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Brazilian Popular Music and the Audiotactile Paradigm: A Brief Introduction

Fabiano Araújo Costa

This study is based on two fundamental questions concerning the Brazilian music and the audiotactile music domains. What is the place of Brazilian Music within the frame of the audiotactile music? How can audiotactile musicology contribute to the current discussions on Brazilian music? Given the complexity of this area, we certainly do not expect to find conclusive answers, but rather to initiate a debate and invite researchers to revisit some core problems in the fields of the Brazilian music and musicology, drawing on the input of the audiotactile musicology literature.

The first part of the research proposes a review of the historical information that helps to locate Brazilian music within the audiotactile category. The second segment will more closely examine the criteria adopted by specialized literature to describe Brazilian music, and more specifically Brazilian popular music. And as part of our final considerations, some outlooks for approaching Brazilian popular music in audiotactile perspective will be provided.

1. General Criteria for Identifying Audiotactile Music and Finding Phonographic Sources of Brazilian Music

According to Vincenzo Caporaletti's article “An Audiotactile Musicology” and other reference works on the Audiotactile-Music Theory [AMT] ¹, the general criterion for identifying audiotactile music is the existence of the mediological pair “audiotactile principle [ATP] + neo-auratic encoding [NAE]” in the formative process of art music². This simple yet dense formula reveals that we may find, in this music’s poietic dimension, important aesthetic precepts associated with groove, swing, and the propulsive and de-pulsive formative energy etc. Such criteria are induced by the awareness of the technological inscription and phonographic fixation of these values, and also by acknowledging the relevance of this process as a constitutive modality of music as a work of art.

In a first moment, we may perceive the ATP + NAE as a structure involving the notions of psycho-corporeal energy, text production and phonogram, as we may similarly recall the music composition scheme notions of pen/writing/score. This understanding rightfully acknowledges that in both cases the artist “writes” music. It may, however, be a reductive and even misleading idea,


² One of the epistemological foundations of the AMT is the concept of “formativity”, coined by the Italian philosopher Luigi Pareyson. (See Luigi Pareyson, Estetica. Teoria della formativita, Tascabili Bompiani, 1991, pp. 248-250). Formativity is a concept that reflects the human way of forming, in general. The formative process implies not only the making of a form, but also, and at the same time, the invention of the mode of forming. This formativity, common to all human operations, is specified in art as artistic formativity. In general formativity, the success of the formative activity in question is the achievement of the purpose of this activity. In artistic formativity, the success of the formative activity is to find the art rule of the work in the current artistic activity. In this context, the AMT is a theory of audiotactile formativity, specifying the formativity in mediological perspective as “visual formativity” and “audiotactile formativity”.

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if we do not identify these two musical-formative modalities as corresponding to distinctive cognitive-operational systems. Consequently, in terms of AMT, one may say that the pen/score scheme matches the “visual” cognitive matrix, while the psycho-corporal energy/phonography formula (ATP + NAE) matches the “audiotactile” cognitive matrix. In other words, the presence of the ATP + NAE means a change of perspective, particularly with regard to the role that phonography plays in the musical formative process, since in this new conception the phonogram is perceived not only as a mass media device, but also as the criterion which grounds the Subject’s awareness of an inscriber of musical values which are prompted by the audiotactile principle: the neo-auristic encoding [NAE].

In a neo-aesthetic perspective, the AMT focuses on two assumptions underlying the audiotactile phenomenology: the Primary NAE and the Secondary NAE. The first one corresponds, unsurprisingly, to the advent of phonography, whereby the primary NAE constitutes a medium that induces psycho-cognitive and aesthetic effects of the sound recording into the audiotactile formativity. A phenomenon connected to the artist’s realization that the music being recorded could be inscribed and endlessly reproduced on the aesthetic level. The second moment corresponds to the advent of the magnetic tape and the techniques of editing, post-production and the assembling of multitrack recording devices, upon which the secondary NAE acts. In this cultural dimension, the compositional model undergoes psycho-cognitive and aesthetical effects according to the possibilities of editing in the poietic-productive level. Additionally, we may hypothesize that there is a pre-NAE level of audiotactile music, since one music may reach the status of ‘audiotactile’ after undergoing written or oral mediation.

Then, in general terms, the “popular music” from the first half of the 20th century meet the prerequisites of the audiotactile model. Jazz, for instance, is an audiotactile type of music of oral inheritance (spirituals, work songs), but before being consolidated through the phonographic medium, in the beginning of the 20th century, it experienced a period of development while in contact with the ragtime written notation, by the end of the 19th century. This notation, as Caporaletti points out, was distinct from the notation of other forms of European popular music, because it essentially carried the mark of the rhythmic-metric extemporization of the “backbeat” (a result of the psycho-kinetic action of the audiotactile principle). The first signs of recorded ragtime are presented in the form of instrumental accompaniment of Coon Songs. The remotest examples are the piano accompaniments of Ernest Hogan’s theme “All Coons Look Alike To Me”, recorded in November 1896, by singer Len G. Spencer [Columbia 7236], and by George J. Gaskin [Berliner 1610]. In December of the same year, the phonogram of a banjo solo version of “Ragtime Medley”, performed by Vess L. Ossman [Berliner 467], was

