

Brazilian Musical Cannibalism and Songwriting

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AND SONGWRITING**

Brazilian popular music
and its impact on a Swedish songwriter

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Abstract

It is said that one thing that lay behind Brazilian music and its development is a form of cannibalism inherited from the Indians. This kind of "musical consumption" seems to continue with a growing amount of musical expressions. *How does the experience of Brazilian popular music affect me as a Swedish songwriter? Can I create something new by "consuming" this music with my background?*

This study has been made through recordings, observations, instrumental lessons, literature studies, interviews and fieldworks in Brazil, Sweden and the United Kingdom from September 2004 to May 2005. An introduction to specific music styles as *Samba*, *Choro* and *Maracatú* is given and the impact of Brazilian popular music, on me as a songwriter, is presented in sections focusing on aspects as rhythm, dance, melody, harmony and lyrics. The results show a rhythmical and lingual affection as well as a growing interest of mixing Brazilian elements with the European tradition in new modern forms. The Swedish songwriter turns out to be a musical cannibal himself!

Keywords: songwriting, Brazil, samba, choro, maracatú

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BRAZILIAN MUSICAL CANNIBALISM AND SONGWRITING

Brazilian popular music and its impact on a Swedish songwriter

1. Introduction

It is said that one thing that lay behind Brazilian music and its development is a form of cannibalism inherited from the Indians. "For modernists in the 1930s and 1940s, the foreign element had to be re-worked and re-integrated into the "roots" of Brazilian culture, a process they called "cultural cannibalism" (Magaldi, 1999). This kind of "musical consumption" seems to continue with a steadily growing amount of musical expressions. I have not experienced such variety of music styles in any other country as there are in Brazil. Rodrigues gives an explanation about this cultural cannibalism:

Brazil is a very strange place cause, I told you about anthropophagic, *antropófago* (cannibalism) (...) the Indians eat people and think that eating the other people gives power, what people have comes to you. We are eating everything and have these characteristics, this power. Everything that we listen, we eat and then start to mix and do something with (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105).

I have a big interest in Latin music since many years, especially in Afro Cuban styles. I don't remember my first contact with Brazilian popular music, which differs from other Latin genres, but both *Samba* and *Bossa Nova* were played during my childhood. According to Morales,

The music of Brazil, from *Samba* to *Bossa Nova* to the progressive Brazilian pop today, is a rich story as any that exists in the Latin world. Like Afro-Cuban music, Brazilian music is an Afro-European fusion, but there are key differences. The *Samba* beat, a shuffling, 2/4 rhythm, came about as a fusion between different African beats and does not conform to Afro-Cuban *clave*, although it is a two-bar pattern. The elaborate array of partner-dancing styles found in afro-Cuban music is not as prevalent in Brazil. Finally, Brazilian music borrows more omnivorously from north American pop and jazz (Morales, 2003).

When I was nine years old I was given the single *Zvampen* from my mother. It was a Swedish *Samba* by *Electric Banana Band*. Some years later I bought an electric organ with a rhythm section including *Samba* and *Bossa Nova*. I enjoyed these styles but it was not until I turned twenty-one, and begun my first fulltime studies in music, that I started to play and listen to Brazilian tunes like *Girl from Ipanema* and *Corcovado* in a more conscious way. During these studies I got some more stylistic tuition in playing *Bossa Nova* and *Samba*. I believe that both styles are commonly played in Sweden and in the rest of the world. Jazz musicians usually include these styles when they perform and write music considered as Jazz. Many popular Swedish artists also have made covers and translations of popular songs from Brazil. One example is *Cornelis Vreeswijks* song *Deidres Samba* which is a translation of Brazilian artist *Chico Buarques* piece *Quem Te Viu, Quem Te Vê*. But I believe that when Swedes play *Bossa Nova* and *Samba* it is given a different expression. When I recently decided to go deeper into Brazilian popular styles I was very much after its origin.

Brazilian and Latin music also had a big impact on me as a songwriter. I was keen of getting deeper into the music of Brazil. How could I do that? All I knew about the music from Brazil was *Bossa Nova* and *Samba*. During a trip to South America 2002/2003, I visited Brazil for the first time. It was just for ten days, and I spent most of my time on beaches, as well as in restaurants and record shops. During my very last day in São Paulo I bought heaps of records and I discovered more modern forms of *Bossa Nova* and electronic music like the Brazilian *lounge*. One CD, *São Paulo Confessions*, was made by the producer and songwriter *Suba* and it had a deep impact on me. He was Yugoslav from Europe with a background of traditional music education and had studied electronic music at the *IRCAM* institution in Paris. Then he had moved to Brazil and worked with top Brazilian musicians and was by this time considered as one of the best producers in the country.

Expatriate Yugoslav musician-producer Suba, a student of Afro-Brazilian rhythms, native Indian music and jazz, has lived in the bustling South American megalopolis of São Paulo for the past ten years. His music is a blend of tropical textures and electronic programming (...) an emergent style that is fast becoming recognised as the shiny new soundtrack to Latin American life (www.crammed.be, 171004).

Suba also produced *Bebel Gilberto*, daughter of the *Bossa Nova* legend *João Gilberto*, on her successful debut album *Tanto Tempo*, released in 2000. She represents a new generation of artists, which renews and brings the tradition further. "I want to show the world that Brazilian music isn't just 'The Girl From Ipanema'" says *Bebel Gilberto* (www.bebelgilberto.com, 171004). *Tanto Tempo* is considered as one of the most globally successful albums of Brazilian music ever, according to the artists website.

I saw *Bebel Gilberto*'s concert in Brighton, UK, October 2004, after the release of her second album *Bebel Gilberto*. This inspired me to get on with similar song-productions.

