

The application of Jazz Methods to  
Brazilian Drum Kit Improvisatory  
Techniques within Choro, Samba and  
Bossa Nova

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**Declaration:**

This is to certify that:

- the thesis comprises only my original work towards the Master of Philosophy (Music) degree;
- Due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other work used;
- The work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award;
- The content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program.



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Peter Alastair McGrath-Kerr

Date:

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## Abstract

There are a number of excellent books currently available that address Brazilian drum kit playing, but across all these books, there is a general lack of ideas for further development and advanced applications, particularly improvisation. Meanwhile, there are many excellent texts that deal with improvisation and the development of improvising skills, but they are largely within the realms of jazz drumming. As a drummer with a long interest in jazz and Brazilian styles, I came to a point where an in-depth look at the methodology for practicing improvisation within the framework of Brazilian music was a clear next step. It is something I felt the need for as a performer and as an educator.

The first section of this thesis provides: a background to the characteristic sounds of choro, samba and bossa; background information on the development of Brazilian drum kit playing; a look at Brazilian phrasing concepts; and a discussion of rhythmic frameworks in these styles.

The second section addresses practice and performance methodology based within the framework laid out by the earlier chapters. A significant part of this is the outlining of a graduated process for the development of three- and four-way co-ordination. It also includes analysis of rhythmic tension-and-release devices and discussion of some of the subtler aspects of Brazilian drum kit performance. The final part addresses the development of solo ideas, primarily through motivic development. The ideas presented throughout are focused on the concepts of *fluent* and *responsive* drumming.



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## 1. Introduction

### Personal Context

From the time I was first introduced to some basic *samba* rhythms for drum kit, the music of Brazil has held a distinct fascination for me. This fascination was strengthened when I first encountered the dynamic percussion and drum kit work of Airto Moreira, and the beautiful compositions of Antonio Carlos Jobim. I was lead to delve further into the amazing range of styles and rhythms from all parts of the country: moving from the staples of *samba* and *bossa nova*, on to *frevo* from Recife, *samba-reggae* from Bahia, *choro* from Rio de Janeiro, and the strong African influence in the religious music of *candomblé*.

My earliest encounters with Brazilian rhythms on drum kit involved playing styles such as *samba*, *bossa nova* and *baião* with what might be termed an “American” accent, having been presented these rhythms through books written by drummers and educators from the United States. I soon discovered some discrepancies between what I was presented in these books and what I was hearing on records from Brazil. I felt that I wasn't being given all of the information I needed. It became clear that an understanding of Brazilian percussion would be essential for the advancement of my Brazilian drum kit work, as would transcription and practice of the work of the great Brazilian drummers. It seemed that this would be necessary if I were to aim for an “authentic” sound, not just a second-hand impression of it. What we might call playing with a Brazilian accent.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> I will touch on the subject of authenticity and tradition later in this thesis. In a broader musical sense, the topic has been covered by a number of ethnomusicologists. For further writings and references: Sean Stroud, *The Defence of Tradition in Brazilian Popular Music*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), and: Charles A. Perrone and Christopher Dunn, ed., *Brazilian Popular Music & Globalization*, (New York: Routledge, 2002).

I started working from a broader range of drum and percussion texts, talking to Australian drummers with similar interests, and listening to more music, trying to gain a better understanding of the intricacies of the diverse styles found in Brazil. I started encountering musicians from Brazil, seeking advice that was both technical and general, and I delved further into the history of the music. Most importantly, I had the opportunity to put my learning into practise alongside musicians with an intimate knowledge of this music.

### Key Research Questions

The key research question that has emerged from this study is: *How can the contemporary drummer approach Brazilian rhythms – in the practice room and in performance – allowing for improvisation, while maintaining distinctive elements from that music?*

There are many texts currently available that deal with Brazilian rhythms for drum kit, but there is a distinct lack of discussion on improvisation. A lot of groove ideas, but little or no talk of further practice methods for improvisation (in groove or solo playing). I hope that my research will go some way to redressing that omission. Meanwhile, there are books that deal with improvisation, but largely within the stylistic framework of jazz. They utilize the rhythmic language of jazz, not the rhythmic language(s) of Brazilian music.

### Methodology

My methodological approaches have been diverse, and include: Transcription and analysis of recorded examples; analysis of existing drumming and percussion texts; elements of auto-ethnography; analysis of performances; professional practice-based research; and participatory fieldwork.

The drum kit and the music recording industry are roughly the same age,<sup>2</sup> so almost from the time of the first drum kits, drummers have been able to use recordings as a primary source of musical information and inspiration. Short of a live performance, it *is* the source - but with the benefit of playback. It makes sense then that transcription of recordings and subsequent analysis is an important method in this study.

The drumset is a relatively young instrument, it's only about a hundred years old, and up until the 1960s everyone that played the drumset was a jazz drummer.<sup>3</sup>

John Riley was talking there about the important foundation that jazz drumming language built. This is important, because it points to the influence jazz drumming has across most drum kit playing, but it is also important to note that there is a strong history of drum kit in Brazilian music, going back at least as far as the 1920s.

It should also be noted that Brazilians were early adopters of recording technology. In the 1880s early phonographs captured *lundus* and *maxixes* for posterity.<sup>4</sup> Gramophones arrived in Brazil in 1900. In 1902 the Casa Edison label made the first recording of Brazilian music (a lundu), and Lisa Shaw refers to 1904 as being a "watershed for popular music" with the mass production of records.<sup>5</sup> By 1912 the Casa Edison label had sold close to a million records, and in 1917 the first samba recording was made<sup>6</sup> (*Pelo Telefone*) - the same year as

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<sup>2</sup> As something that evolved gradually, and has continued to evolve, there is no exact date for the "invention" of the drum kit, but the first "drumset" offered by the Ludwig company appeared in their 1918 catalogue. John Aldridge. *Guide to Vintage Drums*. (Anaheim Hills: Centerstream Publishing, 1994) 9. Bass drum pedals started appearing in the late-1890s. Aldridge, 5

<sup>3</sup> John Riley. *The Master Drummer* (DVD). (Alfred, 2009)

<sup>4</sup> Lisa Shaw. *The Social History of the Brazilian Samba*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999) 49

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 49

<sup>6</sup> Alma Guillermopreito. *Samba*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 26-7



the first jazz recording.<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that there are some who refer to *Pelo Telefone* as a samba-maxixe.<sup>8</sup>

As mentioned, there are already a number of texts available that deal with Brazilian drumming and percussion. I will be looking to these texts to provide further examples of rhythmic styles, drumming techniques and applications. I will also be utilizing books that deal with improvisation, and applying those ideas to the rhythmic structures of choro, samba and bossa nova. This will also include the use of classic drumming texts dealing with rudimentary drumming. These books will form one part of my research that will be greatly supplemented and enhanced by the wide range of methods I employ in this study.

Naturally, my own experiences as a performer and teacher will give a deep understanding of this area of music through first-hand experience of the research. As this research is based in practice and performance methods, I will be putting my ideas into use, gaining feedback in a variety of professional settings. In this way the research is as much practice-led as it is about more traditional methods of research. A large part of this will be based on my performance experience with a number of Brazilian groups in Melbourne. These include *The Doug de Vries Trio* (playing choro, bossa nova, Afro-sambas and Brazilian jazz), *MelSamba* (a *bateria*, lead by the Carioca<sup>9</sup> Carlos Ferreira), *Trio Agogo* (a choro group playing classic choro, original choro, and some forró/baião), *Trio Bem Brasil* (bossa nova), and *Bossa Negra* (primarily MPB, samba, and *axé*). Across these ensembles I have had the opportunity to play a range of Brazilian percussion instruments, drum kit, and combined drum kit/percussion set-ups.

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<sup>7</sup> Alyn Shipton. *A New History of Jazz*. (New York: Continuum, 2007) 76

<sup>8</sup> Shaw, 45

<sup>9</sup> A Carioca is a native of Rio de Janeiro.

Tied-in with this aspect is how practicing these Brazilian styles feeds back into my playing of other styles, principally jazz. Through the period of this research I have had the opportunity to use aspects from the practical component in performances with a number of jazz groups.

During the period of this research I have travelled to Brazil twice, on the first occasion visiting Rio de Janeiro and Salvador, and the second, São Paulo. During these travels I had the opportunity to play with a number of ensembles, including the bateria at Estácio de Sá in Rio de Janeiro, and a number of choro and samba groups in São Paulo. Across these two trips I had the opportunity to see dozens of groups in different settings, from sidewalks, to bars, to concert halls. I was also fortunate enough to be involved in some of Brazil's community-based music events, such as a *roda de choro*.

### Current Standards in Drumming Literature

Part of this study will be the analysis of existing drum and percussion texts. Two of the key ways in which this study marks its significance is by filling in the "gaps" in the existing instructional texts, and by expanding upon the existing ideas through the application of other practice and performance methods. As mentioned, existing texts on Brazilian drumming tend not to involve any discussion of improvisation.

These existing texts will also help in gaining an understanding of the characteristics of Brazilian drum kit playing - characteristics that are a vital part of this discussion. Through selected transcriptions and excerpts from existing texts I will attempt to describe some of the key aspects of the rhythmic language and frameworks found in choro, samba and bossa nova. Along with performance context these characteristics will help give a sense what the Brazilian accent is - or at least what some of its common elements are.

Where applicable, the drum and percussion parts will be put into context with the other instruments – melodic parts and the rhythm section (bass, guitar, piano). This area tends to be glossed over in the standard drum instructional texts (with the notable exception of *Inside the Brazilian Rhythm Section* by Nelson Faria and Cliff Korman).<sup>10</sup>

### Context for Improvisation and the Relationship with Jazz

*"Music that is alive with interaction is, again, open-ended; it is never fixed and always responsive to the present situation."*<sup>11</sup>

Although Thomas Brothers wrote this about the music of New Orleans, it could equally apply to the music of Brazil, and it is the idea of *responsiveness* that I believe lies at the core of much of my study. Mike Jordan takes a similar line in his thesis on melodic drumming, referring to *spontaneous reaction* to the *musical interplay* within an ensemble.<sup>12</sup> He goes as far as saying that this is the "art" of the time-feel.

The art of time-feel is in responding spontaneously to musical events occurring within the ensemble, whilst concurrently defining the form and shape of the composition.<sup>13</sup>

And in relation to the general concept of improvisation he says:

Suffice it to state here that by improvisation, I refer to spontaneous composition as opposed to fully prescribed and scored musical compositions.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Nelson Faria and Cliff Korman. *Inside the Brazilian Rhythm Section*. (Petaluma: Sher Music, 2001)

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Brothers. *Louis Armstrong's New Orleans*. (New York: WW Norton & Co, 2006) 281

<sup>12</sup> Mike Jordan, *Melodic Drumming in Contemporary Popular Music: An Investigation into Melodic Drum-Kit Performance Practices and Repertoire*. MA thesis, RMIT 2009. 59

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 38

<sup>14</sup> Jordan, 59

In my research I won't be specifically asking *what is improvisation?* (a thesis – or several – in itself), but rather, *how can the practices of the improvising drummer be applied to Brazilian rhythms?* After learning the basics, how do we move to a level of playing where we can be responsive to the fixed and variable elements of music?

I will explore this topic - the central topic of my thesis - in a variety of ways, as follows: drawing on the styles of selected Brazilian drummers; the practice techniques of improvising drummers across different genres; the application of improvisation techniques from non-Brazilian drum texts; and the application of rhythmic and rudimental texts.

My aim has been to better understand the ways of developing Brazilian drumming ideas so as to facilitate fluent and flexible playing. I have sought to create and understand longer phrases, and the associated rhythmic possibilities. I have tried to better understand the subtleties of Brazilian drumming and how seemingly small drumming choices affect the ensemble.

In this study the ideas of improvisation will be talked about in two broad categories: firstly as a rhythm section player, focusing on time-keeping and interaction; secondly as a featured soloist. There is certainly overlap between these areas, and I do not seek here to apply any narrow definitions. Improvisation will be discussed in a broad and inclusive sense, referencing improvisation from jazz and Brazilian traditions, as well as other relevant areas.<sup>15</sup>

Jazz drumming texts naturally involve extensive discussion of improvisation and interaction, so I will further draw on these texts and methods to inform

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<sup>15</sup> In the discussion of improvisation, jazz has become somewhat of a benchmark - perhaps in part due to the legitimizing role of jazz education at a university level. Jazz literature is also home to the most extensive writings on improvisation.



other improvisational techniques. These jazz-based texts will help provide the methodology for developing improvisation skills. It should also be noted that the development of the drum kit was also determined by the requirements jazz placed upon the drummer.<sup>16</sup> This in turn determines the way many of the Brazilian percussion rhythms are presented by the kit drummer.

Brazilian music also found a ready home amongst jazz musicians in the United States. Other styles of music imported to the US often had a ready-made audience - for example, the large Latino community as an audience for Cuban music. Brazilian immigration to the US has traditionally been at much lower levels than Cuban and Puerto Rican. John Storm Roberts makes this point quite strongly in *The Latin Tinge*. He continues:

Brazilian music, from the samba through the bossa nova and on, has always almost immediately been taken over by jazz musicians concerned with giving themselves more musical options.<sup>17</sup>

Jazz also played a considerable role in the development of this music in Brazil. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, popular music from the United States, including jazz and the Charleston, was heard in Brazilian carnival celebrations.<sup>18</sup> In the 1920s, members of *Os Oito Batutas* (probably the most influential Brazilian group of their time), were variously involved in jazz groups, having become fans of jazz during their 1922 visit to Paris.<sup>19</sup> In the 1940s jazz and be-bop were strong influences,<sup>20</sup> and the young musicians involved with the burgeoning bossa nova movement were fans of the West Coast "cool jazz" scene, particularly of Stan

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<sup>16</sup> Geoff Nicholls. *The Drum Book: A History of the Rock Drum Kit*. (London: Backbeat Books, 2008) 8

<sup>17</sup> John Storm Roberts. *The Latin Tinge*. (Oxford University Press, 1999) 252

<sup>18</sup> Hermano Vianna. *The Mystery of Samba*, (University of North Carolina Press, 1999) 27

<sup>19</sup> Vianna, 83

<sup>20</sup> Shaw, 54

Kenton.<sup>21</sup> Randy Weston described jazz as a “universal music,” and the practice methods of jazz musicians can be universal too.<sup>22</sup>

Choro, samba and bossa nova all have a strong history of improvisation: Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia describe choro as being “characterized by a certain degree of improvisation in both melody and accompaniment.”<sup>23</sup> In turn, the three styles at the centre of my study - choro, samba and bossa nova - have all played a significant role in the development of a distinct style of Brazilian jazz.

### Origins

Many musical styles can be considered to be distinctly products of a specific place (and time). In this study I am dealing with music to which I am not indigenous; in other words a music that developed in a culture different from mine. Music, however, has a remarkable ability to cross borders, and transcend cultures and languages, enrapturing many who live far from the music’s origins. As percussionist Memo Acevedo put it, “music doesn’t recognize skin colour or flags!”<sup>24</sup> Many musicians find themselves, at some point, playing music that is “not theirs.” Thus it is an issue with which many musicians grapple.

Not only am I dealing with music that is foreign to me, I am also studying and performing it in different social and cultural contexts. The relationship between performer and audience is sometimes different, music education systems are

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<sup>21</sup> Ruy Castro. *Bossa Nova: The Story of the Brazilian Music That Seduced the World*, (A Cappella Books, 2000) 9

<sup>22</sup> Arthur Taylor. *Notes and Tones*. (Da Capo Press, 1993) 22

<sup>23</sup> Tamara Elena Livingston-Isenhour and Thomas-George Caracas Garcia. *Choro: A Social History of a Brazilian Popular Music*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005) 3

<sup>24</sup> Quoted at 2009 PASIC World Percussion Committee panel discussion. Kenyon Williams, “¡Aye que Rico! I love it! I gotta play it! But how do I do it?: Building a Salsa/Latin Jazz Ensemble.” *Percussive Notes*, March 2011, 39

different, and the music-dance relationship often has less emphasis. Guitarist Julian Scheffer wrote about this topic in his thesis on choro in Melbourne - *Roda de Choro: A Musical Conversation*.<sup>25</sup> His research presents an in-depth look at the history and performance contexts of choro in Australia, primarily in Melbourne.

An understanding of the origins and precursors of the material presented here is important. As such, I will be discussing some of the elements of the music, as well as looking at the percussion origins of drum kit ideas, but I will not be entering into the argument surrounding tradition and authenticity. Many writers have previously tackled questions around Brazilian music traditions and notions of authenticity. Where appropriate, I will acknowledge their writings to help provide context for the development of the practical component upon which my study has focused. I share the view John P. Murphy expressed in his book *Music in Brazil*:

It is tempting to pick one style, such as that of the Velha Guarda da Mangueira, which performs classic sambas of the early twentieth century, and call it *the* authentic style and the others adaptations or distortions. But this would itself be a distortion of the important quality of samba: it is as multi-faceted and adaptable as the Brazilian people themselves.<sup>26</sup>

Anthropologist Gilberto Freyre, one of the most influential writers on Brazilian culture and identity, described Brazil as essentially a “combination, fusion, mixture.”<sup>27</sup> So, while acknowledging that there are discussions around the ideas of authenticity, purity, and tradition, I don’t believe that there is reason to expand upon it in this thesis. I will discuss musical elements that I believe are characteristic of specific styles, but only so far as to give a framework to the central part of this thesis regarding practice and performance methods.

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<sup>25</sup> Julian Scheffer. *Roda de Choro: A Musical Conversation*. Honours thesis, Victorian College of the Arts, 2010.

<sup>26</sup> John P. Murphy. *Music in Brazil*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) 6-7

<sup>27</sup> Gilberto Freyre. *Manifesto Regionalista*. (Recife: Instituto Joaquim Nabuco, 1967) 67. Cited in Vianna (59)

### Limits to Research

As mentioned earlier, Brazilian music is diverse – too big for any one study – so my focus will be on one of the important rhythmic streams: that of samba, bossa nova and choro (and use of these rhythms in Brazilian jazz). The grouping together of these styles may cause concern amongst many familiar with them – for example, choro and bossa nova are often considered to be *elite* music, whereas samba would usually be considered *vernacular*. But there is much evidence of encounters between proponents of elite and vernacular cultures, especially in Rio de Janeiro in the first half of the 20th Century.<sup>28</sup> Indeed, Shaw describes samba's evolution as "one of social ascension."<sup>29</sup>

These three styles share some common precursors as well. For example, there are choro and samba compositions that both draw heavily on maxixe (a style popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century). The lines between styles can be blurred: referring to *Pelo Telefone*, Ismael Silva argued with Donga that Donga's composition was really a maxixe, while Donga claimed that Silva's *If You Swear* was really a *marcha*, not a samba.<sup>30</sup>

For a drummer and percussionist these three styles share enough common ground that it is an appropriate grouping, and there is a strong lineage (insomuch as music developments could be considered linear), from choro, through samba and on to bossa nova.

On drum kit there is considerable common ground in the technical requirements, such as the four-way co-ordination used in each of these styles. But the biggest factor in the grouping of these styles is the rhythmic underpinning of each group. Samba, bossa nova and choro – although being

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<sup>28</sup> Larry Crook. *Music of Northeast Brazil*. (New York: Routledge, 2009) 152

<sup>29</sup> Shaw, 58

<sup>30</sup> Vianna, 89



distinct – share many rhythmic concepts, and for the purposes of this study for drum kit and percussion, it is appropriate to group them together. This is not to say that they are rhythmically the same, but they share a common rhythmic heritage. For example, Murphy describes bossa nova as a subtle off-shoot of samba.<sup>31</sup> There are also instances of writers suggesting that there are significant differences. José Ramos Tinhorão (a strident critic of the bossa nova movement) described the bossa nova musicians as young upstarts who:

...broke decisively with the popular heritage of samba by changing the only original thing it had left, the rhythm itself.<sup>32</sup>

The evidence in recordings, in concerts that I have attended, and in the existing texts, is that there is a common rhythmic language/framework for drum kit across these styles. The discussion and analysis of the rhythmic underpinnings – the rhythmic framework – creates the framework for my study, helping provide the *rhythmic* limits to my study. These rhythmic limits also help in creating the practice methodology.

There are a number of related areas that I have researched (and performed) during the course of my study, but due to limitations of space, these will not be covered in this thesis. Some of these areas were addressed in performances and lectures I gave, and they include odd-time applications, relationships with Brazilian ceremonial drumming (candomblé), and the application of transcribed jazz phrases to Brazilian-based drum solos.

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<sup>31</sup> Murphy, 6

<sup>32</sup> José Ramos Tinhorão. *Pequena história da música popular*. (São Paulo: Art, 1986) 231. Cited in Vianna (95)

## 2. Literature Review

For the purposes of my research, it serves to divide the current literature into two categories: Brazilian rhythms for percussion and drum kit (including books with individual chapters on Brazilian drumming); and books dealing with improvisation and practice methods. This review will focus on English language and English-Portuguese bi-lingual texts.

### *Brazilian Rhythms for Percussion and Drum Kit*

There are number of books available covering Brazilian rhythms, by both Brazilian and non-Brazilian authors. Many of them cover very similar territory, differentiated principally by the emphasis (percussion or drum kit), the exact styles covered (eg samba, frevo, *marchinha*), and the depth in which each style is covered. Most of the books readily available are by authors from North America, sometimes in collaboration with Brazilians (such as *Brazilian Rhythms for Drumset* - Weiner/Da Fonseca<sup>33</sup>). More recently books from Brazil have become easier to find, and often bi-lingual (Portuguese/English, such *Batuque é um Privilégio* – Bolão<sup>34</sup>). There has also been interest in the development of play-along books/CDs (in the same vein as the well-known Abersold Jazz Play-alongs). *Inside the Brazilian Rhythm Section* (Faria/Korman)<sup>35</sup> covers a range of styles for piano, guitar, bass and drums.

*Batuque é um Privilégio*, by Oscar Bolão, primarily covers the rhythms of Rio de Janeiro, his hometown - samba, bossa nova, choro, maxixe, *marchinha*, polka and Brazilian waltz. Bolão presents one- and two-bar patterns for percussion

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<sup>33</sup> Duduka Da Fonseca and Bob Weiner, *Brazilian Rhythms for Drumset*. (Miami: Manhattan Music, 1991)

<sup>34</sup> Oscar Bolão. *Batuque é um Privilégio: A percussão na música do Rio de Janeiro Para Músicos, arranjadores e compositores*. (Rio de Janeiro: Lumiar Editora, 2003)

<sup>35</sup> Nelson Faria and Cliff Korman. *Inside the Brazilian Rhythm Section*. (Petaluma: Sher Music, 2001)

and drum kit, and while providing excellent notated examples for "turnarounds" and many rhythmic variations, he is not explicit in their application beyond their obvious use as repetitive patterns. He does not discuss improvisation as a soloist or as a responsive member of the rhythm section.

Duduka Da Fonseca and Bob Weiner's *Brazilian Rhythms for Drumset*, similarly lacks a discussion of improvisation or further development of the rhythms presented, but it does go further than most texts by providing longer notated examples which start to lead away from the use of two-bar patterns. These longer examples are based on the two-bar ideas presented, but start to develop variations, and at times also show how the layering of parts can change the density and intensity of a groove.

Henrique C. De Almeida's *Brazilian Rhythms for the Drumset: Bossa Nova and Samba*<sup>36</sup> focuses on samba and bossa nova. As per Bolão, de Almeida mainly presents short patterns - in this case, one-bar patterns (he notates samba in 4/4, not 2/4)<sup>37</sup>. While not mentioning improvisation, he does develop individual ideas in great depth, showing many variations on orchestration, accents and embellishments. Extended development of individual ideas is one of the primary differences offered by this text.

*Inside the Brazilian Rhythm Section* by Nelson Faria and Cliff Korman, deals with the rhythm section parts of drum kit, bass, guitar and piano. Brief descriptions of styles are given, as well as explanations of groove styles and the interplay between rhythm section players. The instrument-specific charts start to show some of the skills that other texts are not explicit about - most notably the transitions between grooves that help shape the performance of each piece - but

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<sup>36</sup> Henrique C de Almeida. *Brazilian Rhythms for the Drumset – Bossa Nova and Samba*. (New York: Carl Fisher, 2005)

<sup>37</sup> I will discuss time signatures and subdivision in a later chapter.

the charts are not detailed enough to show all the variations and subtleties employed by Paulo Braga on the accompanying recording. While appropriate for an experienced performer in these styles, this does still leave some gaps between it and the work of the other texts discussed here.

Alberto Netto's *Brazilian Rhythms for Drum Set and Percussion*<sup>38</sup> provides an excellent background to Brazilian percussion instruments and rhythms, primarily the instruments used in *batucada*, but does not discuss in detail either practice or performance methods to facilitate the improvisation that Netto encourages. Ed Uribe starts to present some further practice ideas in his book *The Essence of Brazilian Percussion & Drum Set*,<sup>39</sup> presenting some basic exercises to develop flexibility and improvising skills within grooves.

Daniel Sabanovich's *Brazilian Percussion Manual*,<sup>40</sup> like the majority of these texts, deals largely with two-bar patterns, but Sabanovich does very clearly show percussion-to-drum kit relationships. There is no discussion of improvisation or advanced performance practices, though he does mention the use of "turnarounds" taken from percussion instruments such as the *repinique*.

*O Batuque Carioca*,<sup>41</sup> by Guilherme Gonçalves and Mestre Odilon Costa is an in-depth look at samba percussion and its use by *escolas de samba* in carnival. They give examples of many rhythms for each instrument, as well as looking at full *bateria* scores, with breaks, call-and-response, and similar ensemble concepts. As the drum kit is not part of this tradition, it is not mentioned at all, and as such, any drum kit ideas must be interpreted from the percussion ideas presented. It is an excellent source for rhythmic ideas as well as some of the

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<sup>38</sup> Alberto Netto. *Brazilian Rhythms for Drum Set and Percussion*. (Boston: Berklee Press, 2003)

<sup>39</sup> Ed Uribe. *The Essence of Brazilian Percussion and Drum Set*. (Miami: Warner Bros, 1993)

<sup>40</sup> Daniel Sabanovich, ed. Anthony J Cirone. *Brazilian Percussion Manual: Rhythms and Techniques with Application for the Drum Set*. (Van Nuys: Alfred, 1994)

<sup>41</sup> Guilherme Gonçalves and Mestre Odilon Costa. *O Batuque Carioca*. (São Paulo: Contemporânea, 2000)



other devices (like call-and-response) that can be used in drum kit improvisation.

In general, across these Brazilian drumming texts, rhythms are presented as being repetitive one- or two-bar patterns. While authors may encourage improvisation and creativity, very little information is passed on as to how this is achieved. The subtler aspects of Brazilian drum kit performance are also overlooked.

By utilising the methods and ideas presented in the second part of this literature review, I will be able to show a range of practice and performance ideas not presented in the current Brazilian drum kit literature. I will also have the opportunity to look at Brazilian drum kit performance practices in more detail, looking at some of the subtler aspects of performance, as well as looking at possible reasons that different ideas work in different contexts.

### *Improvisation Methods and Practice Methods*

This part of my literature review will look at some of the texts outside the Brazilian drum kit canon that discuss improvisation methods, further practice methods, and also texts that provide clues to possible alternatives in the development of Brazilian drumming methods.

Although not drum kit specific, many of the ideas from Hal Crooks *How to Improvise*<sup>42</sup> and *Ready, Aim, Improvise!*<sup>43</sup> are easily translated to drum kit. Elements such as rhythmic embellishment, motivic soloing and rhythmic displacement can be transferred to the practice of Brazilian rhythms. A number

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<sup>42</sup> Hal Crook. *How to Improvise*. (Advance Music, 1991)

<sup>43</sup> Crook. *Ready, Aim, Improvise!* (Advance Music, 1999)

of books, such as John Ramsay's *The Drummer's Complete Vocabulary*,<sup>44</sup> and John Riley's *The Art of Bop Drumming*,<sup>45</sup> *Beyond Bop Drumming*,<sup>46</sup> and *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*,<sup>47</sup> offer ideas and practice methods for improvisation that can also be transferred to the development of improvisation skills in Brazilian drumming.

There are also texts that deal with Brazilian rhythms in passing, but provide some ideas relating to advanced practice methods and improvisation - Skip Hadden's *World Fusion Drumming*,<sup>48</sup> and Kim Plainfield's *Advanced Concepts*<sup>49</sup> fall in to this category.

Taken alongside less genre-specific texts such as Ted Reed's *Syncopation*<sup>50</sup> or George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*,<sup>51</sup> and in conjunction with transcription and analysis of Brazilian recordings, a more thorough approach to Brazilian improvisation and practice methods can be developed.

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<sup>44</sup> John Ramsay. *The Drummer's Complete Vocabulary, as taught by Alan Dawson*. (Miami: Manhattan Music, 1997)

<sup>45</sup> John Riley. *The Art of Bop Drumming*. (Miami: Manhattan Music, 1994)

<sup>46</sup> Riley. *Beyond Bop Drumming*. (Miami: Manhattan Music, 1997)

<sup>47</sup> Riley. *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop: Advanced Concepts for Musical Development*. (Cedar Grove: Modern Drummer Publications, 2004)

<sup>48</sup> Skip Hadden. *World Fusion Drumming: Rhythmic Concepts Using the Beat, the Body, and the Brain*. (Alfred, 2001)

<sup>49</sup> Kim Plainfield. *Advanced Concepts*. (Alfred, 1993)

<sup>50</sup> Ted Reed. *Progressive Steps to Syncopation for the Modern Drummer*. (Van Nuys: Alfred, 1996)

<sup>51</sup> George Lawrence Stone. *Stick Control - for the Snare Drummer*. (Stone Percussion Books, 2009)

### 3. The Brazilian Sound

One of the most important questions this research has to deal with is “what are the distinctive elements of samba, choro and bossa nova?” Without that aspect I am left, essentially, with a thesis on drum kit improvisation. I will deal with this question in two parts. In this chapter I will take a general look at the characteristics of samba, bossa nova and choro, with particular reference to their application in drum kit improvisation. In the following chapters, I will take a more specific look at the characteristics of drum kit playing in these styles, and the percussion origins of drum kit parts.