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4 See Ibid., p. 9.
5 Rather than the idea of writing a musical “work” – a concept posing a whole array of different problems –, with the NAE, Caporaletti hints at the idea of writing a musical “text”, in the anthropological sense of the term.
6 As for the Primary NAE, one should observe not only the documental function of a musical performance, but also the aesthetic values that are prompted by the awareness of the phonographic fixation of this text. Some examples are the artistic authorship, the pursuit of novelty, the aesthetic autonomy, the disinterested contemplation by an audience etc.
7 V. Caporaletti, I processi improvvisatori nella musica, op. cit., pp. 328-332.
10 According to David A. Jasen & Gene Jones, Spreadin’ Rhythm Around. Black Popular Songwriters, 1880-1930, op. cit., p. 33, this medley consists of “All Coons Look Alike To Me”, “Mr. Johnson”, “Turn Me Loose” and “A Hot Time In The Old Town Tonight”.

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recorded. Other examples are also the piano accompaniments in “The Laughing Song”, sung by George W. Johnson [Columbia 7601] and published in 1897; “Hello, Ma Baby”, sung by Arthur Collins [Edison 5470] and Len G. Spencer [Berliner 05], both recorded in 1899.

According to David A. Jasen, the first recordings of piano ragtime appear later, such as Mike Bernard’s “Everybody Two-Steps” [Columbia A1266], recorded in 12/02/1912 and “That Peculiar Rag” [Columbia A1313] recorded in 12/03/1912. Finally, in 26/02/1917, in New York, the original Dixieland Jazz Band recorded the first phonograms of jazz, under the Victor label.

To establish a point of reference to a possible “History of the Brazilian Audiotactile Music”, we should include the first mechanic cylinder recordings of Brazilian modinhas and lundus, dating from 1897, and produced by phonography pioneer in Brazil, Frederico Figner. On this matter, José R. Tinhinrão wrote:

Ao despontar de 1897 [...] Frederico Figner resolve partir para a conquista definitiva do mercado [de fonógrafos e fonogramas], através da gravação de cilindros com música popular brasileira. Em sociedade com seu irmão Gustavo Figner [...] Frederico Figner chama os cantores de serenatas Antônio da Costa Moreira, o Cadete (às vezes grafado K.D.T.) [...] e Manuel Pedro dos Santos, o Baiano, para gravar fonogramas com acompanhamento de violão, pagando um mil-réis por canção, e com isso se torna responsável pelo advento do profissionalismo no campo da música popular no Brasil. [...] Foram esses fonogramas com modinhas e lundus cantados por Cadete e Baiano, e músicas gravadas pela recém-criada banda do Corpo de Bombeiros (formada pelo maestro Anacletto de Medeiros em 1896), os primeiros a espalhar pelo Brasil centenas de composições de autores quase sempre anônimos [...] 19.

17 Essentially, Jasen maintains that “the major performers [...] didn’t want to record for two main reasons: a) the recording industry was not sufficiently large enough to pay the high salaries accorded to the top pianists and because b) the primitive equipment used in making records could not reproduce the full range of the piano at all clearly [sic].” (D. Jasen, “Notes” in: Early Piano Ragtime, op. cit.); and then, although he did note that “[i]n the recording infancy of the flat disc, piano ragtime is rare. Despite the fact that the first known syncopated piano solo was the one made for the Victor Talking Machine Company of ‘Creole Belles’ by its studio pianist, Charles H. H. Booth, on November 1, 1901.” (D. Jasen, Ragtime. An Encyclopedia, op. cit., p. 311), the author insists on the idea that “[t]he first known ragtime piano recording occurred on December 2, 1912, when Mike Bernard recorded Wallie Herzer’s popular rag ‘Everybody Two-Steps’ for Columbia” (Ibid., p. 180). In this sense, Jasen distinguishes “ragtime piano” from “syncopated piano”. Such ambiguity is also found in Karen Rege’s statement: “Although Charles H. Booth recorded ‘Creole Belles’ for Victor Talking Machine Company in 1901, we know of few piano rags recorded before Mike Bernard’s 1912-1913 recordings for Columbia records”. (Karen Rege, “Tickler’s Secrets. Ragtime Performances Practices, 1900-1920 – A Bibliographic Essay”, in Michael Saffle, Perspectives on American Music, 1900-1950, Routledge 2012, p. 28).
18 Frederico Figner (1866-1947) was born in Milevsko, Bohemia (current Czech Republic), and became an American citizen. He arrived in Pará, Brazil, in 1891, and moved to Rio in 1892, where, at Rua do Ouvidor, he opened a business to exhibit the Edison phonograph. In 1900 Figner founded the “Casa Edison”, a disc recording and selling business. (Cf. Humberto Franceschi, A Casa Edison e seu tempo, Rio de Janeiro, Sarapuí, 2002).
19 “At the beginning of 1897 [...] Frederico Figner decided to take over the market [of phonographs and phonograms], by recording Brazilian popular music on cylinders. In partnership with his brother Gustavo Figner [...] Frederico...
One of the documents attesting these series of recording sessions with Brazilian singers, found by Tinhorão, was an article published on 05/04/1897, on the *A Gazeta de Noticias* newspaper\(^{20}\), which read:

O Sr. Gustavo Figner, que ora mantém seu fonographo à rua do Ouvidor, convidou hontem alguns rapazes da imprensa para a audição de vários trechos novos do seu apparelho. Foram muito aplaudidas uma cançãoeta ingleza – Exquise, varias modinhas brasileiras e um trecho dos Hugenottes, a grande orchestra, executado a capricho \(\text{sic.}\) \(^{21}\)

Tinhorão also found a 1901 Casa Edison ad, which reads: “o único laboratório de fonogramas nacionais dos populares cançonetistas Cadete e Bahiano” \(^{22}\). Other valuable findings include the 1900 Fred. Figner catalogue, from which only the cover remains (Fig. 1a) \(^{23}\), and the 1902 Casa Edison catalogue (Fig. 1b) \(^{24}\). The expression “modinhas cantadas e acompanhadas ao violão pelo popularíssimo Bahiano” \(^{25}\) may be found on the pages of the catalogue (Fig. 2).

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\(^{20}\) Cf. https://goo.gl/Jyh3oR.

\(^{21}\) “Mr. Gustavo Figner, who now has his phonograph at Rua do Ouvidor, invited yesterday some young men of the press to the audition of various selections on his device. The most applauded ones were an English song – *Exquise*, a number of Brazilian modinhas and an excerpt of *Les Hugenottes* and Great Orchestra, which was carefully executed”. (J. R. Tinhorão, *Música popular – do gramofone ao radio e tv*, São Paulo, Editora Ática 1981, pp. 20-21).

\(^{22}\) “The only laboratory making national phonograms of the famous singers Cadete and Bahiano” (*Ibid.*, p. 22).


\(^{24}\) The discovery of this catalogue, stored in the archives of Casa Edison, is credited to musicologist Ary Vasconcelos. (*Cf. Ary Vasconcelos, Panorama da Música Popular Brasileira na “Belle Époche”, Rio de Janeiro, Livraria Sant’Anna, 1977, p. 19*).

\(^{25}\) “Modinhas sung and played by the very popular guitarist Bahiano”
Despite these first indicators of cylinder recordings of popular music in Rio, large-scale cylinder trade in Brazil was not possible, for technical and cultural reasons, before 1900. At this point, it seems inevitable to wonder what would have been the contents of the 1900 catalogue, which could further inform us about such artistic activities, as did the 1902 catalogue. The image of a graphophone (Fig. 1a) on Figner’s 1900 catalogue cover may be seen as a reminder of the “Club de Graphophones” 26, which was organized by Figner in 1899 in order to attract partners and to create a culture that valued and consumed mechanically-recorded music 27. This venture was targeted at the carioca public used to the consumption of piano sheet music. In addition to this, the facts that cylinders were not produced in Brazil at that time, and the recording/replicating procedure used by Figner was somewhat limited 28, lead us to the conclusion that the recordings of Brazilian singers in Rio de Janeiro (mentioned by the 1897 A Gazeta de Noticias and by the 1901 Casa Edison ad referred above) were part of a rather introductory context in terms of production and reception of an audiotactile music in Brazil. It was not until January 1902 – a month before the first Casa Edison catalogue (Fig. 1b) was published – that recording on both cylinder and disc, and Brazilian music commerce became large-scale 29. As for quantitative aspects, the 1902 catalogue bears a total of 407 phonograms of Brazilian music 30, among which there are 60 modinhas and lundus recorded on cylinders and discs (listed on page 52, Fig. 2a) by Bahiano, accompanied by guitar. Page 54 (Fig. 2b) lists the 54 phonograms recorded by the Orquestra do Corpo de Bombeiros do Rio de Janeiro, conducted by Anacleto de Medeiros. They played a repertoire of choris consisting largely of numerous compositions by Medeiros (polkas, tangos, schottisches) and one by Ernesto Nazareth 31.

26 Cf. Club de Graphophones ads published on 16/12/1900 (https://goo.gl/ExBkkD), and on 31/01/1901 (https://goo.gl/X8Wo3v), on the A Província newspaper.
28 See Humberto Franceschi, Registros sonoros por meios mecânicos no Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Studio HMF, 1984, p. 35.
29 H. Franceschi, A Casa Edison e seu Tempo, op. cit., p. 43.
30 E. Gonçalves, Phonographos e gramophones, op. cit., p. 82.
31 The Ernesto Nazareth phonogram indicated in this catalogue is entitled “Está chumbado” (Zon-O-phone/X-1.055). Instituto Moreira Salles has a digital gateway honoring the 150 years of Ernesto Nazareth. Evidence that this cylinder is missing may be found in this website. See: https://goo.gl/SFb7cj, visited on 30/04/2017.
With the mass production of gramophones and 78 rpm discs in 1902, the recording business in Brazil saw a significant increase in demand for artistic production, and choro musicians were the first to become professionals in this area. They were working as instrumental accompanists in Medeiro’s orchestra, or as soloists, such as flutist Patápio Silva, who recorded the choro “Só pra moer” in 1904 [Odeon 40.047]. In songwriting, we could point the Chiquinha Gonzaga’s “Gaucho (Corta-jaca)” 36, a Brazilian tango considered a precursor of choro, recorded around 1905 by Os Gerais [Odeon 40.054], and also by Pepa Delgado and Márcio Pinheiro [Odeon 40.392].