How could *Suba*, a complete stranger (as far as I know) come from outside of Brazil, with another background, get into the Brazilian music and be so successful in working with its prior artists? This was an inspiring inquiry. Was it an opportunity for me as well? Could I, myself, contribute with something to Brazilian popular music with my background? I had a personal interest of developing my own song writing and exploring new spices from a country that seemed to have an endless source of good music and performers. I was keen to have a genuine and true impression of the Brazilian music and to improve my understanding in how it is performed. I was going to visit Brazil a second time.

To prepare my stay in Brazil and be able to communicate in Portuguese (a majority of the people in Brazil doesn't speak English) I had to learn a new language. I had studied Spanish for two years at college in the beginning of the nineties, which does help since the language has a lot of similarities with Portuguese. However, from an earlier experience in South America, during 2002 and 2003, I found out that my Spanish was poor. It was even more difficult to understand spoken Portuguese. Initially gestures and body language had to be used several times. Luckily the Brazilians have a very well developed expression of gestures. In September 2004 I started a distance course in Portuguese at Stockholm University. The meetings took place around every sixth weeks and made it possible for me to combine the Portuguese course with my studies at School of Music in Piteå and the trip to Brazil. Portuguese words and other specific words in this report are put in italic and have explanations in the glossary section.

1.1 Aims

My aim with this study is to explore how the experience of Brazilian popular music affects me as a Swedish songwriter. I also wonder what I can develop in my own compositions based on my experience from this music. Can I create something new from this music with my background?

I am always interested in widening my senses about music and what functions it could have. The travel to Brazil was an opportunity to discover new music and present other Brazilian styles than just *Samba* or *Bossa Nova*, the most well known outside Brazil.

Another purpose of my travel to Brazil was to work with Brazilian musicians and create contacts for further co-operations. What happens in the meeting with the Brazilian musicians? What will the communication be like?

2. Methods

The methods consist of interviews, observations, recordings, literature studies, and instrumental lessons, buying of instruments, collecting of CDs and DVDs in Sweden and Brazil from September 2004 to May 2005.

I chose to do the interviews since I had the opportunity to meet people very involved in the particular music I was interested in. The observations were made consciously and unconsciously through my participation in different musical contexts and activities in Brazil. My own recordings gave me immediate sounding results of my work and show the process and development in my song writing. Through the instrumental lessons I had an opportunity to understand and learn new musical styles through the way they are performed and from their typical sound and function in the music. The purpose of collecting and buying these instruments was to continue the improvement of my skills in playing them even after the return from Brazil and to put

their sounds into my song-productions. Through the collection of CDs I could listen and experience far more music than I was able to consume during my stay in Brazil.

Brazil is a big country and it would not be possible to musically or geographically cover all of it during my travels. Therefore I sampled a few places in different regions and chose states as Minas Gerais, São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the Southeast and Pernambuco in the Northeast. The selection was also based on where I had good contacts.

An important factor in the fieldwork was to get into the culture of Brazil, to get a sense of the context behind the music and see what function the music had in the daily life. This was achieved through the opportunity to stay in Brazilian homes and share the social life with the Brazilian people.

2.1 Interviews

The interviews were made in English, except the interviews with Paulinho Do Bandolim and Jorge Martins, which were in Portuguese. My knowledge in the Portuguese language was limited, even though it improved during my stay in Brazil, and I made an effort to do the translations as authentic as possible.

I made an interview about *Choro* with Paulinho da Rosa Faria, or Paulinho do Bandolim as he is called, mandolin player in a *Choro* group in Itajubá. Percussionist Bill Lucas, leader of *Bantu Querê*, a *Samba* school in Belo Horizonte, was interviewed about *Samba* and Brazilian rhythms. Mauro Rodrigues, flutist and arranger, was questioned about *musica mineira* (music from Minas Gerais) and other Brazilian popular music. An interview about *Maracatú* was made with Jorge Martins, percussionist and leader of *Corpos Percussivos*, a percussion school in Recife. The last interview was about Brazilian electronic music and the music industry in Brazil with producer and songwriter Roberto Coelho, São Paulo.

All informants were filmed and recorded on mini-discs. This was to ensure the recorded material from the interviews if a technical problem would appear for some device. The videos are also a complement to the sound recordings and give important information about the informant's facial expressions during the interview. The interviews took place in informal environments at homes, except the interview with Jorge Martins, which was held at *Corpos Percussivos* percussion school.

2.2 Observations

Observations and recordings of concerts and sessions were done during three months of travel in Brazil. A *Choro* group was recorded during an informal gathering in the home of Fernando Feichas and his family in Itajubá, a small town in the state of Minas Gerais. The *Samba* school *Bantu Querê* was recorded during one of their week concerts at *Tambor Minerio*, their home scene in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais. A *Maracatú* group was recorded during a rehearsal at *Corpos Percussivos*, a percussion school in Recife in the state of Pernambuco.

2.3 Recordings

I have composed music during my stay in Brazil and after the return to Sweden. Individual music recordings were made in Brazil with guitarist Fernando Feichas, Itajubá, singer Mila Conde, Belo Horizonte and percussionist "Beto" Alberto Luiz Ferreira, São Paulo. In Sweden additional recordings so far has been made with singer Katarina Nilsson, Långlöt, guitarist Johan Christher Schütz, Mjölby, singer Maria Rylander, Borgholm, percussionist Paulo Murga, Haparanda, bass player Juan Mendoza, Luleå and singer Ida Olsson, Gothenburg.

2.4 Lessons

Lessons in Brazilian percussion, *cavaquinho*, guitar and piano were taken in Sweden and Brazil from October 2004 to March 2005. In Sweden I had lessons in playing the *pandeiro* with Paulo Murga, percussionist, Haparanda and Jorge Curra, musician, Stockholm. In Brazil I took lessons in Brazilian percussion with the percussionists Bill Lucas, Belo Horizonte, "Beto" Alberto Luiz Ferreira, Recife and Jorge Martins, *Corpos Percussivos*, Recife. Piano lessons were taken with Brazilian pianists André Mehrmari, São Paulo and Claudio Dauelsberg, Rio de Janeiro. An introduction to the *cavaquinho* was given by Fernando Feichas, musician, Itajubá and tuition in playing *Bossa Nova* guitar by Leonora Meirelles, guitarist, Belo Horizonte. Mauro Rodrigues, flutist and arranger, Belo Horizonte introduced and showed *musica mineira*, music from the state of Minas Gerais, and other Brazilian popular music.