#### General Characteristics

It is almost impossible to come up with a comprehensive definition of any style of music. We can talk about *tendencies*, *conventions* or *normal practices*, and perhaps we can even say what it’s not (up to a point). But how do we say “*this is what it is, to the exclusion of everything else*”? I am not sure that we can.

A good example is the debate over what jazz is and isn’t. Ask this question of ten different jazz musicians (or critics, or historians) and you will likely get ten different answers. There will probably be some common ideas – those “tendencies” – and some may even claim to have a comprehensive definition (though the other nine may well disagree!). Stuart Nicholson puts it well in *Is Jazz Dead?*

The “swing and blues” mantra clearly arises out of the desire to assign some properties to jazz that make it “jazz.” Otherwise, the argument goes, how do we know that it is not R&B, blues, pop, baroque, etc? But as Ludwig Wittgenstein argued, a formal definition of even everyday concepts is

probably impossible, as he demonstrated with his famous example of "game."<sup>52</sup>

So seeking to define choro, samba or bossa nova could prove futile, but the idea of tendencies and conventions is worth considering. Ed Morales refers to the tendencies of Latin music when discussing the Mambo Era in *The Latin Beat*, and this idea could easily be applied to many Brazilian styles.

Like so many species of Latin music, mambo is less a formal pattern than a constellation of tendencies...<sup>53</sup>

There is also a strong history of styles intersecting and of musicians in one genre borrowing repertoire from another. Livingston-Isenhour and Garcia:

Much in the way that American ragtime musicians would "rag," or play a piece that was not composed as a ragtime in ragtime style, chorões could play any piece from any style in the choro genre.<sup>54</sup>

Hermano Vianna (a proponent *transculturation*<sup>55</sup>) draws on the writings of musician/poet Caetano Veloso while discussing the concept of *indefiniton* being viewed as a Brazilian national characteristic.<sup>56</sup> And in discussing the transformation of samba into a national music, he draws on the work of Richard Peterson:

The "discovery" of samba by the young Brazilian intellectuals of the 1920s provides examples of "the invention of tradition" or "the fabrication of authenticity," in the formulations advanced by Eric Hobsbawm and Richard Peterson, respectively. I subscribe to the words of Peterson, in his description

<sup>52</sup> Stuart Nicholson. *Is Jazz Dead? (or has it moved to a new address)*. (New York: Routledge, 2005) 70

<sup>53</sup> Ed Morales. *The Latin Beat*. (Da Capo Press, 2003) 35

<sup>54</sup> Livingston-Isenhour/Garcia, 66

<sup>55</sup> Transculturation is a concept that gained currency with the publishing of Fernando Ortiz's *Cuban Counterpoint of Tobacco and Sugar*. In a cultural give-and-take, new, original and independent ideas emerge, as opposed to a mosaic or aggregate of characteristics. Vianna, 36

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 108-9

of the invention of US country music: "Authenticity is not a trait inherent in an object or an event that one declares 'authentic'; it is a matter of social construction, a convention that partially deforms the past."<sup>57</sup>

Even within the work of one artist, it can be hard to be specific. Discussing the work of the famous *sambista* Noel Rosa, Lisa Shaw notes that although over 70 per cent of his compositions were classified as sambas, many proved hard to categorize amongst the sub-genres of samba (for example, *samba-canção*, *samba-de-meio-de-ano*). Rosa simply called them all "sambas."<sup>58</sup> For his part, John P. Murphy describes samba not as a single style or genre, but as "a broad stream of musical activity comparable to jazz... a family of styles."<sup>59</sup>

João Gilberto, one of the most important figures in bossa nova, never liked labels, and around 1961 started saying that he didn't play bossa nova, he played samba.<sup>60</sup> Interestingly, Gilberto's 1959 recording of *A Felicidade* features an arrangement that changes between samba and bossa nova. Discussing the role of this recording in the context of the film *Black Orpheus*, Charles A. Perrone describes it as:

"the contrast of the fundamentally Afro-Brazilian samba rooted in Carnival and the emergent style that the film helped to disseminate."<sup>61</sup>

There are clear distinctions between the sections of this performance, most noticeable in the use of drum kit and percussion. The chorus features many of the standard instruments of Afro-Brazilian samba, such as *agogô*, *surdo*, and *cuíca*. The verse is much more subdued, with brushes on snare drum and

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<sup>57</sup> Vianna, 15-6

<sup>58</sup> Shaw, 96

<sup>59</sup> Murphy, 7

<sup>60</sup> Castro, 223

<sup>61</sup> Perrone and Dunn, 59



*caixeta*,<sup>62</sup> but one surdo does continue through the verse (the surdo is rarely used in bossa nova). The use of two distinct stylistic ideas within one performance does of course bring with it the problem of how to classify the overall result.<sup>63</sup>

Such are the problems with labelling and defining styles. With all that in mind, I will briefly discuss the musical elements found in choro, samba, and bossa nova. I will take particular note of each aspect's relevance in reference to drum kit and improvisational techniques. The different elements should provide the drummer with a wide range of ideas and inspiration for soloing and groove playing.

In a broad discussion of musical styles we could look at the following areas:

- Lyrical content
- Melody
- Harmony (and harmonic movement)
- Structure (form)
- Timbre/texture
- Rhythm
- Dynamics

As my research centres on drumming, some of these elements are of less significance, as not all of these elements may be conveyed easily upon the (un-tuned) drum kit.<sup>64</sup> Style is also a case of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts - all of the elements here are important - but for the purposes of this study and building some workable framework for the discussion of drum kit improvisation, these elements must be broken down somewhat. I realise there

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<sup>62</sup> Caixeta is a woodblock, often used in choro. In this recording, it is used in the same way drum kit players use the rim-click sound in bossa nova.

<sup>63</sup> *Chega de Saudade*, João Gilberto. El Records ACMEM179CD

<sup>64</sup> I say "un-tuned" to convey the fact that the modern drum kit does not (usually) have specific, fixed pitches.

are significant short-comings in such compartmentalisation, but doing so will help provide us with an understanding of the relevant importance of each aspect and its relationship to the characteristic sounds. It is also important to consider context.

### *Lyrical Content*

The lyrical content of a song is important for a drummer, providing the emotional framework in which to work, giving us a guide to the intensity required. In dealing with improvised drumming practices, it is sometimes of less importance, though it remains a reference point. It should also be noted that much repertoire in samba, and choro especially, is instrumental only, removing lyrical content as an issue.<sup>65</sup> So although the lyrical content could be characteristic of the style for a singer, for a drummer, lyrical content has less importance in our discussion of improvisation.

### *Melody*

The rhythm and shape of the melody are important, and many drummers utilize melodic rhythm and a sense of pitch contour to create their own impression of a given melody.

Research undertaken by Benjamin White in 1960 showed that melodies could be recognized by listeners, even when the intervals were altered, if the contour of the melody was kept.<sup>66</sup> This ability amongst listeners allows drummers (playing on an "un-tuned" instrument) to play a recognizable melody, primarily utilizing rhythm and contour. This has been exploited by drummers across many styles. An exponent of note in the contemporary jazz scene is New York-based drummer Ari Hoenig, while on the CD accompanying Larry Crook's

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<sup>65</sup> Though it should be noted that some instrumental pieces have had lyrics added after the fact, as is common in jazz.

<sup>66</sup> BW White, *Recognition of Distorted Melodies* (American Journal of Psychology 73), cited in Levitin (137-8)

*Music of Northeast Brazil*, pandeirista Bernard Aguiar manipulates the pitch of his *pandeiro* to represent the melody of *Asa Branca* (Luiz Gonzaga/Humberto Teixeira).<sup>67</sup> Marcio Bahia, drummer with Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo, also used the melody of *Asa Branca* during an extended solo in their Melbourne concert of March 2012.<sup>68</sup> He played the melody on the floor tom, manipulating the pitch of the skin with one stick, while playing the rhythm with the other. So it is possible for a melody to be represented on the drum kit (and percussion) through rhythm and melodic contour.

Some melodic invention is more easily expressed on the drum-kit than others. Rhythmical melodies associated with jazz syncopation are well suited to the drum-kit perhaps because of (what I refer to as) the percussive nature of the music.<sup>69</sup>

I believe that the melodies of samba, choro and bossa nova frequently show similar qualities, making them excellent sources for improvisational ideas.

Jordan also refers to a concept he calls "mirroring." This uses the rhythmic and dynamic elements of the melody to create phrases on the drums (removing the idea of melodic contour discussed above). He refers to "a rhythmical/dynamic skeleton of a melody without playing the actual pitches themselves."<sup>70</sup>

As I will discuss in Chapter 5 - *A Brazilian Clave?* - the rhythm of the melody also helps dictate the direction of two-bar patterns. This is an important part of setting up the appropriate rhythmic framework, and informs our groove playing as well as soloing. It is also a common technique to develop patterns on the drum kit that reinforce the rhythmic elements of the other instruments. As such, the rhythm of the melody can be used as a source of rhythmic ideas for

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<sup>67</sup> Crook, *Music of Northeast Brazil*, accompanying CD, track 3.

<sup>68</sup> Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo, performance at the Melbourne Recital Centre, March 9, 2012.

<sup>69</sup> Jordan, 64

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, 54

drum parts. This practice is common to other percussion instruments to, such as the pandeiro:

The rhythmic aspects of the melody, the center, and the bass are typically reinforced and complemented by the pandeiro.<sup>71</sup>

As well as providing rhythmic direction, the melody is another element to be considered in relation to the idea of responsiveness. Responsiveness and interaction don't only happen in relation to the other instruments and their improvised elements, but also to the fixed elements. "The melody... gives you context and good content for your comping ideas."<sup>72</sup>

### *Harmony*

Not surprisingly, harmony and harmonic movement are not easily conveyed on the drum kit. In fact I don't think it is a stretch to say that it is near impossible to convey *specific* harmonic movement on a standard drum kit, but in his thesis on melodic drumming, Jordan notes the importance of harmonic understanding:

Drummers who are aware of the harmonic movement in musical composition benefit enormously. It is not essential that the chords themselves be able to be named... This internalization greatly assists the drummer in playing a melodic solo even though they may not have specific pitches at their disposal. Indeed, hearing and responding to rhythmic and harmonic progressions...relates closely to melodic drum-kit performance.<sup>73</sup>

There are elements of harmonic rhythm that could be conveyed, to some extent, on the drum kit. The rate of harmonic movement helps create a feeling of either restlessness or breadth and relaxation. Piston and Devoto note:

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<sup>71</sup> Livingston-Isenhour/Garcia, 8

<sup>72</sup> Riley. *The Master Drummer* (DVD).

<sup>73</sup> Jordan, 56

When the harmony changes with much frequency the effect is apt to be one of restlessness. Widely spaced changes of harmony give the impression of breadth and relaxation.<sup>74</sup>

A skilled drummer could convey these senses of restlessness and relaxation, and they can be important elements in creating an engaging improvisation.

### *Form*

Tied in with melody, harmony and harmonic movement, is the concept of structure – what jazz musicians would commonly refer to as *form*. As an improvising drummer, an understanding of form is very useful, compulsory even, as it provides a natural framework for a solo. Form is an important feature to each of these styles, but not necessarily distinguishing or defining. The forms used in these styles are found elsewhere in popular and art music, but choro, samba and bossa nova do tend to draw on different structures: choro is very commonly in rondo form; bossa nova draws heavily on jazz style AABA forms; and sambas often have a verse-refrain structure.

An understanding of form is also a vital part of a drummer's rhythm section job (ie, grooving!): knowing how to help shape the accompaniment for other soloists and singers; knowing when it's appropriate to do fills; knowing when to change grooves, and so-forth.

### *Rhythm*

Elsewhere in this study I discuss the characteristic rhythms of these styles, and although similar rhythms exist in other genres around the world, it is fair to say that the overall effect of the interlocking rhythms found in choro, samba and bossa nova is unique to Brazil. For example, the overall effect of the

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<sup>74</sup> Walter Piston, ed Mark Devoto, *Harmony* (New York: WW Norton, 1978) 204. Cited in Jordan (57)



interlocking rhythms of samba is distinct from the interlocking rhythms of the Cuban *conga*.<sup>75</sup> Despite common roots or elements, one would not confuse a choro for a tango, or mistake bossa nova for cool jazz. Similarly, a Cuban bell pattern doesn't fit with a samba. Although most of the rhythms of the Americas are affected by the African diaspora to greater or lesser degrees, they are individual. Sometimes one quaver being changed is enough to change a rhythm from something Cuban to something Brazilian. Subtleties like this are sometimes hard to discern, but we can listen to the overall effect of interlocking rhythms within a style and hear a characteristic sound.

### *Texture and Timbre*

Also important are the instruments that these rhythms are played on, and this provides the textural and timbral qualities of Brazilian music. Brazilian music uses a huge array of percussion instruments, and the mixing of certain percussive sounds with other instruments helps give each style a distinctive sound. The percussive sound in choro is almost exclusively the pandeiro, while bossa nova favours the drum kit, and samba features a large range of percussion instruments. In the early days of Rio de Janeiro's *escolas de samba* (c.1935) one of the first rules applied by the city's carnival commission related to instrumentation, banning all instruments except the percussion of the bateria and the *bandolim* accompanying the singer.<sup>76</sup> The common instrumentation of these styles also varies (see table below), and as we consider Brazilian jazz also, we can include the use of electric guitar, bass and keyboard too.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Conga is an Afro-Cuban music and dance associated with carnival in Cuba, specifically with the parades known as *comparsas*. Frank Malabe and Bob Weiner, *Afro-Cuban Rhythms for Drumset*, (New York: Manhattan Music, 1990) 43

<sup>76</sup> Guillermprieto, 31

<sup>77</sup> Although found in modern samba recordings, electric guitars, etc, are not traditional samba instruments. The rise of MPB and the *Jovem Guarda* (Young Guard) in the 1960s saw considerable debate over the use of such instruments (the MPB camp were seen as defenders of "authentic" Brazilian music and were against the use of electric instruments). Perrone and Dunn, 19

Most of the percussion instruments in Brazil have origins in African music or in the band music of Europe (primarily Portugal). Many of these instruments have relatives in other countries, for example, Brazil's *atabaques* and Cuba's *tumbadoras*. In many cases instruments have evolved slightly differently from country to country, and instrumental techniques may also vary from country to country.

*Examples of common ensemble instrumentation*<sup>78</sup>

Choro	Samba	Samba	Bossa Nova
<i>Conjunto Regional</i> <sup>79</sup>	<i>Samba Enredo</i>	<i>Pagode</i>	Vocals
Flute	Vocals	Vocals	Guitar
Violão	Violão	Violão	Double Bass
Violão de 7 Cordas	Cavaquinho	Violão - 7 Cordas	Piano
Cavaquinho	Bateria (percussion section)	Cavaquinho	Drum Kit
Bandolim		Pandeiro	Saxophone
Pandeiro		Repique de mão	
		Tan-tã (or surdo)	

As well as the overall sound of an ensemble, we can also consider the manipulation of sound by percussionists and drummers, such as the use of "slap" tones and other idiosyncratic techniques.<sup>80</sup> I will deal with some of the specifics of this in the Chapter 7, *Background to Brazilian Drum Kit and Percussion*.

### *Dynamics*

Each of the ensemble settings laid out in the table above will lead to its own natural dynamic range. A bateria of 100+ drummers will obviously be a bit louder than a small bossa nova group.

<sup>78</sup> For a full description of the percussion instruments listed here, refer to the Chapter 7 *Background to Brazilian Drum Kit and Percussion*.

<sup>79</sup> The *conjuntos regionais* were professional groups used to accompany singers, and in the 1930s used for live radio broadcasts. Livingston-Isenhour/Garcia, 2

<sup>80</sup> "Slap" is an onomatopoeic term for a specific tone played using an open hand on a drum. Commonly used on atabaques and repinique, amongst others.

Jordan refers to the "external dynamic" as being the relationship between the dynamic level of the drum kit and the whole ensemble dynamic, and that it "is of the utmost importance in terms of musical expression." Along side this is what Jordan refers to as "internal dynamics" - the dynamic relationship between various elements of the drum kit: "The manipulation of internal dynamics is fundamental to melodic drumming."<sup>81</sup>

Dynamics are also a useful element of improvisation, and although not a defining characteristic, use of appropriate dynamics can help further differentiate the soloing and groove styles of samba, choro and bossa nova.

*Distinguishing Brazilian drumkit improvisation within the styles of choro, bossa nova and samba*

It is the rhythmic structure that creates the common ground for my approach to the three styles looked at in this thesis. Choro, samba and bossa nova share a considerable amount of rhythmic language, and many writers have previously established their musical relationships and shared lineage (Ruy Castro, John P Murphy, Hermano Vianna and others). This then begs the question of how to differentiate the three.

In the general characteristics listed above I give some indication as to the tendencies of each style. For example, dynamics may be one way, but at best this could be seen as a *tendency*. Celso de Almeida, performing with Rosa Passos in 2012,<sup>82</sup> would tend to play with brushes for repertoire that would be described as bossa nova, and he was more likely to play with sticks on

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<sup>81</sup> Jordan, 64

<sup>82</sup> Rosa Passos in concert. SESC Vila Mariana, São Paulo. April 7, 2012

repertoire that was more closely aligned with samba. But much of Passos' work straddles genres, and this captures the difficulty in defining the differences.

Another example of the blurred lines between choro, samba and bossa nova is the Antonio Carlos Jobim composition *Chega de Saudade*. What is these days considered a "classic" bossa nova composition, Ruy Castro describes thus: "a kind of *samba-canção* in three parts, but with a *chorinho* flavor."<sup>83</sup>

Overall, it is very difficult to differentiate the three styles - particularly in light of the scarcity of drum kit use in choro. Perhaps the best guide to differentiating the improvising styles is actually in the performance context and the tendencies that each context brings - for example, bossa nova tending to be more delicate and understated, samba more energetic and rhythmically dense.

### Chapter Summary - General Characteristics

Across the different musical elements, I have shown varying levels of importance with regards to drumming and drum kit improvisation. Lyrical content, where applicable, serves as a guide to the emotional intensity of a performance. Melody, including rhythm and contour, can be a valuable reference point for soloing, as well as usually dictating rhythmic direction and the resulting groove ideas. It also provides context for our interactions.

Harmony is a hard idea to express on drum kit, but when considered alongside structure, including an understanding of restlessness and breadth/relaxation, is an important part of any improvising drummer's methods.

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<sup>83</sup> Castro, 119

Timbre and texture can be used to great effect, especially in conveying a certain element or "flavour" of a given style, and dynamics can also help distinguish styles, especially when considered in the context of a performance.

But it is rhythm that most defines the drumming styles of choro, samba and bossa nova. There are rhythmic structures within these styles - some relating to phrasing of semiquavers, some related to emphasis, some of it to syncopated rhythms. The following chapters will deal with some of these ideas, and their percussion origins, in more depth.



## 4. Rhythmic Fundamentals and Phrasing

At this point, I will examine some of the rhythmic fundamentals of samba, choro and bossa nova. In the next chapter I will discuss syncopated two-bar rhythms and how they interlock, but a discussion of some of the basics is important at this point.

### Notation

Although choro, samba and bossa nova can be written in 2/4, 4/4, or cut-common time, the important thing to understand is how the music is *felt*. Whichever of these time signatures a piece may be written in, it will be felt "in two." Different composers/arrangers will have their own understanding of the relationship between the music and the written page - it is up to us as musicians to understand where the writer is coming from. I won't be so bold as to make a statement as to which way is "correct," but I will state my personal preference for choro and samba to be written in 2/4, with semiquavers being the prevalent subdivision. It has been my experience that most writers who are familiar with these styles will write choro and samba in this way, while bossa nova will tend to be written in 4/4 with quavers as the prevalent subdivision.

Below I have written out the *partido alto* rhythm in 2/4, 4/4 (semiquaver based), 4/4 (quaver based), and cut-common (2/2).

Figure 1, Partido Alto in 2/4



Figure 2, Partido Alto, semiquavers in 4/4



Figure 3, Partido Alto, quavers in 4/4



Figure 4, Partido Alto, cut-common



### Brazilian Semiquavers, and how to phrase "in the cracks"

One of the defining phrasing styles of Brazilian music is the concept of phrasing the semiquavers "in the cracks." That is to say, in a steady stream of semiquavers, not all will fit in the standard idea of what semiquavers are, ie they won't be evenly spaced. Airto Moreira describes it as an "elasticity," saying "it is what makes people dance."<sup>84</sup> Although the Brazilians have their own way of doing this, the general concept of in-the-cracks can be found across many styles. John Riley refers to the precise placement of partials as the *micro-dimension*.<sup>85</sup>

There have been some technical papers written on this subject, such as Fabien Gouyon's *Microtiming in "Samba de Roda"*<sup>86</sup> and *Multidimensional Microtiming in Samba music* (Naveda et al).<sup>87</sup> In relation to my research, the most important conclusion from these papers is that the "results strongly confirm the systematic tendency of anticipations of the 3rd and 4th 16th-notes at the metrical level of 1

<sup>84</sup> Airto Moreira. *Listen and Play* (Video). (DCI Music Video, 1993)

<sup>85</sup> Riley. *The Master Drummer* (DVD).

<sup>86</sup> Fabien Gouyon, *Microtiming in "Samba de Roda" - Preliminary experiments with polyphonic audio*. Brazilian Symposium on Computer Music 2007.

<sup>87</sup> Luiz Naveda, Fabien Gouyon, Carlos Guedes, Marc Leman, *Multidimensional Microtiming in Samba Music*, paper presented at the 12th Brazilian Symposium on Computer Music.

beat."<sup>88</sup> Put another way, the 3rd and 4th semiquavers of each beat are slightly rushed.

In his book *Brazilian Percussion Manual*, Daniel Sabanovich discusses this idea in relation to the *caixa* (snare drum) rhythms, utilising this triplet pattern,<sup>89</sup> but played literally, this rhythm is not quite right. Note here that it is the 2nd and 4th semiquavers that are altered (relative to a regular grouping of four semiquavers).

Figure 5, Triplet-based phrasing idea



The best advice I have received on developing this phrasing came from Australian drummer/percussionist Fabian Hevia during a workshop he gave at the Australian National University School of Music in 2001. His process involved going from regular, "straight" semiquavers to the triplet pattern, making the transition as drawn-out as possible. Somewhere in between these two notated ideas, we should find the correct phrasing.

I would add to that the need to listen extensively to Brazilian music to understand this phrasing. It should also be noted that this phrasing style is most prominent in samba. Extensive listening will also show that there are times when straight, evenly spaced semiquavers are required. As always, the performer should be sensitive to the needs of the music at any given moment. The "elasticity" can be adapted according to the demands of a given musical situation.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 10

<sup>89</sup> Sabanovich, 16

From my own experiences, I believe that practice on percussion instruments can also aid the development of this phrasing, particularly playing tamborim while utilizing the "turn," and playing pandeiro with an active left hand. Jonathan Gregory explains the placement of semiquavers on pandeiro as having "a slight delay of the second sixteenth," and that the "subsequent acceleration of the remaining notes are highly individual and varied." Gregory uses the triplet-based approach (Fig 5) as a way of describing *suingue* (literally "swing").<sup>90</sup>

Once this phrasing style has been mastered, it should be practiced in a range of contexts on the drum kit, and with varied sticking patterns (thus facilitating a range of orchestrations). In my own experience, this phrasing style is not easily adapted to all sticking patterns, and is best served by the single stroke roll (R L R L), and some paradiddle patterns (of note, L R R L R L L R, and its inverse).

From this semiquaver phrasing we get another common Brazilian phrasing idea - the meeting of the quaver triplet rhythm and the semiquaver/quaver/semiquaver grouping.

Figure 6. semiquaver/quaver/semiquaver



Figure 7, quaver triplets



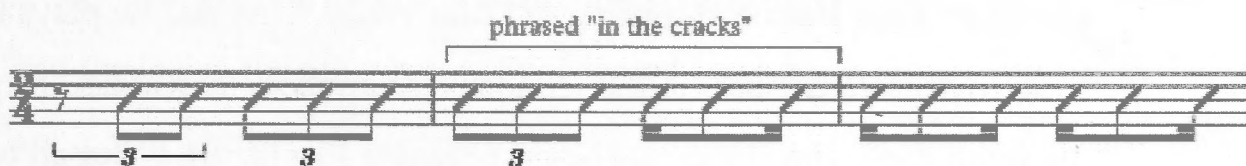
<sup>90</sup> Murphy, 10-2



Many musicians also play with the relationship between the triplet-based rhythm, the rhythm "in the cracks" and regular semiquavers. An example of this can be found on one of Jacob do Bandolim's recordings of *Migalhas de Amor*.<sup>91</sup>

From (approx) 2:17 on this recording, Canhoto, on *cavaquinho*, plays triplets followed by the semiquaver-based equivalent, moving briefly through the equivalent "in the cracks" on his way from the former to the latter. The transition from the triplet rhythm to the semiquaver rhythm is gradual, and I have attempted to show that with the notation style in the second bar. By the third bar he is clearly playing the semiquaver rhythm.

Figure 8, Canhoto's *cavaquinho* rhythm



On drum kit and other percussion instruments - notably repinique - this rhythm can be executed predominantly by one hand, while the other plays the off-beat (ie 3rd semiquaver). The sticking can be expressed thus - R R L R. Below it is shown with the two forms of this rhythm. The tamborim technique that utilises the turn is not dissimilar to the ideas of Figure 9 and 10. In the older technique,<sup>92</sup> the player would play three "down-strokes," matching the right hand, with the "up-stroke" matching the left hand. The up-stroke is facilitated by turning the drum.

<sup>91</sup> *Doce de Coco*, Jacob do Bandolim (compilation) Paris Jazz Corner Productions. Original recording, May 1952.

<sup>92</sup> I say "older" here, in as much as this technique predates the technique used by most contemporary baterias. In general, *samba enredos* have been played at faster tempos over the last 20-30 years, and tamborim playing evolved to facilitate the faster playing required. In informal conversations, it has been suggested to me that the tempos started increasing around the time the *Sambadromo* was opened in Rio de Janeiro (1984).

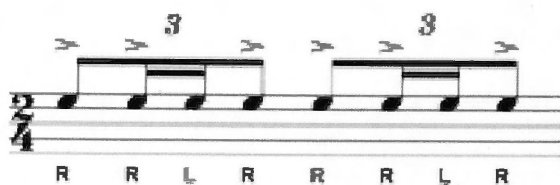
Figure 9, Sticking pattern with triplet-based rhythm



Figure 10, Sticking pattern with semiquavers



It is commonly played in the triplet version, which can be particularly effective when played against other semiquaver rhythms. Again, it is a rhythmic form of tension-and-release. Rafael Barata uses this device during some of his solo breaks on Rosa Passos' recording of *Olhos Verdes*.<sup>93</sup> At 2:47 he plays it stick-on-stick, rhythmically closer to the semiquaver variation, then at 2:53 he plays it on the small tom, with the triplet based phrasing like Figure 9, but all of the right hand notes are accented.

Figure 11, Rafael Barata, *Olhos Verdes* solo excerpt

It is also common to start this phrase on the second note, ie the bar starts with a rest:

<sup>93</sup> *É Luxo Só*, Rosa Passos. Biscoito Fino BF 135-2

Figure 12, rest on first quaver



Figure 13, rest on first semiquaver



As a final point on this phrasing style, it should also be noted that a lot of contemporary Brazilian drummers execute constant semiquaver phrases in this manner, including at faster tempi. This allows them to maintain a flow of semiquavers in one hand while creating syncopated rhythms, surdo patterns, and the like in the other hand. Syncopated accents can also be utilised in this approach. During my second trip to Brazil I saw a number of drummers using these concepts to great effect. I saw Celso de Almeida,<sup>94</sup> Cuca Teixeira,<sup>95</sup> Douglas Alonso,<sup>96</sup> and Edu Ribeiro<sup>97</sup> use this approach, though there are many other drummers using it, of note Erivelton Silva. I have seen a number of different stick techniques used to create a relaxed stream of semiquavers, including the push-pull technique, Moeller strokes and modified Moeller strokes, and the Gladstone technique.

### Rhythmic Emphasis

The next chapter looks at some of the syncopated rhythms found in choro, samba and bossa nova, but it is also worth considering an important emphasis

<sup>94</sup> Rosa Passos in concert. SESC Vila Mariana, São Paulo. April 7, 2012.

<sup>95</sup> In performance at the restaurant/music venue São Cristovão, São Paulo. April 9, 2012.

<sup>96</sup> Second fieldwork trip to Brazil, March-April 2012. I saw Alonso using this technique extensively in performances at the club O do Borogodo.

<sup>97</sup> Edu Ribeiro Trio in concert. SESC Santo Amaro, São Paulo. April 6, 2012.

that exists on the level of pulsation (as opposed subdivision). These three styles all feature heavily an emphasis on the second pulse of the two-beat cycle. One of the dominant sounds of samba is the beat 2 emphasis played on the surdo (Alcebíades Maia Barcelos, known as "Bide," is credited with introducing to samba the second beat emphasis on the surdo<sup>98</sup>). In choro, the pandeiro plays an accented open tone on beat 2. In bossa nova, it is sometimes emphasised by drummers, sometimes by bassists. The idea of emphasis on beat 2 can also be expressed as short-long (as below).