Around 1910, Columbia recorded choro using the traditional flute (or other soloist instrument like the trumpet etc)/guitar/cavaquinho/ and sometimes the piano ensemble, as it is the case of the instrumental version of “Corta-Jaca” [Columbia 11.781] 38, performed by the Chiquinha Gonzaga band, with Gonzaga herself at the piano and Antonio Passos Pereira on the flute, accompanied by a cavaquinho and a guitar.

The phonogram “Atraente” 39 was recorded at least twice by the same group – first time between 1911 and 1912 [Columbia 11.773-12] 40, and then in February 1914 [Odeon 120.918].

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32 The reference work for Brazilian Discography is Alcino Santos et al., Discografia Brasileira 78 RPM: 1902-1964, v. 1-5, Rio de Janeiro, Funarte, 1982. It comes as a result of considerable efforts undertaken for the recovery of original sources. In the case of ancient sources, exhaustive research was carried out to accurately indicate dates, names of performers, composers, serial numbers of matrices, song titles, and data that was, in some cases, omitted in the matrices and in the catalogues. Regarding the 78 rpm system in Brazil, in the “Introduction” of the first volume, the team of musicologists responsible for this work indicates that “in the period from 1902 to 1964 [...] this kind of rotation was almost unique, given that it was only from 1951 that different ones started being used, so that there was a large number of matrices, at the time, being simultaneously edited in 78, 45 and 33-1/3 rpm (ld., “Introdução”, in Id., Discografia Brasileira 78 RPM: 1902-1964, v. 1, Rio de Janeiro, Funarte, 1982, fls. I). In addition, some authors suggest that there are about 28.000 “Brazilian discs from the electric phase at 78 rpm which were published over the course of 37 years, from 1927 to 1964, when the system fell into disuse”. They add that “in the mechanic phase, the rotation did not always strictly comply with the standard of 78 turns per minute, there being the 76 and 80 rpm ones” (Ibid., fls. III).


36 About the 1897 Gaucho (Corta-jaca), the musicologist Carlos Sandroni remarks that the genre indicated in the score is “tango”, while the subtitle “Corta-jaca” designates a dance move of the samba-de-rua, from Bahia. In addition, the author notes that the bass movement in the first section of the score is recurrent in Brazilian music and it is indicated as “batuque”. Cf. Carlos Sandroni, Feitiço decente. Transformações do samba no Rio de Janeiro (1917-1933) [2001], Zahar Editor, edição digital ‘Le livre’, Rio de Janeiro, 2013, p. 67.


39 A. Santos et al. Discografia Brasileira 78 RPM, p. 165. The release of the series 120.000-120.999 is believed to have occurred between the years 1912 and 1915. This is the first series to be simultaneously recorded and edited in Brazil (see A. Santos et al. Discografia Brasileira 78 RPM, p.169). Phonogram available for listening at: [http://acervo.im.com.br/], [Busca combinada: Título: “Atraente”; Intérprete: “Grupo Chiquinha Gonzaga”; Gravadora: “Odeon”. Nº do álbum: “120918”; Código sophia = 1578]. Accessed on 01/10/2017.
One major reference of choro is Pixinguinha, who held his first recording sessions with Irineu Batista's group, Choro Carioca. A sample of that is the recording of “São João debaixo d’água” [Favorite Record 1-450.006] 41, which probably occurred before 08/05/1911 42. Under the Phoenix label, Pixinguinha recorded the Polkas “Carne assada” [Phoenix 70.650] 43 and “Não tem nome” [Phoenix 70.652] 44, which were released between 1913 and 1918 45. In 1917, with the same group and under the Odeon label, Pixinguinha recorded the phonograms “Sofres porque queres” [Odeon 121.364] 46 and “Rosa” [Odeon 121.365] 47. On 08/03/1923, in Argentina, with his group Oito Batutas 48, Pixinguinha recorded “Urubu” [Victor 73.826-A] 49, a performance showing a very audacious improvisational form, when compared to the prevalent choro or jazz of the time. All of these pieces were written by Pixinguinha. In 1912, Ernesto Nazareth played the piano alongside Pedro de Alcântara on the flute, for a Casa Edison's recording of his tangos “Odeon” [Odeon 108.79] 50 and “ Favorito” [Odeon 108.790] 51. He also recorded the polkas

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42 This date features on the record label and it probably refers to when the pressing occurred. (A. Santos et al. Discografia Brasileira 78 RPM, op. cit., p. 314).


48 The Oito Batutas band was composed by: Pixinguinha (flute); Donga (guitar); China (guitar); Nélio Alves (cavaquinho); Raul Palmieri (guitar); Luís Pinto da Silva (bandola and reco-reco); Jacob Palmieri (pandeiro); José Alves Lima (bandolim and ganza).