2.5 Instruments and CDs

Along with the instrumental studies several typical Brazilian instruments were bought. Except for three *cavaquinhos* and one Indian flute these were percussion instruments; six *pandeiros*, a *tamborim*, a *surdo*, an *alfaía*, a *zabumba*, two triangles, an *abê* (cabassa), two *ganzás* (shakers), a *reco-reco*, a *caxixi* and a *timba*. A snare drum was bought after the return to Sweden.

CDs and DVDs of Brazilian popular music were collected during the study. The collection grew from initially 15 CDs to 158 CDs and 6 DVDs of Brazilian music.

More than 50 music concerts and dance shows were seen, mainly in Brazil, and various street performances were experienced during the carnival in Recife, Olinda and Bezerros, cities in the state of Pernambuco.

3. Brazilian Popular Music

Brazilian popular music is an enormous subject and includes a very rich context of music styles. In this work I will present only a few impressions of it. Brazil seems to be a mixture of all elements that have occurred during its lifetime as a nation. This natural blending of everything appears also in its popular music.

Brazilian popular music seems to consist of music with roots from a diversity of cultures like the European, Arabian and African cultures as well as the Caribbean and native Indian ones. The mix of influences in Brazilian music has a long tradition. Could the unique thing about Brazilian music be the mixture of everything rather than geographical and ethnical stereotypes? "Brazil's rich musical tradition derives from the profound mingling of races that has been going on since April 1500, when the Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral stepped onto the lush tropical coast of what would later be southern Bahia" (McGowan & Pessanha, 1998).

As Perrone affirms,

With its blends of Amerindian, African and European sources, Brazil has one of the richest and most diverse musical cultures in the world. Primitive tribal music flourish in the Amazon, rural and urban regions practice many folk/traditional forms, and cosmopolitan art music has been produced since before the time of Villa Lobos. Various music that can be considered popular reflects both this wide national spectrum and the impact of international mass-media pop music (www.caravanmusic.com, 100605).

Wisnik (2002) agrees and states that:

In its origin, in the early centuries of the Colony, Brazilian popular music was marked by a mixture of elements from different contexts and cultures, that are European (Portuguese), Indigenous and African. From all that mixture it is important to point out the African presence, which brought a rhythmic infrastructure linked to dancing and vocal movement that went through centuries of syncretism.

McGowan & Pessanha (1998) emphasises that "the African peoples brought their music, dance, languages, and religions, much of which survived in a purer form in Brazil than in North America". No matter where the influence comes from, the Brazilians seem to adopt them and create something new of their own. This could be an expression of the musical cannibalism mentioned. "Terms like *antropofagia*, cross-fertilisation, and creolisation have been used to highlight a "musical exchange" wherein the local, traditional element, though changed, can still be identified in the final product" (Magaldi, 1999).

The blend of cultures with different musical traditions caused new forms of expressions. As Wisnik (2002) states,

"Brazil's popular music developed parallel to its classical music and it also united traditional European instruments - guitar, piano, and flute - with a whole rhythm section of sounds produced by frying pans, small barrels with a membrane and a stick inside (*cuícas*) that make wheezing sounds, and tambourines" (Wisnik, 2002).

In accordance to my conversations with the people in Brazil I also believe that Brazilian music is not only Afro-European fusion music but also includes the culture of the native Indians.

"Brazil's origins - the Indians with their reed flutes, the Portuguese with their singers and viola players, and the Africans with their many thrilling rhythms - make it a musical country. From the classical compositions of Villa-Lobos, to the soft sounds of *Bossa Nova*, to the driving beat of *Samba*, Brazil has developed music of striking sophistication, quality and diversity" (Wisnik, 2002).

More modern impressions of foreign music come from the international record industry and play an important role for the development of new styles in Brazil. As Perrone (1990, p. 68) suggests, "the interpretation of the massive international flow of music in recent years is particularly relevant in the Brazilian context, since the relationship between national production and foreign imports has been a constant theme in Brazilians interpretation of their own cultural phenomena".

There is a definition of Brazilian popular music as MPB, *Música Popular Brasileira*. It was explained that the meaning could differ from including all Brazilian popular music styles to a specific movement which began in the late sixties when the country was suffering a dictatorship:

Despite a repressive climate, Brazil lived the "golden age" of festivals of popular music between 1965 and 1969. Most of these songwriters' competitions were sponsored by the expanding television industry. In this period, the initials MPB came into use to distinguish music of national character from imported pop and local variants thereof (C.A. Perrone, 1992).

In this work I will not go deep into the explanation of all different music styles that one can find in Brazil. It would not be possible since they are too many. During my stay in Brazil I got in contact with a rich variety of styles like *Samba*, *Bossa Nova*, *Choro*, *Xote*, *Milonga*, *Capoeira*, *Caipira*, *Baião*, *Axé*, *Frevo*, *Forró*, and *Maracatú*. I have chosen to give a brief orientation about *Samba*, *Choro* and *Maracatú*. The *Samba* because it's known and played all over Brazil and the world, the *Choro* because of its beautiful melodies and improvised counterpoint and the *Maracatú* because it represents a style and area that I didn't know anything about.

3.1 Samba

There are some different explanations of the *Sambas* origin.

"Some people believe that the *Samba* was born in the streets of Rio de Janeiro with contributions from three different cultures - Portuguese courtly songs, African rhythms and native Indian fast footwork. Others believe *Samba* is simply African in origin and that it evolved from the *batuque*, a music based on percussion instruments and hand clapping" (Wisnik, 2002).