Figure 14, crotchet pulse - short-long



Iversen, Patel and Ohgushi researched the relationship between linguistic rhythmic templates and the processing of non-linguistic sound patterns.<sup>99</sup> There may be a relationship between the Portuguese language as spoken by Brazilians, and the music they create. This is a possible explanation for the melodic and rhythmic tendencies in Brazilian music, but this discussion lays beyond the limits of my research. The "what" is more important than the "why" for this discussion in this thesis.

### Chapter Summary - Rhythmic Fundamentals and Phrasing

In addition to the basics of notation, this chapter has primarily dealt with the idiosyncrasies of semiquaver phrasing in Brazilian music (also known as microtiming or the micro-dimension). I have outlined some of the applications of this phrasing style, as well as practice methods for achieving this phrasing

<sup>98</sup> José Ramos Tinhorão. *História da Música Popular Brasileira*. (São Paulo: Editora, 1998) 293-4. Cited by Murphy (9)

<sup>99</sup> John R. Iversen, Aniruddh D. Patel and Kengo Ohgushi. *Perception of non-linguistic rhythmic stimuli by American and Japanese listeners*. Proceedings of International Congress of Acoustics, Kyoto, 2004. Cited in Oliver Sacks, *Musicophilia* (London: Picador, 2008) (264-5)

style. It is also important to understand the place of this phrasing style in different contexts. Sometimes the music will call for this type of micro-timing; other times the music will require more regimented semiquavers.



## 5. A Brazilian Clave?

### Interlocking Rhythms

A key element of groove-based music is the concept of interlocking rhythms. Partial or total synchronicity is essential across so many styles – be it funk, polka, heavy metal, or tango. This starts on an elemental level (metre and pulse) and carries through to subdivision and syncopations – be they light syncopations or heavy.

These elements can be manipulated to create tension-and-release (rhythmic consonances and dissonances, if you like) by composer and performer alike. As Daniel Levitin puts it:

Music communicates to us emotionally through systematic violations of expectations. These violations can occur in any domain – the domain of pitch, timbre, contour, rhythm, tempo, and so-on – but occur they must. Music is organized sound, but the organization has to involve some element of the unexpected or it is emotionally flat and robotic.<sup>100</sup>

Rhythmic consonance and dissonance can be used just as effectively as melodic and harmonic consonance/dissonance to create “violations of expectation.” The manipulation of rhythm can take many forms, such as: the use of hemiola figures; highly syncopated rhythms being played off against less syncopated; or simultaneous-but-conflicting syncopated rhythms. These devices all create rhythmic “excitement”, and this excitement is an important element of groove.

The manipulation of rhythm to create tension-and-release can exist over short and long cycles. In samba, choro and bossa nova there is a basic concept of

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<sup>100</sup> Daniel Levitin. *This Is Your Brain On Music*. (London: Atlantic Books, 2008) 172-173

two-bar groove cycles (typically written in 2/4, with semiquavers being the predominant subdivision). Within these two bars there is a sense of tension-and-release created by the contrast between syncopated and less syncopated rhythms. The more syncopated elements create tension that is then resolved by a return to less syncopated rhythms.<sup>101</sup> McGowan and Pessanha talk briefly about the development of two-bar phrases in samba:

From Estácio came such now-legendary sambistas as Bide, Ismael Silva, Nilton Bastos and Armando Marçal. They took the fledgling samba genre and clearly differentiated it from maxixe and marcha, introducing longer notes and two-bar phrasing...<sup>102</sup>

There is also tension-and-release created in playing the more complex (syncopated) rhythms against less syncopated accompaniment. For example, in a bateria, one of the standard tamborim parts is a syncopated rhythm over two bars (with a contrast between heavy and light syncopation in these two bars). Meanwhile, the first and second surdo players play just crotchets (the pulse).<sup>103</sup> The “grounding” provided by a strong pulse, in this case from the surdos, helps create the feeling of tension-and-release that results from the rhythm of the tamborim.

Figure 15, 2-bar Tamborim rhythm



<sup>101</sup> There are many instances of one-bar patterns in all of these styles, but the question of *direction* (dealt with below) does not apply to one-bar rhythms.

<sup>102</sup> Chris McGowan and Ricardo Pessanha. *The Brazilian Sound*. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press) 1998. 25

<sup>103</sup> Surdos are in effect the bass drums of the bateria. For more information refer to Chapter 7, *Background to Brazilian Drum Kit and Percussion*.

The reference point provided by the stated pulse is quite important in this instance. A syncopated rhythm like the tamborim's played without a reference point can leave a listener feeling somewhat unsure of where they are in regards to pulse/metre.

Humans have a very important rhythmic skill known as *metrical extraction*. As Levitin puts it, metrical extraction is "...knowing what the pulse is and knowing when we expect it to occur."<sup>104</sup> That is, we can listen to layers of rhythm, or syncopated rhythms, and from them deduce where the pulse, beat or tactus is.<sup>105</sup> It is this ability that allows us to listen, for example, to the guitar introduction to the Beatles' *Day Tripper* and know where the pulse is even before Ringo starts his drum beat. Within this ability we also can discern metre – the number of beats per beat cycle. As rhythms become more complex, our ability to perform metric extraction is stretched, so hearing the syncopated tamborim rhythms in isolation may make it hard to find the pulse.

This is why the syncopated rhythm of the tamborim played with the simple rhythms of the surdos is so effective. The right level of "expectation violation" occurs, creating a satisfying sense of tension-and-release. A very similar rhythmic construct is used by the bossa nova guitarists. Commonly the right-thumb plays bass notes, two per bar (crotchets in 2/4 or minims in 4/4), while the fingers pluck chordal rhythms.<sup>106</sup> These chordal rhythms are very similar to the rhythms used by tamborim players, though sometimes simplified. This idea also plays to the notion of bossa nova being a subdued relation of samba.

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<sup>104</sup> Levitin, 172

<sup>105</sup> These three terms are essentially inter-changeable, but for the purposes of this study I shall most frequently use *pulse*. In the drumming world the term *beat* can be confusing, as there is often talk of "drum beats" and the like. I will use the word *beat* in relation to a specific division within a bar.

<sup>106</sup> Faria/Korman, 33

### The Afro-Cuban Clave

All of this brings us back to interlocking rhythms and on to the concept of *clave*. Clave is a rhythmic concept found in Cuban music that helps create rhythmic cohesion. Although Brazilian music does not conform to Afro-Cuban clave as such,<sup>107</sup> this background discussion of the Cuban clave provides a good framework for the discussion of two-bar rhythms in samba, choro and bossa nova.

The word "clave" is Spanish for *key* and clave is the rhythmic key to the music. The word clave(s) is also used for the instrument on which the rhythm is played, usually a pair of wooden sticks (shorter and thicker than drum sticks).

The clave is the key to the rhythm being played, serving as a skeletal rhythmic figure around which the different drums and percussion instruments are played.<sup>108</sup>

The concept of a rhythmic key is common to many styles of music that have African origins or influences, and the term "clave" is used in reference to musical styles in many Caribbean and South American countries, not just Cuba.

The concept of Clave (both the rhythm and the instrument) has descended from generation to generation through various African cultures, and its influences can be found in all music where African culture has had a presence. It is present in the Spanish rhythms of the *flamenco* styles, (predating any "New World" explorations by the Spanish), and in practically all of Central and South American and Caribbean musical styles. Since the development of styles in the Caribbean and the Latin Americas developed through the integration of the African and the Spanish, the clave's significant presence is a given.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Morales, 197

<sup>108</sup> Malabe/Weiner, 9

<sup>109</sup> Uribe, *The Essence of Afro-Cuban Percussion & Drum Set* (Miami: Warner Bros, 1996) 34

In Cuban music there are three principal claves – *Son*, *Rumba*, and 6/8 – but any rhythmic figure can function as a clave.<sup>110</sup> The *Son*, *Rumba* and 6/8 claves are all two-bar patterns with three notes in one bar, and two notes in the other (referred to as 3-2 or 2-3, depending on which bar is played first<sup>111</sup>). This two-bar pattern fits in with the concept of tension-and-release.

The bar with three notes is referred to as *fuerte* – strong – and the bar with the two notes is referred to as *debil* – weak. The two bar patterns maintain two conceptual qualities to be aware of. First, the strong and weak bars establish a pattern of tension and resolution – the three side creates an “up” and the two side “brings it down.” Second, the three side and the two side set up a pattern of call and response – the three side calls, the two responds. This is in itself a tension-resolve pattern.<sup>112</sup>

Traditionally, clave is played 3-2 but in modern arrangements we have seen it used in both “directions” (3-2 and 2-3).<sup>113</sup> Although clave is not always stated explicitly (ie, there is not always a clave player), the concept of clave is always present. All of the instruments conform to clave – their rhythms are synchronized with clave. This is not to say there is extensive uniformity, but rather a common rhythmic goal – groove – achieved through independent but interlocking rhythms.

Figure 16, 3:2 Son Clave



Figure 17, 2:3 Son Clave



<sup>110</sup> Malabe/Weiner, 9

<sup>111</sup> This may also be written 3:2 (or 2:3)

<sup>112</sup> Uribe, 39

<sup>113</sup> Ibid, 40



There is no perfect rule to follow that describes how rhythms align with clave, but as a starting point it could be said that, on average, rhythms that synchronise with the three side of clave are more syncopated than rhythms that synchronise with the two side. The result is a two-bar pattern, with tension-and-release created by syncopated rhythms resolving to less syncopated rhythms.

### *The Rhythmic Key in Brazilian Music*

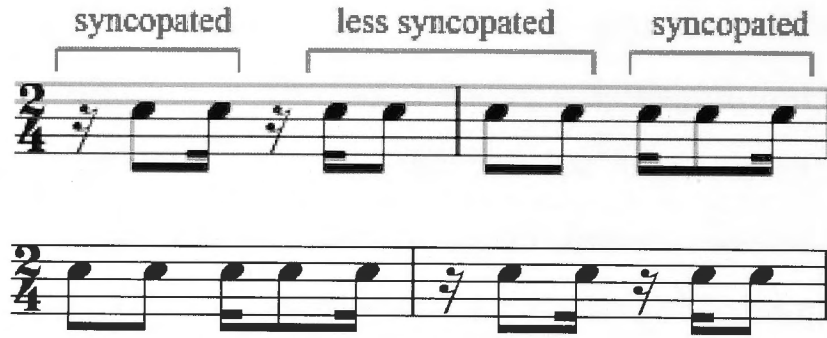
The basic principles I have outlined here regarding Cuban rhythms can be translated to Brazilian rhythms: interlocking rhythms, two-bar patterns with varying levels of syncopation, a common rhythmic goal, and a concept of direction.

Brazilian music has no clearly defined clave rhythm, no instrument by that name, and no instrument that fulfils that role.<sup>114</sup> Yet the concept of a "direction" in a two-bar pattern exists, just as it does in Cuban music. Across the two-bar pattern of a typical samba, choro or bossa nova, the beats of the bar can be broken down into syncopated and less syncopated beats. The same interplay between strong and weak that we saw in the Cuban clave is here, but in this case, the strong and weak sections cross the bar line. The most common direction starts with a syncopated beat followed by a less syncopated in bar one, then bar two reverses that order - beat one less syncopated, beat two more syncopated. Playing in the other direction simply reverses the order of bars, resulting in rhythms starting with a less syncopated beat. This concept of playing in a "direction," is also referred to as starting on one "side" or the other. Figure 18 shows a typical tamborim rhythm in both directions.

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<sup>114</sup> Mozar Terra refers to use of the word "Batida" (beat) as being similar to clave, but I have not found any other authors using "batida" in this way. Mozar Terra. *Musica Instrumental Brasileira*. (São Paulo: Maritaca Prod, 2002) 10

Figure 18, 2-bar tamborim rhythm in both directions



For a groove to be created, it is essential that the musicians are all working in the same rhythmic direction. Again, this is not rhythmic uniformity, but when musicians are playing in opposite rhythmic directions a rhythmic clash is created, and this in turn diminishes the effectiveness of the groove. The conflict of misplaced rhythms can be as dissonant as clashing pitches. Figure 19 shows how some of the different percussion parts “lock” together.

Figure 19, tamborim, agogô and 3rd surdo

The image shows two musical staves in 2/4 time. The top staff is labeled 'Tamborim/ Agogô' and has a complex rhythmic pattern with syncopation. The bottom staff is labeled '3rd Surdo' and has a simpler pattern with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note.

While playing in the same rhythmic direction is important, individualism is still encouraged in much Brazilian music, especially in smaller ensembles (though not in large groups such as the bateria of an escola de samba, where sectional precision is paramount). Musicians will change their rhythms for many reasons; sometimes in response to what other musicians are playing, sometimes to spur another player on, sometimes to facilitate other aspects of playing.

The rhythmic direction is usually dictated by the melody (as in Cuban music), but without a clave rhythm being stated it can be difficult for an inexperienced musician to determine how their rhythms should fit. In order to overcome this, it is important to: understand typical melodic phrasings in whichever style you are playing; understand how your rhythms fit with other instruments; and very importantly, listen extensively to music in that style.

By listening to the music of the idiom, you will come to understand how to hear what side of the clave a tune feels better on, and this will affect everything the band plays, including the percussion section, bass and piano, lead vocals and chorus, horn lines and accents, and finally solo phrasing. Poorly phrased rhythms are referred to as *crucao*, or crossed.<sup>115</sup>

Or as rhythm and blues drummer Zoro puts it:

If you didn't grow up in an environment where this music was a way of life, then you need to create the environment for yourself. Nothing replaces listening, living and learning the music. Let these songs permeate your soul, and the music will begin to rub off on you. It's inevitable.<sup>116</sup>

And on clave and melody, Alberto Netto:

Brazilian music is not based on 3-2 or 2-3 clave, contrary to what many people think... The rhythmic patterns in Brazilian music are made to fit the basic melodic motifs of the many songstyles.<sup>117</sup>

By listening to a wide range of recordings, the beginner can gain an appreciation of the melodic phrasings typically used, and how the melody and accompaniment work together. Most singers and melody players will phrase a given melody in such a way that it becomes clear to the accompanist where the

<sup>115</sup> Lincoln Goines and Robby Ameen, *Afro-Cuban Grooves for Bass and Drums: Funkifying the Clave* (Manhattan Music, 1990) 6

<sup>116</sup> Zoro. *The Commandments of Early R&B Drumming* (Van Nuys: Alfred, 2008) 52

<sup>117</sup> Netto, xiii

syncopations lie. In many songs, there will even be a standard direction in which to perform. For example, the melody of the refrain in *Triste*, by Haroldo Lobo and Niltinho, clearly dictates the direction (bars 3 & 4 spell it out very clearly).

Figure 20, *Tristeza* - four bars of refrain (plus anacrusis)

The musical notation shows a melody in G major, 2/4 time. It begins with an anacrusis of two eighth notes (G4 and A4). The first full bar has a Gmaj7 chord and a half note G4. The second full bar has a G6 chord and a half note G4. The third full bar has a Gmin6 chord and a half note G4. The melody continues in the fourth and fifth bars, which are bracketed together with the label 'Clear direction set by melody here'.

On this point, familiarity with standard repertoire is as important in Brazilian music as it is in jazz (where there is the widely held expectation of musicians knowing some of the “standards” repertoire).

### The Partido Alto rhythm

The partido alto rhythm is sometimes cited as the Brazilian clave, and it perhaps provides the essence of the two-bar structure of samba, choro and bossa nova rhythms.<sup>118</sup> Dan Wilson frames his analysis of João Bosco's performance of *Aquarela do Brasil* in reference to the partido alto rhythm as a Brazilian clave,<sup>119</sup> and in his instructional book *Advanced Concepts*, Kim Plainfield uses the partido alto rhythm in his explanation:

In traditional Brazilian music, there is no "clave" rhythm, as there is in Afro-Cuban music. The "samba clave" provides an underlying rhythmic structure and orientation that is essential when performing samba.<sup>120</sup>

<sup>118</sup> It should be noted at this point that the prominence of the two-bar concept can change depending on style, context and the individual musician's choices.

<sup>119</sup> Dan Wilson, *Partido Alto: Rhythmic Foundation Analysis of Aquarela Do Brasil*. MMus thesis, Youngstown State University, 2010.

<sup>120</sup> Plainfield, 41



Figure 21 shows the standard partido alto rhythm, in both directions. When discussing partido alto in his book, Netto refers to this change of directions as "inversion".<sup>121</sup>

Figure 21, Partido Alto rhythm, both directions



Plainfield refers to this rhythm as the "samba clave", and uses it as the rhythmic framework for his discussion of "hand orientation." As he points out:

It has been my observation that most drummers, with the exception of those from Brazil, are unclear as to precisely what they should play with their hands in order to make a samba feel authentic. It is common to find drummers proficient at playing the samba bass drum ostinato, yet vague with regard to the hand patterns over the bass drum. This ambiguity distracts from the samba feel even if the bass drum ostinato is played correctly. It is important to understand that a very specific hand orientation is necessary in order to play a genuine samba.<sup>122</sup>

Figure 22 shows how the partido alto rhythm fits with other prominent samba rhythms.

Figure 22, tamborim, partido alto and 3rd surdo score

<sup>121</sup> Netto, 58

<sup>122</sup> Plainfield, 41



Using the earlier example of *Tristeza*, the relationship between melody and the partido alto rhythm is clear.

Figure 23, *Tristeza* refrain, bars 3 and 4 plus partido alto rhythm



Further to add to the common ground shared with clave, Wilson states:

This particular rhythm shares the same organizing function as Cuban rumba clave, as the two rhythms both have West African origins. As is typical in most West African-based rhythms, the phrasing is asymmetrical. While both rhythms share similar roots, their development, as well as cultural and musical development is drastically different. It is important to note that while *rumba clave* remains relatively unchanged during a *rumba*, the *partido alto* rhythm is open to improvisation and is often embellished.<sup>123</sup>

There is no consensus on the partido alto acting as a "Brazilian Clave" though. In the appendix to his work, Wilson provides transcripts of interviews he conducted with notable Brazilian musicians. This exchange with Duduka da Fonseca nicely encapsulates the views of many Brazilian musicians:

Dan Wilson: Is partido alto similar in any way to clave in Afro-Cuban music?

Duduka da Fonseca: I sincerely don't think so. Just because clave is also a two bar pattern it does not mean that they are similar. Maracatu (from Recife) is also a two bar pattern. Do you think Maracatu has anything to do with clave? Brazilian and Cuban rhythms, as you know, are two completely different things, like bananas and watermelons. I don't know one Cuban musician who understands Brazilian rhythms 100% or vice versa. BRAZILIAN MUSIC DOES NOT HAVE A CLAVE."

<sup>123</sup> Wilson, 7

The above quote, while quite emphatic, perhaps slightly misses the point of Wilson's question.

### Bossa Nova Clave

Henrique C. de Almeida also refers to the partido alto rhythms as a clave, or clave-like rhythm,<sup>124</sup> and earlier in his book he introduces the idea of the "bossa nova clave." Although not providing a full explanation, he states:

The clave pattern must be adapted to the contour of the song's melodic structure when you perform with a band. Listen to the melody. Make adjustments on your clave pattern to avoid rhythmic clashes.<sup>125</sup>

De Almeida goes on to refer to the pattern as being 3/2 or 2/3 - borrowing from the Cuban clave terminology. This bossa nova rhythm is also very similar to the Cuban Son Clave - there is only one note displaced, on the 2-side.

Figure 24, bossa nova "clave", both directions



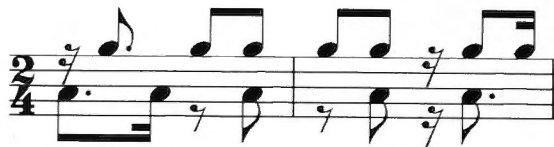
This is not the only bossa nova rhythm as such, but it is commonly taught to drummers as "bossa nova beat #1." Although it fits with the idea of direction, on its own it doesn't provide quite as much applicable rhythmic information as the partido alto rhythm. The comparison in the next figure shows how the

<sup>124</sup> de Almeida, 93

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, 8

partido alto provides more rhythmic information, especially by giving a clear sense of more- and less-syncopate beats within each bar. This may be in part due to the fact that the bossa nova rhythm has a note falling on beat 1 of bar 1, partially obscuring the syncopation at that point.

Figure 25, partido alto and bossa nova clave comparison



### Other Clave Suggestions

De Almeida also uses the term "clave" when discussing drum kit applications of *Samba de Roda*.<sup>126</sup> The eight claves he presents are good examples of the rhythmic emphasis found in samba de roda, but they are less applicable to our discussion of choro, samba and bossa nova. Further to reinforce the idea of rhythmic synchronicity across instruments, he mentions the role of the cavaquinho:

...the cavaquinho plays an important role by centering the groove, playing its rhythms in unison with whatever clave is used. The cavaquinho role can be compared with the Salsa montunos played on the piano, or the rhythm guitar in the Funk style, playing strong repetitive rhythms that hold the whole arrangement together.<sup>127</sup>

In the introduction to *Musica Instrumental Brasileira*, Mozar Terra talks about the benefit of "learning rhythmic 'Keys' (here called 'Claves')..." as he sought to develop left hand accompaniments for piano.<sup>128</sup> The "right choice of the Clave makes the melody flow easily and helps in the creation of a good

<sup>126</sup> de Almeida, 113

<sup>127</sup> Ibid, 112

<sup>128</sup> Terra, 10

accompaniment."<sup>129</sup> He then notates nine possible clave rhythms, with each having a specific style, such as choro, bossa nova, and samba de roda.

Marcio Bahia talked about his approach to rhythmic frameworks during a workshop given by Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo at Monash University in 2012.<sup>130</sup> While discussing his use of rhythmic frameworks for some of the group's more complex pieces (such as frevo in 13/8), he also discussed his use of rhythmic frameworks in samba and bossa nova. Primarily he uses a tamborim rhythm such as the one below.

Figure 26, tamborim rhythm



He then bases his ideas for improvisation (in grooves and solos) on this structure. He feels that having a strong rhythmic base like this allows him to improvise and interact with the other musicians, while retaining the essence of the groove. Further, he utilizes adaptations of these rhythms for his playing of odd-time signatures. The next figure shows the earlier tamborim rhythm adapted to 7/8 by removing a semiquaver rest and a semiquaver from the second bar.

Figure 27, Tamborim rhythm adapted for 7/8



I believe that this concept, as presented by Marcio, is an excellent starting point for further discussions of improvisation.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 10

<sup>130</sup> Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo, public workshop at Monash University (Melbourne, Australia). March 11, 2012.

### Chapter Summary - A Brazilian Clave?

In this chapter we have seen that many of the common rhythms in samba, choro and bossa nova are syncopated two-bar patterns, and that across the different instruments, these patterns have a way of locking together. We often refer to this as "direction," or as starting a rhythm on a particular "side." Cuban music also heavily features two-bar interlocking patterns, and uses the clave rhythm/concept to bring players to the same direction. Although Brazilian music has neither a clave, or a fully expounded concept that correlates with the Afro-Cuban one, the concept of direction is there none-the-less. It is generally dictated by melodic cues, and an understanding of these fundamentals is a key to playing an "authentic" groove.

The partido alto and bossa nova rhythms have been put forward as Brazilian claves. Although there are differing views on these rhythms being used as claves, the partido alto rhythm does succinctly provide the rhythmic information required to explain direction in two-bar Brazilian rhythms. The ideas behind the clave concept are also found in other Brazilian styles, such as the distinct samba de roda.

Finally, the concept of a rhythmic framework can be utilized as a departure point for improvisation, both as a groove player, and as a soloist. This framework provides an excellent reference point for longer phrases and complex musical ideas.



## 6. Brazilian Rhythmic Frameworks in Practice

All of this information regarding "claves," "direction," or "rhythmic frameworks" is important to the improvising drummer and the question of how to maintain some of the distinctive elements of Brazilian music while allowing for improvisation.

Having a rhythmic key can help a musician keep improvised ideas within the same rhythmic language as the overall performance. The rhythmic framework can provide a reference point, a point of departure, and perhaps even a refuge in complex passages. Well known rhythmic figures can be used to synchronise the members of an ensemble when playing complex rhythmic passages. These same ideas can be used to re-orient an ensemble when there is uncertainty over things such as pulse and downbeat.

To achieve rhythmic cohesion – ie groove – the drummer must have an awareness of the whole ensemble. This can mean having an awareness of several rhythms/layers at once (melody, harmonic accompaniment, counter-melodies, bass parts, etc). Different ensembles will have different focal points, but the fundamental approaches remain much the same.

In my performance experience, rhythmic direction is rarely discussed. Usually there is an expectation that the individual will hear the rhythmic cues within the melody and play accordingly. On occasions, when playing with musicians less familiar with the intricacies of Brazilian rhythmic styles, I have taken time to instruct a musician to play in a certain direction. I have also encountered music where the direction is not spelled out by the melody, and the musicians have discussed the rhythmic direction beforehand. Unfortunately, without the jargon associated with the Cuban (eg 3:2 *Rumba* or 2:3 *Son*), there can be confusion over the language used to describe direction. Some musicians refer

to *samba direction* or *bossa nova direction* but these are not necessarily clear in themselves. They certainly lack the succinct nature of 3:2 *Son clave*.

When playing in a traditional setting, it is obviously important to be working within the same rhythmic framework as the rest of the musicians, but even as we move away from the tradition, good groove practises remain important. "Tradition" can be a fuzzy thing, suffice to say that it could be considered a matter of degrees. Fitting with the concept of musical protocols, an awareness of expectations is important, and this will change from ensemble to ensemble. As this research topic is regarding the *improvising* drummer, I will focus more on musical situations where creativity and improvisation are central, or at least encouraged.

When playing in non-traditional settings (eg a jazz group playing a Brazilian-influenced jazz piece), the concept of a rhythmic framework is just as important as in a more traditional setting, but there may be differing levels of awareness of traditional practises within a non-traditional group. For example, not everyone in a jazz group will necessarily understand the rhythmic intricacies of bossa nova. At this point, a decision must be made regarding the general direction of the music.

In such an instance, rhythmic cohesion is still a goal, but the flexibility required for ensemble-based improvisation will affect the way this is achieved. Furthermore, a non-traditional melody brings with it its own rhythmic ideas, which may not necessarily fit with the two-bar concept found in many traditional styles. In such an instance, strict adherence to traditional rhythmic practice could be counter-productive; a more fluid approach can be more appropriate. The improvising drummer must therefore show an awareness of the styles and rhythms being utilized, aiming for rhythmic cohesion (groove), while maintaining the flexibility to allow interaction with the other musicians.

Therefore some level of compromise must be reached between traditional and improvising approaches.

*A Melodic Quandary - Blue Bossa*

An example of a non-traditional melody that doesn't fit neatly into the two-bar rhythmic concept is Kenny Dorham's *Blue Bossa*.<sup>131</sup>

Figure 28, *Blue Bossa*, first two bars of melody<sup>132</sup>



The first two bars of melody show that the last and third-last semiquavers of both bars are played strongly. This two-bar rhythmic idea, repeated three times over the first 12 bars of melody, struggles to fit with the rhythmic structure of bossa nova. In this first phrase, the G, C, and A are the strongest notes, and normally these strong notes would indicate to us the direction.

But comparing the melody's rhythm with partido alto in both directions shows that at some point a strong rhythmic clash is going to occur no matter which direction we choose. This is largely due to the last semiquaver of each bar being tied-over, making them significant moments in the phrases.

Figure 29, *Blue Bossa* rhythmic depiction with partido alto above



<sup>131</sup> *Page One*, Joe Henderson. Blue Note BST-84140

<sup>132</sup> Normally this melody would be written as quaver-based, in 4/4, but I have re-written it in 2/4 to fit with the other notated examples.

Figure 30, Partido alto reversed



It becomes clear that whichever partido alto direction, one of the two bars synchronises well, while the other does not, creating a rhythmic clash. The third bar of each phrase echoes the rhythm of bar 2. While this slightly strengthens the case for Figure 29 being the correct direction, it is a less than satisfactory musical result. This is an example of a time when the drummer must choose syncopated rhythms that may not necessarily represent the "traditional" way of playing. A form of musical pragmatism might be required.

### Airto Moreira - Spain

Airto Moreira makes a similar point regarding rhythmic adaptation in his video *Listen and Play*,<sup>133</sup> when talking about his experience in Chick Corea's group *Return to Forever*. Airto briefly describes the diverse backgrounds of the musicians (such as Corea's time with Mongo Santamaria), and talks about the unique challenges involved in creating that music. In discussing the piece *Sometime Ago* (from the album *Return to Forever*) Airto describes Stanley Clarke's bass playing as very fast and syncopated. To help create a good groove, Airto played a hand pattern more akin to a baião, with a samba foot pattern.<sup>134</sup> Another good example of Airto adopting a similar approach is on Corea's composition *Spain*.<sup>135</sup> Airto again plays a samba foot-pattern with a one-bar baião hand-pattern as his basic groove.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Airto Moreira, *Listen and Play* (video). (DCI Music Videos, 1993)

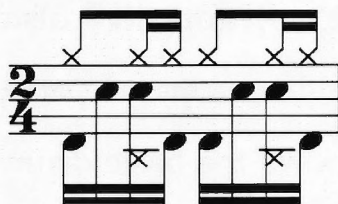
<sup>134</sup> Baião is a style from Northeast Brazil.

<sup>135</sup> *Light as a Feather*, *Return to Forever*. Verve 557 115-2

<sup>136</sup> Airto uses a number of variations, but this groove is the most common through the up-tempo groove sections of this recording.



Figure 31, Airtó Moreira on Spain



This combination works very well alongside the busy bass lines played by Clarke. Airtó adapts this baião hand-pattern – a pattern less syncopated than samba – to allow a more synchronous rhythm section groove. This one-bar idea is the basis for his playing throughout the up-tempo groove sections of the piece, though he does occasionally utilize some of the two-bar ideas more common in samba.