As for samba, the first phonograms were recorded around 1911, such as Alfredo Carlos Bricio’s “Samba em casa da baiana” (performed by the Conjunto da Casa Faulhaber & Cia [Favorite Record 1-452.216] 54), and around 1914, as the Catulo da Paixão’s piece “A viola está magoada” [Odeon 120.445] 55, recorded with Baiano’s vocals. However, it was “Pelo telefone” [Odeon 121.322] 56 (a samba piece written by Donga and Mauro de Almeida and recorded in 1916 by Baiano) the phonogram that would consolidate the “samba carioca” 55 genre. At some point between 1920 and 1922, Chiquinha Gonzaga and her husband João Batista founded a record company in the neighborhood of Engenho Novo, Rio de Janeiro. The works were released under either of the two labels of the company, “Popular” and “Jurity”. It was Gonzaga and Batista’s corporation that launched names such as Francisco Alves and Sinthô 59. In 1929, Noel Rosa and the Bando de Tangarás group recorded “Na Pavuna” [Odeon 13089] 60, the first samba recorded with percussion instruments.

The historic data here provided may help us identify the first signs of a possible primary NAE awareness in the Brazilian music formative process in audiotactile form. We may follow from here by mentioning later developments in this process – the bossa nova, the MPB, Radamés Gnattali’s instrumental music groups, the “música nordestina”, the “samba-jazz” trios – until the emergency of the first signs of awareness of a potential Secondary NAE in 1968, through the experimentation of the “tropicalistas” Gilberto Gil, Caetano Veloso and the Os Mutantes, whose music embraced influences from pop music and progressive rock, but who also relied on the collaboration (particularly for orchestral arrangements) of avant-garde composers and arrangers of the band “Grupo Música Nova” – among whom Rogério Duprat, Júlio Medaglia, Gilberto Mendes (at the time freshly arrived from Europe, where they had attended courses taught by Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, Pierre Boulez, and Karlheinz Stockhausen).

Naturally, jazz has also played a part in the building of Brazilian audiotactile music. It is worth noting in this process: the visit to Paris in 1922 of Pixinguinha’s group “Oito Batutas”...
(known in the occasion as the “Jazz Band Os Batutas”), the jazz influences openly admitted by Gnatalli, the bossa nova and the samba-jazz from the 1950’s and 60’s, the Spock orchestras in the Frevo, Orquestra Tabajara. All of which have absorbed some traits of jazz. Nevertheless, the reverse is also true. It is noticeable the the participation of Airto Moreira in Miles Davis’ and in Chick Corea’s groups; the influence of bossa nova on Stan Getz’s cool-jazz 61; of Milton Nascimento’s music on Wayne Shorter’s music; of Clube da Esquina’s aesthetics on Pat Metheny and Lyle Mays’s music; and of Egberto Gismonti and Nana Vasconcelos’ music on the ECM’s aesthetics consolidated in Europe etc.

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To summarize the landscape of Brazilian music as an organized set of multiple manifestations is a daunting task. As our primary objective, we will focus on the first phonographic sources of Brazilian music dating from 1897, in Rio de Janeiro, which included recordings of chansonnettes with instrumental accompaniment by choro musicians, along with the instrumental 1902 recordings of choro. In order to provide a panoramic view of the “Brazilian audiotactile music” we have built the table below (table 1) presenting the main styles, movements and artists (non - exhaustive list) in the categories of Brazilian songs and instrumental music, together with social-historical markers (which will be later dealt with in this paper), and those of the current NAE modality.

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61 The album Getz/Gilbert was recorded on the 18th and 19th of March 1963, and was released in 1964. One year before, Getz had recorded the albums Jazz samba with Charlie Byrd, and Jazz samba encore! with Luiz Bonfá. (Cf. Ruy Castro, Chega de Saudade. A história e as histórias da Bossa Nova, São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 1990).
Table 1: Brazilian Audiotactile Music Panorama

For a better understanding of the connecting threads of this scenario, we will conduct a short review of the Brazilian music historiography.
2. Some Musicological Questions around Brazilian Popular Music

Brazilian musical historiography originates in the end of the 19th century, but reference studies would not be published until the beginning of the 20th century, namely the works A música no Brasil desde os tempos coloniais até o primeiro décênio da república (1908) by Guilherme de Mello, História da música brasileira (1926) by Renato Almeida, Ensaio sobre a música brasileira (1928), Compendio da história da música (1929), Música do Brasil (1941), all by Mario de Andrade, the preface of Musique brésilienne (1937) by Andrade Muricy, “La musica en Minas Gerais” (1946) by Francisco Curt Lange and 150 anos de música no Brasil (1956) by Luiz Heitor Correia de Azevedo 62. These studies approach the Brazilian music of written tradition as they also express the ideal of a great national music (concert music) founded on folkloric sources 63. Andrade Muricy, for instance, re-establishes a chronology of the “Brazilian music” according to the categories of “religious music” (1801 à 1851), “Opera” (1836 and 1900), and “Symphony and Chamber Music of nationalistic character” (1901 through 1950) 64.

In this article we focus on the historiography of the so-called “Brazilian popular music”. Thus, the most current works reviewing this literature were written by Marcos Napolitano (2006 65, Silvano Fernandes Baia (2010) 66 and Martha T. de Ulhôa (2015) 67. The authors examine the works produced between the years 1970 and 1990. According to Baia, three recurring dichotomies triggering the debate about the music made in Brazil are: (1) brazilianness and foreign influences, (2) erudite and popular, and (3) modernity and tradition 68.