"The word "*Samba*" came from the *Bantu* word "semba", referring to gyrating umbilical movements, becoming a term in the nineteenth century that covered dance and popular music in general" (Wisnik, 2002). Whatever the origin, *Samba* is an important thing in Brazil.

"All of Brazil plays *Samba*, there is carnival in all Brazilian regions and there's different kinds of carnivals, different kind of rhythms and traditions in carnivals all throughout Brazil. But *Samba* is one style that's played everywhere, you see everywhere. So I think it's the main voice of Brazil" (Interview, Bill Lucas, 310105).

There are a wide range of *Samba* styles. I was explained that one of the most known styles is *Samba Enredo*, which is played by the *Samba* schools. According to Bill Lucas (310105) it is usually performed with three different pitched *surdos*; *surdo principal*, *surdo de resposta* and *surdo de repique*. Other instruments are *caixa*, *tamborims*, *agogô*, *ganzás* (shakers), *cuíca*, *repinique* and metal *reco-reco*.

Samba Enredo as played in the *Samba* schools. Example from Claudio Dauelsberg, Rio de Janeiro.

Another common style is *Samba Partido Alto* that is played with *repique de mão*, *tantan*, *pandeiro* and wooden *reco-reco*.



Pandeiros of natural and plastic skin. The later one is used in *Samba Partido Alto*.

3.2 Choro

I got in contact with *Choro* for the very first time during my recent stay in Brazil and was very impressed of it. "It is an authentic genre of instrumental music from Rio de Janeiro, played since the end of nineteenth century and marked by a great sense of improvisation, ornamentation and virtuosity" (Wisnik, 2002). This is certainly true.

I met and observed *Choro*es at an unforgettable informal session in Itajubá and experienced a very intuitive, improvised and rich music with joyful performers.

The *Choro* is also of melodically and harmonically interest and has much less percussive instrumentation than the *Samba*. *Choro* means crying in Portuguese and it's an instrumental music mainly performed in Rio de Janeiro and in the Northeast, according to Paulinho do Bandolim. "It was the way of playing which had lots of feeling, like weeping when playing (...) that it is why it is called *Choro*" (Interview, Paulinho do Bandolim, 291204).

Choro-Lento

João Machado

The musical score for "Choro-Lento" by João Machado is presented in a single system of eight staves. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into two main sections: Section A (measures 1-28) and Section B (measures 29-69). Section A begins with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket. Section B begins with a second ending bracket. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like "D.S. al Coda" and "Fine".

João Machado, Bezzeros, Pernambuco gave this Choro composition.

What is the relationship between *Choro* and *Samba*? "The rhythmic patterns are different in *Samba* and *Choro*. The main beats in *Samba* are more marked, stronger. *Choro* works more with quick notes" says Sebastião, a guitarist from the *Choro* group in Itajubá. But there is also a difference within the orchestration:

The *Samba* is heavier. In most cases you have more percussion instruments. Most of *Choro* groups have just one *pandeiro*. Sometimes you have a shaker, you have a surdo but it's basically the *pandeiro* that's the main percussion voice (...) The whole mood is something more settled (Interview, Bill Lucas, 310105).

Paulinho do Bandolim (291204) explains that *Choro* is commonly played with *cavaquinho*, two *violões* (six-string guitars), *violão de sete cordas* (seventh-string guitar), and *pandeiro* as the only percussion instrument. The *Choro* group that I observed in Itajubá were also using *tamborim*. The melody is usually played by *cavaquinho* or guitar, but mandolin, clarinet, flute or violin are also used according to Paulinho do Bandolim. "The instrument soloist plays the melody; guitars make the bass line and can also play phrases like duets; *cavaquinho* plays the core, the basic harmony and the *pandeiro* makes the rhythm. So that is the minimum" (Interview, Paulinho do Bandolim, 291204). Playing *Choro* is also a lot about improvisation. "It comes when we are playing, according to the mood, the spirit state (...) we make up things; make up new phrases on the established harmony" says Fernando Feichas from the *Choro* group in Itajubá.

3.3 Maracatú

If *Samba* is the voice of Brazil I consider *Maracatú* as one of the main voices of Pernambuco in the northeast of Brazil. There are also some similarities between *Samba* and *Maracatú*. Both are very percussive, performed on the streets among poor people and there are schools of *Maracatú* like there are schools of *Samba*. *Maracatú* is also interesting because it represents another region of the country.

Baque de Marcação, Maracatú as shown by Jorge Martins, Corpos Percussivos

The following text is a summary of the information I received from Jorge Martins through the interview at *Corpos Percussivos* percussion school in Recife:

Maracatú is from Recife and the state of Pernambuco in the northeast of Brazil. From the beginning it was a celebration to the king (king in an African cultural context and not the king of the Portuguese empire) and it usually had a popular theme. The procession used to gather in the front of a church and then walk through the city. There are two kinds of *Maracatú*, *Maracatú Traditional* and *Maracatú Estilizado*. *Maracatú Traditional* is the original form and has a religious part from the *Candomblé* (Interview, Jorge Martins, 250205).

I have understood that *Candomblé* is one typical Afro-Brazilian religion that has played an important role for the development of the Brazilian music. "Afro-Brazilian religions, despite their suppression by the Catholic Church and Brazilian government,

became firmly rooted in the national culture and had a tremendous influence on the development of Brazil's popular music" (McGowan & Pessanha, 1998).