It is also possible that his adoption of a less syncopated cymbal pattern (quaver/two semi-quavers) made it easier for the jazz-oriented members of the band to work with, due to its similarity to the jazz cymbal pattern (it is essentially the same as the up-tempo version of the jazz cymbal pattern).

Figure 32, up-tempo jazz cymbal pattern

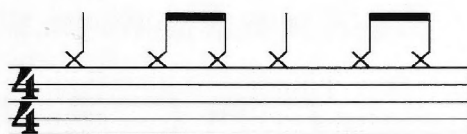
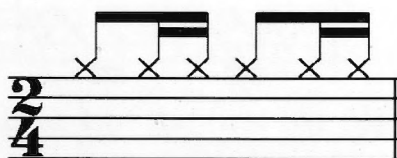


Figure 33, common baião cymbal pattern

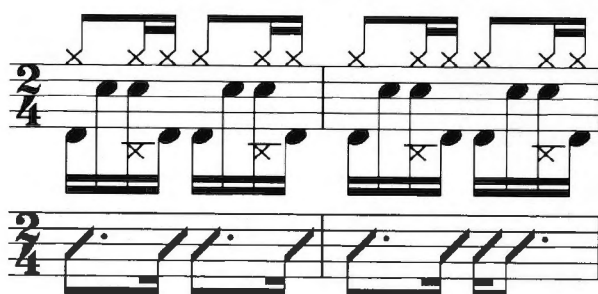


The interaction between Airtó's bass drum and snare is another key factor here. The bass drum and snare between them play out the full grouping of semiquavers fairly consistently, which works perfectly to facilitate the



syncopated nature of many of Clarke's bass lines. The ebb and flow of Airtó's part against Clarke's syncopations also fits with the idea discussed earlier in this chapter – highly syncopated parts contrasted with less syncopated. The following figure shows the basic drum pattern with one of Clarke's common bass rhythms in the staff below. The bass largely locks in with the bass drum, but when they don't, Airtó's snare drum rhythm helps Clarke's variations sit better, creating a strong, flowing rhythm section groove.

Figure 34, drum pattern compared with rhythmic depiction of bass



There are even moments when Clarke plays variations that just fit with Airtó's snare rhythm - what could be seen as the rhythmic inverse of his usual pattern. This creates rhythmic tension, before Clarke resolves to his basic pattern.

Figure 35, drum pattern with inverted rhythm in bass

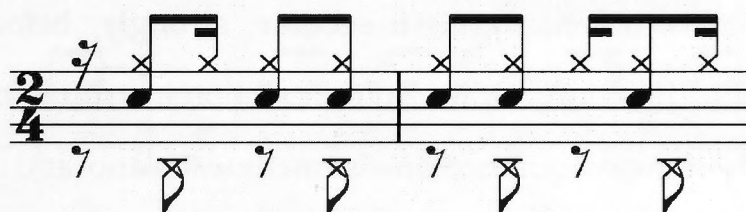


The end result of this is that Airtó and Clarke create a strong, driving groove, while still having the flexibility to interact with the other ensemble members. This music in itself could not be classified as "Brazilian" but there is an undeniable Brazilian-ness to it, and the basis of the groove could not be called

anything if not Brazilian. Although this mix of samba and baião may not conform to traditional notions of these styles, Airtó maintains much of the Brazilian character while improvising and creating a groove that is responsive to the ensemble's needs.

A look at some of Airtó's other variations shows elements of samba coming through more strongly in the hands. Below is a short example from early in Clarke's bass solo.

Figure 36, Airtó, samba hand pattern - 7:37



In the flute (Joe Farrell) and keyboard (Corea) solos, Airtó uses some samba-based hand patterns, but mainly for the ends of phrases - using them as turnarounds. Tellingly, in the bass solo, with no bass line to lock-in with, Airtó plays much more freely with the samba rhythms in the hands. When the band re-enters at the end of the bass solo (approx 8:35), Airtó returns to his earlier pattern (as in Fig 31).

On the subject of direction, Airtó clearly starts the bass solo playing in the direction shown in Figure 36. By 7:40, he has turned this around, adjusting his part to fit with Corea's comping. Corea sets up a fairly repetitive rhythmic figure over two bars, with beat 1 of the first bar played quite clearly. Figure 37 is a basic rhythmic representation of the right hand of this comp. His right hand rhythm is based on the partido alto rhythm, with the left hand playing crotchets, but his right hand plays many subtle variations on this rhythm.

Figure 37, Corea's comp rhythm using partido alto



Once again, Airtó is pragmatic, doing what is required to make the rhythms lock together.

### Moving in(to) the right direction

Brazilian drummers and percussionists use a few standard phrases that allow them to commence groove sections strongly, before moving to the correct rhythmic direction. Other rhythm section instruments use similar devices, most notably the cavaquinho, and sometimes piano and guitar too. Pianist Chick Corea uses a variation on the quaver lead-in (discussed below) leading into the first solo on *Samba Song*.<sup>137</sup>

Bossa nova guitarists can also be heard using these ideas. João Gilberto plays six bars of quavers as an intro to *Águas de Março*,<sup>138</sup> and upon the start of his vocals, he continues the quavers for another three beats before the syncopated semiquaver comp pattern starts.

Tamborim players in a bateria often use elaborate lead-in phrases (*entradas*<sup>139</sup>) at the beginning of a groove section - for example, following call-and-response phrases. These can be clearly on a number of recordings, such as Uri Caine's *Rio*, featuring the bateria of Unidos da Vila Isabel,<sup>140</sup> or Sergio Mendes' *Fanfarrã* from *Brasileiro*.<sup>141</sup> These tamborim lead-ins can be followed by a syncopated tamborim pattern, or more commonly by the semiquaver technique using the

<sup>137</sup> *Friends*, Chick Corea. Polydor 849 071-2

<sup>138</sup> *João Gilberto*, João Gilberto. EmArcy 837 589-2

<sup>139</sup> Gonçalves/Costa, 26

<sup>140</sup> *Rio*, Uri Caine. Winter & Winter 910 079-2

<sup>141</sup> *Brasileiro*, Sergio Mendes. Elektra 7559-61315-2

"turn." Below is an example that leads to a syncopated rhythm. It is written above the 3rd surdo to show that the rhythmic direction is consistent from the beginning of the lead-in through to the beginning of the repeated syncopated figure. This was the first of many tamborim lead-ins taught to me many years ago by Carlos Ferreira, *Mestre de Bateria* of MelSamba.

Figure 38, tamborim lead-in to syncopated phrase

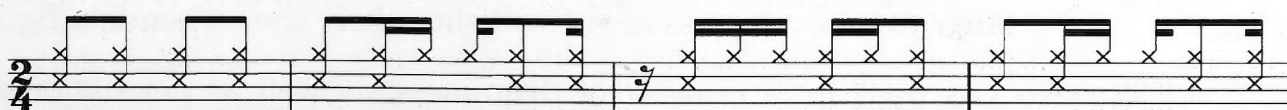


### Drum Kit Applications

The more common rhythmic direction for samba often involves the drummer having a semiquaver rest for the hands at the beginning of each two-bar cycle. This can be an awkward way to commence the groove at times, so short lead-in phrases can be used before settling into the syncopated groove.

One of the most common ways to play a lead-in on drum kit is to start with a run of quavers, before picking up the syncopation at the end of the second bar. This is the same concept used by Corea and Gilberto in the examples mentioned earlier.

Figure 39. quaver lead-in (hands only)



When considering the feet, I will present three basic approaches: feet enter in bar 3 (when the syncopate groove settles); feet from the beginning, and; feet utilised in the quaver lead-in.

Firstly, just the hands for the first two bars, with the feet entering in bar 3:

Figure 40, Feet enter bar 3



With the feet from the beginning:

Figure 41, Feet from beginning



Or with the bass drum used in the quaver lead-in:

Figure 42, quaver lead-in, rim-click and bass drum



This is not an exhaustive list of possibilities, but a grasp of these three basic possibilities will help give the drummer scope to better shape a performance.

The other common lead-in idea I will show here uses a hemiola figure. I have seen this used by a number of drummers, as well as percussionists playing tamborim or caixeta. During my second trip to Brazil (March/April 2012), I saw



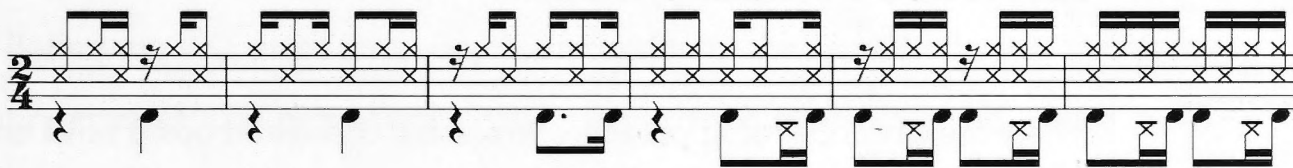
a number of percussionists in choro groups and small samba groups, using this idea. Here is an example for tamborim using this idea:

Figure 43, hemiola lead-in to tamborim pattern



Next, the same rhythm applied to drum kit, with the cymbal following the rim click's rhythmic lead. The bass drum plays just beat 2 through the hemiola, then the common foot pattern starts when the hands start the samba pattern.

Figure 44, hemiola lead-in on drum kit



### Chapter Summary - Brazilian Rhythmic Frameworks in Practice

In this chapter I have discussed a number of aspects around the concepts of rhythmic framework and direction. I have discussed a number of practical applications for this information, as well as some of the limitations and difficulties that are sometimes encountered, especially in ensembles such as jazz groups. Musical pragmatism was talked about with regards to rhythmic direction and groove styles, with both of these topics dealt with in short case-studies. Finally I looked at common ways of starting a groove and getting it to sit in the correct rhythmic direction while providing a strong foundation for the whole ensemble.

## 7. Background to Brazilian Drum Kit and Percussion

The drum kit has a long history in Brazil. Luciano Perrone is considered to be the "godfather," so to speak, of Brazilian drum kit playing, having introduced snare drum to samba recordings in the late-1920s, before going on to record a number of landmark albums.<sup>142</sup> There are also examples of Pixinguinha writing for drum kit at least as early as 1929.<sup>143</sup> Under the influence of jazz, choro *orquestras* containing electric guitar and drum kit became popular,<sup>144</sup> and the great Brazilian composer Radamés Gnattali included drum kit in some of his works,<sup>145</sup> including large-scale orchestral works.<sup>146</sup> In the decades since, a distinct Brazilian drumming style emerged, blending elements from the dominant US drumming styles (exported to Brazil primarily via recordings),<sup>147</sup> and elements of Brazilian percussion.

There are a number of approaches to samba, choro and bossa nova on drum kit, with similar conventions across all three genres. We can categorize the drumming styles across all these genres into five basic methods:

- Batucada - on drum kit this method focuses on the snare drum, with the toms also being used extensively.
- *Samba de Prato* - primarily utilising cymbal and snare/rim-click.
- Brushes - using "sweep" strokes and "ticks/taps/slaps".<sup>148</sup>

<sup>142</sup> [www.allmusic.com/artist/luciano-perrone-p409253/biography](http://www.allmusic.com/artist/luciano-perrone-p409253/biography) [Accessed 11/1/12]

<sup>143</sup> Crook, 137

<sup>144</sup> Livingston-Isenhour/Garcia, 106

<sup>145</sup> Ibid, 196

<sup>146</sup> During my second field trip to Brazil I saw Orquestra Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo perform a concert of Gnattali's orchestral suites, which included the use of drum kit and Brazilian percussion. *Orquestra Jazz Sinfônica*, April 8, 2011.

<sup>147</sup> Initially jazz drumming was the principle external influence, later, US (and British) rock drumming also influenced Brazilian kit players.

<sup>148</sup> These terms are commonly used to describe brush techniques. A sweep stroke is where the drummer sweeps the brush across the drum head, maintaining contact between brush and skin. Ticks (also ties), taps and slaps are distinct strokes, with a slap being heavier than a tap. I have borrowed this nomenclature in part from Ed Thigpen's DVD *The Essence of Brushes* (Warner Bros Music, 2004). Thigpen refers to sweeps as "swishes" and slaps as "flat."

- Combination set-up - drum kit supplemented with Brazilian percussion.
- Brush and stick combination, drawing on elements from the first three points.

These five styles draw their distinctions from the primary way the hands are used - sticks on drums, sticks on cymbals, brushes, drum kit-plus-percussion, stick/brush combination. One performance may use a range of these methods, and there are many off-shoots, sub-styles and crossovers. For now though, these distinctions allow us to look at the conventions of Brazilian drumming, the distinguishing characteristics of Brazilian drumming, and the similarities between Brazilian drumming and other styles.

Before moving on to an in-depth discussion of these methods, it is necessary to understand the percussion instruments used in samba and choro as they provide the foundation for drum kit playing in these styles.<sup>149</sup> The instruments listed below influence drum kit players in many ways - the foundation parts of the surdos, the rhythmic style of the tamborim, melodic shape of agogô parts, the phrasing of the caixa, and so-on. The application of these percussion parts to drum kit is central to the development of the Brazilian style of drum kit playing.

### *Percussion in Samba*

There are a number of excellent texts already dealing with the percussion of samba, so here I shall just give a basic outline of the instruments and their roles to better understand the origins of Brazilian drum kit rhythms. As the

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<sup>149</sup> I omit bossa nova at this point as bossa nova was developed at a time when the drum kit was already common in Brazil. As such, there isn't such a distinct percussion background to bossa nova, as there is in samba and choro. The bossa nova drummers largely took their cues from existing samba and choro ideas.

discussion moves on to more specific drum kit applications, I will explain specific percussion origins in greater depth, as needed.

Firstly, the common percussion instruments of samba batucada, as played by the bateria of an escola de samba. The bateria is central to much of samba, perhaps partially because of a ban enacted in 1935 by the carnival commission. All non-percussive instruments were banned, other than the mandolin to accompany the singer.<sup>150</sup> The first recording of a batucada was in 1929, featuring the musicians of *Flor do Tempo*, a middle-class group from Vila Isabel in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>151</sup>

### *Surdo*

Surdos are effectively the bass drums of samba. The large bateria of an escola de samba typically uses three sizes of surdos - small, medium and large - which provide a strong foundation for the other instruments. Surdo is played with a large mallet in one hand, and with the fingers/palm of the other, utilizing "open" tones, muffled strokes, palm strokes, and occasionally use of the rims.

The largest, and lowest pitched, surdo is known as *surdo-marcaná* (or *surdo-marcação*).<sup>152</sup> Marcação can mean to mark (as in marking the beat), but Henrique C. de Almeida goes further, saying it can also translate as "from which everything else is built upon."<sup>153</sup> It is also referred to as 1st surdo, and features a strong open tone on beat 2 of each bar.

Figure 45, 1st Surdo



<sup>150</sup> Guillermprieto, 31.

<sup>151</sup> Vianna, 87.

<sup>152</sup> Uribe, 24

<sup>153</sup> de Almeida, 25

The middle-sized drum is the 2nd surdo, also known as *surdo-resposta* or *contra-surdo*. It is tuned slightly higher than the 1st surdo, and plays an open tone on beat 1.<sup>154</sup>

Figure 46, 2nd Surdo



So between the 1st and 2nd surdos, the pulse is spelled out, with the emphasis coming more on beat two due to the dominant sound of the 1st surdo.<sup>155</sup> This is a very important concept in samba drumming, and is also prevalent in bossa nova and choro. The second beat of the bar is further emphasised by the 3rd surdo, which plays syncopated rhythms that primarily lock in with the 1st surdo on beat 2. The syncopated elements of the 3rd surdo fit with the rhythms played by other instruments, such as tamborim, agogô and guitar.

Figure 47, 3rd Surdo



In smaller groups, such as pagode groups,<sup>156</sup> it is common to have a single surdo player. In these instances the player uses a combination of ideas from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd surdos. Usually beat one will be a muffled stroke, beat two open (giving us that beat two emphasis again), with "pick-up" notes being played by the open palm. (This rhythm is of particular note as it forms the basis

<sup>154</sup> The pitches are sometimes inverted, with the 2nd surdo playing the lowest pitch on beat one, such as in GREŠ Mocidade's 2009 enredo. *Sambas de Enredo 2009*, various artists, Gravasamba 60251793450

<sup>155</sup> The bateria at Estação Primeira de Mangueira is a notable exception to the standard of three surdos. At Mangueira the surdos are often divided into two groups, but the emphasis of the larger drums still falls on beat two. Bolão, 58. According to Goçaves and Costa, Mangueira omits the surdo resposta. Gonçalves/Costa, 18

<sup>156</sup> Pagode is a sub-style of samba.



of the most common bass drum pattern on drum kit.) From there the player can add in variations and syncopations derived from the 3rd surdo.

There are many variations on this, but the main point to consider is the emphasis on beat two. When transferring rhythms to drum kit, this is very important as the beat 2 emphasis is one of the defining characteristics of drumming and percussion in samba, bossa nova and choro.

### *Caixa and Tarol*

Caixa and *tarol* are both snare drums, with the caixa typically having a deeper shell than the tarol. The caixa is generally considered to use slightly more complex rhythms than the tarol. As Oscar Bolão states in *Batuque é um Privilégio*: "While the caixa is characterized by elaborate ornaments and improvisation, the tarol sustains the rhythm in a simpler manner."<sup>157</sup> The caixa and tarol predominantly play constant semiquavers, using the phrasing style referred to as "playing in the cracks." This technique helps give samba its groove (or as the Brazilians often put it, *suingue*). See Chapter 4, *Rhythmic Fundamentals and Phrasing* for further discussion.

### *Tamborim*

The tamborim is a small frame drum, about 6" in diameter, that is held in one hand whilst struck by a stick in the other. It is not to be confused with the tambourine - the tamborim has no zils (jingles). There are two basic approaches to tamborim playing - the first more common in large sectional playing, the second more common for a single player, though both are can be used in a variety of playing situations.

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<sup>157</sup> Bolão, 61

Lindsay Walsh says the tamborim was added to samba in the late 1920s with the rise of the *Estácio Sound*.<sup>158</sup> She also cites a syncopated tamborim example from the 1933 recording, *Lenço no pescoço*.<sup>159</sup>

Figure 48, tamborim from *Lenço no pescoço*



The tamborim section of a bateria is generally one of the largest, and players there use a multi-pronged stick, made of flexible plastic. Players will turn the drum as part of the playing motion, allowing them to play continuous streams of notes (usually semiquavers) at high speeds while minimizing fatigue. This technique is better observed than described. Sometimes the turning technique is also used for a small section of a longer rhythmic phrase.

The simpler, straight-forward technique of playing tamborim with a normal stroke is more easily adapted to drum kit. This technique is used when playing syncopated rhythmic figures, and translates well into cymbal and rim-click patterns for samba de prato. Some of the rhythms played using the turning technique can be effectively applied to drum kit using multiple-rebound techniques, and if using a mixed drum kit/percussion set-up, the multi-pronged plastic stick can also be used to great effect.

### Agogô

The agogô (sometime referred to as *agogo bells*) is one of the "colour" instruments of samba. William Megenney refers to agogô as having two bells

<sup>158</sup> Lindsay Walsh. *Brazil is Samba: Rhythm, Percussion, and Samba in the Formation of Brazilian National Identity (1902-1958)*. BA thesis, Wesleyan University, 2010. 43-5

<sup>159</sup> Wilson Batista, "Lenço no pescoço," original recording by Sílvio Caldas, Victor, 1933. Cited in Walsh, 64.

(with the single-bell instrument being *gã*),<sup>160</sup> but in modern usage two and three bell versions are both common, and there are versions with four and even five bells.<sup>161</sup> As well as the different pitches, the agogô adds to the syncopated rhythmic style.

In the earlier days of recorded samba, the agogô was quite prominent - for example, the Mangueira enredo recording of 1971 (*Lendas do Abaetés*) features the agogô quite clearly.<sup>162</sup> In recent years the agogô has become significantly less prominent. The 2009 recording of enredos, released in the lead up to Carnaval, has very little agogô.<sup>163</sup> It features prominently in the introduction to Império Serrano's enredo, but on the few other occasions agogô is included, it is very low in the recording mix.

As well as providing more syncopated rhythms for our rhythmic vocabulary, the differing pitches of the agogô can be adapted to the drum kit for groove and solo applications. Gonçalves and Costa refer to the melodic possibilities, such as arpeggios, available on four-bell agogô.<sup>164</sup> And de Almeida: "There is usually a somewhat melodic motif involving two tonalities. Think of agogô parts as good sources for drum set interpretations."<sup>165</sup>

Figure 49, sample agogô rhythm (two bells)



<sup>160</sup> William M. Megenney. "Afro-Brazilian Percussion Instruments: Etymologies & Uses." *Revista del CESLA*, núm. 9, 2006. 26

<sup>161</sup> Gonçalves and Costa refer to the four-bell version as being employed by Império Serrano. Gonçalves/Costa, 29

<sup>162</sup> *História das Escolas de Samba*, Mangueira. Discos Marcus Pereira MPC-4002

<sup>163</sup> *Sambas de Enredo 2009*, various artists. Gravasamba 60251793450

<sup>164</sup> Gonçalves/Costa, 29

<sup>165</sup> de Almeida, 46

### *Cuíca*

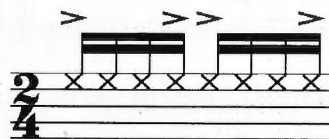
The *cuíca* is a single headed drum, with a length of bamboo attached to the underside of the head. Although it is not struck with hand or stick, it is considered a percussion instrument. The *cuíca* is a friction drum, played by pushing and pulling the length of bamboo with a small damp cloth in one hand, while the other hand changes the pitch by applying pressure to the head (usually using either the thumb or middle finger).

The *cuíca* plays a mix of syncopated rhythms and constant semiquavers, and as with the *agogô* provides rhythmic vocabulary and pitch variation, ie melody.

### *Ganza and Chocalho*

*Ganza* and *chocalho* are both shakers, but of different design. *Ganzas* are usually cylindrical, filled with beads or grains, whilst *chocalhos* are frames with jingles attached (similar to tambourine zils). These shakers (and other variations, such as *caxixi*) feature prominently in Brazilian music. Commonly used to fill out the basic rhythm of samba with a constant stream of semiquavers, the shakers also provide one of the key phrasing ideas of samba, with the 1st and 4th notes of each semiquaver grouping being accented. The shakers, like the *caixa/tarol*, utilise the technique of playing in the cracks.

Figure 50, basic ganza pattern



### *Repinique (or repique)*

The *repinique* is a high-pitched, double-headed drum, usually played with one stick and the palm/fingers of the other hand.<sup>166</sup> The *repinique* has multiple

<sup>166</sup> The *repinique* is played with two sticks for some styles, such as samba-reggae.

functions. It can play as part of the overall groove of the samba, playing repetitive patterns, but it is also the drum responsible for giving many of the cues within the music, such as cues to start and end, or to change to the next section of music. These are known as *chamadas* (calls) or *preparações* (preparations). The repinique is also used as a soloing drum, "repinique...like the caixa, is a soloing instrument where capacity of the drummer to improvise is essential."<sup>167</sup> De Almeida goes further, "the role of the repinique in Samba styles is to improvise Samba rhythms, soloing on top of the rest of the percussion ensemble."<sup>168</sup>

### *Pandeiro*

I will discuss the pandeiro in detail in the next section on choro percussion.

### *Reco-reco*

The *reco-reco*<sup>169</sup> is a scraping instrument, similar to the Cuban *guiro*. Reco-recos used in a bateria are usually made of a metallic cylinder, cut away on one side with two springs running down its length. The springs are then scraped with a metal beater (like a triangle beater). By changing the pressure of the stroke, the player can create accents. Generally, continuous semiquavers are played, with accents similar to the caixa and tarol. Some reco-recos have a bell attached to one end to help in sound projection, and this bell can also be struck for rhythmic and tonal effects. There also exist reco-recos made from bamboo (or similar), which provide a much quieter sound of a more mellow tone. These are sometimes used in small samba groups, in bossa nova, and in choro.

### *Apito*

The *apito* is a whistle, used in primarily to give cues to the musicians of the bateria. The mestre de bateria uses the whistle to signal changes in the music.

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<sup>167</sup> Bolão, 62

<sup>168</sup> De Almeida, 32

<sup>169</sup> Also known as *quêêrêquêxê*. Megenney, 32



The standard apito used for samba has three different pitches (known as a tritone whistle), controlled by covering or opening the holes on either side. In smaller groups, the apito is also used to provide extra colour and excitement to an arrangement, and can also be used for solos.

### *Pratos*

*Pratos* are cymbals, and in the case of a bateria, a pair of cymbals, as used in the European marching band tradition. As well as the common "crash" sound (open and ringing), players utilize a "chick" sound, where the cymbals are brought and held together - similar to a drummer's use of the hi-hat pedal. *Pratos* are generally used to reinforce the pulse, with occasional syncopations.

### *Pagode*

Pagode is a sub-genre of samba, developed in the 1970s. Pagode refers not just to a musical style, but to a gathering, a party, where this style of samba is played - typically a relaxed afternoon in someone's backyard. With this more intimate setting came some new instruments, most notably *tantã* (or *tan-tan*), *rebolo*, and *repique de mão*. These instruments are played with one hand on the head (producing open and muffled tones), with the other tapping rhythms on the shell. The rhythmic style of these instruments is drawn from samba - for example the *tantã* is used in the same role as the *surdo* - but the combination of tones on the drum head and the use of the shell for other rhythms can be applied to drum kit. It is also a useful study in co-ordination for the drummer to study such techniques.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> For a detailed examination of these techniques, refer to: Luiz Roberto Cioce Sampaio, *Tambores do Brasil*, (Florianópolis: Bernuncia Editora, 2009)

### Other percussion in samba

Other percussion instruments do find their way into samba - *atabaques* and triangle for example - but they are usually used to give a certain flavour to a given samba. For example, *atabaques* might be used to give the impression of ritual music from the Afro-Brazilian religion Candomblé,<sup>171</sup> or a triangle may be used to give a touch of the Northeastern *baião* sound.

### Percussion in Choro

The principal percussion instrument of choro is the *pandeiro*, and it is considered to be part of the "traditional" choro ensemble,<sup>172</sup> as well as being the quintessential Brazilian percussion instrument. Other percussion can be found used choro, with *caixeta* (woodblock), *surdo*, *tamborim* and *reco-reco* being amongst the more common. Unlike the *pandeiro*, these other percussion instruments are not considered to be central to choro.

The *pandeiro* is sometimes referred to as *bateria no saco* - drum kit in a bag. This refers to the *pandeirista's* rhythmic and tonal flexibility and capabilities, as well as how he carries the instrument from gig to gig. The *pandeiro* can produce low bass tones, sharp slap tones, and many other effects, all while maintaining a steady stream of notes. This means that a skilled player can give an impression of an entire percussion section, or of a full drum kit.

*Pandeiro* parts principally reflect ideas from *surdo*, *ganza* and *caixa*, but when considering the common rhythmic language found across many Brazilian percussion instruments, we could just as easily say it shows influences from *repinque*, *agogô* or *tamborim*.

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<sup>171</sup> For further information on Candomblé drumming, refer to: Oliveira et al, *Ritmos do Candomblé - Songbook*, (Rio de Janeiro: Abbetira Artes Produções, 2008)

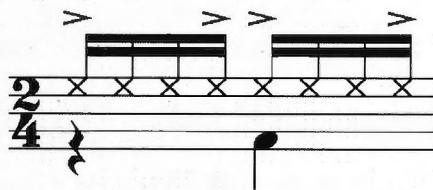
<sup>172</sup> Livingston-Isenhour/Garcia, 89

The basic concepts of choro and samba rhythms on pandeiro are an emphasised bass tone on beat two (like the 1st surdo) and constant semiquavers, with the first and fourth of each grouping accented. The most common variations involve extra bass tones being added (taking ideas from the 3rd surdo) and other accents being added.

### *The Most Basic of Grooves*

The fundamental groove elements of choro, samba and bossa nova can be expressed in a very simple way. The basic beat (Figure 51) contains two of the most important elements of these styles - a semiquaver based rhythm (with the first and fourth notes accented) and an emphasised bass tone on beat two. This groove could be expressed in a number of orchestrations: on pandeiro; between a ganza and a tantã; caixa and a surdo, or; a hi-hat and a bass drum. This idea provides the fundamental percussive sound of choro, samba and bossa nova, and is an excellent starting point for further exploration of these styles on the drum kit.

Figure 51, basic beat - hi-hat and bass drum



### *Chapter Summary - Background to Brazilian Drum Kit and Percussion*

This chapter has outlined the percussion instruments that have influenced the development of a distinct Brazilian style of drum kit playing. The roles of these instruments have been discussed, as have some of the rhythmic styles. This

understanding will inform the discussion of groove and soloing in the following chapters.

## 8. The Bass Drum - Variations and Turnarounds

This chapter will focus on the bass drum, covering different groove patterns as well as turnaround ideas. These two aspects are important for all drummers, but especially for any drummers wishing to be responsive to other factors in the music. Having an understanding of a number of bass drum patterns broadens the drummer's expressive capabilities, and having a range of bass drum grooves and turnarounds will help the drummer instigate or respond to different musical situations.

In most existing texts, the bass drum is presented as a one-bar pattern, limited to maintaining the same underlying rhythm for all situations. Sabanovich, Netto, Uribe, and Da Fonseca & Weiner, almost exclusively use the following pattern:

Figure 52, common bass drum rhythm



Bolão and de Almeida stand out in offering a number of bass drum possibilities, but how and when to use them is not discussed. Most of the existing texts also mention the concept of combining different hi-hat (left foot) and bass drum ideas, but the resulting change in effect is not considered alongside this. I will come to the hi-hat in the next chapter, but first there are elements of bass drum playing that should be looked at in isolation.

As mentioned earlier, most bass drum ideas are derived from the surdo parts. An understanding of the three surdo parts and their variations, especially the 3rd surdo's variations is important in creating the right feel for samba, choro



and bossa nova.<sup>173</sup> There are repetitive, groove-based ideas, and there are also ideas that can be used for turnarounds.<sup>174</sup> These turnaround ideas can be used in place of, or in conjunction with other fills. From the surdo parts also come the concept of open and closed/muffled tones on the bass drum, as well as accents.

When contemplating bass drum variations, attention should also be paid to the performance context - ensemble instrumentation, the requirements of a piece, and general ensemble context (eg, pagode, jazz, samba-funk, etc). If there is a surdo player, this should be taken into account. The type of bass part also should be considered - eg, double bass, electric bass, 7-string guitar, or sometimes no bass. This last point is also something to be considered when using the toms, especially lower-pitched toms. The general ensemble context can also influence choice of bass drum rhythms - sometimes a strong, driving rhythm is required, other times something giving a more relaxed feel to the groove.

### *Open and Closed/Muffled Strokes*

On the point of open and closed/muffled strokes,<sup>175</sup> I have encountered many different ideas. Context should be considered when contemplating bass drum variations, and the same applies to open and muffled tones.

De Almeida, while presenting many bass drum ostinati,<sup>176</sup> does not mention open and closed tones for bass drum. Bolão notates for open and closed tones throughout his pages of bass drum variations.<sup>177</sup>

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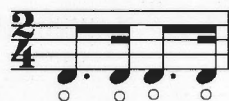
<sup>173</sup> In groups with one surdo player, many of these 3rd surdo variations are used in combination with 1st and 2nd surdo ideas. But as these variations are generally seen to have their genesis in the playing of 3rd surdo, I will refer to them as "3rd surdo variations."

<sup>174</sup> Here we can loosely consider turnarounds as rhythmic figures used to help shape the ends of phrases (and the like) - the same role often fulfilled by a drummer's "fill."

<sup>175</sup> For the purposes of this discussion of bass drum technique, "muffled" and "closed" can be considered interchangeable.

In two performances with Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo, I noticed Marcio Bahia playing the common samba bass drum pattern entirely with open tones.<sup>178</sup>

Figure 53, samba bass drum, all notes open



On the other hand, Celso de Almeida, playing with Rosa Passos, played the same pattern with each note muffled.<sup>179</sup>

Figure 54, samba bass drum, all notes muffled



Many times the pattern will be played and written with an open tone on beat 2, mimicking the dominant open tone of the 1st surdo.

Figure 55, samba bass drum, beat 2 open



At other times, the same underlying idea may be expressed with an accent on beat 2.

<sup>176</sup> De Almeida, 64

<sup>177</sup> Bolão, 72-9

<sup>178</sup> Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo in concert: Melbourne Recital Centre, March 9, 2012; Bourbon St Jazz Club, São Paulo, March 28, 2012.

<sup>179</sup> Rosa Passos in concert. SESC Vila Mariana, São Paulo, April 7, 2012.

Figure 56, samba bass drum with beat 2 accent



In my experience, each of these variations has merit. Context should guide the drummer in their choice. I would like to provide a personal anecdote to illustrate this point.

*One night in July 2011, I performed with two different bands in different venues. The first performance was with a trio well versed in Brazilian music - we primarily played samba, choro and bossa nova. Amongst other bass drum variations, my standard bass drum part utilised the open tone on beat 2 (as per Fig 55). The second performance was with equally competent musicians, but they were jazz musicians, less familiar with the intricacies of Brazilian music.*

*Throughout the first performance, the feeling of the groove was great. We received compliments from some Brazilians in the audience, noting how well our group of Australians had captured the essence of those Brazilian grooves.*

*At the second performance, the jazz musicians played a number of bossa nova compositions, such as Desafinado, Corcovado and Chega de Saudade. I started playing the bass drum as I had in the previous gig, using the rhythm shown in Figure 55. The groove just didn't seem to settle - it didn't feel right. I started making minor adjustments to my playing, trying to better work with the bass player. I tried crotchets, using the muffled/open technique (Fig 57).*

Figure 57, crotchets - muffled/open



*The groove still wouldn't sit. I then tried the basic pattern again, but with every note muffled (Fig 54). Suddenly everything clicked within the group.*

*Even now, I'm not sure that I could state for certain why the group needed this variation on the bass drum for the rhythm to sit right, but it highlighted to me the importance of being aware of the differing needs of ensembles, even down to subtleties like open/muffled bass drum tones.*

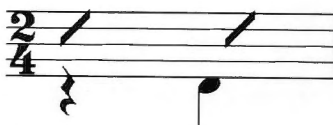
An awareness of different bass drum rhythms is also important. Drummers can help shape a piece's performance by using different bass drum figures. Some rhythms can provide a very insistent groove (what could be referred to as a "driving" groove), some set-up a more relaxed groove. But the individual drummer's approach to each variation is the most important factor. For example, some drummers play the groove from Figure 57 in a very relaxed way, others use its simplicity to really drive the groove. As such, I cannot define these variations one way or the other, but drummers should be aware of the possibilities afforded by the different figures.

When choosing bass drum rhythms, there are a few factors to consider. Alongside normal performance considerations, the drummer should also consider the nature of the bass player in the group and what other percussion is present. I hesitate to set any particular rules or guidelines, or to be specific as to what works and what doesn't, but I will mention a few points, based on what I have seen other drummers do, as well as on my own experiences.

Having a surdo player in a group will greatly effect the drummer's choice of bass drum grooves and turnarounds. On the two occasions I saw Douglas "Doúglinhas" Alonso perform at O do Borogodo, I saw him adapt his playing according to the surdo player's choices (Raphael Toledo was playing percussion, including surdo, tamborim, repique-de-mão, reco-reco and

agogô).<sup>180</sup> Raphael would rarely start a song on surdo - he would more regularly start on a smaller instrument, then change to surdo after a chorus as a way of lifting the band up a gear. Without surdo in the first part, Douglinhas would usually play the bass drum on beat two, creating the emphasis that the surdo would normally provide.

Figure 58, bass drum on beat two only



Upon the entrance of the surdo, he would usually change to the common bass drum figure below:

Figure 59



He would then maintain that rhythm, allowing Raphael the freedom to play variations and turnarounds on surdo.

### Bass Drum grooves in Choro

My choice of bass drum rhythms tends to vary depending on who is playing bass in the group, and further, what type of bass - ie, electric, double, or acoustic bass guitar. When playing with a choro group it is common for there to be no bass player. Instead, the role is fulfilled by the *violão de sete cordas* (7-string guitar). My experience has been that the best bass drum pattern to use

<sup>180</sup> Second fieldwork trip to Brazil, March-April 2012. O do Borogodo is a well known choro/samba club in the suburb of Vila Madalena. I heard Douglas Alonso playing there on April 4 & 11.



with sete cordas is based on the bass tones of the pandeiro (which in turn are essentially surdo-derived rhythms).

As mentioned earlier, the pandeiro is the principal percussion instrument of choro, and the standard rhythm features an open bass tone on beat two, with a muffled bass tone on beat one. A second open bass tone can be added on the last semiquaver of the bar. Here is a simple representation of this rhythm:

Figure 60, simple representation of pandeiro choro pattern



On bass drum, we can translate that as:

Figure 61, bass drum representation of pandeiro bass tones



I have found that this variation helps maintain the right feeling for choro in most instances. This may be partly because it captures some of the pandeiro rhythm that the other musicians are used to hearing.

### Changing Bass Drum Grooves

Through my own performance experience I can say that an ability to maintain a groove while changing bass drum rhythms is also important. In my practice I have found it helpful to use exercises such as the ones below. In the first example, the hand pattern remains the same as the bass drum changes from one rhythm to the next. (These examples only show two bars either side of the

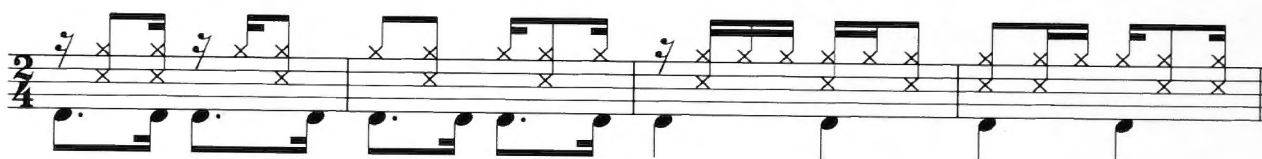
transition.) Changing bass drum patterns while maintaining the groove in the hands is another way of increasing or lowering the intensity of the overall groove, thus improving a drummer's ability to be responsive to the fixed and variable elements of the music.

Figure 62, bass drum change



In the second, the hands also change patterns:

Figure 63, bass drum change + hands change



### Surdo Variations as Turnarounds on Bass Drum

There are a number of bass drum rhythms derived from the surdos, primarily from the 3rd surdo. Some lend themselves to repetitive, groove playing, others to turnarounds. Generally their application on bass drum matches their use on surdo - ie, repetitive surdo parts become repetitive bass drum parts. Some rhythms that are used as repeated figures on surdo can also be used as short turnarounds on the bass drum. Similar turnarounds can also be heard on pandeiro. Luiz Roberto Sampaio includes a number of these ideas in Volume 2 of *Pandeiro Brasileiro*.<sup>181</sup>

There are two common endings to these turnaround phrases. The first (Fig 64) ends on the last semiquaver of the bar, which would usually be tied over to beat

<sup>181</sup> Luiz Roberto Sampaio, *Pandeiro Brasileiro - Volume 2*. (Florianópolis: Bernuncia Editora, 2010) 64

one of the following bar. The second (Fig 65) finishes with a note on the last quaver of the bar. This would often be followed by a return to the groove from the very first semiquaver of the next bar. The decision is largely based on the rhythmic direction and the musical requirements of the following bar. The drummer should particularly be aware of the melody, as this will often dictate how the other instruments will play at that point. In an improvised section, the drummer is afforded more discretion, but still needs to be aware of the other musicians, and how they are likely to be shaping a performance at that point. I will discuss these possibilities further as specific examples are presented below.

Figure 64, end of first turnaround idea



Figure 65, end of second turnaround idea



The first turnaround uses the common bass drum figure followed by a 3rd surdo variation.

Figure 66, bass drum phrase with turnaround



Here, one of the common 3rd surdo rhythms (bars 3 & 4) is used as the turnaround, without any further embellishment. This could be played with a number of different hand patterns - brushes, batucada style, samba de prato, etc. By tying the last semiquaver of the turnaround (bar 4) to beat 1 of the next

bar the variation is further highlighted. This syncopation helps create a sense of "forward motion" in the groove, propelling the rhythm strongly into the next section. If the tie is removed and the bass drum played on beat one that sense of forward motion is lessened - some of the rhythm's natural momentum can be lost. Hal Crook says the feeling of forward motion "rhythmically propels the feeling of tempo without causing it to speed up."<sup>182</sup> In relation to jazz comping, John Riley says that comping on "beats 1 or 3... really diminishes forward momentum, so avoid them."<sup>183</sup> The same principle is applied here.

Finishing the phrase there also fits with the rhythmic structure of samba, choro and bossa nova. Playing the last semiquaver of the bar and either tying it over the bar line, or having a rest on beat one, fits with many of common syncopated rhythms found in samba. The next example shows bars 3-5 of Figure 66 with the partido alto rhythm above the staff. We can see how the tied semiquaver fits, and how the 3rd surdo variation fits with the partido alto rhythm.

Figure 67, turnaround plus partido alto rhythm



Surdo players have their own turnarounds, used in much the same way. The next figure uses the turnaround from the bass drum above as the repeated figure, then a common 3rd surdo turnaround (bar 4).

Figure 68, 3rd surdo with turnaround



<sup>182</sup> Hal Crook, *Ready, Aim, Improvise!* (Advance Music, 1999) 143

<sup>183</sup> Riley, *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*, 40

Now utilised as a bass drum turnaround on drum kit:

Figure 69, 3rd surdo turnaround on bass drum



My experience has been that this turnaround (Fig 69) stands out from the surrounding rhythms more prominently than does Figure 66. At this point the drummer needs to decide what is required in the music at a given moment. As the more pronounced variation of Figure 69 can disrupt the flow of the groove, I find that it should be used more sparingly than the subtler Figure 66.

Longer turnaround figures can also be created using 3rd surdo variations. The following figure shows the common bass drum rhythm as the groove, changing to a 3rd surdo rhythm for the first two bars of the turnaround (bars 2 & 3), then utilising a 3rd surdo turnaround to finish the four bar phrase (bars 4 & 5).

Figure 70, four bar bass drum turnaround



Disrupting the groove when playing these turnarounds creates a sense of rhythmic tension, and a longer turnaround leads to more rhythmic tension. This is something the drummer should consider when using these devices. Hal Crook refers to it as *musical impact*:

...the strongest musical impact occurs in an improvised solo when tension is created and intensified over a long period of time... and then released



suddenly at a point which coincides with the beginning of a major section of the song's form.<sup>184</sup>

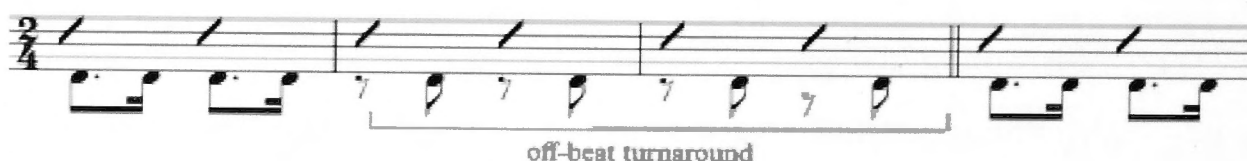
The drummer can help intensify the musical impact of the soloists phrase by working with the soloist to create and resolve tension, and the discussion of turnarounds here fits with Crook's reference to "major sections." Crook continues: "in certain cases it is also important that the build-up and release of tension is supported by the accompanying players."<sup>185</sup>

### The Off-beat Turnaround

A common turnaround played on surdo and adapted to drum kit works on the off-beats. Bolão introduces the idea briefly in examples such *exercício 9*.<sup>186</sup> De Almeida uses a similar idea in the *batucada* section of his book, where he labels exercise 8 as "fill."<sup>187</sup>

I will present two examples, one just on the off-beats, the other starting on the off-beats before finishing with a syncopated semiquaver phrase. Figure 71 could be used as it appears here in either rhythmic direction, as the two bars of turnaround are the same.

Figure 71, off-beat turnaround



Finishing the turnaround on the last quaver tends to lead the drummer strongly to beat 1. The next examples show how this off-beat turnaround can be used

<sup>184</sup> Crook, 202

<sup>185</sup> Ibid, 202

<sup>186</sup> Bolão, 78

<sup>187</sup> De Almeida, 68

leading into a hand pattern in either direction. Figure 72 uses one of the lead-ins from *Brazilian Rhythmic Frameworks in Practice* to "get into" the correct direction. Figure 73 is in the opposite direction, not requiring a lead-in.

Figure 72, off-beat quaver turnaround followed by quaver lead-in



Figure 73, off-beat turnaround followed by groove



The last off-beat turnaround example shows three bars of off-beat quavers, finishing with the off-beat semiquavers. This example is direction specific, and thus shows the bass drum tied-over the double bar line.

Figure 74, off-beat turnaround with semiquaver ending



### Hemiolas in Turnarounds

This sense of rhythmic tension can be further increased by using rhythmic ideas such as hemiolas. Phrases such as the hemiola can help create rhythmic tension and release over longer cycles - in part by the rhythm crossing the bar line. In the examples below I have essentially aimed to finish the figure on the last semiquaver of the turnaround, tied over to the next bar as in earlier examples. To facilitate the different hemiola permutations I have drawn on a range of 3rd

surdo variations. Bolão lists a number of these possibilities in his book.<sup>188</sup> These figures can be adapted to fit other resolution points as the music requires.

Below, dotted quavers (or equivalents) are used to create the hemiola figure.

Figure 75, hemiola figure in turnaround



The next figure shows the hemiola figure continuing to the last semiquaver before the double bar-line.

Figure 76, hemiola figure #2



The same phrase, but with an alternate resolution:

Figure 77, hemiola figure #3



There are many possibilities with hemiola figures. As seen above, they can be started in different places, and resolved in different ways.

<sup>188</sup> Bolão, 74-5

Even with use of longer phrases, such as these hemiola figures, the rhythmic direction is maintained. In the following example, the partido alto rhythm is superimposed on the bass drum part. Notice how the bass drum rhythm in bars 1 & 2 fits with the partido alto rhythm, and that synchronicity returns at the completion of the hemiola figure (bars 7 & 8). This is the same synchronicity shown in Figure 67.

Figure 78, hemiola turnaround with partido alto rhythm shown

As mentioned, the above figures all end on the last semiquaver of the bar, and all are leading in the same rhythmic direction. To lead into the opposite direction, the last quaver should be aimed for - meaning that in many instances the hemiola pattern will be displaced by a semiquaver. Here is an example:

Figure 79, hemiola with groove in other direction

### Utilising Space in Turnarounds

Tension can be created in other ways. The following examples show how rests in the bass drum part create a different effect in a turnaround. Leaving the bass drum out for a short period can create a sense of anticipation in the listener. The deliberate suspension of the driving bass drum rhythm is another form of groove disruption. The listener's "reward" comes when that driving rhythm returns.

In Figure 80 a 3rd surdo turnaround is used to bring the bass drum back in. Once more, the last semiquaver tied over the bar line, fitting with the common rhythmic structure, as well as sustaining a sense of rhythmic momentum.

Figure 80, suspending bass drum rhythm



Here is an example played in the opposite rhythmic direction. It uses a single quaver pick-up on the bass drum:

Figure 81, bass drum pick-up on last quaver





### Crossing the Double Bar-line

Another technique is to suspend the resolution of such turnarounds. The next example shows an emphasis on the second semiquaver after the double bar-line (played here with snare drum and crash), with the regular groove resuming in the second bar after the double bar-line. I heard Douglas Alonso use this type of fill resolution many times at O do Borogodo in São Paulo. In this example the resolution isn't really complete until the last bar-and-a-half, when the bass drum resumes its earlier pattern.

Figure 82, delayed resolution



John Riley discusses delayed resolutions like this in relation to Philly Joe Jones playing: "by not resolving on 1, Joe's phrases keep moving forward, and they keep listeners engaged by making them hope for a resolution."<sup>189</sup> The rhythms of the turnaround and its delayed resolution all fit with the standard rhythmic structure.

Many of the turnaround ideas presented here can be applied to samba batucada, using the toms to play the turnaround rhythms used here. I will present some of these ideas later in this thesis.

<sup>189</sup> Riley, 40

### Chapter Summary - Bass Drum Methods

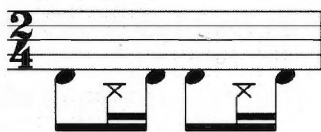
In this chapter a number of groove ideas for bass drum have been suggested as well as ideas relating to their application. While not laying down specific guidelines, I have given examples on how context affects bass drum rhythm choice. Open and muffled sounds, based on the surdo's open and muffled tones, have been discussed. I also put forward a number of bass drum turnarounds - some based on the variations of the 3rd surdo, some developed from the bass drum ideas of authors such as Bolão and de Almeida. These turnarounds can fulfil the same role as standard drum fills, helping shape a performance by leading strongly into new sections.

## 9. The Hi-Hat

This chapter will focus on the left foot playing on the hi-hat. I will discuss some of the rhythmic possibilities, its relationship with the bass drum, and how it can be used in turnarounds as well as grooves. As with the bass drum, the drummer should aim to develop a number of groove ideas, and the technical skills to execute them. Below I will outline how effective the left foot on the hi-hat can be in shaping a performance, and how these ideas give the drummer more ways of being responsive to the music.

Just as bass drum variations can be used to shape a performance, the hi-hat too presents many options. It can be used for simple repetitive figures as well as more syncopated rhythms, but most of the existing texts fall back on the common left foot variation of playing the off-beats (the "ands").

Figure 83, common hi-hat rhythm, with bass drum



Netto uses this rhythm for most of his samba and bossa nova rhythms, only presenting a few variations.<sup>190</sup> Sabanovich introduces a few rhythmic variations alongside the concept of "splashing" the hi-hat, but only shows a couple of full kit versions with these variations.<sup>191</sup> Da Fonseca & Weiner show some similar variations, while mentioning the hi-hat's ability to "add color and change a song very subtly."<sup>192</sup> Through all of these books though, there is a lack of depth to the discussion. In this chapter I will analyse some specific recordings to help show how colour can be added and where some of these subtleties lie.

<sup>190</sup> Netto, 49

<sup>191</sup> Sabanovich, 48

<sup>192</sup> Da Fonseca/Weiner, 17

Uribe presents seven bass drum/hi-hat variations. He states that the following two figures "give you the most traditional sound because they most closely emulate the *Surdo* and *Pratos*,"<sup>193</sup> and he acknowledges that different patterns will give the music a different feel. The concept of bass drum and hi-hat emulating the *surdos* and *pratos* is very common.

Figure 84, Uribe bass drum and hi-hat ex 1

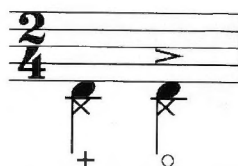
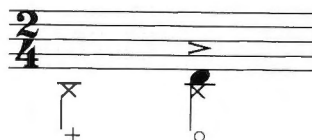


Figure 85, Uribe bass drum and hi-hat ex 2



The closed and splashed notes on the hi-hat mimic the muffled and open tones of the *surdo*. Often the bass drum is already emphasising the beat 2 open tone, but the splashed hi-hat can reinforce that emphasis.

In the video *Rhythms and Colours* Airto Moreira talks about changing between the two main hi-hat variations.<sup>194</sup> On *Perfume de Cebola* Airto plays three basic ideas on hi-hat - off-beats (Fig 83), down-beats (ie crotchets), and quavers.

Figure 86, hi-hat plays crotchets



<sup>193</sup> Uribe, 90

<sup>194</sup> Airto Moreira. *Rhythms and Colours* (video). (DCI Music Video, 1993)

Figure 87, hi-hat plays quavers



Airto, being interviewed by Dan Thress, talks about using the down-beat hi-hat variation (Fig 86) during the song's introduction. He says he uses this variation in the introduction, as opposed to off-beats (Fig 83), because the melody has "a lot of ups" (the melody emphasises the 2nd and 4th semiquavers of beat 2). Airto goes on to sing the melody while playing Figure 83. He describes this variation as "too complicated." Figure 87 is used to build intensity later in the performance.

Oscar Bolão develops some more advanced ideas in his book, presenting four hi-hat variations that he refers to as "simplified tamborim patterns."<sup>195</sup>

Figure 88, Bolão hi-hat variation



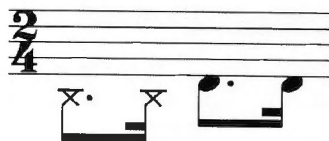
De Almeida lists a number of standard bass drum/hi-hat variations, including some possible applications,<sup>196</sup> but then introduces another concept. Taking a 3rd surdo variation, he plays the open tones on the bass drum, while the surdo notes played with the palm are played on the hi-hat.

<sup>195</sup> Bolão, 76-7

<sup>196</sup> De Almeida, 63-5



Figure 89, de Almeida - application of 3rd surdo, open and palm notes



### Transcriptions and Analysis

In this next section, I will analyse some specific recordings to help highlight the variations of the hi-hat. I will attempt to put the drummers' choices in context with the surrounding instruments to show how the hi-hat can add colour and help shape a performance, and to show how the hi-hat can add to the improvising drummer's vocabulary.

### João Palma - Brazil

João Palma uses the splashed hi-hats in Antonio Carlos Jobim's 1970 recording of *Brazil (Aquarela do Brasil)*.<sup>197</sup> He utilises the off-beat splash (Fig 90), sometimes for just one note (as in Fig 91), other times through a whole section.

Figure 90, common pattern, with splashed hi-hat

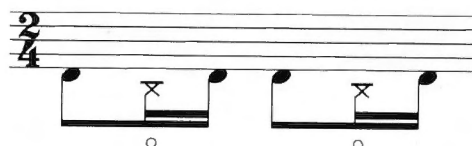
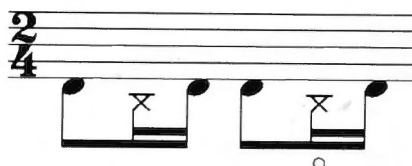


Figure 91, splash once in bar



<sup>197</sup> *Stoneflower*, Antonio Carlos Jobim. CTi - Epic/Legacy EK61616

At 2:22 he uses it for an 8 bar section, creating a temporary "lift" in the ensemble. This "lifting" effect could be described in three parts. Firstly, the splashed hi-hat creates an increase in volume. Secondly, the splashing effect creates what is referred to as cymbal "wash" - the ongoing vibration of a cymbal after the moment of contact (ie stick on cymbal, or in this case, cymbal on cymbal). This wash increases the density of the sound, and along with the increased volume adds to the intensity of the performance at that moment. This change in intensity is noticeable as either side of the 8 bars of splashed hi-hat, Palma's hi-hat is playing a regular, closed, "chick" sound.

The third aspect is the resultant rhythmic effect. Although he has already been playing the hi-hat on the off-beats, by further emphasising it (via the splash sound), Palma increases the feeling of rhythmic lift that syncopation creates. The first and second parts, as described above, would occur if he splashed *on* the beat (Fig 92), but the rhythmic lift occurs here because of his rhythmic choice.

Figure 92, splashing on beats 1 and 2.



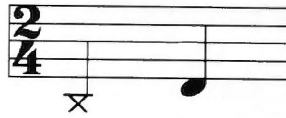
### Raphael Barata

The next subject is Rafael Barata, and I will focus on a couple of hi-hat variations used by him on the Rosa Passos album *É Luxo Só*.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>198</sup> *É Luxo Só*, Rosa Passos. Biscoito Fino BF 135-2

On the first track, *Olhos Verdes*, Barata plays the first few bars with only bass drum on beat two, then when the guitar enters the hi-hat starts on beat one with the bass drum still playing beat two.

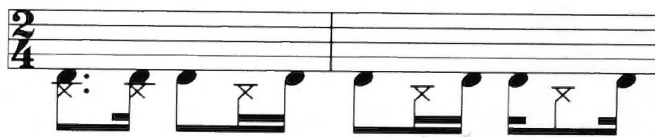
Figure 93, Rafael Barata, *Olhos Verdes*



Upon the entry of the vocals, he changes to the rhythm shown in Figure 83. Then, leading towards the end of the first chorus, and the 7/8 break between choruses, Barata starts splashing the hi-hat. This effect, although only played for the last two bars before the 7/8, helps "lift" the band (as described earlier), opening the sound up, suggesting a rise in dynamics and intensity, as well as signifying the change. Following the 7/8 break (3 bars of 7/8 followed by two bars of 2/4), Barata returns to the closed hi-hat, as before.

On track 3, *O Amor e a Rosa*, Barata introduces the "bossa nova clave" on the hi-hat at 0:19 (perhaps taking its cue from the introduction to this piece). Barata's bass drum playing is very subtle on this recording, and at times hard to discern amongst the similar rhythms played by bassist Jorge Helder, but it appears that he maintains the common bass drum figure for much of the song.

Figure 94, bossa nova clave on hi-hat



The hi-hat is such a distinct part of the performance that Celso de Almeida, in concert with Rosa Passos in São Paulo, paid his respects to Barata's playing to

the extent of copying this groove almost note-for-note.<sup>199</sup> A high compliment from one of Brazil's best drummers.

Barata uses splashed hi-hat notes at various points in the rhythm, and to help shape the end of the first A section, returns to the splashed off-beats, as in Figure 90. In the second A section, he uses the standard foot pattern (Fig 83), but echoes the earlier hi-hat rhythm by playing the bossa nova clave as accents within his brushes pattern.

In the B section, he returns to the splashed off-beats, creating a sense of lift again. Then, in the coda, the bossa nova clave returns, using the same idea as the introduction. This time around the guitar and bass are joined by the hi-hat in playing the rhythm.

### Paulinho Braga - *Aguas de Março*

In Tom Jobim and Elis Regina's 1974 recording of *Aguas de Março*, Paulinho Braga utilises a few of the hi-hat ideas discussed previously.<sup>200</sup> He starts with the hi-hat on the off-beats, and the common bass drum pattern, as in Figure 83. At 0:25 he splashes the hi-hat for one bar (Fig 90), and emphasises these splashed notes with snare drum accents (played with brushes). These two splashes help accentuate the vocal phrase at that point (Regina's part). He uses the same idea to accentuate Regina's phrase at 0:47.

From 0:34 Braga plays quavers on the hi-hat for five bars, along with a changed bass drum pattern. This bass drum pattern mimics the change in Luizão Maia's bass part. When this phrase resolves, Braga returns to the basic pattern (Fig 83).

<sup>199</sup> Rosa Passos in concert. SESC Vila Mariana, São Paulo. April 7, 2012.

<sup>200</sup> *Elis & Tom*, Antonio Carlos Jobim/Elis Regina. Philips 6349 112.

Braga and Maia repeat this idea at the same point in the form throughout (for example, at 1:00) - again, five bars on this figure before resolving.

Figure 95, Braga's foot pattern, 0:34

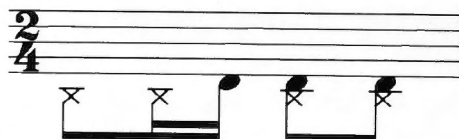
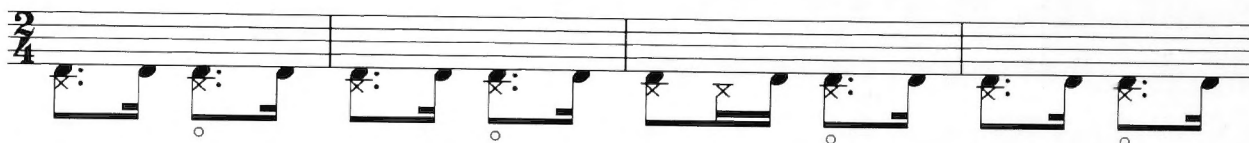


Figure 96, Maia's bass rhythm, 0:34



At 1:14 Maia's bass emphasises beat 2 more strongly than at any previous point in the song. Braga matches that intensity with splashed hi-hat on beat 2. The following figure shows the foot pattern through this four bar section. Note the change in the third bar.

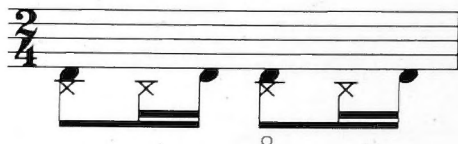
Figure 97, Braga's foot pattern from 1:14



After this section, Braga again returns to the basic pattern (Fig 83).

Maia returns to the strong beat 2 feel around 2:48, and Braga again splashes the hi-hat, but this time does so while playing a full bar of quavers.

Figure 98, full bar of quavers, beat two splashed





The use of the hi-hat to emphasise sections, or even just specific phrases, stands out in Braga's masterful and under-stated performance.

### The Hi-Hat in Turnarounds

The hi-hat can be used in turnarounds, such as the ones discussed in the bass drum chapter (and later in relation to batucada on kit). There are two basic approaches (not counting left foot abstinence). The hi-hat can continue to be played as it has in the lead-up to the turnaround, be it off-beats, on the beat, splashed, or closed. One method of note here is to splash the hi-hat during the turnaround phrase, further heightening the musical effect. Sometimes, this can be overdoing it somewhat. The turnaround should be played in context with the rest of the performance. Discretion is important.

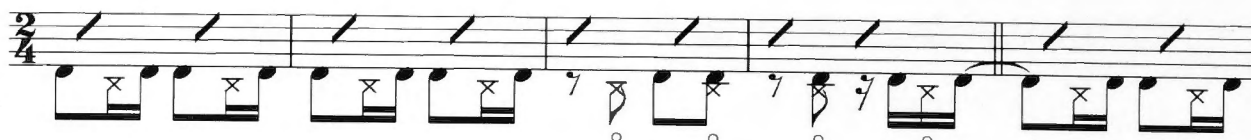
The other option is to specifically incorporate the hi-hat into the bass drum turnaround. I will briefly discuss a couple of the possibilities. The first example shows the hi-hat continuing on the off-beats, no splashing.

Figure 99, hi-hat on off-beats, no splashing



Next, the same figure but with splashed hi-hat in the two turnaround bars. Splashing the hi-hat at the end of a phrase, or section, can help shape the performance, working in with melodic phrasing and harmonic movement.

Figure 100, splashing in turnaround bars



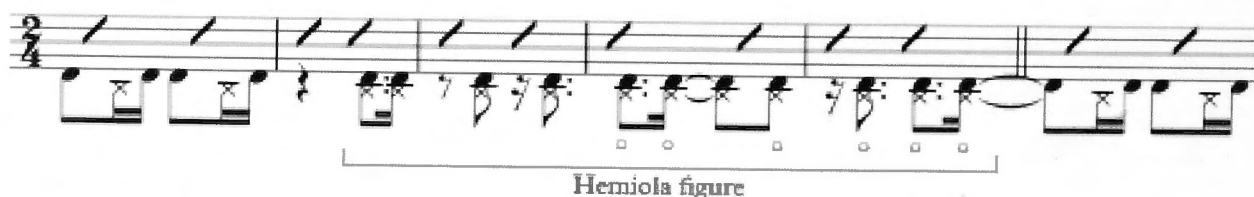
Now, using the same turnaround, but with the hi-hat and bass drum synchronised in bars 3 and 4.

Figure 101, splashed hi-hat follows bass drum



And in the last example, using the hemiola figure, the hi-hat is splashed in only the 3rd and fourth bars of the four bar turnaround. This has the effect of increasing the musical intensity as the phrase progresses.

Figure 102, hi-hat and bass drum hemiola



### A Jazz-based approach

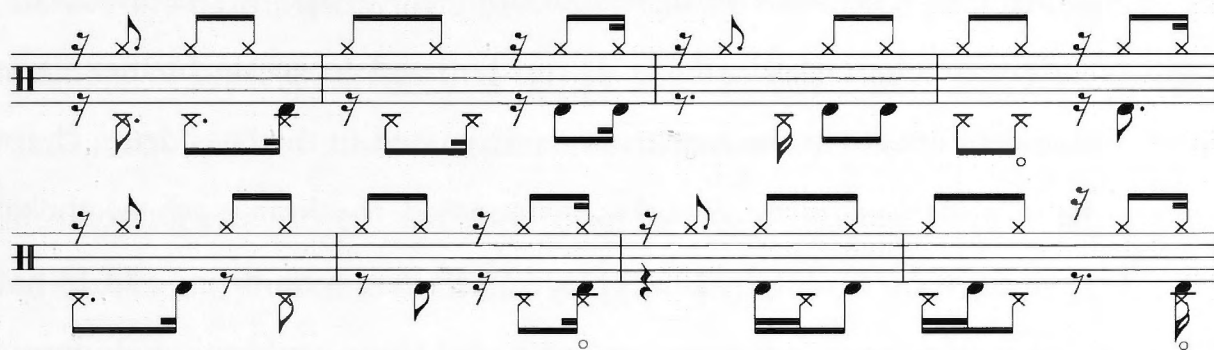
Marcio Bahia talked briefly about a more open, free-flowing style of playing the feet in samba and bossa nova during a workshop at Monash University.<sup>201</sup> He described a method that he found useful when playing samba and bossa nova in jazz, or jazz-related settings. In this concept, the hi-hat and bass drum still work within the rhythmic frameworks of the music, but instead of expressing

<sup>201</sup> Hermeto Pascoal e Grupo, public workshop at Monash University (Melbourne, Australia). March 11, 2012

an ostinato, they play fragmented or "broken up" rhythms. He expressed the view that ostinati could sometimes be constrictive on the ensemble when trying to create free-flowing improvised ideas. By changing the approach to the feet, the ensemble can move to a more open idea of phrasing. This is very similar to the developments in jazz drumming in the 1960s, when players such as Jack DeJohnette, Tony Williams, Elvin Jones, Paul Motian and others, started moving away from what we might call the "fixed concepts" of earlier jazz drumming (that is, a constant ride cymbal pattern coupled with the left foot on beats 2 and 4).<sup>202</sup>

As well as Marcio Bahia, I have seen other Brazilian drummers use this approach, including Edu Ribeiro<sup>203</sup> and A.C dal Farra.<sup>204</sup> Below is an example of bass drum and hi-hat in this style, with the partido alto rhythm marked above.

Figure 103, broken figure for bass drum and hi-hat



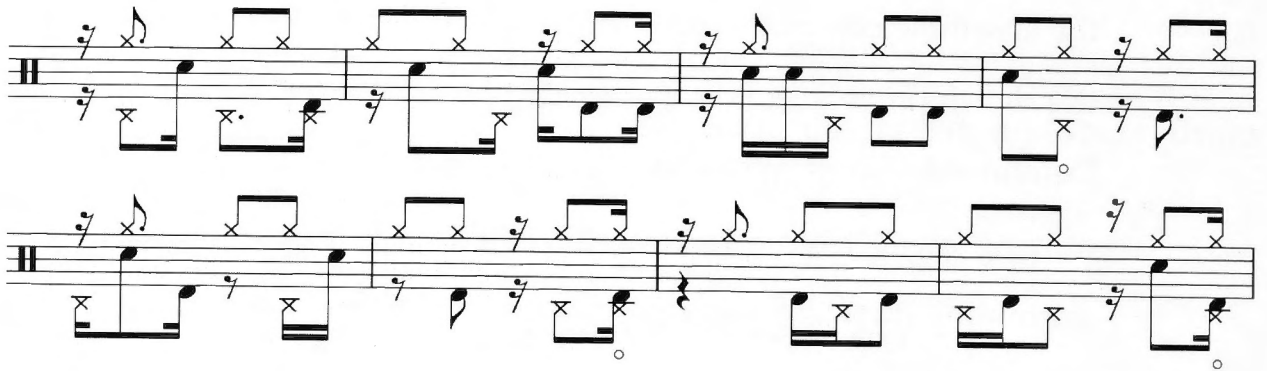
It is also possible to integrate a third component into this concept, creating a three-way comping figure. The next example has snare drum included as the third limb (this would be in the samba de prato style).

<sup>202</sup> For further reading on these developments in jazz drumming, see: Riley, *Beyond Bop Drumming*.

<sup>203</sup> Quinteto Vento em Madeira in concert. Casa do Núcleo, São Paulo. April 10, 2012.

<sup>204</sup> *Quinteto*, Teco Cardoso e Léa Freire. Núcleo Contemporâneo NC013, 1999.

Figure 104, broken figure for feet and snare



### Chapter Summary - The Hi-hat

In this chapter I have explored a number of groove and turnaround possibilities for the hi-hat. The hi-hat has been seen playing simple repetitive rhythms, such as crotchet and quaver based ideas. It has also been shown that simple ideas using the splashed hi-hat sound can help shape a performance, providing different colours and effects. It can be used to create further variations and different effects in the turnarounds discussed in the bass drum chapter. There have also been more complex syncopated rhythms, such as those based on tamborim or surdo rhythms (played between bass drum and hi-hat), phrases such as the "bossa nova rhythm" on hi-hat alone, and broken rhythmic ideas.

## 10. Samba de Prato and Co-ordination Development

This chapter will present some practice methods aimed at developing three- and four-way co-ordination in a variety of contexts. The ideas presented will primarily relate to the earlier discussion of bass drum and hi-hat patterns. I will present here a few ideas drawn from drumming texts beyond the canon of Brazilian drumming books. These exercises are aimed at developing technique and co-ordination in order to better execute musical choices and to help provide the technical skills required to be *responsive*. John Riley on technique:

Technique and creativity are the building blocks that lead to a solid groove and contribute to good musicianship. Improved technique improves your groove and makes it possible to execute your musical decisions.<sup>205</sup>

The more advanced feet variations (eg, Fig 86 & 87 in *The Hi-Hat*) are much harder to co-ordinate with the hands than the basic foot patterns. There are a number of basic exercises that can be used to help develop the co-ordination skills required for smooth execution. These exercises have benefits beyond developing basic co-ordination for these styles. They can be used as a pathway to developing rhythmic flexibility and fluency, giving the drummer some of the skills to be used in ensemble interaction - or in jazz parlance, "comping." Riley again, talking about co-ordination exercises for jazz:

And that's strengthened by doing the co-ordination exercises... because they're designed to reduce the friction between your limbs, so that you can synchronise your ideas in a flowing way.<sup>206</sup>

Although Riley is referring to co-ordination exercises for jazz, the same is true for co-ordination exercises in any style; reducing friction, synchronising ideas

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<sup>205</sup> John Riley. *The Master Drummer* (DVD).

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*



properly, creating a flowing groove. Without high levels of three- and four-way co-ordination, these ideas won't fall into place, and the technical level required for responsiveness won't be reached.

Beyond technical facility, musical expressiveness should also be considered. John Ramsay talks of Alan Dawson "trying to balance his lessons and studies equally between technique and musical ideas."<sup>207</sup> Marc Hannaford draws in part on the work of Lydia Goehr as he takes a dialectical approach to the "cerebral/expressive dichotomy" in relationship to rhythm.<sup>208</sup>

It is a point to be considered in the development of improvisation, and becomes an individual's choice as one looks at the *technical* and *persuasive* elements of improvised music performance. In regards to my study, I propose to lay out methods for the development of technical aspects - generally a systematic approach - while maintaining the idea that through stronger technical understanding, a stronger persuasive and inventive style can be developed.

### *Rhythmic Development - Samba de Prato*

This section will cover the development of basic rhythmic co-ordination, developing syncopation, and then some groove ideas in the samba de prato style.

The first of these practice ideas is based on a concept used by Horacio "El Negro" Hernandez in his book *Conversations in Clave*.<sup>209</sup> In the second chapter Hernandez introduces a number of exercises under the sub-heading "Rhythmic Permutations with Rumba Clave." This method forms the core of his book.

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<sup>207</sup> Ramsay, 48

<sup>208</sup> Marc Hannaford, *Elliot Carter's Rhythmic Language: A Framework for Improvisation*. Master of Music Performance diss, Faculty of VCA and Music, Melbourne University, 2012. 78

<sup>209</sup> Horacio Hernandez. *Conversations in Clave*. (Van Nuys: Alfred, 2000) 21

Firstly, a direct adaptation of Hernandez's method, where each semiquaver of the bar is played by the hands with the selected foot pattern. Throughout this chapter I will use one of de Almeida's patterns (Fig 89, *The Hi-Hat*).

Figure 105, individual semiquavers with foot pattern



Next, playing pairs of consecutive semiquavers:

Figure 106, two consecutive semiquavers

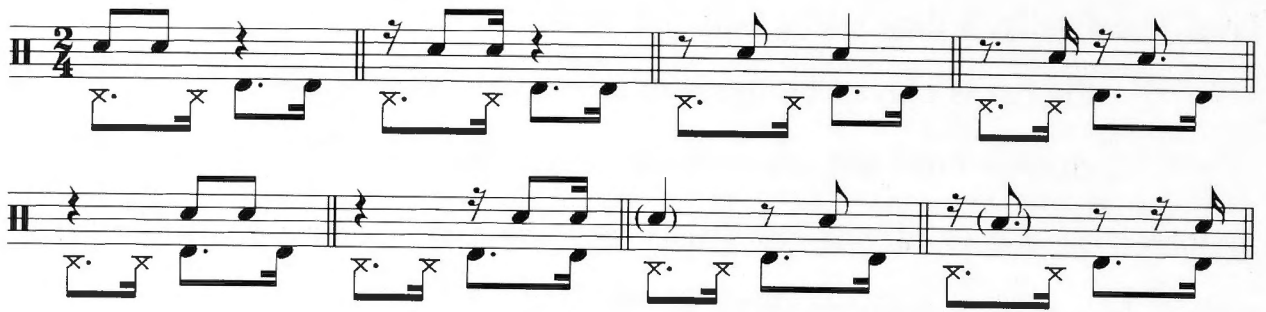


Hernandez presents this idea up to seven consecutive notes (in his case, quaver based). These ideas can be played by one hand, both hands (unison), alternating (ie, single stroke roll), or in mixed sticking.

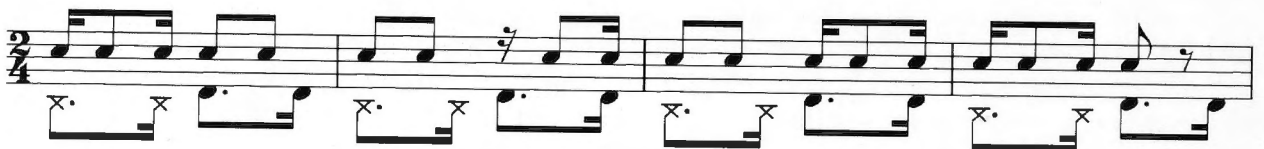
In the next stage Hernandez introduces what he calls "two-note melody exercises."<sup>210</sup> The following figure shows one of the possible rhythms with permutations against the same foot pattern.

<sup>210</sup> Hernandez, 46

Figure 107, two quavers, and permutations

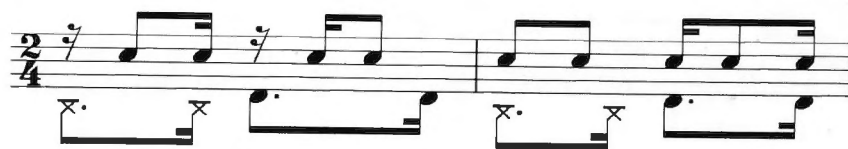


This idea can be extended to incorporate many different rhythms. Texts such as Ted Reed's *Syncopation* could be used.<sup>211</sup> Below, the first four bars of Reed's *Exercise One*, interpreted in double-time (ie crotchets become quavers).<sup>212</sup>

Figure 108, four bar *Syncopation* example

Most importantly, Brazilian rhythms should be applied. Here, a common tamborim rhythm:

Figure 109, tamborim rhythm

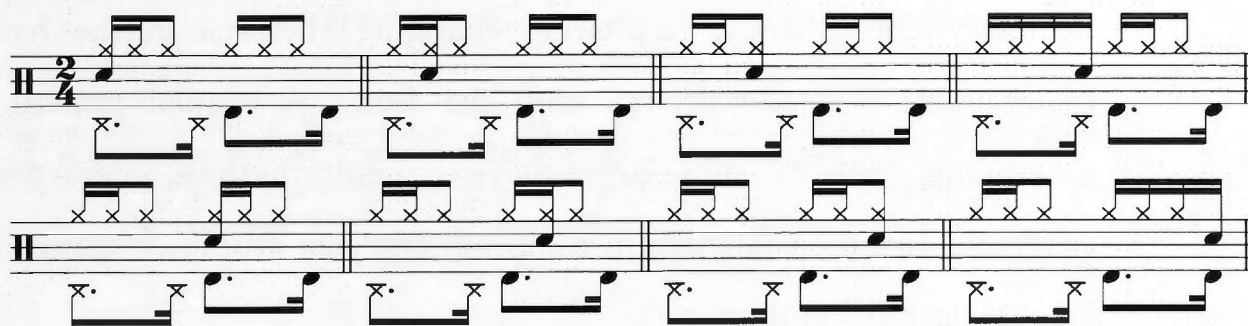


The next step involves four-way co-ordination, introducing cymbal patterns in one hand, while playing the rhythmic permutations in the other. At first, I have written this exercise with a short rhythmic cell on the cymbal - a one-beat pattern, as it were.

<sup>211</sup> Ted Reed. *Progressive Steps to Syncopation for the Modern Drummer*. (Van Nuys: Alfred, 1996)

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid*, 38

Figure 110, single semiquavers on snare, with cymbal



This can be extended to the other rhythmic permutations presented earlier, as well as other cymbal patterns.

Moving to a two bar pattern on the cymbal, similar methods can be used. Here is one (relatively) advanced example, with a tamborim rhythm on the cymbal and the left hand playing three consecutive semiquavers (first four permutations only).

Figure 111, three consecutive semiquavers on snare, with tamborim rhythm on cymbal



Next, a full samba, utilising syncopated rhythms in the left hand, with longer cymbal patterns (as opposed to the shorter rhythmic cell presented in Fig 110).

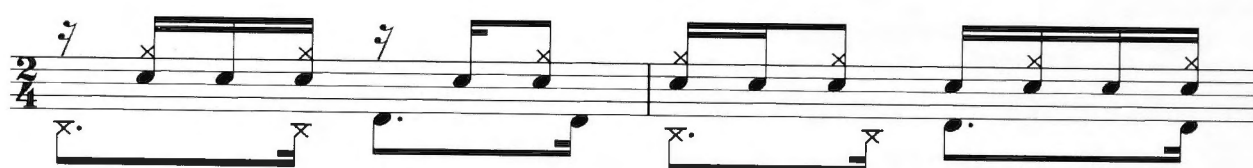
Figure 112, full samba de prato



Practising a range of these exercises should help the drummer develop flexibility and fluency, facilitating changing rhythms in the hands while maintaining a steady groove with the feet. A cymbal pattern could be maintained while the snare drum plays changing rhythms, interacting with the ensemble, like the snare drum "comping" of a jazz drummer against the steady jazz ride cymbal pattern.

The option also exists to invert the hands - playing cymbal rhythms on the snare drum, and vice versa. This can also be seen as a reversal of the roles. The left hand in effect becomes the "ride" source, playing a repetitive figure, while the right hand on the cymbal can display some rhythmic freedom.

Figure 113, hands reversed



The left hand on the snare can also play shorter repeated figures, such as this one based on the maxixe rhythm:

Figure 114, left hand maxixe



Similar permutation exercises can be developed with the role of left and right hands reversed. That is, the left hand playing repeated, ostinato figures, with the right developing the permutations. Figure 115 shows the first four permutations of individual semiquavers played on the cymbal, with the left hand playing the maxixe-based rhythm as in Figure 114.



Figure 115, left hand maxixe, right hand individual semiquavers



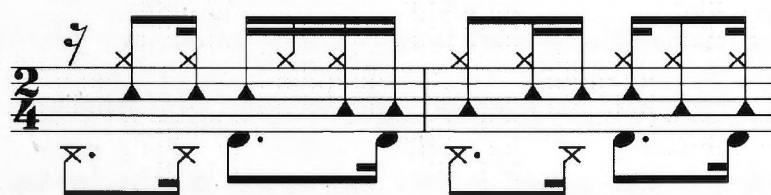
These practices can be extended to playing two different rhythms drawn from samba batucada. Figure 116 uses a tamborim rhythm on the cymbal and an agogô rhythm on the snare.

Figure 116, tamborim and agogô together



With an agogô added to the drum kit, the pattern could be played between two bells:

Figure 117, agogô rhythm between to bells



The ideas presented above, although fairly advanced, can be easily adapted to make simpler co-ordination exercises – for example, two-way co-ordination.

### Developing Longer Phrases

There are times when constant or repetitive cymbal-and-snare phrases serve the music perfectly, but there are also times when a more free-flowing approach

should be adopted. This is an important part of the improvised and responsive style I have been looking towards throughout this study.

Early in *The Art of Bop Drumming*, John Riley talks about the role of comping.<sup>213</sup> He lists four points: to enhance the groove; to add variety to the time flow; to support or stimulate the soloist; and as a response to an idea just played by another band member. These four points are all equally valid in the discussion of Brazilian drumming. The exercises discussed earlier in this chapter help develop some of the technical skills required to fulfil the comping role. But there is another step – developing longer phrases.

Longer phrases add variety to the time flow; they can help support and stimulate other band members; and the skills required for longer phrases match up with the skills required to respond to ideas from other band members. Poorly executed, or poorly thought-out phrases can disrupt the time flow. It is the drummer's responsibility to ensure that the music benefits from the use of variations and longer phrases.

The high level of co-ordination development aimed for in the earlier exercises also helps facilitate the development of longer phrases. This is another step towards flowing, responsive groove playing. It could be seen in similar way to the idea of learning drum rudiments individually before putting multiple rudiments together in a snare drum solo. Looking at the jazz drumming books of Riley, we see two-bar comping ideas in *The Art of Bop Drumming* before the introduction of four-bar ideas in his second book *Beyond Bop Drumming*.<sup>214</sup> In *Advanced Concepts for the Modern Drummer* Jim Chapin first introduces one-bar ideas, before building into longer melodic and solo exercises.<sup>215</sup> The graduated

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<sup>213</sup> Riley, *The Art of Bop Drumming*, 17

<sup>214</sup> Riley, *Beyond Bop Drumming*, 10

<sup>215</sup> Jim Chapin. *Advanced Techniques for the Modern Drummer*. (Van Nuys: Alfred)

development of phrases is a common theme - start with short phrases (eg one or two-bar phrases), before building to longer "combination" phrases.

I do not believe there is any secret to developing these longer phrases. Much of it is relatively obvious, for example, stringing different hand patterns together while maintaining a consistent groove in the feet. This comes back to Riley's idea of removing "friction." One important thing to consider through the variations is the rhythmic framework discussed in *A Brazilian Clave?* This framework can be used as a reference point as the drummer moves through complex syncopated ideas that cross multiple bars. By keeping the rhythmic framework in mind, the drummer should be able to minimize the chances of variations disrupting the flow of the music.

The melody can also be a good source of longer rhythmic ideas. Below is an example of a longer samba de prato phrase based on the first 8 bars of the B section of *Assanhado*, a well-known choro by Jacob do Bandolim. The melody is reflected in part by the cymbal, with the rim-click catching key moments within the cymbal rhythm. The cymbal and rim-click both fit in with the concept of direction established in earlier chapters.

Figure 118, cymbal and rim click example - Assanhado

The figure displays two systems of musical notation. The first system is labeled 'Melodic Rhythm' and 'Drum Kit'. The melodic line is in treble clef, 2/4 time, and consists of a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes. The drum kit line is in bass clef, 2/4 time, and consists of a sequence of eighth and sixteenth notes, with 'x' marks indicating cymbal and rim-click sounds. The second system shows a similar melodic and drum kit line, continuing the sequence.

This approach is not far removed from Jordan's concept of "mirroring." The end result above is similar to his idea of a "rhythmic/dynamic skeleton." This is not an uncommon approach on other percussion instruments, such as pandeiro, and can also be expressed in simple ways on drum kit. In a 1967 recording of *Brasileirinho*, the drummer (not acknowledged in liner notes) accompanying Waldir Azevedo catches key accents from the melody on the snare drum.<sup>216</sup> Below is a two bar example from the B section, played with brushes on the snare drum (snare on):

Figure 119, excerpt from *Brasileirinho*



### Chapter Summary - Samba de Prato and Co-ordination Development

In this chapter I presented a few ideas relating to the development of three- and four-way co-ordination, primarily as they relate to samba de prato. These exercises are designed to develop rhythmic flexibility and fluency through systematic and graduated practice routines. I outlined some of the more advanced possibilities that these exercises can lead to, as well as the development of longer phrases. The relationship with melodic content was also highlighted through the use of concepts such as mirroring.

<sup>216</sup> *Coleção Folha Raizes da Música Popular Brasileira*. Waldir Azevedo. Folha de S. Paulo Collection, 24.

## 11. Advanced Batucada

In this chapter I will examine some practice and performance ideas for samba batucada that build upon the ideas and explanations presented in the current Brazilian drumming texts. Many of these ideas will be drawn from the earlier chapters, including ideas for turnaround and co-ordination development.

Samba batucada on drum kit draws most of its ideas from the caixa (snare drum) and surdos of the bateria. Further ideas and inspiration can be found in tamborim and repinique parts, and sometimes melodic elements, such as cuica and agogô are also used. Turnarounds from the 3rd surdo are also used.

In a basic drum kit batucada, there would typically be a steady stream of semiquavers on the snare drum, disrupted only by the movement of selected notes to the toms, played over a foot ostinato. In the following example, the note played on the floor tom mimics the 1st surdo's accent.

Figure 120, basic batucada for drum kit



I propose that there are four basic technical elements in good batucada playing on drum kit: Sticking fluency - the ability to change freely between sticking ideas; accent fluency; orchestration fluency - the ability to move freely around the drums, including doing so with changing sticking ideas; and the co-ordination of the three previous ideas with a foot ostinato.<sup>217</sup>

<sup>217</sup> There are other elements, such as buzzed notes, but the four listed here cover the essentials of batucada.



To help develop fluency and flexibility in batucada, there are some exercises that can be undertaken whereby the hand-based elements listed above are isolated and practised over a foot ostinato. The three hand-based elements are common drum kit ideas, and there are many books available that deal with these elements, such as Ted Reed's *Syncopation*, George Lawrence Stone's *Stick Control*,<sup>218</sup> and many others. I will draw on some of these books as I outline some exercises that will help develop the skills for advanced batucada playing.

### Sticking Fluency

Sticking fluency, in itself, is a common idea in drumming. Most drummers spend considerable time practising changing from one sticking idea to another, for example, single strokes to double strokes to paradiddles. There are many books that cover this material, so I intend here to focus on the ideas that are most readily applied to batucada on drum kit.

In batucada, sticking fluency is related to orchestration and accent choices. In essence, the sticking pattern serves to enable a range of orchestrations and accents. A good sticking pattern will eliminate potential playing hazards, such as cross-overs and awkward jumps around the instrument.<sup>219</sup>

In the current Brazilian drumming texts various sticking ideas are presented. In many instances the sticking just comes down to a personal choice, but in some cases there are important sticking decisions to make. These usually involve cross-overs or jumps between drums with one hand - everyday drumming choices, but decisions must be made.

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<sup>218</sup> George Lawrence Stone. *Stick Control – for the Snare Drummer*. (Stone Percussion Books, 2009)

<sup>219</sup> A cross-over is where one hand crosses over the other in order to play a given orchestration.

Ed Uribe avoids cross-overs, but will notate for the occasional jump that can be difficult at speed, as in Figure 121.<sup>220</sup> Da Fonseca & Weiner use a similar approach, though in Exercise 6, they adapt the orchestration for simplicity.<sup>221</sup>

Figure 121, Uribe Batucada (Ex 5)<sup>222</sup>



In his short section on batucada, Daniel Sabanovich changes the sticking to facilitate easy movement around the kit, but the sample of ideas he presents is too small to draw further conclusions from.<sup>223</sup>

Oscar Bolão uses the single stroke roll as the foundation for his batucada section, but notates for sticking changes. At times this leads to a result similar to Uribe (such as in Exercício 4, Fig 122),<sup>224</sup> but at other points he adapts the orchestration for a simpler outcome (for example, Exercício 9, Fig 123).<sup>225</sup>

Figure 122, Bolão Exercício 4

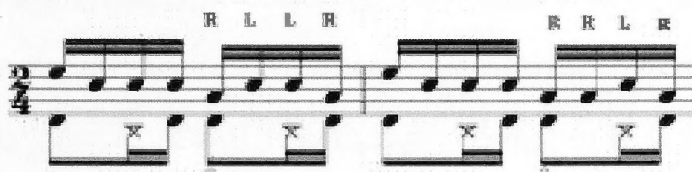
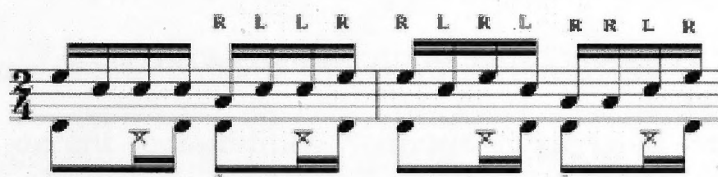


Figure 123, Bolão Exercício 9



<sup>220</sup> Ed Uribe, 104-6

<sup>221</sup> Da Fonseca/Weiner, 14, 16

<sup>222</sup> Uribe, 105

<sup>223</sup> Sabanovich, 51-2

<sup>224</sup> Bolão, 84

<sup>225</sup> Ibid, 85

In my research, I have found Henrique C. de Almeida to have the most clearly thought-out approach to the sticking-orchestration relationship.<sup>226</sup> He appears to never sacrifice his orchestration choices for ease of sticking. De Almeida uses the single stroke roll as his foundation, but uses paradiddle ideas to excellent effect. He chooses sticking patterns that easily facilitate all of his orchestration choices.

A common theme across most of the batucada examples presented in the existing Brazilian drumming texts is the use the single stroke roll as the foundation, with the sticking altered at points to facilitate the orchestration. Figure 120 (above) uses the single stroke roll, leading with the right hand. With just the one tom note, there is no need to change from the single strokes. In the next example I draw on the rhythms of the 3rd surdo. To most easily facilitate the tom notes, a mixed-sticking approach is used.<sup>227</sup>

Figure 124, batucada with mixed sticking approach



In preparation for these examples that use mixed-sticking, it is helpful to practice rudiments and sticking combinations over a foot pattern. It is possible to just learn the specific examples given in the existing Brazilian drumming texts, but to develop fluency to the level of improvisation, the drummer should look at a broader range of preparatory exercises.

<sup>226</sup> de Almeida, 68-70

<sup>227</sup> For the notation of these examples, I have only written accents on the snare drum notes. The tom notes should be strong, and most drummers will afford them the right level of emphasis quite naturally. I have reserved the use of accents for instances where the distinction is required. Where another source is quoted, the accents are written as per the source.

Some of these exercises already exist in drumming texts. In his book on the Alan Dawson method, John Ramsay outlines Dawson's *Rudimental Ritual*. This extensive rudimental exercise is presented over the "bossa nova foot ostinato."<sup>228</sup> This method can be extended to other sticking ideas and other foot patterns. As most batucada grooves are based on the idea of a steady flow of semiquavers, the focus should be on rudiments and sticking ideas that fit with that premise.

As such, an excellent place to start is Stone's *Stick Control*. The first three pages of exercises alone serve as an excellent grounding to the fluency required for batucada.<sup>229</sup> Practising these ideas over a foot pattern should help the drummer achieve a good level of sticking proficiency in the context of four-way coordination. The ability to maintain the foot pattern, and to maintain a sense of groove, is integral.

### Accent Fluency

Accent fluency is a natural progression from sticking fluency. In batucada, accents are drawn from the rhythmic language of samba, but that means that there are many possible accent combinations. On a basic level, the ability to accent any note in the stream of semiquavers is desirable. This might start with the ability to accent any individual semiquaver within a single stroke roll, but should be extended to include multiple accent combinations and other sticking patterns.

Reed's *Syncopation* is an excellent source of accent ideas. In Lesson Five, he presents many accent possibilities without designated sticking.<sup>230</sup> These exercises can be used with various sticking patterns, played over a samba foot pattern. When considering also the notation possibilities of samba (see

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<sup>228</sup> Ramsay, 11

<sup>229</sup> Stone, 5-7

<sup>230</sup> Reed. 60-3

*Rhythmic Fundamentals and Phrasing*), Reed's quaver-based accent exercises could also be used.<sup>231</sup> In these instances, the samba would be predominantly quaver-based (ie in 2/2), not semiquaver-based.

Returning to *Stick Control*, accent ideas can be developed alongside the sticking patterns used. For example, accenting any individual note from the sticking pattern, while maintaining the foot pattern.

### Orchestration

I refer here to orchestration as the ability to move around the drum kit. For batucada we can see the snare drum as "home base" as it were, and the movement to the toms as being the orchestration of our sticking ideas.

I have personally found a systematic approach to be best in the early stages of orchestration development, helping to provide competency and flexibility. This means being able to move any note within the sticking idea from the snare drum on to the toms - preferably either hand to any tom, aiming for maximum flexibility and fluency. *Stick Control* can again be utilised. Much like the accent practice, any individual note could be changed from snare drum to tom. Once again, all of this should be practised over a samba foot pattern, with a sense of *groove*.

As a way of developing more advanced orchestration ideas, especially in relation to soloing, exercises such as John Riley's *Cross-sticking Combinations* can be utilised. Riley describes these single-stroke exercises ("hand-to-hand") as being designed to "increase fluidity and flexibility around the kit."<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Reed. 47-9

<sup>232</sup> Riley, *Beyond Bop Drumming*. 60



The first step is to maintain four-way co-ordination while playing the cross-sticking phrase, whichever speed is chosen. Riley presents the page as quaver triplets, but mentions also the possibility of creating a semiquaver based phrase over three beats. Figure 125 shows the first example in quaver triplets, Figure 126 is the semiquaver version Riley presents in 3/4.

Figure 125, Riley cross-sticking example 1

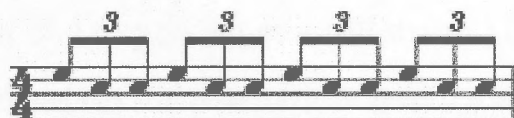


Figure 126, cross-sticking example 1 as semiquavers in 3/4



The figure in 3/4 can be transferred into 2/4, giving us three-beat phrases in 2/4. Phrases that contain polyrhythmic ideas such as this can be seen to have a *cyclic duration*. In the following figure, the basic cycle is shown, with the two rhythms being the three-beat phrase played against the two-beat bar. Where the two rhythms coincide (in this case, beat 1 of bar 1), is called the point of *maximum convergence*.<sup>233</sup> The next time this occurs would be beat 1 of bar 4, giving us a three bar cyclic duration. In this instance, the notes played on the small tom also spell out a hemiola.

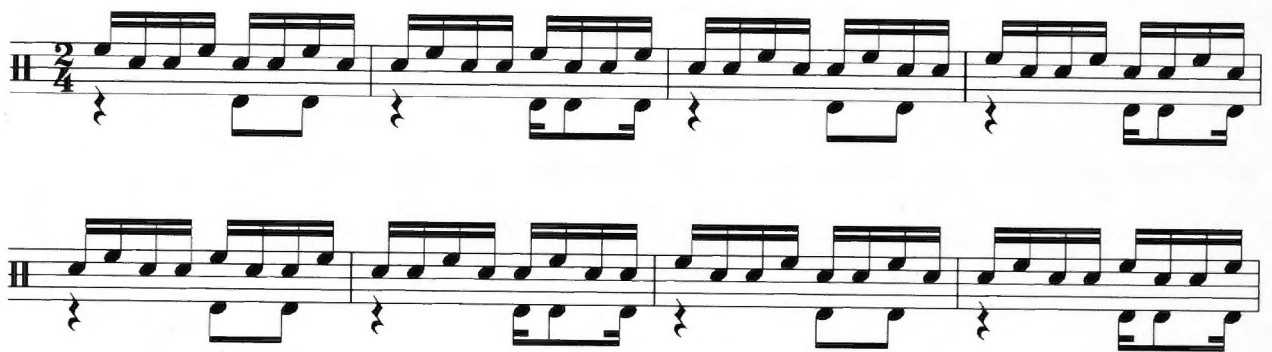
Figure 127, three-beat phrase in 2/4



<sup>233</sup> Craig Alan Weston. *Inversion, Subversion, and Metaphor: Music and Text in Elliott Carter's "a Mirror on Which to Dwell."* DMA diss, University of Washington, 1992, 28. Cited in Hannaford (23).

In a three-bar phrase it can be easy to lose sense of the two-bar framework of these Brazilian styles. The next example shows a two-bar surdo pattern played on the bass drum. Although increasing the difficulty, a two-bar foot pattern can help orient the drummer within the rhythmic framework. The foot pattern here is a four beat cycle. With the hands playing a three-beat cycle the cyclic duration is six bars. If maximum convergence is seen to occur on beat 1 of bar 1, it happens again on beat 1 of bar 7.

Figure 128, cross-stick example in semiquavers with two-bar foot pattern



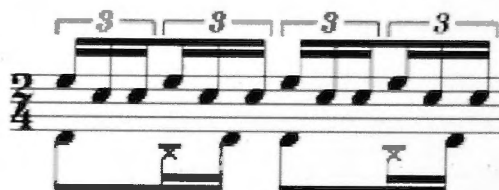
Returning to Riley's original quaver-triplet expression, Figure 129 shows it adapted to 2/4 with a samba foot pattern underneath.

Figure 129, cross-sticking example with samba foot pattern



The speed of the hand pattern can be doubled, making it semiquaver-triplets.

Figure 130, hands played at semiquaver-triplet speed



These cross-sticking exercises can be beneficial for fluency in time-keeping, notably batucada, and for soloing.

### Combining the Elements

Instead of endless pages of examples relating to the three hand-based elements outlined above, I would like to present one full drum kit batucada and outline a brief practice method based on the discussion above.

The groove I am using here uses mixed-sticking in continuous semiquavers, with accents, and surdo ideas applied to the toms. In a bateria, the 3rd surdo would be higher pitched than the 2nd, but practicalities on the drum kit usually dictate the opposite. This practicality stems from the 3rd surdo sharing the beat 2 emphasis with the 1st surdo.

Figure 131, two bar batucada combination



Firstly, a sticking pattern is required - one that easily facilitates the movements required, avoiding cross-overs where possible.

Figure 132, sticking pattern



Notice that the pattern starts on the left hand. This follows from the end of the pattern where the right hand finishes on the floor tom. At faster speeds, one hand playing consecutive semiquavers moving from floor tom to small tom is potentially problematic. By playing the first small tom note with the left hand, we avoid that problem. There are no other factors at this point that suggest the left hand is a bad choice.

The left hand leading note starts a paradiddle idea (L R R L), before single strokes commence on beat two. The paradiddle facilitates a change of direction - after starting the pattern with the left hand the next three beats are better served by leading with the right. The single strokes then carry through to beat two of the second bar, where the orchestration dictates R R L R (another paradiddle inversion). All of the accents required fall on single strokes in this example, meaning that there are no accent parts that pose problems at faster speeds.

Knowing the sticking, we can break it down into smaller pieces to develop sticking fluency. There are three groupings used - the paradiddle (L R R L), the singles (R L R L), and the second paradiddle idea (R R L R). The final grouping (R R L R) was seen earlier in the discussion of phrasing "in the cracks." Each of these ideas could be practiced in isolation with the foot pattern.

Figure 133, first paradiddle (extended to full paradiddle pattern)



Figure 134, single strokes, leading with right hand

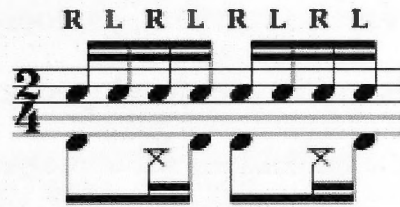


Figure 135, second paradiddle idea, repeated (not full paradiddle)



Figure 136, second paradiddle, extended to full paradiddle



Practising each of these ideas in isolation can help the drummer focus on the co-ordination requirements of each sticking idea before combining them for the full 2-bar pattern.

Figure 137, full sticking pattern plus feet



I have found that generally the co-ordination of sticking and foot pattern is the hardest step. Once this is achieved, the accent and orchestration elements are often relatively simple, but there can be methodology for these steps.



One possibility is to attempt one accent or orchestrated note at a time. The sticking pattern remains constant, as does the foot pattern, but the elements of accent and orchestration are developed gradually. The first four would look like this:

Figure 138, two-bar development exercises

Following from here, combinations of two or more accented and/or orchestrated notes can be practised, until the full pattern is mastered.

In practising these three hand-related elements - sticking, accents, orchestration - in depth along with a samba foot pattern, the drummer will naturally develop some of the technical skills required (ie fluency and flexibility) for improvisation. There are other elements that can be added, such as buzzed notes, and the development approaches outlined above can be adapted and expanded to include these other elements.

### *A Brief Word on Paradiddles*

Paradiddles can be used to change direction and facilitate orchestrations (as seen above), but they can also serve as a complete vehicle for a samba. James Dreier outlines a series of graduated steps for the development of a paradiddle idea in samba in his article *Kiko's Samba*.<sup>234</sup> I will briefly discuss that paradiddle

<sup>234</sup> James Dreier. "Kiko's Samba" *Percussive Notes*, February 2001. 18-9

idea below, as well as a jazz-fusion adaptation, played by Steve Gadd on Chick Corea's album *Friends*.

Below is a common one-bar samba idea which uses a basic 3rd surdo rhythm on the floor tom, with the small tom playing the 2nd surdo part. The paradiddle used earlier fits perfectly with this orchestration, with no need for cross-overs or fast jumps made by one hand. This time, the paradiddle is extended to its full length (L R R L R L L R). The second single left also facilitates the fundamental accent idea.

Figure 139, paradiddle batucada



This version of the paradiddle also facilitates the "in the cracks" phrasing discussed earlier. Dreier describes this paradiddle as having "the unique feel and articulation that gives Brazilian drumming such a great sound."<sup>235</sup> Beyond single strokes, most other sticking patterns present difficulties when trying to consistently create this phrasing style. This paradiddle is one of the few other patterns that lends itself quite naturally to this phrasing.

Alberto Netto presents a similar idea in his book, but avoids the need for paradiddles or cross-overs by playing the last tom note on the small tom.<sup>236</sup> This allows for the whole bar to be played with single strokes.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid, 18

<sup>236</sup> Netto, 40

Figure 140, extract from Netto's batucada (Ex 3)



Steve Gadd uses a different paradiddle on the Chick Corea composition *Sicily*.<sup>237</sup>

Figure 141, Steve Gadd on *Sicily*

With one hand on the snare, and one on the hi-hat, Gadd plays this paradiddle as a repeated pattern through the "A" sections of the recording. The accents on the "ands" could be seen to mimic the usual placement of the hi-hat notes played by the left foot.

This paradiddle facilitates a specific melodic/rhythmic idea, whereby the accents and orchestration serve the melody and accompaniment well. A flowing groove is created, and although complex, it serves the music well.

### Turnaround Ideas for Batucada

A number of the turnaround ideas presented in the earlier chapter on bass drum playing can be used in samba batucada. Some of these ideas can be played using a single stroke roll, but many will require more complex sticking ideas, including 3-note groupings for the hemiola rhythms.

Here is a simple turnaround from de Almeida's book, similar to the off-beat bass drum turnaround seen earlier here (*The Bass Drum*, Fig 71). De Almeida

<sup>237</sup> *Friends*, Chick Corea. Polydor 849 071-2

refers to it as a "fill."<sup>238</sup> The whole turnaround can be played with a single stroke roll, with all the accents falling on the right hand.

Figure 142, de Almeida "fill", adapted to 2/4 Ex 8



De Almeida also labels two other examples as *fills*. Examples 14 and 17 also work on the off-beat turnaround idea, but with notes added in on the small tom.<sup>239</sup>

Figure 143, de Almeida Ex 14



Other examples presented by de Almeida are also turnarounds, but he doesn't label them as *fill*. In Example 7 he shows a simple variation that echoes one of the simplest 3<sup>rd</sup> surdo variations.<sup>240</sup>

Figure 144, de Almeida Ex 7



Example 27 (Fig 145) is similar to a bass drum turnaround I presented in *The Bass Drum* (Fig 74), with a syncopated semiquaver ending orchestrated between small tom and floor tom.<sup>241</sup> Note how the left hand plays a double stroke over

<sup>238</sup> de Almeida, 68

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, 69

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, 68

<sup>241</sup> Ibid, 69

the bar line to facilitate an easy open-handed motion in the second bar. There is no need for any crossing-over.



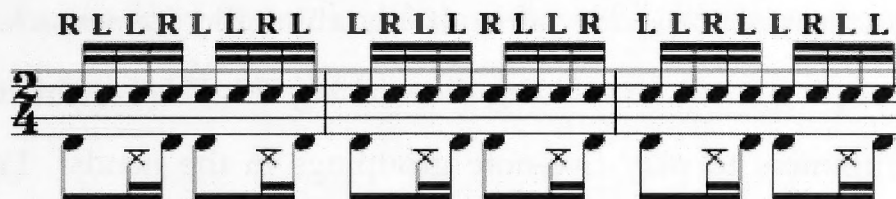
### Hemiola Turnarounds

I have found that the easiest way to play hemiola turnarounds is by using the 3-note sticking pattern R L L, but there are times when other patterns are more appropriate. These other occasions are usually related to the preceding or following phrase.

As a preliminary exercise, the 3-note grouping can be practised over a samba foot pattern. The two cycles being observed in this case are minims (ie beat 1) and dotted quavers (the three-semiquaver grouping, commencing with the right hand). Where beat 1 and the right hand coincide is the first point of maximum convergence. On beat 1 of the fourth bar we would see the second point, giving us a three bar cyclic duration. This point could also be seen as a rhythmic resolution. From one point of maximum convergence a sense of rhythmic tension is built, resolving at the next.



Figure 146, 3 bars of 3-note grouping



Now a simple version of this used as a turnaround. The turnaround starts in the third bar, but due to the tom/surdo notes in the second bar, the hemiola actually starts earlier - on beat 2 of the second bar. From the beginning of the hemiola the sticking R L L is used, with the right hand playing all the tom notes, including the ending. The tom part mimics the 3<sup>rd</sup> surdo turnarounds in the same way that the bass drum did earlier, including the ending of the phrase. I have written in one beat of sticking to show the transition from the turnaround to the groove. The left-leading paradiddle idea that starts bar 7 removes the need for a cross-over, and makes the accent on the second semiquaver quite easy to execute.

Figure 147, R L L hemiola idea

### Five-note Groupings in Batucada Turnarounds

Five-note groupings of semiquavers are another option in turnarounds. These increase the difficulty, but can be very effective ways of creating rhythmic tension-and-release. This gives a longer cyclic duration (five bars), but in the

example below, I will be utilising aspects of the five-note grouping in synchronisation with parts of the rhythmic framework. For this five-note grouping I will be utilising the sticking R L R L L. This is a common way for drummers to play five-note groupings in the hands. Looking at one of the surdo variations played on the floor tom, the first four notes of this five-note grouping can be seen (R L R L).

Figure 148, sticking relationship #1



The end of this turnaround (Fig 150) also contains a segment that fits with this five-note sticking (the first marked "left" in effect being the second note of the five-note sticking pattern).

Figure 149, sticking relationship #2



Using these two segments as the beginning and end, a five-note grouping turnaround can be created that fits in easily with the rhythmic framework.

Figure 150, 5-note grouping in turnaround



The next figure shows the same idea with the partido alto rhythm marked. Note the coinciding rhythms that start and end the five-semiquaver phrase (tom

and partido alto converge). A clear move from synchronicity to rhythmic dissonance can be seen. Bars 2 and 3 show how the tom notes move away from synchronicity, before the resolution on beat 2 of bar 4.

Figure 151, 5-note grouping plus partido alto



### Chapter Summary - Advanced Batucada

In this chapter, I proposed that there are four technical elements required for advanced batucada playing - sticking fluency, accent fluency, orchestration fluency, and co-ordination of these elements with foot patterns. A graduated approach to developing these skills was outlined, including references to classic drumming texts *Syncopation* and *Stick Control*, as well as showing how this practice approach relates to the full batucada grooves. John Riley's cross-sticking examples were used as ways of developing orchestration fluency over foot patterns, and at various speeds. I described some specific paradiddle ideas, before looking at turnarounds in batucada - specifically turnarounds using odd-groupings of semiquavers (threes and fives).

## 12. Development of Solo Ideas

In this chapter I will be discussing some practice and performance methods for the development of solo ideas. That is, the development of improvised ideas in a solo context, as opposed to an ensemble, or groove-based context. Many of the foundation skills for soloing in choro, samba and bossa nova have been discussed in earlier chapters. I will be building upon some of those ideas as I discuss approaches to thematic solo development within the rhythmic framework outlined earlier. Although there are many elements that can be drawn upon in improvisation, I will present here examples that relate more specifically to the ideas already discussed, such as rhythmic frameworks and Brazilian percussion-based ideas.

In *The World in Six Songs* Daniel Levitin talks about the cognitive steps involved in creating art:

(1) form a mental image of the thing to be created; (2) hold that mental image in mind; (3) understand how to go about manipulating objects in the physical world in order to conform to the mental image; (4) compare the ongoing development of physical-world object with the mental image in real time; (5) update plans as necessary to accommodate unforeseen difficulties or mistakes in making the physical object.<sup>242</sup>

These steps are as true for improvising musicians as they are for any other artist. With regards to the formation of a mental image, the earlier discussion of phrasing styles, rhythmic language and other elements will provide the context and starting point for the examples in this chapter.

The focus of this chapter is the third step suggested by Levitin – the understanding of manipulation. That is, developing the technical skills and

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<sup>242</sup> Levitin. *The World in Six Songs*. (London: Aurum, 2010) 253-4

musical understanding required to develop the mental image into a musical reality. For a drummer, that entails the manipulation of the central musical elements - rhythm, timbre, pitch and volume - as they are expressed on the drum kit. As mentioned, some of the techniques required for skilful manipulation have already been discussed, such as co-ordination exercises. There are further elements that can be utilised, and I will outline some of them in this chapter.

I will be using some existing improvisation and drumming texts to guide the examples and exercises presented below – primarily Hal Crook's *How to Improvise*,<sup>243</sup> and *Ready, Aim, Improvise!*<sup>244</sup> and John Riley's *The Art of Bop Drumming*,<sup>245</sup> *Beyond Bop Drumming*,<sup>246</sup> and *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*.<sup>247</sup>

Using improvisation concepts and methods from these books, I will outline some of the possibilities for soloing in these Brazilian styles. My focus will be on utilising the rhythmic language and concepts from the earlier chapters within the context of these improvisation methods. In this way I hope to maintain a sense of the elements that help characterize the music as *Brazilian*.

### *The Role of the Feet*

A common approach to soloing in Brazilian styles is to maintain an ostinato in the feet while improvising with the hands. The use of Brazilian foot patterns can help strengthen the sense of *Brazilian-ness*. This technique is common to many genres. For example, here Mike Jordan refers to Max Roach's use of a foot ostinato on the album *Jazz in 3/4 Time* (1957):

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<sup>243</sup> Crook. *How to Improvise*. (Advance Music, 1991)

<sup>244</sup> Crook. *Ready, Aim, Improvise*. (Advance Music, 1999)

<sup>245</sup> Riley. *The Art of Bop Drumming*. (Miami: Manhattan Music, 1994)

<sup>246</sup> Riley. *Beyond Bop Drumming*. (Miami: Manhattan Music, 1997)

<sup>247</sup> Riley. *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*. (Cedar Grove: Modern Drummer Publications, 2004)



...Roach plays an ostinato bass figure with the feet whilst freely improvising melodically with the hands. This formula of soloing freely with the hands over an ostinato foot pattern is still widely used today. The foot pattern acts as an anchor, whilst the hands are free to create melodic ideas on the toms, cymbals and snare.<sup>248</sup>

Many of the foot patterns presented in earlier chapters can easily be applied to the material presented below. At times I will notate a foot part to highlight a specific idea, or to show a reference point or context. It is also possible to use the feet as a central part of the improvisation - that is, the hi-hat and bass drum used as melodic, rhythmic and textural parts of the solo, not as time-keepers. Jordan again:

...a four way co-ordinated melodic relationship. By four-way co-ordination I refer to the practice of playing musical phrases and passages using the bass drum and hi-hat independently and in combination with the hands.<sup>249</sup>

### Idea No. 1

The first theme will be an agogô rhythm, adapted to the drum kit. Here it is, in its normal form, written for two bells.

Figure 152, Idea #1



### Rhythm and Filling-in

In this first step I will be looking at simple rhythmic ideas and embellishments based on the theme. At first, these will be mono-tonal – I will come to melody

<sup>248</sup> Jordan, 25

<sup>249</sup> Jordan, 49

and orchestration in the next section. But before getting into the examples and exercises, I will show the agogô rhythm in comparison with the partido alto rhythm, to show the direction of the rhythm. This sense of direction is central to the idea of a rhythmic framework.

Figure 153, agogô and partido alto



The figure below shows just the agogô rhythm, played on the snare drum. This is the simple rhythmic representation of Idea #1.

Figure 154, rhythm only



A common idea is to “fill in” the “missing” semiquavers in this rhythm. This leads to a constant flow of semiquavers, with the chosen rhythm being accented. Usually this is achieved with one hand playing the accent notes, the other “filling in.” Skip Hadden uses this idea in *World Fusion Drumming: The Beat, The Body & The Brain*, and Da Fonseca & Weiner use it in *Brazilian Rhythms for Drum Set*.<sup>250</sup> Here is the accent pattern, without sticking.

Figure 155, semiquavers filled-in



<sup>250</sup> Da Fonseca/Weiner, 12

Two further ideas presented by Da Fonseca and Weiner are rim shots and buzzed notes. The rim shots provide another level of accent, as well as tonal variety. David Garibaldi refers to the rim shot as having "a slightly lower and thicker snare drum sound."<sup>251</sup> Different effects can be achieved with the buzzed notes. They can be played as buzzes and as demi-semiquavers (ie the demi-semiquavers are played with double strokes).

Figure 156, filled in with buzzes



Figure 157, filled in with demi-semiquavers



Lastly, here is the first filled-in variation with the basic samba foot pattern.

Figure 158, filled in, plus foot pattern



### Melody and Orchestration

The melodic shape of this pattern could be represented on drum kit in a number of ways - all that is needed are two sound sources with different pitches. For example, the small tom and floor tom representing the high and low pitches of the agogô:

<sup>251</sup> David Garibaldi. *Future Sounds*. (Van Nuys: Alfred, 1990) 5

Figure 159, Idea #1 orchestrated on toms



In *Brazilian Percussion Manual* Daniel Sabanovich applies five samba percussion rhythms to drum kit at the beginning of his section on drum kit.<sup>252</sup> He is discussing groove concepts, but what I'm interested in here is the melodic concept. Sabanovich represents melodic shapes (such as those of agogô or cuíca), as well as open and muffled tones (from tamborim) using rim-click, small tom and floor tom. He goes beyond a sense of just high and low pitches, and maintains the *contour* – the sense of melodic direction – across three pitches. Below is his first example, an agogô rhythm:

Figure 160, Sabanovich left hand example 1



The rim-click represents the higher pitch, with the toms representing the lower. Having returned to the higher pitch at the beginning of the second bar, the low pitch can be changed to another drum without losing the fundamental sense of high and low. As more pitches are added to an idea, this becomes less feasible, but on simple ideas, it is a good way of creating more melodic variation.

Next, one of Sabanovich's tamborim applications. The muffled tones of the tamborim are played as rim-clicks, with the open tones played on small tom and floor tom.<sup>253</sup>

<sup>252</sup> Sabanovich, 45

<sup>253</sup> In this example I have reversed the direction so that it matches the direction of the other examples in this chapter.

Figure 161, Sabanovich left hand example 5



With that in mind, we can now orchestrate the melody of the original agogô pattern across three pitches. In Figure 162 the snare drum represents the highest pitch, with the small tom and floor tom taking the lower pitches.

Figure 162, Idea #1 - three pitch representation



In the next example, instead of changing the orchestration of the lower pitch, I will change the orchestration of the higher pitch.

Figure 163, Idea #1, three pitch orchestration no. 2



Gonçalves and Costa include some four-bell examples in *O Batuque Carioca*. These can be used as further ideas in themselves, and also as a guide to possible orchestrations/melodic ideas across four pitches. Here is one of their four-bell agogô examples, rhythmically very similar to Idea #1.<sup>254</sup>

Figure 164, four-bell agogô example



<sup>254</sup> Gonçalves/Costa, 30



John Riley talks about musical logic and melodic phrasing in the introduction to his chapter on soloing in *The Art of Bop Drumming*. He talks about how the great drummers "developed their music in a logical way," and of "building each new idea on what was played previously."<sup>255</sup> In his section on orchestration, Riley presents four bar phrases. He presents the melodic variations in an order that makes compositional sense - that is, they are developed in a logical way. Here is an 8 bar phrase using Idea #1 showing a logical development of melodic ideas:

Figure 165, 8 bar melodic phrase



Following the direct transposition of the agogô part onto the drum kit, other melodic devices can be used, such as inversion.

Figure 166, pitches inverted



The filling-in concept from earlier can also be used alongside the melodic adaptation. The next figure shows an orchestration with the semiquavers filled in on snare drum.

Figure 167, orchestration with semiquavers filled in



<sup>255</sup> Riley, 35

This filling-in concept already exists in Brazilian agogô playing.<sup>256</sup> Between the notes of an existing pattern, the bells are squeezed together, creating a slightly muffled metal-on-metal sound. Idea #1 would be notated like this, with the "x" note-heads representing the squeezed notes.

Figure 168, bells squeezed to fill out semiquaver



Using the left foot, this metal-on-metal sound could be imitated by the hi-hat. Hadden also uses the left foot filling idea in *World Fusion Drumming*.<sup>257</sup>



### Rhythmic Sequence

Moving away from agogô-based melodic ideas, a broader scope of melodic ideas can be used applying Crook's *rhythmic sequence*, keeping the rhythmic element of the theme, while altering the melodic aspect.<sup>258</sup> On drum kit, this means the whole range of orchestration possibilities are available, while maintaining the original rhythm.

<sup>256</sup> Sabanovich, 24

<sup>257</sup> Hadden, 22, 34

<sup>258</sup> Crook, *How to Improvise*, 86

### Rhythmic Embellishment and Density

Crook refers to *rhythmic embellishment* as being the changing of rhythm while leaving the same melody, using notes that are shorter, longer, repeated or displaced.<sup>259</sup> Here are two examples of rhythmic embellishment:

Figure 169, rhythmic embellishment

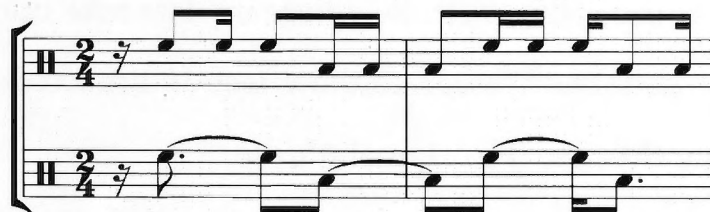


Figure 170, rhythmic embellishment



A similar idea to the filling-in method is the concept of creating *density*. I will be approaching this within the melodic/rhythmic structure naturally provided by Idea #1, starting with a representation of the duration of each pitch within the pattern.

Figure 171, representation of pitch duration



From this idea comes the concept of creating long notes on the drums using rolls. Firstly, a closed roll, with the roll on each "pitch" sustained until the next pitch:

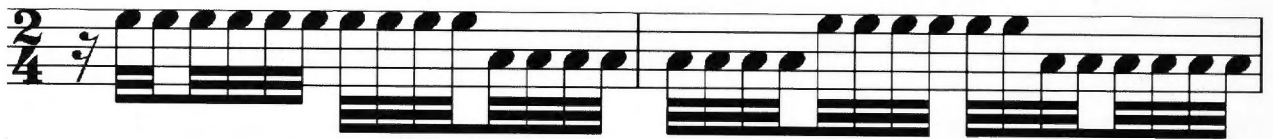
<sup>259</sup> Crook, *How to Improvise*, 34

Figure 172, sustained rolls



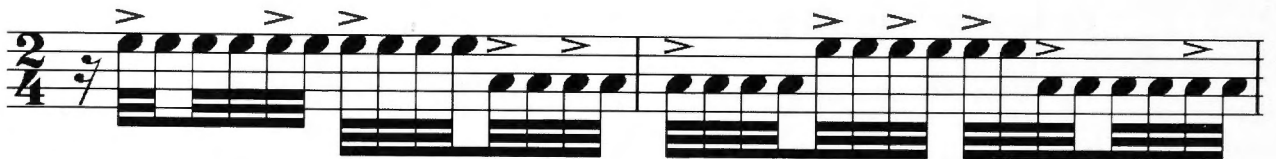
Using a similar approach, this could be expressed with a single stroke roll playing demi-semiquavers.

Figure 173, demi-semiquavers



And with the original rhythm accented:

Figure 174, original rhythm accented



An alternative to sustained rolls is to roll from the commencement of the pitch, until playing a single stroke where the last note of that pitch was played in the original pattern. This gives the effect of a more defined rhythmic idea and is probably closer to the original phrase.

Figure 175, rolls with single stroke end



Next, demi-semiquavers with the last note of each pitch played as an end to the roll, as in Figure 175.

Figure 176, last note of each pitch ends roll



### Rhythmic Displacement and Adding Rests

The third and fourth steps covered by Riley in *The Art of Bop Drumming* involve adding rests to the phrase.<sup>260</sup> His first step is to put rests between phrases, the second putting rests within a phrase. The second step is easy to do within the rhythmic framework, but adding rests between phrases requires thought as to where phrases resolve and the relationship between the phrase and the rhythmic direction. Crook refers to rests between phrases as creating *rhythmic displacement*, and he breaks this down into two types - symmetrical (balanced) and asymmetrical (less balanced).<sup>261</sup>

Crook describes symmetrical displacement as starting "two full beats away from its original starting point in the measure," while asymmetrical displacement is one or three beats away from the original starting point.<sup>262</sup>

Crook is describing the ideas in the context of jazz improvisation, but his and Riley's ideas can be looked at in the context of Brazilian drumming. With different over-arching rhythmic schemes, I'm not sure how Crook would describe symmetrical and asymmetrical in samba, choro or bossa nova, but the rhythmic scheme(s) of these Brazilian styles must be acknowledged. For

<sup>260</sup> Riley, 38

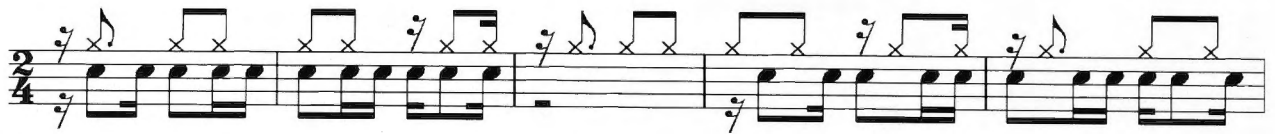
<sup>261</sup> Crook, *How to Improvise*, 96

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid*, 96



example, adding a one bar rest between phrases turns the direction of the phrase around. Below I have shown the phrase on the snare drum, with the partido alto again being the reference. When the phrase is played again starting in bar four, it is out of step with the reference point.

Figure 177, one bar rest between phrases, with partido alto above



This is not a problem necessarily, but it is something for the drummer to keep in mind. The tension created by the rhythmic clash can be exploited, but the drummer should keep in mind the underlying rhythmic structure. Below is an orchestrated example with short rests between phrases. The phrase is displaced by a quaver on two occasions, before returning to the original position (relative to the two-bar phrase). The partido alto rhythm is included again as a reference.

Figure 178, quaver displacement of phrase

The image shows two staves of music in 2/4 time. The top staff is a snare drum part with a rhythmic phrase. The bottom staff is a partido alto reference rhythm. The snare drum phrase starts in bar 1, has a short rest in bar 2, and then continues in bars 3 and 4. The partido alto reference is continuous throughout the four bars. Brackets and labels indicate specific displacements: 'quaver displacement' under the third bar of the snare drum part, 'further quaver displacement' under the first bar of the snare drum part, and 'last three beats return to original position' under the last three bars of the snare drum part.

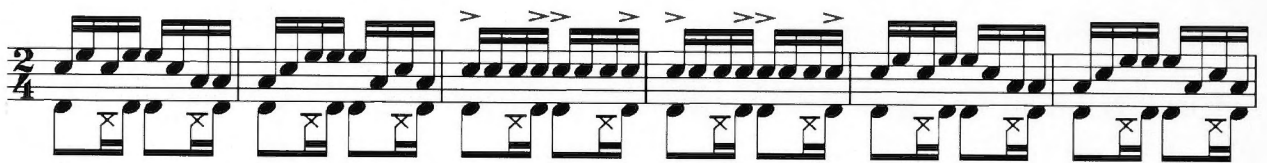
Crook suggests that displacement by half beats (eg 1/2, 1-1/2, 2-1/2) is impractical for improvising due to the difficulties of accurate execution.<sup>263</sup> I believe in the example above the quaver displacement is quite reasonable, and that it does sound related to the original idea, but perhaps a semiquaver

<sup>263</sup> Crook, *How to Improvise*, 96



Rests within a phrase create a sense of anticipation, but this can also be achieved by playing a simple "resting" phrase between other phrases. For example, a sense of space and rest can be created by returning to a simple idea on the snare, such as a roll. In the next example, the basic samba snare drum phrase is used in lieu of a rest, and it serves to create anticipation and a contrast to the first two bars. Also, by having two bars of "rest" between the melodic phrases, the relationship with the rhythmic direction is maintained.

Figure 182, snare drum phrase creating sense of space



### Three-beat Phrases

Riley talks about creating three-beat phrases in 4/4 by omitting the first or last beat of the phrase<sup>265</sup> (Crook refers to this device as *fragmentation*<sup>266</sup>). This idea can easily be transferred to the Brazilian rhythms presented here, and in the examples below I will be creating three-beat phrases in 2/4 by omitting the last beat of the two-bar pattern. Here is the three-beat rhythm played on snare drum, with the partido alto rhythm above (creating a cyclic duration of six bars). The last beat of the pattern is re-instated in the last bar to complete the 8-bar phrase.

<sup>265</sup> Riley, 40

<sup>266</sup> Crook, *How to Improvise*, 87

Figure 183, three-beat phrase



And now orchestrated:

Figure 184, three-beat phrase orchestrated



This concept can be adapted to create other phrase lengths. For example, two-and-a-half beat phrases (ie five quavers long), creating a cyclic duration of 10 bars. Again, on snare with partido alto above (8 bars):

Figure 185, five-quaver fragment



Now an orchestrated idea, with the bass drum playing a simple representation of the 1st surdo:

Figure 186, five-quaver fragment orchestrated



### Adding a Second Idea

A second idea can be added to create an answering phrase. I will use a tamborim rhythm as the basis for the second idea.

Figure 187, Idea #2



Figure 188, Idea #2, semiquavers filled in



Figure 189, filled in with buzzes



Here is a short example of a solo using Ideas #1 and #2, and some of the variations presented above.



Figure 190, 16 bar solo example

Figure 190 shows a 16-bar solo example in 2/4 time, divided into four staves. The first staff is labeled "Idea #1" (first 4 bars) and "Idea #2" (last 4 bars). The second staff is labeled "#2 - rests added within phrase" (last 4 bars). The third staff is labeled "semiquavers filled (buzzes)" (last 4 bars). The fourth staff is labeled "semiquavers filled (buzzes) with orchestration" (first 4 bars) and "transposed to small tom" (last 4 bars).

### Rhythmic Elasticity

Referring to the earlier discussion of "phrasing in the cracks," elements of rhythmic elasticity can be utilised.<sup>267</sup> In *Rhythmic and Phrasing Fundamentals I* I discussed the relationship between the following two rhythms:

Figure 191, semiquaver/triplet comparison

Figure 191 shows a comparison between a semiquaver pattern and a triplet pattern in 2/4 time. The top staff shows a semiquaver pattern (two groups of two eighth notes). The bottom staff shows a triplet pattern (two groups of three eighth notes).

Using this elastic approach to rhythmic figures, Ideas #1 and #2 can be altered. For example:

<sup>267</sup> This is different to John Riley's discussion of rhythmic elasticity in *The Art of Bop Drumming*. Riley, 39.

Figure 192, Idea #1, with triplet adaptation



Figure 193, Idea #2, triplet adaptation



With Idea #1, this triplet expression could even lead to the whole phrase being re-interpreted as quaver triplets (a form of rhythmic embellishment). The melodic shape is maintained.

Figure 194, Idea #1, full triplet adaptation



### Variable Speed Phrases

In *Beyond Bop Drumming* Riley introduces the idea of the "variable speed phrase."<sup>268</sup> This is different from *rhythmic* embellishment in that it uses specific metric modulations. As an example, Riley uses a three-note phrase moved between quavers, quaver-triplets, and semiquavers. Hannaford refers to this as *rhythmic transposition*: "using familiar rhythmic cells in... metrical pulsation divisions of five, six and seven."<sup>269</sup> I will approach this concept with slightly longer phrases than Riley and Hannaford, though in simpler subdivisions than Hannaford. Using the two-bar rhythms already presented, I will show them

<sup>268</sup> Riley, 47

<sup>269</sup> Hannaford, 92

being rhythmically transposed into two triplet based subdivisions.<sup>270</sup> Using quaver-triplets the cyclic duration is 8 bars, with semiquaver-triplets, it is 4 bars.

Figure 195, rhythmic transposition - semiquavers become quaver triplets

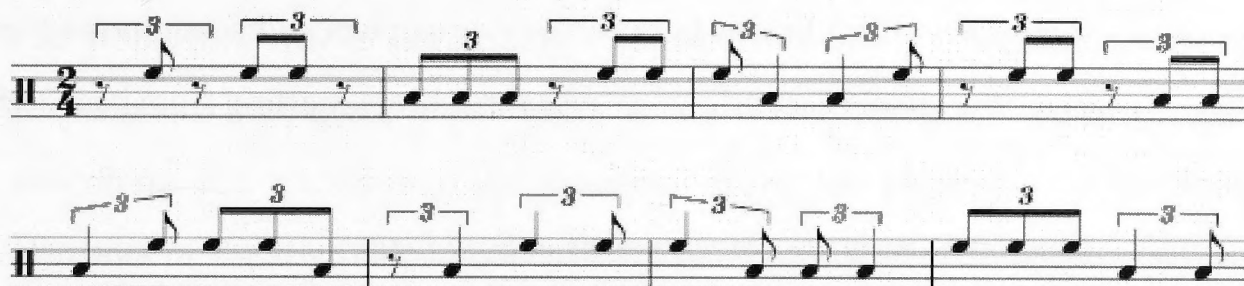
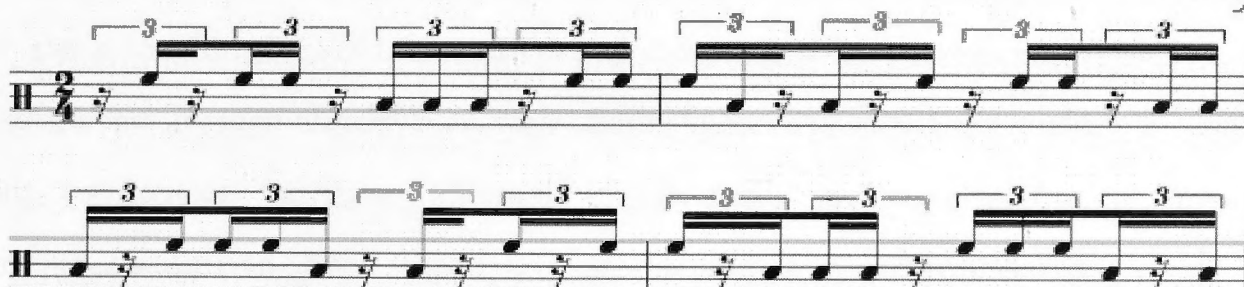
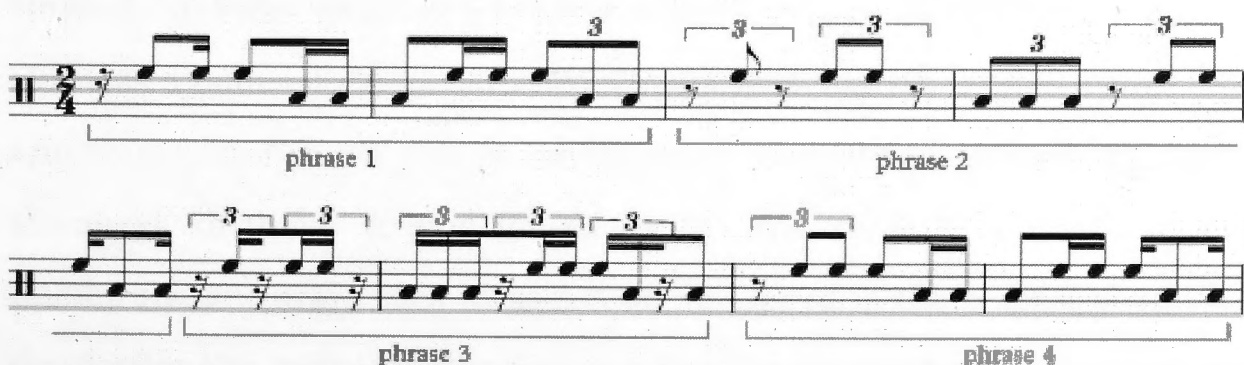


Figure 196, rhythmic transposition - semiquavers become semiquaver-triplets



The three speeds can be combined within a single phrase giving the effect of speeding up or slowing down while the underlying pulse remains constant.

Figure 197, 8 bar variable speed phrase



<sup>270</sup> It should be noted that Hannaford's use of the term *rhythmic transposition* differs from Riley's. Riley, in *The Art of Bop Drumming* uses it to refer to the displacement of a phrase within a larger phrase (Riley, 21). Riley's *The Pyramid* is closer to Hannaford's *rhythmic transposition*. Riley, *The Jazz Drummer's Workshop*, 62

Figure 197 combines the three speeds, as well as utilising the triplet adaptation of Figure 192. That adaptation acts as a bridge between phrases. For example beat 2 of the second bar uses a quaver triplet based on the "in the cracks" idea to lead into the quaver-triplet transposition of bars 3 and 4. Beat 1 of bar 5 uses semiquavers as a bridge between quaver-triplets and semiquaver-triplets. This gives the effect of speeding up over three beats, starting from beat 2 of bar 4.

### Chapter Summary - Development of Solo Ideas

This chapter focused on the development of solo ideas within the frameworks established in earlier chapters, while utilising solo development concepts from other texts, such as the books of Riley and Crook. There are a number of elements that were not covered, such as dynamic control, pacing/peak points, and articulation,<sup>271</sup> but these elements tend not to convey the stylistic characteristics of samba, choro and bossa nova, as utilised by improvising drummers. The elements covered, such as rhythmic embellishment, orchestration, filling-in, and so-forth, could all be manipulated to create impact within solos, while maintaining a strong sense of the Brazilian roots. The original themes - Ideas #1 & #2 - were both identifiable throughout the process, providing a thematic reference point, while the over-arching rhythmic scheme - represented by the partido alto rhythm - was used as a guide to longer phrasing, including tension-and-release devices.

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<sup>271</sup> Topics listed by Crook, *Ready, Aim, Improvise*, 203

### 13. Conclusions

In the course of this thesis I have aimed to describe and develop practice and performance methods on drum kit for the Brazilian styles of choro, samba and bossa nova. The focus of these methods has been the development of a fluent and responsive way of performing in these styles, while maintaining some of the elements that make it *Brazilian*. This involved some preliminary steps - describing the background to Brazilian drum kit playing, and outlining elements of the rhythmic language and characteristic sounds of these styles - before looking at these ideas in practice as a rhythm section player and soloist.

Some of the questions I asked had no clear answer, but through the discussion of rhythmic directions, a rhythmic principle was described that could be used as an over-arching rhythmic framework. Creating definitions for musical styles and languages can be fraught, and I have acknowledged some of the pitfalls inherent in doing so, but through the frameworks and characteristics I described, a clearer path to musical and technical development could be outlined.

While discussing concepts of improvisation, I have had to rationalise the idea of technical proficiency with the persuasive and inventive elements of music creation. In order to create a broader palate for the persuasive and inventive elements, I outlined graduated steps that could be used to improve three- and four-way co-ordination within the rhythmic frameworks discussed. I also examined rhythmic tension-and-release in the context of the rhythmic framework, and ways such ideas can be developed in the practice room. By developing this technical foundation, a broader range of the persuasive and inventive is available for improvised use. As an accompanist, this improves one's ability to be spontaneously responsive to the fixed and variable elements of a given performance.



When discussing the development of improvised solos, there is again significant debate over the relative roles of the technical and persuasive/inventive elements. The discussion of persuasive and inventive largely falls outside the scope of this thesis, but using concepts from existing texts I outlined what could be described as thematic and/or motivic approaches to solo development.

I don't believe that this thesis is an end-point or a definitive explanation - merely *an* explanation of some practice and performance methods, looked at through the prism of some specific and general musical elements found within choro, samba and bossa nova. This study also leads to further questions and possibilities for further research, such as the development of these ideas and concepts in odd-time signatures, study of other Brazilian rhythms and styles, and the specific development of some of these concepts in Brazilian percussion playing.

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## Appendix – Glossary

**Agogô** A number of bells, usually two or three, of varying pitch, welded together on a flexible rod. The agogô is a feature of Carnival samba, but is also found in some ceremonial music.

**Apito** Whistle. Primarily used to signal changes in the bateria. Often a variable pitch whistle is used – ie the tri-tone samba whistle.

**Atabaque** The Brazilian version of Cuba's congas or tumbadoras. The drum has its roots in West Africa (as does the Cuban version). Predominantly found in Candomblé.

**Baião** Music style of North-eastern Brazil, traditionally played with zabumba, triangle and accordion. The style was re-popularized in the 1940s courtesy of a Luiz Gonzaga tune – *Baião*. Forró is a modern successor to baião. See *forró*.

**Bateria, 1.** A drumming group, usually associate with an escola de samba. Typical instruments include surdo, caixa, tamborim, agogô, ganza, cuíca, and repinique. "Bateria" can also be used to describe a (large) group of drummers not associated with an escola.

**Bateria, 2.** Portuguese for "drum kit."

**Batucada** Samba played by percussion instruments only. Also, a percussion jam.

**Bloco** Often used to describe a parading group, such as the parading group of an escola de samba. Also *bloco-afro*.

**Bossa Nova** A musical style born in Rio de Janeiro in the 1950s, Bossa Nova blended sophisticated harmony and melodies in a very lyrical manner, over subdued grooves drawing on the rhythms of samba.

**Brasileirho** Brazilian.

**Bumbo** Bass drum (esp drum kit). Also *bombo*.

**Caixa** Snare drum. See also *tarol*.

**Caixeta** Woodblock.

**Candomblé** The Yoruba religion of West Africa (Nigeria), as practiced in Brazil.

**Carioca** Native of Rio de Janeiro.

**Carnaval** Originally a religious ceremony (Roman Catholic), Carnaval is a celebration across the four days leading up to Ash Wednesday (Ash Wednesday marking the beginning of the fasting of Lent). In Brazil, it has come to be much more, with the feature being the parades featuring the Escolas de Samba.

**Cavaquinho** Small 4-stringed instrument, similar to the ukulele, used to accompany samba, esp. samba enredo. Also *cavaco*.

**Caxixi** Small woven basket style shaker with a solid base, usually made of clay. Often used when playing *berimbau*.

**Chocalho** Shaker. See also *ganza*.

**Choro** Musical style developed in the late 1800s, particularly in Rio de Janeiro. Choro features European harmony with complex melodic lines. Influenced by tango, waltzes and polkas, the rhythmic style gradually came to closer reflect the influence of samba. Also *chorinho*.



**Conjunto Regional** The *conjuntos regionais* were professional groups used to accompany singers, and in the 1930s used for live radio broadcasts. There are fairly strict ideas about the instrumentation of the conjunto regional, usually guitar, 7-string guitar, cavaquinho, bandolim, pandeiro and a woodwind instrument (usually flute or clarinet).

**Cuíca** Friction drum; a metal or wood shell, with a head only on one end. Attached to the underside of the head is a rod, usually of bamboo or similar, which the player rubs with a damp cloth to create the sound. The other hand is used to manipulate pitch. The sound can resemble groans and squeaks, as well as mimicking the human voice. The *cuíca* can be used for effects as well as *ostinati*. Also *roncador*, *lion's roar*, or *puita*.

**Escola de Samba** A community based organization, comprising of dancers, singers, and drummers. The highlight of the calendar for an *escola* is the Carnival parades. The drumming section of an *escola* is the *bateria*, which may have as many as 500-600 players. The parading group is often referred to as a *bloco*. See also *bateria*, *GRES*, and *bloco*.

**Favela** Run-down, or slum neighbourhood. In Rio de Janeiro many of the favelas sprawl across the hills of the city. In reference to this, they are occasionally referred to as *morros*.

**Forró** A musical style of the northeast, developing out of *baião*, but usually of a faster tempo than *baião*. The label *forró* can also be applied to: the style of dance; a party; the venue for a dance or party where these rhythms are played; and as an umbrella term for the family of northeastern musical styles.

**Frevo** A dance and music style derived from *marcha*. Originating from, and primarily used in the Carnival celebrations of Recife in the northeast state of Pernambuco.

**Frigideira** An improvised percussion instrument, made by welding frying pans together. Similar in function to the agogô.

**Ganza** Shaker, usually cylindrical. Often for large ensembles the player will use an instrument of two or three cylinders mounted together on a light frame. Also *chocalho*.

**GRES** This abbreviation is often used in conjunction with the name of an escola de samba. In full Gremio Recreativo Escola de Samba (recreational club samba school). For example GRES Unidos do Viradouro, or GRES Beija-Flor. See also *bloco*, and *escola de samba*.

**Jongo** Type of samba from southern Brazil.

**Lundu** Song-style brought to Brazil by the Bantu slaves of Angola. Influential in the development of several Afro-Brazilian styles.

**Maracatu** A traditional genre of the northeastern state of Pernambuco. It has two basic forms *maracatu de nação*, and *maracatu de baque virado*. The former is associated with Afro-Brazilian religion, while the latter is a rural style, blending Afro-Brazilian with indigenous elements.

**Marcha/Marchinha** Up-tempo song and dance style from northern Brazil, performed widely during carnival. The primary percussion instruments are surdo and caixa, and brass sections are prominent. Double-entendre is a regular feature in the lyrics

**Maxixe** Music and dance style developed in Rio de Janeiro around 1870, fusing elements of various European and South American styles, notably polka, tango, the Cuban habanera and the African lundu. The dance was, at the time,

considered to be very lascivious. Maxixe is considered to be one of the musical and social antecedents to choro.

**Maxixe de Salão** A more restrained dance style of the maxixe, generally practiced by the upper-class.

**Mestre-de Bateria** Leader of the bateria.

**Modinha** A sentimental, lyrical songstyle, developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It is considered one of the first truly Brazilian styles, and is a musical and social precursor to choro.

**Morro** Hill. Often used in reference to the favelas of Rio de Janeiro that spread across the hills of the city (eg Samba de Morro). See also *favela*.

**MPB** Música Popular Brasileira. A term developed post-bossa nova to describe popular urban music in Brazil that could not easily be defined by other names, often crossing genres (eg rock, samba, bossa nova, forró).

**Pagode** Like *forró*, pagode refers to both a party/gathering, and the associated informal style of samba – an heir to partido alto. Through pagode, the new percussion instruments of tantã and repique de mão were introduced to the common format of guitars, cavaquinho, and percussion.

**Pandeirista** Pandeiro player.

**Pandeiro** The Brazilian tambourine. One hand plays a rhythmic pattern – continuous with accents, or syncopated – on the skin of the drum. The other hand, holding the instrument, controls “open” and “muffled” tones.

**Partido Alto** Sub-genre of samba, featuring improvised verses set against a short refrain. The term is now also used to describe a certain samba rhythm.

**Pratos** Cymbals. Often a pair of small cymbals is used in a bateria.

**Rebolo** Percussion instrument used in pagode. Functions alongside the larger tantã and the smaller repique de mão.

**Reco-reco** Scraper-style instrument, made of metal or bamboo, similar to the Afro-Cuban guiro. The metal version is usually springs mounted in a cut-away cylinder with a bell on one end, played with a thin metal beater/scraper.

**Repinique** The lead drum of the bateria. One repinique provides the "calls" (chamadas and preparações) for the group, signalling changes in the music, while there also may be a section of several players playing the basic rhythm. Also *repique*.

**Repinique de Mão** Literally, hand-repinique. A relatively modern invention, most commonly used in pagode.

**Roda de Choro** A social and musical gathering of choro musicians and fans.

**Samba** The most famous Brazilian music style, popular in different forms across the country. Characterized by highly syncopated, interlocking rhythms in 2/4 time.

**Samba-canção** Samba with a more melodic and lyrical focus (as opposed to the rhythmic focus of batucada).

**Samba Cruzado** "Samba that crosses". This refers to a particular method of playing samba on drum kit, where the left hand crosses over the right.

**Samba Enredo** The theme-samba for an escola de samba, written and performed for Carnaval.

**Samba Exaltação** Style of samba developed in the 1930s during the Vargas regime, singing the praises of Brazil. Characterized by romanticized patriotic lyrics and grandiose arrangements. Perhaps the most famous example being Ary Barroso's *Aquarela do Brasil* (*Watercolour of Brazil*, or *Brazil* as it is better known).

**Samba de Gafieira** Dance hall style of samba, influenced by American big band jazz.

**Samba de Morro** Term used to describe sambas that kept the elements developed in early sambas at Estácio, as distinct from samba-canção, or partido alto.

**Samba-reggae** Mixture of samba and reggae developed in Salvador in the 1980s. *Olodum* is the most widely recognized samba-reggae ensemble.

**Samba-rock** Mixture of samba and rock'n'roll.

**Samba de Roda** Circle-dance samba, accompanied by percussion and clapping.

**Sambista** Someone dedicated to samba, either as singer, musician, dancer or composer.

**Surdo** The "bass drum" of samba. In small groups, only one player would play surdo, but in a large bateria, three sizes are used.

**Tamborim** Small (6") frame drum used primarily in the bateria for samba. In the bateria where there is a large section of tamborims, it is usually played with a multi-pronged rattan stick, but in small groups with one player a regular drum stick is used.

**Tantã** Drum that fulfils the same role as the surdo, it came to the fore with the rise of pagode. Played by one hand on the skin and one on the shell, it is



similar in size to a *tumbadora* (conga), but lighter, and a with a consistent diameter (ie, straight sides). Also *tan-tan*. See also *rebolo*, *repique de mão*, *pagode*.

**Tarol** Variation on the *caixa*. Usually a shallow drum, with very few wires across the head. See also *caixa*.

**Viola** Guitar-like instrument, whose number of strings may vary (often depending on region).

**Violão** Guitar.

**Violão Sete Cordas** Seven string guitar commonly used in choro. The seventh string is lower than the standard low E-string. *Violão sete cordas* is used as the principal bass instrument of choro.

**Zabumba** Shallow bass drum used for *baião* and *farró*. Usually slung with a strap over the shoulder, *zabumba* is played with a mallet in one hand, with the other hand facilitating "open" and "muffled" tones. That hand may also use a thin stick to provide a crisp-sounding counterpoint to the bass tones played with the mallet.

**Zona Norte** The north zone of Rio de Janeiro, including the neighbourhoods of Estácio and Vila Isabel.

**Zone Sul** The south zone of Rio de Janeiro, including the neighbourhoods of Copacobana and Ipanema.