The first dichotomy is typical of the nationalist project instigated by Mário de Andrade’s musicological perspective, particularly in his 1928 Ensaio sobre a música brasileira. This is the very project Baia recognizes as “nacionalismo musical” (musical nationalism) – a somewhat “national disinterested art music”, based on a folklorist and modernist project (which seemed to go along with Bartók and De Falla’s nationalists projects in Europe). Baia suggests that, according to this project, the musical genres originating the popular music in Brasil are, as follows: the modinha and the lundu, the choro, the maxixe, the Brazilian tango and the first manifestations of the carioca samba (the “authentic samba”). All of these genres may be regarded as part of the Brazilian art music formula 69, which is why they have always been included in Brazilian historical-musicological studies. On the other hand, as the author implies, the popular music produced from 1930 70 on was left aside due to its association with the market of cultural goods 71.

This observation leads us to the second dichotomy, erudite/popular, because it speaks in behalf of Mário de Andrade’s influence on a whole generation of Brazilian erudite music composers’ aesthetical sense, which does not seem to be the case of the urban popular-music making. Such contrast is often linked to others, such as literate/illiterate, written/unwritten,

62 Cf. Bibliography.
69 Ibidem.
70 Cf. Table 1.
systematic and unsystematic learning. That is partly due to Rio de Janeiro’s fast urbanization process, which emerged in the wake of slavery abolishment (1888) and produced a particular brand of cultural environment in that city. In this context, we should stress the existence of musicians known as pianeiros, who, in certain cases, came from a classical music educational background (such was the case with Chiquinha Gonzaga and Ernesto Nazareth) and whom – as Samuel Araújo notes – were already carrying the germ of a singular type of music, essentially Brazilian, “relatively distanced from its presumable Iberic sources, African, or whatever would they be, by the means of a sonority that, somehow, represented the national problematic” 72. The quality of these musicians and their music is often associated with a certain type of “sophistication”, inherited from the “erudite” culture, and from the “swing”, or the “balanço” typical of the popular classes’ music. There was another type of musicians who acted on both the “erudite” and “popular” fields, as for instance, the members of the choro community, which was largely comprised of civil servants (mail workers, police officers, firefighters, etc.) who played “by ear” the repertoire of European ballroom dances (polkas, mazurkas, waltzes, schottisches etc.) with a syncopated style, to “enliven” the carioca middle class house parties of the time 73. In the context of the AMT, we may say that the constitution of the choro extemporization model derives from this particular syncopated interpretation of this repertoire, and from the idiosyncrasies (of intrinsically improvised and interactive nature) that stemmed from the transposition of piano scores to the flute-guitar-cavaquinho ensemble (known as “conjunto de pau e de corda”).

The very “medio logical re-adjustment” phenomenon that occurs specifically with the choro in this pre-NAE phase of Brazilian music also seems to happen to the ragtime – that is, the adaptation of the features associated with the “visual” and the “audiotactile”, in case of a shift (or a transformation) from a medium to the other. This phenomenon is questioned in Caporaletti’s seminal article about the Brazilian audiotactile sources in Darius Milhaud’s piece Le boeuf sur le toit 74, thus corroborating Corrêa do Lago’s article on the Brazilian sources in the same Milhaud’s piece. 75 In Caporaletti’s article, reference is made to the transcription and groovemic analysis of a recorded excerpt of “Apanhei-te Cavaquinho” (Ernesto Nazareth on piano), showing there is a particular problematic issue with respect to the relationship between the notational mediation of Nazareth’s scores and the audiotactile mediation revealed by the recording. For an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of “medio logical re-adjustment” – this time from Nazareth’s notational point of view – Cáca Machado’s analysis of the scores of Cine, perigo! (1879), Rayon D’Or (1892), Floraux (1909), and Batuque (1913) 76 and Pedro Aragão’s research 77 can provide excellent insights.


The third pair, modernity/tradition, is particularly relevant as it deals with the first historiographical markers of Brazilian popular music, among which, the books *Na roda de samba*, (1933), by Francisco Guimarães (a journalist also known as Vagalume) and *Samba: sua História, seus poetas, seus músicos* (1933), by Orestes Barbosa. These works corroborate what Silvano Baia classifies as “protective nationalism” 78 (the hailing of Samba as the National Music). For these authors, the carioca samba was the authentic Brazilian Music. Vagalume believed samba had died when it departed from the *roda de samba* and landed in the world of recording. For them, it was impossible to keep up a certain tradition while subjecting it to the aesthetical and socio-economical interests of a specific group. Orestes Barbosa, in turn, thought even Nazareth’s tangos were sambas in disguise, and the music then known as *polcas, lundus and marixês* had been mislabeled. For Barbosa, Samba originated in the slums but was subsequently adopted by the carioca middle-class, which expanded its language – as illustrated by the author – in strict reference to the *Os Oito Batutas* band. According to Barbosa, record trade and the radio meant a great opportunity to the carioca samba 79. One may say that Barbosa’s view, in his own way, incorporates the ATP + NAE formula. Nevertheless, what really matters in the present discussion is that, however different Barbosa and Vagalume’s points of view may be, they converge in that they both grant the carioca samba the status of authentic Brazilian music.