In *Maracatú* the religious meaning is always present. "The religious part is shown in the middle of the cortege at the street. When people dance at the *terreiro* it's a dance for the *orixás*, the African gods. The performers are protected by these gods" (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105). "*Maracatú* is a *folgado*, it means a whole group of people who go out on the streets dancing, singing, playing with specific clothing and sometimes with one specific theme. All this is *Maracatú*. *Maracatú* is not a rhythm, it's not a dance, it's not a form of singing, it is everything!" (Interview, Bill Lucas, 310105). *Maracatú Estilizado* has another choreography, more stylized, which differs from the dance for the *orixás* according to Jorge Martins (250205).

Jorge Martins explained further aspects about *Maracatú* during our interview. *Maracatú* is played at several occasions during the year but the biggest occasion is the carnival in February with preparations from August. The *Maracatú* exists in the interior of Pernambuco but is also spread over the world. Today there are *Maracatú* groups in countries as US, Sweden, Germany and Russia. Common instruments that are played are the *alfaía*, *caixa de guerra* (snare drum), *tarol*, *gôngue*, and *ganza*. The *abê* is a modern invention in *Maracatú*. *Agogô* is not traditional in *Maracatú* but it appears at times. The structure is very simple. Intro and part A is the traditional form. More modern forms has intro, part A, part B and part C. (Interview, Jorge Martins, 250205)

There are two main influences in *Maracatú*. *Maracatú Baque Virado* comes from the negro culture and *Maracatú Rural* or *Maracatú de Orchestra* are from the cultures of the Indians in the north zone of Pernambuco and the interiors. The styles are different but have a lot in common. The percussion is different in *Maracatú* rural. It has *caixa*, *bumbo*, *mineiro* (*ganzá*), *gonguê*, and *cuíca grave*, a smaller type of *cuíca* than the one used in *Samba* schools. Trombone and trumpet are also used to play the melodies. (Interview, Jorge Martins, 250205)

4. Discussion

How does Brazilian popular music affect me as a Swedish songwriter? When I was in Brazil I tried to absorb as much as I could of the rich amount of music styles and it would be impossible to include all impressions. I will now give some examples in sections focusing on aspects as rhythm, dance, melody, harmony and lyrics. I will not go very deep into the lyrics since my poor Portuguese does not give me the opportunity to fully understand and analyze this area.

4.1 Rhythm and dance

Rhythm and dance is fundamental in Brazilian popular music. This is mainly a consequence of its African origin. "The African influence reveals itself in Brazil's traditional and folk music through the use of syncopation and complex rhythmic figures" (McGowan & Pessanha, 1998). I experienced a strong relationship between music and dance in Brazil. This is probably inherited from Africa, as Perrone (1992) explains: "Dance and song in Brazil comprise accounts of interaction between Iberian forms brought by the colonizers of Portugal and those of the Africans brought forcibly to the New World" (Perrone, 1992).

4.1.1 Findings

I consider that for foreign people, including myself, the references in music are different than for native Brazilians. Even though I'm interested in Brazilian music, and keen of playing it, some problems will appear.

First lets have a look at the mystery of the accentuations. My references in the music usually rely on the first beat. Once I know where the first beat is in music, things normally go my way. However, knowing the first beat in Brazilian music does not help me.

I had some experience of this when I went to see *Bantu Querê Samba* school in Belo Horizonte. It was actually not anything to see but to dance! Everybody was shaking according to the rhythms and I noticed for myself that my main issue was to loosen up the feet. People went on for hours and all the rhythms were transferred into the way Brazilians danced the *Samba*. "There's no difference between music and dance. Dance is always in the context of the rhythm (...) For each rhythm, it's one kind of movement. Through dance you express many things (...) If you play and people are not willing to dance you are playing wrong" (Interview, Bill Lucas, 310105).

The rhythms can also have a religious meaning as in the *Maracatú*. "All kinds of rhythms in Brazil that are not three, are not sixth eight (time signature) became transformed to popular styles of music (...) but sixth eight rhythms in Brazil remained religious rhythms" (Interview, Bill Lucas, 310105). These rhythms are an African inherit and appear simultaneously in Africa, in Cuba and other countries according to Bill Lucas (310105).

4.1.2 How to get closer the authentic Samba

(SAMBA)

Nã'n.
Text: JAT Öhsson
Musik: Harald Erici

♩ 120 Intro

The musical score is arranged for the following instruments: Sång (Vocal), Flöjt (Flute), Trumpet I, Tenorax (Saxophone), Trombon (Trumpet), Rhodes (Piano), Bas (Bass), Percussion, and Trummor (Drums). The score begins with an 'Intro' section at a tempo of 120. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The vocal line is mostly rests. The flute part includes a 'solo ad lib' section. The piano part features complex chordal textures and a bass line. The drum part shows a rhythmic pattern with accents and a change in the pattern towards the end of the piece.

I have written a few *sambas* throughout the years. *Nã'n* is one of them, written 1997, with singer *Ida Olsson*, for our band *Ida Olsson Quartet*.

The arrangement is from 2002. The structure of the rhythms in the drum kit, the base figure and the rhythmical chords on the *Rhodes* where typical elements from what I considered as a *Samba*. I would still say it's a *Samba* but today I have a completely different idea of how to build it more authentically. A new song that I call *Comida Mineira* has a structure more close to the original were the bass follows the sound of the *surdo*. The *surdo* play the first beat muffled and the second beat open. This creates an important character of the *Samba*. To simulate the lower open sound of the *surdo* at the second beat I let the bass play the lower notes on the second beat:

The image shows three staves of musical notation for the song *Comida Mineira*. The top staff is for Bass, the middle for Pandeiro, and the bottom for Surdo. All are in 2/4 time and B-flat major. The Bass line consists of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. The Pandeiro part is a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F60, G60, 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translated with help of singer Mila Conde. She was recorded on the vocal and given clear instructions in how to sing and express the lyrics. I added recordings with percussionist "Beto" Alberto Luiz Ferreira, who in other hand was given very little direction. He played *Maracatú* patterns on the *alfaia*, *pandeiro* and shaker and improvised through mainly the second part of the song. In Sweden the recordings were organized and selected in different orders to build the final arrangement of the song. The element from the *Maracatú* brings an interesting, new expression in my music. The sounding result is putted on the attached CD.

4.2 Melody and harmony

There are two strong influences in the Brazilian melodies according to Mauro Rodrigues. The European influences came from the very first colonisation of the continent and there was later a very strong classical influence during the Portuguese empire. The royalties brought European musicians and artists to perform music as it was played in Europe. The other melodic influence comes from the Negro chants, prayers for the *orixás* explains Mauro. These songs are more modal when Portuguese songs are tonal. "In some kind of music you can listen completely tonal and in other you can listen completely modal and there are sometimes mix of this two things" (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105).

What about the harmonies? When I was in the state of Minas Gerais I discovered a very rich harmonic world that seemed specific for the region. One of the most important artists from Minas Gerais, *Milton Nascimento*, brought a lot of new ideas into harmonizing, explains Mauro Rodrigues. "When you listen to Milton you can listen to something very mixed with a very modal background because of his early influences, but you can also listen to something of Ravel mixed with this" (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105).

I remember my first impressions of listening to *Milton Nascimentos* music.

At first I did not like it, maybe because the music didn't approach me immediately, with its odd form and expression that I wasn't used to. However, a few months later, when I was suffering the loss of a relative, I got the CD *Milagre Dos Peixes* and the

music fitted perfectly well with my emotions. As I listen more to Milton's music the quality grows and I find a great originality in his expression. The melodies, the form and the harmonisation are very unpredictable. The artist's expression also seems genuine and direct, and for a moment I felt like going back to my home island in Sweden and express what we have there, in my music.

But there are other artists who are important regarding music from Minas Gerais and the specific *mineira* sound. "There are guys like *Toninho Horta* that you can listen some polytonal harmonisation, two different tones, and Toninho is a big influence in *mineiros* music" (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105).

4.2.1 Failure in making a Choro

I noticed during my stay in Brazil that *Choro* had a revival among young people who are beginning to explore and develop the tradition. "Nowadays, many youngsters listening to *Choro*, playing *Choro* (...) they come in the *roda de Choro* (group of *Choro*) to learn the style and the swing to be able to compose later" (Interview, Paulinho do Bandolim, 291204).

I was certainly keen to compose a *Choro*. During my stay in Itajubá I scored something that I considered as a *Choro*. But something went wrong. What I thought was a *Choro* was more like a Mambo, which is an Afro Cuban style! The chord progression was apparently not at all typical for *Choro*. As Fernando Feichas, musician in a *Choro* group in Itajubá, says (291204):

In the genuine *Choros*, the chords are simple. There are no sophisticated or dissonant chords. The dissonant chords are the diminished. Chords with 7th are very much used. And the progressions more used are: tonic, dominant, tonic with 7th, subdominant, relative.

"Most of the *Choros* are made in 3 sections" (Interview, Paulinho Do Bandolim, 291204). Mine had two.

4.3 The lyrics

Brazil has many great lyricists. One explanation of the very developed and metaphorical expression can be traced in the recent past.

When we had the dictatorship there were people that wanted to write against the regime but they couldn't say clearly what they wanted (...) they had to make some not directly. It becomes a style, to write things, to say something not saying it (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105).

I have listened to a lot of Brazilian artists with no understanding of the lyrics. The music and the grace of the Portuguese language has been enough to please my ears. Even when I listen to *Milton Nascimento* I do not understand his lyrics very well.

I was told that they are often about his background in the black communities of Minas Gerais, but when I hear his recordings the expression is very convincing and it is obvious that he sings in his native language. I strongly believe that music and lyrics gets a stronger expression if it is written and sung in native language. "The lyrics from Minas Gerais are kind of surrealistic, sometimes very crazy *imagems* (...) maybe people are crazy! In the northeast people say things more related to life, more feet on the ground" (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105).

During a visit to São Paulo I joined a friend in a course where they were analysing the lyrics of *Chico Buarque*. I had some difficulties to follow the conversation as it was held rapidly but I got a sense of the brilliant way that Chico put the words together. One of his most well known songs is *Quem Te Viu, Quem Te Vê*, which also is famous in Sweden but in another version, *Deidres Samba*, with the Swedish artist *Cornelis Vreeswijk*.

I wanted to write lyrics in Portuguese from the very first moment in Brazil but since my knowledge in the language was poor I felt a strong limitation in doing so. A solution was to let other people join the process. I initially wrote English lyrics for my song *Brazil*. Then singer Mila Conde helped me to translate it to Portuguese. In the translation some words and expressions changed but the meaning remained the same:

Brazil

Come as you are
Bring your dreams
This is the land of flavours
raised by the good sun

Ask yourself
why you're here
What is the secret
of this sacred land

Brazil thrills your mind

Mountains by the sea
are guarding the city
Now is the time to be
and leave the fear behind

Brazil stirs up your mind
Feel the spirits of life

Brasil

Vem, vem pra cá
Experimentar
O sabor do sonho
Deste lugar

Qual a razão
De aqui estar?
Qual é o segredo
Que o sol vem me contar?

Brasil vezes mil é mais

Me conectar
o azul do mar
É agora a hora
De ser

Brasil me tocou demais
Vida pulsa em ondas, carnavais

I also found a solution to get Portuguese lyrics when I collected names from common dishes in Minas Gerais and transformed them into lyrics in my song *Comida Mineira*:

Comida Mineira

Farofa, pamonha, coxinha
queijo de Minas
Empadinha, quindim, carne seca
com mandioca frita

Feijão tropeiro, pao de queijo
pastel de milho
You have to try the food that's named
Comida Mineira!

Feijoada e tutu de feijão
com costelinha
biscoito pipoca, requeijão
e frango com quiabo

Lombo à mineira, bife
acebolado
This is what they do in
Comida Mineira!

The best part comes and put an end,
to your stunning meal
"a sobremesa" close the deal

Cajuzinho, mousse de maracujá
Paçoca e bolo de fubá
Doce de leite, manjar de côco

Curau de milho verde, mogango,
pastel de angu,
pessegada, chuchu, abobrinha
e frango ao Molho Pardo

Doce de abó-bora,
e goiabada?
Think about the sweet
when you fill up
with more tender meat

Vaca atolada, que mais?
A marmelada!
Boscoito de Polvilho
tem pudim de leite lá?

Feijão tropeiro, pao de queijo
pastel de milho
You have to try the food that's named
Comida Mineira!

The best part comes and put an end,
to your stunning meal
"a sobremesa" close the deal

Bananada, doce de figo,
brigadeiro, doce de côco,
e mamão, biscoito pipoca

Another way to approach Brazilian lyrics is to try and translate them. So far I have translated two songs of Tom Jobim; *Corcovado* and *O Amor Em Paz*. The songs fitted well to be performed at some of my family occasions, with lyrics close to what I wanted to express. These two songs are both translated into English and from the comparison of the two versions I understood that there was some freedom in the translation if the meaning would remain close to the original. This helped my own purpose when I worked with the Jobim lyrics. However, generally I consider that the lyrical influence in my song writing today is more a matter of themes from my experience in Brazil rather than impressions from Brazilian song lyrics.

5. Conclusion

The aim with this work is to study Brazilian popular music and see what impact it has in my song writing. My big interest in this music is an important parameter.

I am familiar with Brazilian music through *Samba* and *Bossa Nova* and have played and composed in these styles since years back. This is important. The interest and former experience of Brazilian popular music probably helps me to understand and learn new things about it. Do I represent a Swedish songwriter in general? Probably not, regarding my relationship to this music. I consider Brazilian music as very rare in Sweden. *The girl from Ipanema* and other *Bossa Nova* and *Samba* classics are nowadays considered a part of the jazz standard collection. These tunes are played. But other Brazilian music is rare. To find this music in a record shop in Sweden is difficult. If I mention *Gilberto Gil*, one of the most important Brazilian artists and songwriters today, many people in Sweden will not know who he is. As he got the *Polar Music Prize* in Stockholm this year for his big contribution of Brazilian popular music that situation might change. But I would say that my interest and knowledge in Brazilian music is pretty rare. This could also mean a limitation to perform Brazilian styles in Sweden. It would be of interest to see further research in this area.

What I find interesting in Brazilian music is probably the rhythms, the beautiful melodies and the nice harmonies. I love listening to singing in Brazilian Portuguese and I consider this one of the most beautiful and musical languages in the world.

Just to hear this language is like music to me. That could be a reason of why I enjoy this music so much even though I don't understand what is said in the lyrics. This might change now as I improve my skills in Portuguese due to my studies of it.

During my time in Brazil I discovered a rich diversity of music besides *Samba* and *Bossa Nova*. In Minas Gerais I got familiar with *Choro* and beautiful instruments as *cavaquinho* and seven-string guitar. I was introduced to the typical *mineira* sound and expression, as in the music of *Milton Nascimento*, the certain love for instrumental music as it was played at the bars of Belo Horizonte. In Pernambuco the music impressions exploded with styles as *Maracatú*, *Frevo*, *Forró*, *Xote*, *Quadrilha*, *Baião*, *Banda de Pifano* among others and not to mention the festivity of the incredible carnival. The Northeast is considered as the poorest region in Brazil, but it appears to have an endless richness in culture.

Dance is more important in Brazilian music than I expected, as music and dance is one unit in Brazil. I understood that if you want to play, understand or transmit the music with the correct feeling it is necessary to establish the rhythms within the body. This symbiosis creates a rich expression and experience of the music. I initially felt very stiff in my body since there are not the same moves in Sweden, but this changed after some *Samba* nights with hours of dancing. When I returned to Sweden and went to dance at a party the difference was very obvious. I felt like my body died on the dance floor since the music did not challenge or inspire me the way it did in Brazil.

The music instruments I got in Brazil enrich my music and bring new sounds into my songs. They are an important factor in my experience. These instruments preserve some flavours of Brazil and are a lot of fun to play. Through the understanding of them and their specific functions I can develop as a pianist, as well as a songwriter and arranger. Their sounds immediately change the expression in my songs, and their typical function and patterns inspire me to compose songs in new mixtures of styles. Brazil consists of a great mixture of people. I think this open-minded mixture of traditions and people is also reflected within the music. Mixing things and searching for new combinations and expressions takes the music further. In Brazil this process seems to have been going on for a long time.

"Mixing different parts of the world, different cultures that come together (...) this is the most important contribution of Brazilian people to the world. Maybe it's the future, it can be a reference for the future, to be more amazing, friendly" (Interview, Mauro Rodrigues, 310105). That could be the essential thing about Brazilian popular music and my great interest in it; the mixture, the exploration, and the continuing development that results in new great musical achievements. This is how I want my own music to be, unpredictable and always moving to new forms of expressions.

The form of musical cannibalism that seems to exist in Brazil is perhaps something that I can apply myself? Nothing wrong with that! In this form of cannibalism people don't have to die. It rather brings life to people. Many people in Brazil live under poor and simple circumstances and this is very sad to see. However, despite these circumstances, many of them seem to be incredibly happy. I believe that music has a central role in Brazil and that it makes the Brazilians life better. "If you have a beautiful music like Brazilian music you have to be proud of it. I hope this kind of music goes all over the world and make people happy (...) make people think about their lives in a good point of view" (Interview, Roberto Coelho, 060305).

In Brazil, music is everywhere. You can find it in a complex rhythmic pattern beaten out by an old man with his fingers on a cafe table; in the thundering *Samba* that echoes down from the hills around Rio in the months prior to *Carnaval*; and in the bars where a guitar passes from hand to hand and everyone knows all the lyrics to all the classic Brazilian songs played late into the night (McGowan & Pessanha, 1998).

Except for the great experience of the music and dance in Brazil, the people also had a deep impact on me. Friendlier and happier people with such a generosity would be hard to find. I had the opportunity to stay at their homes and share their social lives. They gave me great food, showed me their country and helped me in all kinds of situations. This I will remember with love and happiness and this is what makes me long to return soon. The time in Brazil was also an opportunity to generate contacts for future co-operations with musicians, artists and people in the field of music. I hope to have many further contacts with these people, as they represent a great musical world and because they are my friends in Brazil.

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7. Glossary

Abê - a form of cabassa

Agogô - a bell of iron or steel normally with two different sounding parts

Alfaia- drum, originally from Pernambuco Its shell can be made of macaíba wood or plywood. Its frame can be made of jenipapo or iron. The skin is goatskin, and the tuning strings are made of sisal. It is played with a pair of mallets (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Antropófago/antropofagia - cannibalism

Axé - music style influenced by modern dance music

Baião - traditional rhythm from the Northeast

Banda de Pifano - music with flutes and percussion from the interior of Pernambuco

Bantu - African language

Batuque - a kind of jam session where dancers form a circle around one performer who chooses his successor for the exhibition spot while shouting the word "Sama".
(<http://users.erols.com/arthurmurraydc/b.htm>, 100605).

Bossa Nova - musical movement born in Rio de Janeiro in the late 50s; the Bossa Nova revolutionized the Samba, condensing its rhythmic wealth into a syncopated beat with polished jazz chords for piano and guitar (Aiken et al., 2003, pp. 55)

Bumbo - A deep sounding drum, played with a mallet with a felt ball on each end, or with two surdo or tympani mallets to get the same vibrating effect. It can be played resting on a stand or with a body strap, depending on its size (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Caipira - country music style from the interior of Brazil

Caixa - snare drum

Caixa de guerra - a specific type of snare drum

Candomblé - an Afro Brazilian religion

Capoeira - a dance and fight game invented by Brazilian slaves

Carioca - someone who are from Rio de Janeiro

Carneval - yearly festivity with music and dance parades that takes off in February

Cavaquinho- a small four-string guitar

Caxixi - instrument made of straw, filled with little pieces of acrylic, rice or beriba seeds
(www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Choro - an instrumental music style mainly performed with guitar, cavaquinho and pandeiro

Choroos - people who performs Choro

Clave - rhythmical reference in Afro Cuban music

Comida Mineira - traditional food from the state of Minas Gerais

Congado - religious brotherhood with strong African ties

Cuíca - a little drum. The sound is produced by rubbing a stick inside the drum with a damp cloth, and pressing the outer head with the finger. The closer one presses to the center of the cuica, the higher the sound (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Cuíca grave - a smaller form of cuíca which differs from the instrument¹⁹ above

Folgado - group of people who dances, sings and plays with specific clothing and themes

Forró - music style from the Northeast, the original meaning was music "for all"

Frevo - music style from the Northeast with Dutch influences

Ganzá - shaker

Gôngue - bell

Groove - patterns of music that together brings a specific context

Imagens - images

IRCAM - Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique, institution of electronic music

Lounge - electronic music style

Loop - a short piece of music that is repeated

Maracatú - music style from the Northeast with percussion and voice

Maracatú Baque Virado - Maracatú style developed from black traditions

Maracatú de Orchestra - Maracatú style developed from Indian traditions

Maracatú Estilizado - Maracatú style more stylized than the traditional versions

Maracatú Rural - Maracatú style developed from Indian traditions

Maracatú Traditional - original form with religious parts from the Candomblé

Mineiro/a - something or someone who are from Minas Gerais

Mineiro - shaker

Milonga - music style from Southern Brazil

Moçambique - religious brotherhood with strong African ties

Musica mineira - music from Minas Gerais

MPB/Música Popular Brasileira - Brazilian Popular Music, also name of a movement

Orixás - African Gods

Pandeiro - tambourine-like instrument with natural or plastic skin

Partido Alto - traditional Samba style

Polar Music Prize - Swedish music prize

Quadrilha - music style from the Northeast with French/European influences

Reco-reco - instrument of African origin, made of bamboo or iron. The sound is produced by rubbing a rod on its ends and grooves (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Repinique - drum, with a high, piercing sound. It is also used as a calling and solo instrument in the samba school. In samba it is played with a stick in the right hand, with the left hand beating counterpoint directly on the drumhead (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Repique de mão - drum, normally made of aluminum, it is played with one hand on the skin and the other hitting the shell of the drum (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Rhodes- electric piano invented in the seventies

Roda de Choro - group of Choro players

Samba - music style originally from Rio de Janeiro

Samba Enredo - Samba style played at carnival by the schools of Samba

Samba Partido Alto - traditional Samba style

Saudade - a feeling of deep longing or yearning

Surdo - big tom played with hand and stick

Surdo principal/de resposta/de repique - variations of the surdo

Tamborim - small drum played with a stick commonly divided in two or three parts

Tan tan - drum, played with one hand on the head and the other on the shell of the drum. Sometimes it's used to keep time, and others to play variations (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Tarol - drum, used in brass bands and in folkloric music. It's a kind of flatter caixa with a natural skin on both sides, and a snare on the bottom side (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Terreiro - gathering place for musical and social activities

Timba - small hand drum. From the same family as the Tan tan and the Rebolô, the Timba, used a lot in samba, has a low sound that marks double time with one hand on the head and the other playing counterpoint on the shell (www.brazilianpercussion.com, 100605).

Violão - guitar

Violão de sete cordas - seventh-string guitar

Xote - music style from the Northeast

Zabumba - drum played on two sides with a small and big stick



The authors souvenirs from Brazil, wonderful instruments that keeps the sound of Brazil.

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