the Bantu tribes of West Africa and that it is characterized by lyrics and rhythms that contain allusions to the Afro-Brazilian world. Originally, it was a dance accompanied with percussion instruments and performed in a round by African slaves during the colonial period in Brazil. The accompaniment then became transplanted to the guitar and viola (Portuguese viola) and later the piano. The lundu became a popular song form in the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century and there are numerous scores for piano illustrating that the music had become fashionable in the salons of the period.

According to Bruno Kiefer, “the history of the lundu-canção [lundu-song] begins with the Brazilian priest Domingos Caldas Barbosa.”<sup>20</sup> In fact, black guitar players from Brazil “are found in the Iberian literature . . . as early as the late 16th century.”<sup>21</sup> Caldas Barbosa, arguably the most well known of these, became famous in Portugal during the late eighteenth century for his performances and compositions of *modinhas* and *lundus*. The poetry of his music is preserved in *Viola de Lereno*, published in 2 volumes, “the first in 1798 and the second, posthumously, in 1826.”<sup>22</sup> Afro-Brazilian characteristics can be found in the poetry of Caldas Barbosa, but since his publications contain no music, a determination of the Afro-Brazilian musical elements cannot be made from *Viola de Lereno*.

The lyrics themselves, though, contain relevant information. After analyzing the lyrics of the *lundus* of Caldas Barbosa, Kiefer draws the following important conclusions:

1. For the author [Caldas Barbosa], the lundu has its origins as a Brazilian dance;
2. This dance is rooted in the world of the black slaves in Brazil;
3. The poet has a nostalgic longing for the Brazilian lundu.

He continues:

Based on these facts, it is possible to propose the hypothesis that, since the lundu is a dance derived from the *batuque* and born in Brazil, Caldas Barbosa transformed it into the *lundu-canção* (lundu-song) due to the impossibility of seeing it danced in Portugal and to fulfill his longing for the country in which he was born.<sup>23</sup>

Kiefer concludes that the lundu has the following musical characteristics: binary meter (2/4, with a few exceptions in 6/8); predominant use of the major mode; four-measure phrases; almost omnipresence of the characteristic

syncopation. He also concludes that the accompaniment frequently uses the syncopation, but he could not find a typical accompaniment pattern.<sup>24</sup>

Caldas Barbosa's experience clearly shows how the guitar (or Portuguese viola) became a functional substitute for the original percussion accompaniment. After examining scores attributed to Caldas Barbosa, the nineteenth century piano scores entitled or subtitled *lundu*, and recordings from 1902 and throughout the twentieth century, I drew the following conclusions about the accompaniment and postulated on possible accompaniment patterns. They can be summarized in the following three features:

1. A constant motion of sixteenth notes in 2/4 meter using a strumming technique ("rasgado") or an arpeggiated plucking technique within a strict metronomic time.
2. An improvisatory approach in which the tresillo time line emerges through accentuation, mainly in the form of the characteristic syncopation. The recorded examples and the earlier *lundus* tend to emphasize the second and fourth sixteenth notes, and not necessarily the complete characteristic syncopation. The piano scores and the "rasgado" formula from MS 1596 (a manuscript ascribed to Caldas Barbosa) suggest the complete characteristic syncopation is one of the standard accompaniment patterns.
3. A simple melodic bass line that alternates between I and V and that may use the habanera pattern.

One of the earliest recordings of a *lundu* is *Isto é bom* (Ex. 4), a composition attributed to Xisto Bahia and possibly the first recording in Brazil

♩.62

Example 4: 1902 recording of Xisto Bahia's song *Isto é bom*.<sup>25</sup>

(it was recorded in 1902 by Eduardo das Neves, but there is some debate whether it is actually the first). The right hand employs a technique that is still used in samba to obtain a bigger sound from the guitar (in a samba setting the acoustically soft guitar must compete with a large percussion

section). The technique is a mixture of plucking and strumming. The thumb plucks the bass note while the index finger strums the three subsequent sixteenth notes. Accents can be varied, but this technique essentially emphasizes the second and fourth sixteenth notes. The notation in mm. 5–8 shows the third sixteenth note as an “x” to show this accentuation: the third sixteenth note is heard faintly almost as a ghost note. Its presence is felt but it is not marked. Another aspect of this accompaniment pattern is the repetitive melodic bass line. It is an incipient form of the contrapuntal *baixaria* that later flourished in the hands of seven-string guitarists Tute and Dino 7 Cordas,. In the upper voices, das Neves fills in the gaps of the bass line, maintaining the constant pattern of the accompaniment.

## The Standard Choro Accompaniment Pattern

The *lundu* provided the basic rhythmic pattern of choro. Rhythmic variations already evident in the 1902 recording of “Isto É Bom” illustrate the standard patterns for choro guitarists.

Examples 5a-d demonstrate variations on the basic choro guitar patterns. Different guitarists give these patterns different names, but preserve a marked continuity of style. In the course of my research, I studied with Dino Sete Cordas and Marcello Gonçalves, himself a former student of Dino Sete Cordas. Both taught the accompaniment pattern shown in Example 5a as the standard choro pattern. Note that the tapping pattern under Example 5a corresponds to the first half of the characteristic syncopation (as shown in Ex. 2). In recordings of slower choros, the pattern of Example 5b is often used. The fourth sixteenth note is followed by a rest, receives a slight accent and a staccato phrasing. Since the pattern in Example 5b has all the sixteenth notes, the *tresillo* time line is expressed through accentuation. The tapping pattern below it is notated with the upper-case “X” representing the voiced pattern and the lower-case “x” representing the unvoiced pattern. Patterns 5a and 5b are both present in the 1902 recording of the *lundu* (Ex. 4).<sup>26</sup>

Guitarist Nelson Faria labels these two patterns differently, calling Pattern 2 the “basic pattern” and Pattern 1 “variation #1.” He adds that “Pattern 2” is the “typical ‘pandeiro’ pattern.”<sup>27</sup> Renato de Sá calls a mixture of the patterns (Ex. 5c) the “Levada Tradicional” (“traditional accompaniment pattern”). He labels Example 5a as the “Levada Tradicional 2.”<sup>28</sup> Despite these slight differences in labeling, there is a strong agreement that these are the traditional choro accompaniments. The 1902 recording of “Isto É Bom”

## a. Pattern 1: The standard choro accompaniment pattern

Rhythmic notation for Pattern 1:

X	X	.	X	X	X	.	X	X	X	.	X	X	X	.	X
.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.

## b. Pattern 2: for slower tempi.

Rhythmic notation for Pattern 2:

X	X	x	X	X	X	x	X	X	X	x	X	X	X	x	X
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

## c. Pattern 3: "Levada Tradicional" according to Renato de Sá.

Rhythmic notation for Pattern 3:

x	x	.	x	X	X	x	X	x	x	.	x	X	X	x	X
.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.	.	.	X	.

## d. The characteristic syncopation as guitar accompaniment

Rhythmic notation for Pattern 4:

X	X	.	X	X	.	X	.	X	X	.	X	X	.	X	.
.	.	X	.	.	X	.	X	.	.	X	.	.	X	.	X

Example 5: Standard choro accompaniment rhythms for the mature choro genre.

shown in Example 5 links these patterns directly to the lundu. Example 5d shows the characteristic syncopation as guitar accompaniment, a practice also linked to lundu. Nineteenth century piano scores reveal that the characteristic syncopation was also an important accompaniment pattern for the lundu. Recapitulating, metronomic sixteenth-note pulses in tresillo ac-

centuation formed the bedrock of *lundu*, guitarists accompanied *lundu* using several standard variations but each of these preserved the *tresillo* feel, and these variations subsequently formed the basis for guitar accompaniments of many early Brazilian dances including *maxixe*, *tango brasileiro*, *choro*, and *samba*.

Choro guitarists vary their accompaniments and rarely adhere to one pattern throughout an entire piece. The underlying time line behind all four patterns of Example 5 show that they are variations of each other and can be used interchangeably. The most important stylistic consideration is to play each pattern with an accentuation that brings out the *tresillo* pattern.<sup>29</sup>

This is not to suggest that choro guitar remained the same since the 1902 recording of “*Isto É Bom*.” Quite the contrary: the rhythmic, harmonic, and contrapuntal patterns of choro expanded and continue to expand beyond the basic patterns of the *lundu*. By the second decade of the twentieth century, the seven-string guitarist Tute (Artur de Souza Nascimento) began to transform the simple melodic bass line evident in the 1902 recording of “*Isto É Bom*” into the more complex contrapuntal bass runs known as *baixaria*. Dino Sete Cordas (Horondino da Silva) subsequently raised *baixaria* to greater levels of complexity, making it one of choro’s defining characteristics. Influences from the Northeast of Brazil expanded the rhythmic palate of choro, and American jazz and blues expanded its harmonic vocabulary.

It is worth drawing more specific attention to the chain of influence here: Tute (1886–1957) played in the thriving *maxixe*, *tango brasileiro* and early choro scene of Rio de Janeiro in the first two decades of the twentieth century. In addition to being choro’s first known seven-string guitarist, he is credited with giving Pixinguinha his first gig, in 1912. Dino Sete Cordas’s (1918–2006) career overlapped with that of Tute, and accompanied Pixinguinha (the influence of Pixinguinha’s tenor-sax counterpoint on Dino Sete Cordas’s *baixaria* is well-known). And Dino Sete Cordas, besides having influenced or taught most guitarist of the generations that followed him, including most notably Raphael Rabello, taught Marcello Gonçalves (1972–present), a guitarist with Trio Madeira Brasil and numerous other bands, and one of the foremost musicians of choro’s revival from the 1990s through the present. It took only three or four musicians to traverse more than a century of music, and choro has placed great emphasis on the generational passing of wisdom. This helps explain how early notions of distinctions between *tango brasileiro* and *maxixe* patterns, and the proper ways to use both in accompanying choro, could have survived in the practical knowledge of seven-string guitarists, despite broader confusion over terminology.

## Tango Brasileiro

The Brazilian tango is not a Brazilian version of the Argentinean tango. The reason they share the same name is not because one followed the other or was an imitation of the other. Rather, both styles came from the influence of the *habanera* as it spread through Latin America. Besides sharing common roots and instrumentation (the early phase of Argentinean tango also had an instrumentation based on the flute and the guitar),<sup>30</sup> the two styles have important differences. Brazilian tangos predate the Argentinean tango, have a stronger African accent, and were for the most part instrumental. The “stronger African accent” is the most notable difference between the two tangos.<sup>31</sup> The European nuance features a more elastic or rubato treatment of tempos and beats within a measure, accenting the pushes and pulls of the melodic line. The African nuance features a strict adherence to tempo, bringing out the layered rhythmic juxtaposition of the time lines.

By the 1930s, the word *tango* became decidedly associated with the Argentinean dance and Brazilian composers rarely used it. Before that, though, the main composers of Brazilian tangos were the pianists Ernesto Nazareth, Chiquinha Gonzaga, and Marcelo Tupinambá (1889–1953). Henrique Alves de Mesquita (1830–1906) is credited with creating the style and being the composer of the first *tango brasileiro*, *Olhos Matadores* (1871), followed by *Ali-Babá*, from the theatrical review *Grande Mágica*, premiered in 1872.<sup>32</sup>

Unlike the nebulous and contradictory information on Brazilian accompaniments, the *habanera* is one style that has been clearly defined by the rhythm of its bass line and is itself “a synthesis of European and African elements.”<sup>33</sup> Its influence had a worldwide impact ranging from the development of ragtime, choro, and the Argentinean tango to its usage by art-music composers such as Bizet, Debussy, and Albéniz. It was introduced in Brazil in 1865 or 1866.<sup>34</sup> Example 6 illustrates the habanera bass line and shows how it is a variation of the tresillo time line. As such, a nuanced performance would accentuate the second note, as marked on the score. Most performers steeped in the European tradition accent the third note because it falls on the beat. This emphasizes the symmetry of the meter of the piece and dilutes the asymmetry and the dancing quality of the time line. The anacrusic nature of the tresillo accentuation truly transforms the performance of this simple pattern. The experience is evident simply by tapping with the accentuation shown in Example 6 and then comparing it to an accentuation that emphasizes the third note.

In Brazil, the words *tango* and *habanera* were used interchangeably during the second half of the nineteenth century. Baptista Siqueira reports that in the 1860s the word *tango* did not refer to a particular genre; it was a title that indicated a fast piece of music.<sup>35</sup> Siqueira continues that Alves de



Example 6: the habanera bass line

Mesquita adapted a *zarzuela*<sup>36</sup> to the taste of the carioca public, substituting the term *tango* for *habanera*.

## The Maxixe

The history of the maxixe has been well covered by Jota Efegê and other musicologists, and I will concentrate on the musical characteristics of maxixe accompaniment.<sup>37</sup> The maxixe was a dance performed to polkas and tangos before the maxixe acquired its own musical characteristics. For this reason, there are polkas and tangos that went by the name of maxixes but do not represent the characteristics of the music that would later be identified with the same name. Béhague writes:

If we compare a real maxixe written around 1900, with a polka of thirty years earlier, we can easily verify that in its early phase the maxixe was nothing more than a choreographic indication applied to the polka, the tango, and the habanera.<sup>38</sup>

Jota Efegê quotes Mozart de Araújo as affirming: “Initially the word indicated the way of dancing a polka or a tango.”<sup>39</sup>

The dance began around the 1870s and 1880s. The music began to acquire characteristics that were notable in the dance, and piano scores that are subtitled *maxixe* began to appear around 1902.<sup>40</sup> The foremost element of the dance is the incorporation of African traits borrowed from the *lundu*. The *lundu* was a dance of purportedly sensuous and even lascivious nature, but it was danced with the couples standing apart in a round. The novelty of the polka was the entwined stance of the partners. The combination of the sensuous movements of the *lundu* with the entwined stance of the polka yielded the maxixe, a dance that was so provocative that maxixes were banned from being performed by military bands at the presidential palace in the first decade of the twentieth century and were looked upon with moral outrage by the elite of the society.<sup>41</sup>

In the music, the increased presence of African elements of the dance was expressed in an exaggeration of the accentuation of the time lines. Mário de Andrade described the character of the music of the maxixe by saying, “its





O maxixe bem requadrado by Aurelio Cavalcanti.<sup>42</sup>

originality consisted simply in its *jeitinho*.<sup>43</sup> *Jeito* means “way” or “manner,” and Andrade was referring to the way in which Brazilians nationalized the music. He continues, “And with the *jeitinho*, we even nationalize Bruckner [*sic*, Bruckner] who is a stiff German, and Puccini, who is a loose Italian.”<sup>44</sup> The diminutive suffix (*-inho*) adds endearing connotations that include what can be described as the essence of Brazilian characteristics. Basically, Andrade was saying that the originality lay in the Brazilian way in which the music was played. What was this way? A hint can be taken from discussions of the music of one of the first chorões, Joaquim Callado, who was active during the 1870s when the dance began to become popular. Callado’s ensemble, Choro Carioca, is purported to have established the choro ensemble formation with guitars, cavaquinho and flute. From interviews with musicians who actually knew and played with Callado, musicologist Mariza Lira reported:

The thing that distinguished the interpretation of this artist [Callado], and that became a characteristic of the music, was not the melodic design, nor the rhythm, nor even the variations of the counterpoint; it was all of these things resting on a foundation of laziness, purposeful indecision, a type of delay.<sup>45</sup>

Callado was playing polkas and lundus with his choro ensemble in the 1870s in this manner, a manner that is reflected in subsequent publications of his music for piano by incorporating the increased presence of time lines and the “distillation” of the tresillo.<sup>46</sup>

There are other connotations of the word *maxixe* that confirm the above quotations. In notes provided with the early recordings, Henrique Cazes mentions that the snare drum in *Maxixe dos brochasis* playing “prá trás” (behind the beat).<sup>47</sup> In fact, in current chorão terminology, *amaxixado* (“maxixed”) refers to the characteristic of the maxixe to play slightly behind the beat in a very “laid back” cadence that is typical of Brazilian popular music. Pinto also conceived of maxixe (in the 1930s) as meaning to *pull back*. He said:

The polka, cadenced and crying to the sound of a flute . . . guitar . . . cavaquinho . . . was and will continue to be the soul of Brazilian dance, with all its melodic splendor and the beauty of its lively music, attractive and sometimes inviting the ‘repucho’ of the maxixe.<sup>48</sup>

*Repuxo* (modern or correct spelling) means “the act of drawing (back).”<sup>49</sup> The choreography involved “dragging of the feet,”<sup>50</sup> which is reflected in the behind-the-beat cadence. The influence of the maxixe on the polka suggested by this quotation is confirmed in the early recordings and the piano scores.

A French writer captured this characteristic of the maxixe in an article from 1938. Although his writing reveals that his knowledge of music theory was not very strong,<sup>51</sup> the idea the author expresses is clear. In an article that discusses maxixes, he writes:

The *cake-walk*, that created a furor in 1900, saw itself dethroned by the *matchiche*, the intoxicating dance. With music whose rhythms are immediately penetrating, imposing its ardent and languid undulations on the listeners . . . marking a cadence and a melody that holds back in the trombones and drags the phrases . . .<sup>52</sup>

Although terms like “drawing back,” “dragging,” or “behind-the-beat” might imply that the music was slowed down, this was not necessarily the case.<sup>53</sup> Rather, the quotations reflect the incorporation of African elements in the music and the tendency to play on the back part of the beat in a manner in which the time lines find their greatest expression, or “groove,” to use a popular term, similar to the “laying back” found in much jazz. This characteristic is not the same as slowing down the music—it can be felt at any tempo. In fact, García and Béhague report that *maxixe* indicates a faster tempo than the tango or polka.<sup>54</sup> Andrade confirms that Nazareth’s tangos were slower than the maxixes of his time. He says:

Even habaneras are *maxixáveis* [“maxixeable”] as long as we impose a more hurried tempo. And precisely, when Ernesto Nazareth is performing, you will observe that he imposes on his tangos a less lively tempo than the maxixe.<sup>55</sup>

## Accompaniment Patterns for Maxixe and Tango Brasileiro

The blending of the lundu with the polka occurred musically as well as choreographically. The African time line found its way into the European dance. The nineteenth century piano scores were often subtitled as polka-lundus, indicating this musical blending of styles or rhythms. In fact, these scores show the union of the polka with its “um-pah” figure with the tresillo in two ways. The first had a predominance of the habanera bass line figure. Since the word tango is so closely related to the habanera, I have labeled the music that follows this line of development as the tango brasileiro. This follows the examples of the famous tango brasileiros written by Ernesto Nazareth (such as “Odeon” and “Brejeiro”). The second type of polka-lundu found in the nineteenth century piano scores emphasized the pure tresillo, with its metronomic sixteenth notes and asymmetric accentuation. This juxtaposition of rhythms led to the accompaniment style of the maxixe.

Example 7 illustrates two polka-lundus that refer to each other in their titles. The nineteenth century piano scores in Brazil have numerous examples of this practice of trading barbs and referring to other publications. *O que é da chave?* (Ex. 7a) uses the habanera bass pattern throughout the song. The title means “What’s with the key?” or “What happened to the key?” which refers to the habit of the hosts of parties of locking the guests in and

a. José Soares Barboza, *Que é da chave?*, polka-lundú, mm. 1-5.<sup>57</sup>



b. Antonio Hilário da Rocha, *O que é da tranca?*, polka-lundú, mm. 1-4. The first section in Ab major with a tresillo accompaniment.<sup>58</sup>



Example 7: Two polka-lundus that refer to each other in their titles.

hiding the key to ensure their continued presence.<sup>56</sup> The response to this polka-lundu, entitled *O que é da tranca?* (Ex. 7b, “What’s with the lock?” or “What happened to the lock?”) begins with the pure tresillo form in the first section, where the second and third notes of the habanera bass line are tied together, becoming one sustained note). The second section uses the standard habanera figure, with no tie, in the bass line.

Note the similarity between the accompaniment patterns of Ex. 7a and 7b. Example 7a features the typical habanera pattern. Example 7b differs in the tie that is placed between the second and third notes of the pattern in a process that I describe as the “distillation” of the time line. The tie essentially changes the habanera rhythm to the pure tresillo, illustrating two important details. First, the accentuation pattern of the habanera should indeed accentuate the tresillo pattern; second, the polka-lundus are the link between the maxixe and the tango brasileiro.

The accompaniment pattern in Example 7a alternates between the habanera in measures 1, 2 and 5 and the polka “um-pah” figure in measures 3 and 4. The two rhythms have still not fused into one pattern. The tango brasileiro and maxixe patterns united the two patterns into one organic whole, each in a different manner. The polka-lundus that developed by joining the habanera bass line with the upper part of the polka (the “pah”) led to the tango brasileiro. Because the word “tango” is closely associated with the habanera, it is natural to call the accompaniment patterns that preserve the habanera as “tango brasileiro.” Oneyda Alvarenga calls the *tangos brasileiros* “polcas habaneradas” (“Havanarated” or Havana-style polkas).<sup>59</sup>

The polka-lundus that developed by preserving the pure tresillo and joining it with the bass part of the polka (the “um”), in contrast, led to the maxixe. Kiefer differentiates the *tango brasileiro* from the *maxixe* in terms of the presence of the habanera: the *maxixes* did not have the habanera bass lines of the *tangos*; instead they feature the pure tresillo or the characteristic syncopation.<sup>60</sup> Examples 8 and 9 illustrate these processes.

Example 8 illustrates the development of the tango brasileiro from the polka in guitar accompaniments.

Example 8 comes from my research into the tango brasileiro. Performance of this rhythm accenting the second and last notes of the bass line bring out the underlying tresillo. Pieces by Ernesto Nazareth, João Pernambuco, Chiquinha Gonzaga, Radamés Gnattali and many other Brazilian composers feature this rhythm.

Example 9 illustrates the tresillo united with the polka bass line in the unified, organic whole of the maxixe. Marcello Gonçalves gave me this example in lessons I received from him in 2001. The notes that are marked with an “x” represent ghost notes and are muted with the left hand. These ghost notes fill in the unvoiced pattern of the time line. The first line of

Polka

Habanera or tango bass

Tango brasileiro

Example 8: Development of the tango brasileiro

Example 9 represents the voiced pattern only with the polka bass line. The second line introduces some ghost notes and the third shows the complete tresillo time line with voiced and unvoiced patterns. When this pattern is performed with a steady tempo and with accentuation of the tresillo pattern, the resulting groove is infectious.

The study of the guitar accompaniments of Brazilian dances not only helps define the dances, but also aids in the interpretation of academic music from composers such as Villa-Lobos, Mignone, Gnattali, and Guerra-Peixe, to name a few, who were steeped in the popular Brazilian tradition.<sup>61</sup>

G6

D7

Example 9: The maxixe on the guitar.

## Villa Lobos and the Maxixe

After having mastered this maxixe pattern, I performed Heitor Villa Lobos's Choros No. 1 for solo guitar at a concert. To my amazement, I realized that this choro was based on this maxixe accompaniment pattern, and my performance was greatly enhanced by the nuance I had learned from the exercise of playing the maxixe pattern. The third section of the same piece features the characteristic syncopation prominently. This section is also greatly enhanced by bringing out the tresillo in the accentuation. After another performance of this piece, a guitarist asked me to show him the extra notes I played in the third section because he wanted to incorporate it into his own playing. I explained that no new notes were added, that I simply brought out the tresillo time line hidden in the characteristic syncopation.

This experience helped reveal to me the deep importance of the tresillo in structuring some of Villa-Lobos's greatest compositions. Villa-Lobos's foundations in the world of choro are well-known—he grew up attending and then playing guitar in *rodas de choro* in Rio de Janeiro in the first decade of the twentieth century. But while an appreciation of this context has helped illuminate Villa Lobos's approach to melody and counterpoint, the underlying importance of the tresillo time-line has received less attention, and is often missed by performing musicians.

This occurred most notably with the Spanish guitarist's Andrés Segovia's premiere recording of Villa-Lobos's *Étude no. 8*. Segovia altered the rhythm of the accompaniment in a way that accented the second beat, thus emphasizing the European meter and obscuring the timeline of the tresillo (Ex. 10a). Segovia's stature and the fact that this was the first recording set this rhythmic alteration as the standard interpretation of the piece.<sup>62</sup> But a closer examination of the score reveals that the accompaniment naturally emphasizes the tresillo—the uppermost notes within the accompaniment fall directly on the accented strokes of the tresillo (Ex. 10b). Playing the piece with this accentuation, respecting the note values that Villa-Lobos wrote, brings out the “groove” of the time line. The piece takes on another aspect entirely. The melody appears to float over a steady and dancing accompaniment.

A beautifully lyrical melody that floats above a metronomic accompaniment that has subtle references to African time lines is perhaps the essence of Brazilian culture. Not by coincidence, Villa-Lobos labeled another piece, *Choros No. 5* as “Alma Brasileira” (Ex. 11). What is the Brazilian soul? A quick examination of the piece shows that the opening has a steady accompaniment that consists of the tresillo time line, over which a lyrical melody

a. As recorded by Segovia<sup>63</sup>



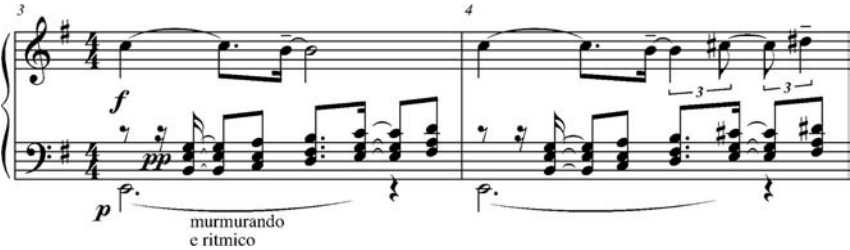
b. Accentuation that would highlight the time line.<sup>64</sup>



Example 10: Villa-Lobos, Étude no. 8.

unfolds notated with triplets and offbeat rhythms, avoiding a sense of metric placement. The melody literally floats over the accompaniment that is grounded in the time line. This is the soul of Brazil expressed musically, unifying both the lyrical melody inherited from the Portuguese and Italian with the steady pulse of the African time line in a beautiful musical expression that is greater than the sum of its parts.

I have not found a recording that preserves the time line in the accompaniment, however. Pianists seem to ignore the notation under the accompaniment (*murmurando e ritimico*) that calls for a rhythmic interpretation. The majority of interpretations diffuses the African time line with rubato interpretations.<sup>65</sup> Villa-Lobos was very aware of the metronomic sense of



Example 11: Alma Brasileira by Villa-Lobos

time and the effect it had on his music. In a philosophical statement that goes beyond a description of music but that underscores the importance he placed on preserving a metronomic sense of time, Villa-Lobos said:

Brazil has the geographic shape of a heart. Every Brazilian has this heart. The music goes from one soul to the other. Birds talk through music, and they have a heart. Everything you feel through life, you feel through the heart. The heart is the metronome of life, and there are too many people who forget this. What humanity most needs is a metronome; if there were someone in the world who could put a metronome in the middle of the earth, we might be closer to peace. People and cultures disagree because they live out of rhythm; because they don't remember the metronome they have within them: the heart. It was a fated by God that Brazil would possess the geometric shape of a heart and that all its race would have a pulsating rhythm, above all else in the Northeast, that sense of rhythm of the heart, that unity of movement, that metronome that is so sensitive. My friends, it was with this thought that I became a musician. It was because of this that I became a slave profoundly and eternally of the life of Brazil, of the things of Brazil. . . . My music is the reflex of sincerity.<sup>66</sup>

These two pieces—Etude no. 8 for guitar and Choros No. 4 for piano—and many others (e.g., *Bachianas Brasileiras*, *Tremzinho do Caipira*) capture this sincerity and this attempt to portray the aesthetics and art of a country in music. To honor the intent of the composer, it is necessary for the interpreter to recapture the sincerity that the composer brought to composition. A performance that loses the metronomic characteristic of the time line juxtaposed with the rubato nature of the melody will miss at least half of the dimensions of the music.

Understanding the incorporation of the *tresillo* in the standard *maxixe* accompaniment thus helps reveal the “*alma brasileira*” of Brazil’s most famous erudite composer. Villa-Lobos was by no means alone in this regard. Francisco Mignone, Radamés Gnattali and César Guerra-Peixe, to name a few, similarly brought the rhythm of *maxixe* and other Brazilian popular dances into erudite music.<sup>67</sup>

## Conclusions

When *maxixe*’s popularity boomed in the early twentieth century, publishers of sheet music often subtitled tangos brasileiros as *maxixes*. Popular recordings often changed the accompaniment pattern of a piece from tango brasileiro to *maxixe*, and publishers subsequently called them *maxixes*, even though the printed music bears the hallmarks of tango brasi-



leiro. This is the case for João Pernambuco's "*Graúna*," which is subtitled maxixe, but has a clear habanera bass line. The piece was recorded by the popular group Os Oito Batutas, led by Pixinguinha. The recording features a maxixe accompaniment and omits the habanera bass line. The result is printed music that features the tango brasileiro pattern, but is labeled as maxixe.

When Argentine tango replaced maxixe as an international dance fad, the term tango became firmly associated with Argentina, and was rarely used to describe Brazilian music after the 1930s. These factors and perhaps others created confusion over the labeling of rhythms, and many studies perpetuate this confusion when they assert that there are no differences.

But it would be facile to suggest that, with these distinctions in accompaniment patterns we can now label entire pieces as maxixes or tangos. Just as choro guitarists tend to vary accompaniment patterns in performance, so do pieces written in these styles vary the accompaniment patterns. Indeed, Ernesto Nazareth tended to delineate the sections of his pieces by the accompaniment patterns. For example, the first section of his famous "*Odeon*" features the tango brasileiro pattern, the second section uses the characteristic syncopation, and the third section features the maxixe pattern. The distinctions given above help us interpret each section and rhythmic pattern, recognizing the cleverness and infinite variety that composers such as Nazareth employed in mixing these patterns and other related patterns into the organic whole of a piece. Labeling a composition as either tango brasileiro or maxixe turns out to be unnecessary: identifying the presence of both tango brasileiro and maxixe in any given composition, in contrast, helps bring out its nuances and subtleties.

Close analysis of the tresillo in Brazilian popular music, then, helps illuminate the distinctions between tango brasileiro and maxixe, and the ways in which both have been crucial to the development of choro. At the same time, analysis of the tresillo and other African and Afro-Atlantic timelines helps reveal the rhythmic nuance of the patterns and of pieces that are based on them. I have discussed a few pieces by Villa-Lobos, but the ability to interpret and appreciate almost all his pieces and pieces of other Brazilian composers who were influenced by popular styles, are enhanced by this study. Furthermore, these time lines are not limited to Brazil. Analysis of Cuban music, in particular can be similarly enriched by close attention to these underlying time lines.<sup>68</sup> In Brazil's case, the time lines are particularly important as a key to understanding the rich overlap between popular and erudite music that characterized much of the twentieth century. To paraphrase Villa-Lobos, they allow one to listen to the beating heart of Brazil.

## Notes

1. The term "Afro-Atlantic" is meant to include music from the Americas that have an African influence, including the coastal areas Peru, which is not properly "Atlantic."
2. Henrique Cazes and Marcello Gonçalves, *Pixinguinha de bolso* (Kuarup Discos KCD-142, 2000), CD.
3. For a more complete description see my dissertation Richard Miller, "The Guitar in the Brazilian Choro: Analyses of Traditional, Solo, and Art Music," (Ph.D. diss., Catholic University of America, 2006).
4. J.H. Kwabena Nketia, "African Roots of Music in the Americas—An African View," *Jamaica Journal* 43 (1979): 16.
5. Ibid.
6. A. M. Jones, *Studies in African Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), I: 49.
7. These statements are not meant to imply that there are no additive rhythms in European music or divisive rhythms in African music. Indeed, additive time signatures and processes are found in many twentieth-century western scores; similarly, Agawu criticizes Brandel's work for its preponderance of "metrical modulations" that convey the impression that African music uses mostly additive rather than divisive meter, an impression that then confirms the complexity of this music, a complexity in turn necessary to the construction of its difference, its 'exotic' status. In Northern Ewe music there are, of course, additive processes on local levels, but beyond that meter is divisive, not additive." The presence of additive processes within divisive meters in Africa helps to explain their integration into the divisive meters of nineteenth-century Brazil.
8. Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music*, (New York: Routledge, 2003), 73.
9. Carlos Sandroni, *Feitiço Decente, Transformações do Samba no Rio de Janeiro (1917–1933)* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ, 2001), 28.
10. Gerhard Kubik, "Africa" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2001 ed., 201.
11. J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *The Music of Africa* (London: Victor Gollancz, Ltd., 1975), 131. The concept of time lines as the "structural fundamental" has been questioned in Meki Nzewi, *African Music: Theoretical Content and Creative Continuum: the Culture Exponent's Definitions* (Oldershausen, Germany: Institut für Didaktik populärer Musik, 1997), 193. "Elsewhere, Nzewi notes that the bell pattern of West African ensemble music, popularly known as a "time line," is no more than a 'phrasing referent.' It provides a 'statistical measure' in ensemble music but is 'not the structural fundamental' (V. Kofi Agawu, "An African Understanding of African Music" *Research in African Literatures* 32, no. 2 [summer 2001], 193). Perhaps the organizing principle can be found in the regular patterns of the dance, but the distinguishing features for non-native listeners are indeed the time lines. Perhaps the word "hallmark" is meant to convey this idea and not that it is the main feature of the rhythm or its organizing principle.
12. Jones, I: 20.

13. Kubik, 201.

14. The preceding elements of Kubik's analysis are also necessary to a fuller musicological appreciation of these patterns. According to Kubik, African time line patterns are mathematically determined by (a) the cycle number (the number of constituent elementary pulse units contained in the repeating cycle, usually 8, 12, 16 or 24), (b) the number of strokes distributed across the cycle (5, 6, 7 or 9 strokes) and (c) the asymmetric distribution of the strokes that generate two adjoined sub-patterns (5+7, 7+9 or 11+13). Each asymmetric time-line pattern has both manifest and latent components. The auditory perceptible part is supplemented by a silent, unvoiced pattern. Kubik, 201.

15. *Metronome sense* is another term that Agawu objects to as a description of African music. The distinction here is the difference between the regularity of the elementary pulse of African-influenced music and the elasticity of the pulse in much of European music. It's not meant to imply that African music displays no elasticity or that European music has no regular pulsation. Simply that the African time lines exhibit the same strict adherence to a steady pulse as does, say, much of Baroque music. It certainly does not mean to imply surprise that Africa has developed a strict sense of pulse (Agawu, 79).

16. Kazadi W. Mukuna, "O Contato Musical Transatlântico: Contribuição Banto à Música Popular Brasileira," (Ph.D diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1978), 128. Note: Mukuna labels this rhythm as a four-pulse time line, perhaps because when it is rendered in European notation it appears to have four quarter notes.

17. Sandroni, 29. The term "characteristic syncopation" that describes the rhythm is becoming standard usage. Besides Sandroni, it is also used in Tania Mara Lopes Cancado, "An Investigation of West African and Haitian Rhythms on the Development of Syncopation in Cuban Habanera, Brazilian Tango/Choro and American Ragtime (1791-1900)" (DMA diss., Shenandoah Conservatory, 1999) to describe the sixteenth note-eighth note-sixteenth note portion of this rhythm that is prevalent in the Habanera, Choro, and Ragtime.

18. Example 2 illustrates Kubik's "mathematical determinations" (see footnote 14) in the following way: a) the cycle number is 8 (total of eight pulses); b) There are five strokes (voiced pattern) distributed across this cycle; c) the strokes (voiced pattern) are divided into 3+3+2 (illustrating that this rhythm is a variation of the tresillo pattern described in Example 1) Kubik, 201.

19. To increase your enjoyment of Brazilian music, or to enhance your performance of Brazilian rhythms, take Example 2 and practice it until you can tap it repeatedly without stopping. Vary the speeds until you have mastered the pattern to the point that the hands do it alone without the need for you to look either at the notation or your hands, i.e., without conscious direction from the brain.

20. Bruno Kiefer, *A modinha e o lundu, duas raízes da música popular brasileira* (Porto Alegre: Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, 1977), 35. "... a história do lundu-canção inicia-se com o brasileiro Domingos Caldas Barbosa."

21. Rogério Budasz, "Black guitar-players and early African-Iberian music in Portugal and Brazil," *Early Music* 35.1 (2007) 3-21.

22. Márcia Taborda, "Nas Cordas da Viola . . . a Consolidação dos Gêneros Nacionais," *Revista Brasileira* 8 (May 2001): 14.

23. Kiefer, *A modinha e o lundu*, 38. “1-para o autor o lundu é originariamente uma dança brasileira; 2-esta dança está vinculada ao mundo dos negros escravos brasileiros; 3-o poeta sente saudade do lundu brasileiro. A partir destes dados, pode-se aventar a hipótese de que, sendo comprovadamente o lundu uma dança derivada do batuque e nascida no Brasil, Caldas Barbosa o tenha transformado em lundu-canção pela impossibilidade de vê-lo dançado em Portugal e – para matar saudades do país em que nasceu.”

24. Ibid., 43.

25. Humberto Moraes Franceschi, *A Casa Edison e seu tempo* (Rio de Janeiro: Sarapu, 2002), CD. Reissue of *Isto é bom*, Odeon Record 108076, 1902.

26. The rhythm book that supplements the seven-string guitar method of Marco Bertaglia<sup>1</sup> presents both these patterns in the order presented here and adds that Example 6b should be played staccato and slightly muffled. Marco Antonio Bertaglia, *Ritmos no Violão* (São Paulo: Marse Gráfica LTDA, 2003), 36.

27. Nelson Faria, *The Brazilian Guitar Book* (Petaluma, CA: Sher Music Co., 1995), 88–89.

28. Renato de Sá, *211 levadas rítmicas* (São Paulo: Irmãos Vitale, 2002), 16.

29. More specifically, the guitarist preserves the tresillo feel in the upper part while imitating the accentuation pattern of the *surdo* in the lower part (stems down played with the thumb). This *surdo* pattern emphasizes the second beat by making the first beat more staccato (the quarter note is actually performed as a dotted eighth with a sixteenth rest) and accenting the second beat (as shown in the first measure of Ex. 5a, but normally not notated).

30. Astor Piazzolla, *Histoire du Tango pour flûte et guitare* (Paris: Éditions Henry Lemoine, 1986). From notes to each movement; author of notes not identified.

31. For an excellent example of this difference, listen to the pianist Joseph Smith's renditions of Ernesto Nazareth recorded on National Public Radio's Performance Today and available on NPR's website. Smith plays “9 de Julho,” an Argentinean tango by Nazareth and contrasts it with “Guerreiro,” a Brazilian tango by the same composer. Nazareth wrote *9 de Julho* to honor Argentina's independence day, and the style is markedly different from his *tango brasileiros*. The rhythms of the different pieces appear very similar—both are derived from the tresillo time line. However, Smith, following Nazareth's compositional clues, interpreted the Argentinean tango with European rhythmic nuance and the Brazilian tango with a more African nuance. Joseph Smith, “Ernesto Nazareth, Brazil's Tango Master,” *Performance Today* (9 July 2004); available from <http://www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfId=3216041>; accessed on 28 July 2004.

32. Bruno Kiefer, *Música e dança popular, sua influência na música erudita* (Porto Alegre:

Editora Movimento, 1979), 35.

33. Frances Barulich, “Habanera” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2001 ed.

34. Kiefer, *Música e dança*, 18.

35. Batista Siqueira, *Três Vultos Históricos da Música Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro, MEC, 1969), 78.

36. "A Spanish genre of musical theatre characterized by a mixture of sung and spoken dialogue." ("Zarzuela," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2001 ed.)

37. Jota Efegê (João Ferreira Gomes), *Maxixe, a dança excomungada* (Rio de Janeiro: Conquista, 1974). Tinhorão, Alvarenga, Kiefer, Siqueira, Sandroni, Béhague and others also have significant writings on the subject.

38. Gerard Béhague, "Popular Musical Currents in the Art Music of the Early Nationalistic Period in Brazil, Circa 1870–1920" (Ph.D. diss., Tulane University, 1966), 95.

39. Efegê, 47.

40. José Maria Campos Manzo, "O Maxixe," in *Breve história da Música Brasileira* [database on-line]; available from [http://www.collectors.com.br/CS06/cso6\\_cso6\\_05m.shtml](http://www.collectors.com.br/CS06/cso6_cso6_05m.shtml); Internet; accessed on 27 September 2004. Scores that were subtitled as *maxixe* indicate the name referred to a musical style with its own characteristics.

41. Efegê, 157. Instituted by the highest ranking military officer in the Brazilian army, Marechal Hermes de Fonseca, Minister of War, the ban illustrates how shocking the music and dance was to the elite society. During the early twentieth century there were unfounded rumors that the Pope himself had "excommunicated" the dance, which explains the title of Jota Efegê's book: "Maxixe: the excommunicated dance." Brazilian musicologist Luiz Antonio Simas speculates that the *lambada* craze from Brazil that swept the world in the late 1980s and early 1990s was simply a revival of the old maxixe. Luiz Antonio Simas, "O choro e o maxixe" in *Roda de Choro* vol. 2 (Rio de Janeiro: Sulamérica Estúdio Gráfico Ltda., March/April 1996), 3. Drawings of the maxixe from the early twentieth century do have a strong resemblance to the *lambada*, giving us an idea of the nature of the dance one hundred years later. Despite the similarities, a brief search for the history of the *lambada* suggests that the *lambada* came from a dance called *Carimbó* and is not a revival of the maxixe. "Lambada" in *Maria-Brazil* [database on-line]; available from <http://www.maria-brazil.org/lambada.htm>; Internet; accessed on 22 January 2005.

42. Aurelio Calvacanti, (1907), illustrated in Efegê, 39. There are manuals from the time that describe the steps of the dance. There is also a famous scene of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dancing to the "maxixe" *Dengoso* (Tango brasileiro by Nazareth) in the 1939 movie *The Story of Vernon and Irene Castle*. Note that this picture is probably reversed since the normal stance would be for the male to lead with his left hand.

43. Mário de Andrade, "Originalidade do Maxixe" in *Ilustração Musical* 1, no. 2 (1930), 45. Reported in Luíz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo, *150 Anos de Música no Brasil (1800–1950)* (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editôra, 1956), 144..

44. Efegê, 43.

45. Mariza Lira, "A Característica Brasileira nas Interpretações de Calado," *Revista Brasileira de Música* 7 (1940–41): 212. Reported in Azevedo, 149. "o que diferenciava a interpretação desse artista, tornando-a característica, não eram os desenhos que traçava com a melodia, nem o ritmo, nem tampouco as variações do contracanto; era tudo isso repousando numa preguiça, indecisão propositada, espécie de ganha-tempo."

46. A good example of this process is illustrated in my discussion of *Iman* (Richard Miller, "The Guitar in the Brazilian Choro, Ex. 4.9, p. 154), where the third section contains the pure tresillo as the accompaniment figure.

47. *Maxixe dos brochas*, Casa Edison 40478, 1906. Mini disc. Author unknown.

48. Alexandre Gonçalves Pinto, *O choro: reminiscências dos chorões antigos* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Gloria, 1936; reprint, Rio de Janeiro: Edição FUNARTE, 1978), 115–116. "A polka cadenciada e chorosa ao som de uma flauta, . . . um violão . . . um cavaquinho . . . foi, é e continuará a ser a alma da dança brasileira, com todo o seu esplendor de melodia e a sua beleza de musica buliçosa, atraente e as vezes convidativa aos repuchos do maxixe."

49. "Repuxo" in *Michaelis, Dicionário Prático* (São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1987), 768

50. Gerard Béhague, "Maxixe" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2001 ed.

51. For example, in sections left out of the quotation he says "with accompaniment of flats" and "the English horns strike, once in a while, on the third beat." It is very unlikely that the maxixe was performed with English horns and there is no third beat (unless he confused the duple time for a quadruple time); I can think of no explanation for the "accompaniment with flats."

52. Efegê, 46. Quoted from an article in the *Miroir du Monde* (Paris, 1938), author and title omitted. Parts left out of this quote show that the author was not conversant with musical terminology. ". . . o cake-walk, que fizera furor em 1900, viu-se destronado pelo *matchiche*, a dança que embriaga. Música cujo ritmo penetra de imediato impondo aos membros sua ondulação ardente e lânguida . . . marcando o compasso e melodia que se atarda nos trombones que arrastam as frases . . ."

53. It would have been helpful if it were, because it would provide direct evidence of the slowing down of the polka that led to the choro.

54. Béhague, "Popular Musical Currents," 71. Thomas George Caracas Garcia, "The Brazilian Choro: Music, Politics and Performance" (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1997), 56.

55. Efegê, 45. "as próprias habaneras são maxixáveis desde que a gente lhes imprima andadura mais afobada. E justamente quando Ernesto Nazareth estiver executando, o senhora porão reparo em que ele imprime aos tangos andamento menos vivo que o de maxixe."

56. Sandroni, 70. This behavior may have been in response to the attitude of the musicians who formed the choro ensembles that enlivened these parties. According to the stories in A. G. Pinto, chorões most often performed simply for food and drink. A. G. Pinto relates a humorous story of a choro ensemble visiting a home. The first thing the musicians did, even before tuning and playing, was to visit the kitchen to see what kind of food preparations were going on. Upon finding nothing being prepared in the kitchen, one chorão returned to his colleagues and said "The cat is sleeping in the oven [meaning the oven was not on and no food was being prepared], let's follow our stomachs out the door." Without hesitation they abandoned the party. (A. G. Pinto, 15) The expression *gato no fogão* [cat in the oven] was slang for no food.

57. José Soares Barboza, *Que é da chave?* (Rio de Janeiro: Viuva Canongia & Ca., c. 1872). BNRJ C-I-13.

58. Antonio Hilarião da Rocha, *O que é da tranca?* (Rio de Janeiro: Filippone e Tornaghi, c. 1873). BNRJ F-II-20.

59. Oneyda Alvarenga, *Música popular brasileira* (São Paulo: Livraria Duas Cidades, 1982), 252.

60. Kiefer, *Música e dança*, 53.

61. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study on the accompaniment patterns of the Baroque guitar to see what stylistic understanding we could bring to Bach, Handel, and the great Baroque composers. It would, however, be much more difficult to determine the accompaniment patterns since the line of tradition has been broken and there are no recordings of the patterns.

62. When I learned it in the early 1980s, I was advised to play it like this, because that is how everybody played it. Marco Pereira reported this practice as being very common by guitarists. (Marco Pereira, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: sua obra para violão* (Brasília: Musi Med, 1984), p. 51.)

63. Rereleased on *Segovia: The Great Master* (Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 2004).

64. Heitor Villa-Lobos, *Collected Works for Solo Guitar* (New York: Amsco Publications, 1990). Note values appear as printed; accentuation is my own.

65. The recording I am waiting for is one of Sonia Rubinsky whom I heard perform this piece with attention to the time line. She expressed in a master class that it is important to play this piece as if the pianist were being accompanied by a pandeiro player.<sup>1</sup> In choro and samba, the pandeiro (tambourine) is performed with a strict adherence to a metronomic sense of tempo. (Virginia Commonwealth University, March 2008, Villa-Lobos conference.

66. You can hear his speech given in João Pessoa in 1951 on youtube at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3uzM\\_q4h5k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3uzM_q4h5k). The translation here is my own, but there is a translation at the youtube site of the entire speech.

67. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study on the accompaniment patterns of the Baroque guitar to see what stylistic understanding we could bring to Bach, Handel, and the great Baroque composers. It would, however, be much more difficult to determine the accompaniment patterns since the line of tradition has been broken and there are no recordings of the patterns. However, we may find clues in the traditions that survived in Latin America with instruments that descend from vihuela and baroque guitar, such as the Venezuelan *cuatro* and the Mexican *jarana*.

68. For example, understanding the time lines prevalent in Cuba greatly enhances a guitarist's interpretation of Leo Brouwer. The study of the Cuban Guiro (a style that features a 6/8 time line, which Jones called the "African signature tune") informs the performance of Brouwer's *Etude no. 6*.