According to Marcos Napolitano, the “traditionalist” current of thought was consolidated in the 1950’s through the *Revista de Música Popular*, and it was strictly based on Barbosa and Vagalume’s folklorist perception, which valued the carioca musical past of the twenties and thirties – and was instrumental in the ideological construction of the traditional/authentic urban Brazilian music. Among the traditionalists we find Lúcio Rangel, Almirante, Ary Barroso, Fernando Lobo, Jorge Guinle, Mariza Lira, Nestor de Holanda, Sérgio Porto, Túlio Cardoso; and in the 60’s, Ary Vasconcelos, José Ramos Tinhorão and Jota Efegê. Tinhorão’s traditionalist line is, according to Baia, one of the pillars in the historiographical debate surrounding Brazilian popular Music. This traditional line of study is charged with a strong social-historical determinism, heavily influenced by historical materialism and Marxism. Tinhorão’s work is characterized by a strong resistance to mass media such as the phonogram, the radio and television – as demonstrated in his 1966 *Música popular em debate* chapter “*Como as revistas, o disco e o rádio mataram o choro*” 80. In a similar way, the author felt suspicious towards bossa nova, which he viewed as a byproduct of Brazilian popular music, assumedly resulting from jazz influence, as exemplified in the chapters *“Rompimento da tradição, raiz da bossa nova”, “Caminhos do jazz conduzem à bossa nova”, “Influência norte-americana vem do tempo do jazz-band”* and *“Samba de 1946: pior produto da política da boa-vizinhança”*, on the same 1966 book. We here note a strict correlation between this debate and the “Braziliananness/foreign influence dichotomy”. 82

The reaction to these nationalistic ideas and the defense of a certain authenticity in the carioca Brazilian music, encouraged by this traditionalist resistance, was started by the *Balanço da bossa e outras bossas* (1968), edited by influential members of the previously mentioned “Grupo Música Nova” 83, whose components included Brasil Rocha Brito, Julió Medaglia, Gilberto Mendes and Augusto de Campos. The incorporation of modernity, jazz, rock or any other avant-garde music defended by the book resonate the arguments presented in an article published in

79 Cf. ibid., p. 29.
80 “How magazines, the phonogram and the radio killed the Choro”.
81 “Tradition-breaking, root of the bossa-nova”; “Jazz ways lead to the bossa-nova”; “North-American influence coming from the jazz-band era”; “1946 samba: the worst product of the good-neighbouring policy”.
82 This problem requires particular attention, because if the lack of trust towards technology as a mediator of “bad” mass culture can bring this perspective closer to Adorno’s standpoint, this nationalist move was also used by the fascist music composers in Italy in the 1930s, who founded their identity while denying foreign and cosmopolitan influences, and seeking roots in the national folklore.
83 A string of musicologists (and composers) linked to erudite and avant-garde music.
1966, written by tropicalist composer Caetano Veloso (at the time a philosophy student at the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA)), who supported the idea of an evolutionary course in the Brazilian popular music, with the integration of modernity – and this would allow the continuity of the choro/samba/samba-canção/bossa-nova/tropicália path.\(^{84}\)

This has led to – in the context of the late 60s and still following Silvano Baia\(^ {85} \) – the reinforcement of at least three modes to refer to “Brazilian popular music”: (1) “música popular brasileira”, whose meaning is charged with the 70s popular ideas in Brazil\(^ {86} \), largely identifying the carioca popular line samba/bossa-nova/MPB; (2) the acronym “MPB” represents a segment of the popular music made in Brazil, which relates to the historical perception of its own conception, in the end of the years 1960’s, as a symbol of political resistance. It also, in a given moment, became synonym of “quality Brazilian music”, while embodying a musical tradition that was to be preserved as a symbol of “brazilianness”\(^ {87} \); and (3) “Brazilian Popular Music”, in capital letters, which carries an even stronger institutionalized sense than the one attached to the MPB acronym.

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The frame of the musicological studies on Brazilian popular music has been therefore characterized, since the end of the 60s, by the interest in social-political issues and their associations with the production of musical culture in Brazil. From then on, academic studies have been mainly confined to post-graduation programs in Literary Studies, Sociology, and cultural History. The predominant research area gradually became the discourse analysis of the songs relating to the dictatorial regimes of Getúlio Vargas between 1930 and 1945, and then the 1964 military coup, but in this period we may also find research topics dealing with the rapports between music and the ethnic question in Brazil.\(^ {88} \)

From the 1990s on, Music and Musicology Programs start to carry out research on Brazilian popular music in a broader analytical context, thus connecting the contextual problems with the musical object.

This new breath in the musicological research also falls onto the Brazilian instrumental music domain – an auspicious field to the audiotactile analysis.

Some pioneering work deserving careful attention is the ethnomusicologist Carlos Sandroni’s Feitiço decente. Transformações do samba no Rio de Janeiro (1917-1933), which is the product of his 1997 PhD thesis, published as a book in 2001. Sandroni presents a fresh perspective on the topic, offering an explanation of samba’s rhythmic model structure alternative to the well-known “syncope” model, based on theoretical inputs from studies on African Music, by researchers such as Mieczyslaw Kolinski, Simha Arom, Gerhard Kubik, A. M. Jones and J. H. Kwabena Nketia. The author approaches what he refers to as Afro-Brazilian rhythm, grounded on the “Tresillo Paradigm” and the “Estácio Paradigm” as keys to clarify the transformation of Samba. In the same theoretical line of the Afro-Brazilian rythmics we may also find the work of Tiago Oliveira Pinto.\(^ {89} \)

In his book, Sandroni situates his field of study within the “historical ethnomusicology” realm, problematizing, on one hand, the formality of the ethnomusicological approach to the terrain (by definition, one in which the researcher is the outsider). On the other hand, the author questions the applicability of this approach to cases like his own, in which the researcher sees


\(^{85}\) Ibid., p. 139.


\(^{88}\) Cf. Ibid., p. 68.

himself/herself as an insider in reference to the music being examined (in this case, the samba, a “popular music”). The author also points to the relevance of ancient scores and commercial recordings for the investigation of his object. We should emphasize, nevertheless, that Sandroni’s arguments are precisely the ones strictly formalized and systematized by the main principles of the AMT, which may further contribute to a continuation of this debate.  

Final Considerations

To return to the main focus in our problem, i.e., the relationship between the Brazilian music and the Audiotactile paradigm, we should finally consider the distinction between “audiotactile music” and “audiotactile musicology”. The first one consists of the object of study while the second one underlies its epistemological/methodological approach. Audiotactile musicology aims to examine all the audiotactile music (jazz, Brazilian music, pop, rock, improvised music etc.) in spite of their idiomatic differences. It is in this sense that the audiotactile musicology may also be perceived as transcultural musicology, since it inherits and actualizes the methodological rudiments from comparative musicology, thus incorporating a series of applications, particularly in the field of historiographical review. This springs from the rediscovery of “audiotactile sources”, of new aesthetical values and poetical criteria in the music-making process, while carrying inter and trans-cultural traits. In fact, from a phenomenological perspective, the audiotactile musicology regards the idioms of the audiotactile music as highly dependent on the mediological mixture of visual/audiotactile, or more precisely, the degree and form of the subsumption of the visual medium and the audiotactile medium, and vice-versa.

What changes, then, when one sees one music as audiotactile? In the first place, one changes the perspective of the role of phonography in the musical formative process. The phonogram is then regarded not only as a mass media device, but also as the source that activates the Subject’s awareness (or that of the anthropological agent) of the inscription of musical values induced by the audiotactile principle: the awareness of the neo-auratic encoding. As a result, one should also note that, in the dynamic process of acquisition of such knowledge, the musical models inherent in an oral culture (or even in a visual culture) are re-designed. This new configuration joins the criteria pertaining to an artistic expression preeminently audiotactile, and which are, at the same time “singularizing” and “universalizing”. This means that the musical object produced within the ATP + NAE system is therefore, as any artwork, an object that ultimately embodies the nature of exemplarity. It should be unique and foundational, but also acknowledged as such by most listeners. Hence, when one perceives a music as audiotactile, they agree with the fact that, in the specific formative process of the musical work of art, the artist identifies the object and the object makes itself identifiable as art by its own aesthetical criteria, pinned to audiotactility (and not necessarily to its potential popularity, or to a certain type of sophistication), inherited from the erudite culture). In addition, from the AMT point of view, the rigor of the cognition and perception induced by audiotactility is distinct in substance, but equal in dignity in relation to the rigor found in the cognition and perception induced by the visual matrix.

90 See the specific passage about the “etnic” approach in the article by V. Caporaletti, “An Audiotactile Musicology”, op. cit., pp. 12, 13, 15.

91 In January 2013, at the Fondazione Cini, Venice, Italy, the Instituto Interculturale di Studi Musicali Comparati organized the XVIII Seminario Internazionale di Etnomusicologia. Prospettive di una musicologia comparata nel secolo XXI: etnomusicologia o musicologia transculturale? The theme revolved around the idea that Ethnomusicology would have, in a way, accomplished its purpose of making the music of the world known. But today, the inter-, transcultural, and the “simultaneous” dynamics of the world would justify a transcultural view of musicology by reviewing and updating the methodology in Comparative Musicology, instead of pursuing a classical ethnological view of the world.

92 This subject is dealt with in Fabiano Araújo Costa “Groove and Writing in Radamés Gnattali’s Toccatas em Ritmo de Samba n. 2”, RJMA – Journal of Jazz and Audiotactile Music Studies, English Notebook, No. 1, 2018, pp. 1-20.
Finally, in a broader sense, the possibility of a musicology of the Brazilian musics in audiotactile perspective may also emerge from the question: how can the expression of aesthetical awareness of audiotactile musical cognition be perceived within the Brazilian musical culture domain? Certainly, the process of building this perception is not a simple one, and the maturing of such understanding permeates the political and social-economical specificities of a culture, for when the visual/audiotactile constitutive mediological relationship of a music is discussed, the cultural-historical contextual factors are ingrained in this reasoning. Table 1 may help promote further investigations in this direction.

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BRAZILIAN POPULAR MUSIC AND THE AUDIOTACTILE PARADIGM: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION


