

AUTHENTICITY AND PERFORMANCE PRACTICE: BOSSA NOVA AND JOÃO GILBERTO

IRNA PRIORE

August 2, 1962.

Show at the ›Au Bon Gourmet‹ with Tom, Vinícius de Moraes, João Gilberto, and Os Cariocas. Several songs were premièred there: *Só danço samba*, by Tom and Vinicius; *Samba do Avião*, by Tom; and *Garota de Ipanema*, by Tom and Vinícius, which received a special introduction made especially for the occasion, in the form of a dialogue between Tom, Vinicius, and João:

João: ›Tom, if you would compose a song about love?‹

Tom: ›Well, Joãozinho, I would not know how to, without Vinícius to write the lyrics.‹

Vinicius: ›For this song to happen, João would have to sing it.‹

João: ›Oh, but who am I? I am yours. How wonderful if the three of us would sing together.‹¹

Introduction

In 2008, we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the release of *Chega de Saudades*.² Considered as the album that ›changed everything‹ and the one which brought the idea of bossa nova to the center of an avalanche of arguments, *Chega de Saudades* still is a monumental mark in the history of Brazilian popular music. The dramatic sambas, boleros, and samba-canção that dominated the charts in previous decades were taken by surprise by the sophisticated, cool, naïve, and light-hearted ways of the new trend. The late 1950s was conducive to the advent of bossa nova, because under the leadership of progressive president Juscelino Kubitschek, the atmosphere of the country was optimistic.³ For the first time in Brazilian history, public discussions about the validity of bossa nova began to dominate the media. Liliana Harb Bollos has pointed out that it was particularly João Gilber-

1 *Clube do Tom*. www.jobim.com.br/ (Accessed 5/21/2007). Translation mine. Tom Jobim (1927–1994); Vinícius de Moraes (1913–1980), João Gilberto (*1931).

2 *Chega de Saudades* was released by Odeon in 1958. The music was written by Tom Jobim and the lyrics by Vinícius de Moraes.

3 Juscelino Kubitschek de Oliveira (1902–1976) was president of Brazil from 1956 until 1961.

to and the bossa nova movement that caused a flood of newspaper reviews (Bollos 2005). The style was scrutinized, questions were raised, and sides were taken.

The purpose of this study is not to re-launch a debate, but to offer an alternative view to a subject that has been always very contentious. One of the major issues in defining this work is the idea of the local and global approaches to a style that is associated with Brazil, but it is practiced around the world. Since we know that music cannot be studied in a vacuum, that music is a cultural and human product, we must interact fully with the producers of that practice. I will approach this study from two viewpoints: locally, as a native Brazilian born after the 'golden years' of the bossa-nova movement, who lived through the harsh military government, and was politically involved in the student movement of the 1970s; and globally, as a diasporic member of the Brazilian people, living in the United States for the last twenty years. It is because of my own experiences and observations of the practice of bossa nova in the United States that this work came about. I will attempt to define the bossa nova without the pretense that this is the final word in such a complicated field; however, this account may help us in our most basic understanding of the conflict bossa nova brought.

Bossa nova today is heard and performed world wide. It has been considered a sophisticated form of Brazilian Popular Music, having had a high caliber of artists associated with it. João Gilberto said in one of his songs that if you want to sing about love, you need Tom Jobim to write the melody, the poet Vinícius de Moraes to write the poetry, and Gilberto to deliver it (quoted above). Not without reason, these three artists embodied the bossa nova movement and have often been associated with it from its beginning in the late 1950s. Although the three artists are equally important, each is famous for a particular aspect of bossa nova: melody/harmony, lyrics, and rhythm/interpretation respectively.

There are numerous studies of bossa nova that have attempted to define it. To give a few examples, we could cite a very recent one by David Treece (Treece 2007) and a period article by Brasil Rocha Brito (Brito 1986). This discussion focuses primarily on the conflict that bossa nova produced and discusses its most contentious aspect: the rhythmic interpretation of bossa nova songs as realized by João Gilberto. I also would like to establish the time frame of 1958 to 1964 for this study: from the release of the song *Chega de Saudade* until the military coup of March 31, 1964.⁴

4 José Ramos Tinhorão refers to period after 1964 as the second phase of bossa nova. I particularly dislike this categorization. There were many changes that took place in Brazilian

The controversy: is it or is it not?

In a recent documentary, Chico Buarque raised the following questions: does bossa nova still exist? Can it be reproduced by foreigners? Is it contemporary?⁵ There are no easy answers to any of these questions as we shall see below. Buarque's arguments are relevant to this study not only because they were recently made but also because discussions over these same arguments have occupied scholars and critics alike since the late 1950s. It can be said that bossa nova is not a genre, but rather a style where any tune can be performed as such. A good example is Caetano Veloso's rendition of Michael Jackson's song *Billie Jean* in the 1986 album *Caetano*.⁶ Caetano has always been an avid supporter of bossa nova. Actually, he considers himself a musical descendent of bossa nova, but not just any BOSSA, particularly the one practiced by Gilberto. There were hosts of composers that wrote bossa-nova songs, including Luis Bonfá, João Donato, João Gilberto, Tom Jobim, Carlos Lyra, Newton Mendonça, Roberto Menescal, Vinícius de Moraes, and Marcos Valle; but there were very few interpreters of bossa nova at the time it appeared, among them João Gilberto, Astrud Gilberto, and Nara Leão.⁷ In one of the most important books of the period written about bossa nova (cited above), Brasil Rocha Brito says that »not all singers [of bossa nova] that tried to perform BN [sic] are able to do it well in the new conception [of sound]. That means that there is a traditional component [in the style] that cannot always be overcome by some of those interpreters [mentioned in his text].«⁸

The fact that Caetano makes a distinction between Gilberto and the others indicates that there may be different lines of approach in regards to the bossa nova style: one more purist, that is frequently practiced by Gilberto (as proclaimed by

music as consequence of the coup, and bossa nova, as conceived in 1958, ceased to be, becoming irreversibly obsolete for the time. This is the subject of another paper that I delivered at a joint meeting of the AMS/MTSE/SEM regional societies in 2007. The title of the paper is *The Only Cool Song is the Protest Song*.

5 Chico Buarque, *Chico Buarque: Anos Dourados*, Volume 2/1, DVD Emi Brasil (2005). Translation mine.

6 Caetano Veloso (*1942) has been one of the most influential personalities of Brazil for the last four decades. A composer, performer, writer, essayist, Veloso's powerful ideas and social defiance have shaped the artistic life of Brazil since his appearance in the 1960s.

7 Luis Bonfá (1922–2001); João Donato (*1934); Carlos Lyra (*1939); Newton Mendonça (1927–1960); Roberto Menescal (*1937); Marcos Valle (*1943); Astrud Gilberto (*1940); Nara Leão (1942–1989).

8 Brito (1986: 17) cites a list of 21 well-known singers of the time.

Caetano); and another more universal, as practiced by Tom Jobim. The purist approach is more true to samba practices of the time: the music is repeated several times with minimum variation. The more universal approach closely resembles cool jazz: the tune is performed once, improvised a few times by each member of the ensemble, and repeated unvaried before closing. These two aspects (purist/universal) were first debated in the press with a different rhetoric. The initial discussion was if bossa nova was indeed Brazilian or not. Brito says (Brito 1986: 17):

Without doubt, the appearance of bossa-nova revolutionized Brazil's musical scene: never before had an event brought such fierce controversial discussions and polemics, motivating round-tables, articles, news, interviews, and mobilizing the diverse means of communication. [...] Bossa-Nova's position is not iconoclastic, in enmity, or hostile to a live tradition [of Brazilian popular music] because it was new to its time. [...] The bossa-nova movement was born out of a powerful force of mutation that took place in the midst of [Brazilian] popular music, where it came from.⁹

Contradictory points of view have never ceased to appear, including a recent one by Canadian scholar George Lang. He comments: »Bossa nova was not a native, let alone nativist product of Brazilian musical culture, rather a creative and commercially successful response to the invasion of American popular music in the 1950s.« (Lang 2002: Abstract). This polemic was felt inside Brazil as well, as critics were equally divided among themselves.¹⁰ Historian Marcos Napolitano agrees with the ›Brazilianess‹ of bossa nova, but is quick to point out the controversy it provoked. He says (Napolitano 2004: 32–33):

The great catalytic event was the 1962 Carnegie Hall concert in New York. This was also the last straw that worsened the polemic around the movement. For bossa nova enthusiasts, the idea of Brazilian music going to the United States meant that Brazil was not only the exporter of exotic sounds, but also that Brazil was now exporting a refined cultural product (as Tom Jobim had mentioned in a period interview). For the critics of the movement, the radical nationalists, the North-American recognition of bossa nova was a natural [event], since this new samba was only a copy of jazz. Let's remind ourselves that this debate was not simply a matter of taste: in a

9 Translation mine.

10 Liliana Harb Bollos informs us that the polemic generated by Bossa Nova was what gave impetus to popular music reviews and criticism.

country more and more politically divided and looking for solutions for the social, cultural, and economic impasse, art and culture were like a ›laboratory of ideas‹, a field of action for Brazilian ideological projects.¹¹

Samba and Bossa Nova in the 1950s

In the late 1950s, bossa nova groups not only performed newly composed works, but they also recycled old sambas, dressing them up with a new instrumentation, offering a more sophisticated delivery of the song. This form of interpretation was in sharp contrast with other styles of the time, particularly samba and samba-canção.¹² Soloists that performed samba made use of an exaggerated (and theatrical) way of singing, making frequent use of rubato, heavy syllabic articulation of words, and frequent anticipation of the downbeat by an eighth-note. All of these interpretation trends were rejected by bossa-nova interpreters with the exception of anticipating the last eighth-note of a four-four measure ahead of its metric downbeat placement.¹³ The exaggerated style of performing continued in Brazil long into the 1960s by singers such as Maysa, Elizeth Cardoso, and Maria Bethânia.¹⁴

Comparing bossa nova with the traditional sambas of the 1950s, we can perceive the reasons why bossa nova was frequently a target for criticism: bossa nova was considered elitist (as it was produced by the upper middle class), while samba was produced by the lower class; bossa nova was naïve (its main subject matter was usually innocent love affairs), while samba used more realistic subjects such as the hard life in the slums; bossa nova was whispered, while samba was performed by singers with powerful voices; bossa nova was difficult to follow as it was particularly a one-person song, while samba was generally sung in groups.

11 Translation mine.

12 Samba-canção is a slow type of samba, often on romantic subjects.

13 The anticipation of an eighth-note before the downbeat in popular tunes was not an exclusive practice of any particular style: it is a common interpretation trait of popular musicians. As an example, I can cite Ella Fitzgerald (1917–1996). See David 2004: 83.

14 Maysa (1936–1977); Elizeth Cardoso (1920–1990); Maria Bethânia (*1946). Before them Carmen Miranda (1909–1955) and Aracy Cortes (1904–1985) were also great examples of this type of interpretation.

Instrumentation, rhythm, and melody

The sophistication of lyrics, the use of chromatic harmonies, and a sophisticated rhythmic pattern proved to be elements of modernity to young musicians of the time. One of the greatest novelties of bossa nova was the instrumentation and that alone has many times characterized groups of BOSSA NOVA. Instead of the high and low hand-held percussion instruments and acoustic guitars of several sizes, bossa nova used exclusively the drum set (as the only percussion ensemble) and the acoustic guitar.¹⁵ Other instruments such as the electric bass and piano frequently joined the bossa nova groups as well. Samba, on the other hand, has kept the same instrumentation since the early 1930s, as new instruments were not only expensive but they were impractical for samba group formations.¹⁶

The tunes composed during the bossa-nova period have become immortalized and are performed world-wide by professional jazz musicians, amateurs, jazz students, etc. Liliana Bollos comments that these tunes quickly joined American jazz as a way to revitalize the genre in the early 1960s (Bollos 2005: 56).¹⁷ As these tunes were easily incorporated into the jazz repertoire outside Brazil, confusion with ›bossa nova melodies‹ versus ›bossa nova style‹ is often made. Therefore, I would like to point out that we have to be careful not to confuse the melodies of the songs composed during the bossa nova period (1958–1964) with the style of the bossa nova itself.

However, beautiful as the melodies of bossa nova are, what caused the most astonishment was the rhythmic aspect of the style. This fascination became an obsession for musicians as schools were created with the specific purpose of teaching the new style's beat (or ›batida‹ as it is commonly referred to in the Portuguese language). Several scholars have commented on this rhythmic craze including José Ramos Tinhorão (discussed later) and Marcos Napolitano. Napolitano focuses on the external reasons for such fascination (social and political events). He says (Napolitano 2004: 33):

Between 1959 and 1962, bossa nova consecrated itself, not because of record sales but because of the new social cultural status that [bossa nova] allowed to Brazilian popular music. The North-Americans [i.e. the North-

15 It was particularly the absence of the bass drum marking the second and fourth beats of samba that gives bossa nova a distinct sound from samba.

16 The instrumentation of samba groups consists of several sizes of hand-held percussion, particularly the bass drum and cuica and several guitars of different sizes.

17 Translation mine.

American musicians] could no longer count on its usual reservoir of Latin music coming from Cuba (due to the 1959 Cuban revolution) and started to be interested in bossa nova. [This was possible] not because of the quality of the music, but because the new rhythmic groove of Latin Jazz was very hot on the international market.¹⁸

To exactly pinpoint what was going on with this rhythm proved to be an almost impossible task for musicians and critics of the era; instead, the press of the time frequently spoke of bossa nova in a dualistic way: 1) by often pointing out the incorporation of jazz chords (chords with added major 7th, added 6th, etc.) into traditional sambas as some sort of sacrilege, and 2) by attributing the rhythmic complexity to a musical incapacity on the part of the performers.¹⁹ Such prejudiced attacks only provoked more controversy because bossa nova was not performed without rhythm nor was it comprised only of harmonic progressions. Furthermore, Jobim could not be accredited for creating any new harmonies: he incorporated chromatic harmonies into tunes that he or other composers had already composed. This distinction lends scholars to favor Gilberto as the true innovator, a fact that has been accepted by important musicians, including Jobim himself. Daniela Thompson explains:

When João played *Bim-Bom* and *Hô-Ba-La-Lá* for Tom, the latter was impressed not so much with the singing as with the guitar. He immediately recognized the possibilities inherent in the beat: it simplified the rhythm of samba and allowed a lot of room for modern harmonies of the kind Tom was creating. Looking over his compositions to see how he could work the new rhythm into them, he found a song he had written with Vinícius de Moraes at least a year earlier. The song was *Chega de Saudade* (*No More Longing*).²⁰

This observation leads us to an obvious conclusion: there is a difference between Jobim's and Gilberto's styles. Moreover, since it was Jobim's approach that incorporated jazz harmonies and improvisations into the songs, it was Jobim's style that became internationally known as bossa nova because of its close ties with the cool

18 Translation mine.

19 For more on the bickering of the press, see Bollos: *Crítica Musical* cited above.

20 Thompson, Daniela: *Plain João: The Man who Invented Bossa Nova*. http://daniellathompson.com/Texts/Brazzil/Plain_Joao.htm (Accessed 5/21/07). It is interesting that Thompson points out that Gilberto 'simplified' the samba rhythm. Tinhorão makes the opposite observation. See below.

jazz style of performance. This is not a small issue, since Jobim's intimate knowledge of cool jazz and his bias towards the jazz presentation of his beautiful and famous tunes made bossa nova easier to be assimilated by cultures outside Brazil. In other words, Gilberto's interpretation lent itself to a more local and intimate approach, while Jobim's lent itself to a more universal one.

The enigma of Gilberto's ›batida‹

João Gilberto is now 77 years old: his career is unusual as it is the style he helped to create. We have to remember that Gilberto was initially greatly misunderstood, considered unmusical, and inexpressive. The main difference from his initial shy appearances as a recording studio artist to his interpretations after 1962 is that his first recordings included more instrumentation (some strings, trombone or flute, sometimes saxophone, and piano). However, after 1962, most of his appearances and live performances are consistently the same: he is alone with his guitar, performing old classics and a few (very few) new works. Brazilian critic Arthur Nestrovski has described him as follows:

João Gilberto never changes: what is for some a weakness, is for him a virtue. He has the idea that [his] music is essentially the same since the first recording forty years ago. Each new recording is a way of polishing this same jewel. Maybe it is just not possible to say that he is getting better. Instead, each time he is more himself. In each new recording – of which there are not many – the repertoire is predictably the same: classic sambas, some international songs, a bolero, Tom Jobim, Dorival Caymmi, Caetano Veloso.²¹

Gilberto is not so much a composer of bossa nova songs.²² His contribution rests on the way in which the syncopated accompaniment, known in Brazil as the BATIDA [›beat‹], is performed against a melodic line: at certain moments, melody and accompaniment go out of synchronization, yet they never fall apart. At the time Gilberto came to the musical scene, there was no disagreement that the way he performed was unique, difficult to reproduce, enthralling, etc. It is not only his

21 Arthur Nestrovski in João Gilberto's official web site. <http://joaogilberto.org/> (Accessed 10/8/2006). Translation mine.

22 João Gilberto recorded only three of his *Bossa Nova* songs during the period between 1958 and 1962. They are: *Bim-Bom* (1958), *Hô-ba-la-lá* (1958), and *Um Abraço no Bonfá* (1960).

whispered style of singing that seemed unusual, since other artists from the same time had similar takes on this approach to interpretation.²³ The fascination with Gilberto goes beyond the stereotypical labels that became associated with his name: soft, intimate, sophisticated, etc. Maria Bethânia has said: »João Gilberto simply is music. He plays. He sings. Without stopping. Day and night. He is very, very strange. But he is the most fascinating being, the most fascinating person that I have encountered in the world. João, he is mystery. He hypnotizes.«²⁴

In trying to grasp the sophistication of Gilberto's style, many critics launched a bitter battle against him, taking his way of interpreting the new and old songs as odd, musically wrong, out of tune, etc. José Ramos Tinhorão's depiction of bossa nova is a good example (Tinhorão 1998: 309–310):

This event [bossa nova] was the result of the incapacity caused by the young people's obliviousness to the secrets of popular percussion, of feeling the pulse of the black people's rhythm ›in their skin‹. Therefore, [bossa nova] was represented by the rhythmic substitution, by the improvisatory character of the misalignment of the rhythmic accents of the melody and those of the accompaniment. This bi-rhythmic scheme, originated by accents that were out of synchronization, was given the name of VIOLÃO GAGO [›stuttering guitar‹], and over this scheme would rest the accompaniment of bossa nova sambas.²⁵

Tinhorão attacks several issues, including the melody, the harmony, the style of singing, but more forcefully, the rhythmic misalignment between melody and accompaniment. Although all the criticisms Tinhorão raised were common accusations to all the new youth groups, they were actually directed most exclusively to Gilberto himself. These arguments can be summarized as follows: 1) Gilberto is out of tune; 2) he sings without vibrato; 3) he overuses syncopation; and 4) his guitar is out of synchronization, therefore nicknamed ›the stuttering guitar‹ or VIOLÃO GAGO.

Observing Tinhorão's arguments, I could agree with some and disagree with others and I will discuss them in the order provided above: 1) the accusation that João Gilberto is out of tune is false. His intonation has always been very good for an untrained voice. The difference is that his singing is soft and not projected, in sharp contrast with singers that had powerful and more technical skills; 2) Gilber-

23 Sylvia Telles (1934–1966), Astrud Gilberto, and Nara Leão also sang in a similar way.

24 Thompson: *Plain João* (Accessed 5/21/2007).

25 Translation mine.

to's singing is indeed without vibrato, since this is the definition of his style of singing: a whispered voice, without vibrato, without inflection or without any kind of exaggeration; 3) The overuse of syncopation is a ludicrous accusation: syncopation was neither invented by bossa nova, nor was it one a particular trait of its style. Samba had always used syncopation in both melody and accompaniment. Furthermore, most of the songs that Gilberto recorded were composed before his 1958 famous recording of *Chega de Saudade*.

The only criticism that requires more careful attention is the fourth one: the rhythmic misalignment between voice and guitar. João Gilberto is capable of detaching the melodic line from the guitar accompaniment. At certain points in the music, the melodic line floats on top of the accompaniment often finding synchronized moments during the composition, usually during formal divisions or repetitions. The tempo is stretched out of synchronization between voice and guitar. The misalignment continues until the phrase is over, aligning itself again when a new verse begins. This misalignment produces a metric dissonance and a sense of rhythmic instability that can be only corrected when a new phrase begins. British scholar David Treece has referred to this stretching of the tempo as »suspended animation« (Treece 2006). However, at that time, the misalignment of rhythm and voice was considered a weakness and not a quality, as if Gilberto was incapable of properly synchronizing his singing. Again, this is a false accusation. As we shall examine below, the misalignment does not pervade the interpretation since it only occurs at selected portions of the music, proving that Gilberto was perfectly capable of synchronizing the rhythm with melody if he wished to do so.

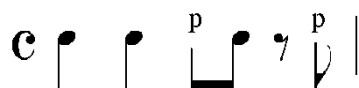
However, what made this *BATIDA* so unusual has not been theoretically explained, but simply assumed. In order to understand it, I have extensively studied all of the original recordings that Gilberto made between 1958 and 1962, and most of the recordings he made after 1962. The first recordings (which include over 60 songs) are remarkably the same. In the live recording Gilberto made after 1962, his preference is to record alone (with his guitar). Appendix 1 shows three famous albums recorded by Gilberto. The first album is an anthology of the first three recordings Gilberto made from 1958 to 1962. All the songs in this anthology were produced and arranged by Tom Jobim. We noticed that they are usually short, with fewer than three repetitions, frequently lightly orchestrated with strings (which usually come in at the second repetition of the song, but without overpowering Gilberto), a trombone solo, sometimes a flute or a saxophone and light percussion performed by a drum set. The second album shown in Appendix 1 is the studio version of the Carnegie Hall concert of 1962, having Tom Jobim at the

piano, Stan Getz at the saxophone, and the special participation of Astrud Gilberto singing the English version of *Garota de Ipanema*. This recording was also executed under the supervision of Tom Jobim and a classic jazz set up appears in all songs: Gilberto sings first and is followed by an improvised instrumental solo by either Getz or Jobim. The third album shown on this list comes from Gilberto's participation at the 1987 Montreux Jazz Festival, where Gilberto is singing accompanied only by his guitar. This became his favorite set-up for performances after 1964. At this recording we noticed that the lengths of the songs are considerable longer, particularly if compared to the first set of recordings; also, each song is repeated at least five times and no improvisation is present.

In João Gilberto's performance, there are three independent parameters that run alongside each other: 1) the agogic of the words, which provokes a sense of a regular meter; 2) the steady accompaniment of the guitar; and 3) the relationship between voice and guitar. The metric dissonance occurs by treating the agogic of the words as downbeats, while the accompaniment has an independent and steady downbeat on its own. I have compared several live recordings of Gilberto as well as recordings of Aracy Cortes and other artists of the time. For the purpose of this study, I have selected to show only one song performed by Aracy Cortes and one song performed by Gilberto that are representative of the musical nuances in question.

Analysis and Comparison

The beat of the bossa nova is similar to the beat of samba. The rhythmic pattern is shown in Example 1 as performed by the guitar.²⁶ If that was all that bossa nova was about, there would be no reason to find this beat unusual.



Example 1 (the letter ›P‹ represents picking the bass string with the right-hand thumb²⁷)

26 We can hear this beat at the introduction of *Garota de Ipanema*, as Gilberto performs it at the 1987 live recording: Gilberto, João: *Live in Montreux*. Elektra Musician E2-60760. Los Angeles 1987.

27 Christiansen, Mike: *Latin Rhythms*. www.guitarpeople.com/jazz/jazzprog.asp (Accessed 5/22/2007).

The two songs selected are: *Ai Ioiô*, recorded in 1964, sung by Aracy Cortes and *Garota de Ipanema*, recorded live, 1987, sung by João Gilberto.²⁸ Aracy Cortes always performed accompanied by a group. On the other hand, Gilberto began recording accompanied by orchestra and those early recordings are indeed more rhythmically steady. It was only when he was performing alone that his music nuances were felt more strongly. Therefore, to understand his style of playing, we need to concentrate on the live recordings instead, where he has the freedom to flex the tempo as he wishes. I begin by using a Wave File imported into Live 6 by Ableton, 2006; the file was then re-recorded into Record Producer Advanced. The final file was then measured with Protools – Digidesign.

Parameters of Analysis:

1. Original recording is put into Live;
2. The music was adjusted to a constant metronome marking. The beat was accented by the software in relationship to a medium between the lyrics' agogic accent and the music;
3. The lyrics were adjusted to fall into the metronomic markings suggested by the software;
4. The adjusted version was compared with the original unaltered recording and measured the deviation between the two;
5. A value was attributed to this deviation in percentage of the total beat;
6. A percentage was calculated into the closest musical notation value.

The overall sound is divided into:

1. Voice and Accompaniment together;
2. Accompaniment alone;
3. Voice alone.

The tempo is understood in relation to a constant beat and:

1. Voice and a constant beat;
2. Accompaniment and a constant beat;
3. Voice and accompaniment (as one) and a constant beat.

28 *Ai Ioiô* is recorded in: *Raízes do Samba: Conjunto Rosas de Ouro*. Gravações Originais Remasterizadas. EMI Brasil 5254912. Manaus 1965.

Results

Table 1: List of Songs that were analyzed

Song	Interpreter	Recorded	Year	Instrumentation
<i>Garota de Ipanema</i>	João Gilberto	Live in 1986	1986	guitar alone
<i>Ai Ioiô</i>	Aracy Cortes	Studio in 1964	1929	samba group

Garota de Ipanema (1962)

Antonio Carlos Jobim – Vinícius de Moraes

Olha que coisa mais linda	Look, what a beautiful thing
Mais cheia de graça	full of grace
É ela menina que vem e que passa	It is she, the girl, coming and going
Num doce balanço, caminho do mar	in a sweet sway, towards the sea

Moça do corpo dourado	Girl with the body golden by
Do sol de Ipanema	the Ipanema's sun
O seu balançado é mais que um poema	your swing is more than a poem
É a coisa mais linda que eu já vi passar	it is the most beautiful thing I ever seen going by

Table 2: Agogic Accents of *Garota de Ipanema*

Measure #	Beats			
	1	2	3	4
1	Olha	Coisa	Linda	cheia de
2	Graça	Ela	(me)nina	vem e que
3	Passa	Doce	(ba)lanço	caminho do
4	Mar			
5	Moça	Corpo	dourado	do sol de
6	(Ipa)nema	Seu	(ba)lançado	que um po-
7	Ema	Coisa	Linda	pas-
8	Sar			

Table 3: *Garota de Ipanema*. Words sung by Gilberto and their relationship to the agogic accent of the beat

Word	Delay/Anticipation	Value of one beat	% of total	actual seconds
Coisa	delay	0.476 seconds	22.48%	0.107
Linda	delay	0.476 seconds	32.56%	0.155
Graca	Anticipation	0.476 seconds	31.51%	0.15
Que vem	delay	0.476 seconds	73.74%	0.351
Passa	Anticipation	0.476 seconds	82.77%	0.394

Linda Flor (1929, aka *Iaiá*, aka *Ai, Ioiô*)
(Henrique Vogeler/Luiz Peixoto/Marques Pôrto)

Ai, Ioiô!	Oh, Ioiô
Eu nasci pra sofrê	I was born to suffer
Fui oiá pra você,	I just looked at you
Meus oinho fechou!	My little eyes closed
E quando os óio eu abri,	And when I opened my eyes
Quis gritá, quis fugi,	I wanted to cry, I wanted to slip away
Mas você,	but you
Eu não sei por quê,	I don't know why
Você me chamô!	but you sent for me!

Table 4: Agogic Accents of *Ai, Ioiô*

	Beats			
Measure #	1	2	3	4
1				Ai, Io-
2	iô!			eu nas-
3	ci	pra so-	Frê	
4				fui
5	oiá	pra vo-	Cê	
6				meus
7	(o)in	Nho fe	Chou	
8				E
9				quando os
10	óio	eu a-	Bri	
11				quis gri-
12	tá	Quis	Fu-	gi
13				mas vo-
14	cê	Eu	nao sei	por
15	que	você	Me	cha-
16	mô!			

Table 5: *Ai, Ioiô*. Words sung by Aracy Cortes and their relationship to the agogic accent of the beat

Words	Delay/Anticipation	Value of one beat	% of total	Actual seconds
Sofrer	Anticipation	0.529 seconds	49%	0.261
Meus	Anticipation	0.529 seconds	61.44%	0.529
(Fe)chou	Anticipation	0.529 seconds	58.34%	0.307
E	Anticipation	0.529 seconds	43.28%	0.229
(A)brir	Anticipation	0.529 seconds	63.89%	0.338

*Anticipation is approximately an eighth-note

Based on the above data, I conclude that Gilberto's deviation of delaying or anticipating the beat are irregular and unpredictable, involving a range of deviation anywhere between 20% and 80% of a beat. Aracy Cortes only anticipates the beat at a constant rate of about 55%. In João Gilberto's performance, there are three independent parameters: the agogic of the words, which provokes a sense of a regular meter; the steady accompaniment of the guitar; and the relationship between voice and guitar. The metric dissonance occurs by treating the agogic of the words as downbeats, while the accompaniment has an independent and steady downbeat on its own. Because the musical downbeat stretches before and after the actual downbeat of the agogic metric of the words, there is a sense that the tempo (the speed) of the song does not flow easily, stalling back and forth, but never totally stopping. However, the stalling of the beat is not the norm either, as it alternates with moments of regularity. The agogic of the words guarantee some kind of metric; however, the pull and the push of the rhythmic nuances move at an unpredictable pace, provoking a sense that time has been temporarily suspended.

In an attempt to provide scores and fakebooks for commercial use, arrangers invariably choose the anticipation of the eighth note to give the song an 'off beat' feel. In turn, the transcriptions are equally square, as they don't resemble the nuances of Gilberto's style. Below, two transcriptions are shown: one by Lee Evans and the other by a fakebook. Notice how invariable the eighth note is anticipated. I have also included the preface of a fakebook where claims of accuracy in transcriptions are made. It is interesting that the fakebook claims to be faithful to the style they reflect. See Examples 2, 3, and 4.

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The image shows two systems of musical notation for piano accompaniment. The first system consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The first measure of the treble staff contains a triplet of eighth notes. Below the staves, the following chords are indicated: I6, I+7, a dashed line, and ii. The second system also consists of two staves, starting with a measure number '5' above the treble staff. Below the staves, the following chords are indicated: ii, V7 --, --9, and I+7. The word 'etc.' appears to the right of the second system.

Example 2: Lee Evan's arrangement of *Garota de Ipanema*²⁹

The image shows a handwritten musical score titled 'THE GIRL FROM IPANEMA' with '-JOBIM' and '17/.' written in the top right. The score is written on three staves. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It contains several measures of music with red boxes highlighting specific notes. Chords written below the first staff include Fmaj7, G7, G-7, Gb7, 1. Fmaj7, and Gb7. The second staff continues the melody with a red box highlighting a note. Chords written below include 2. Fmaj7 and Gbmaj7. The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, with a triplet of eighth notes. Chords written below include B7 and F#-7.

Example 3: *The Girl from Ipanema*, Fakebook

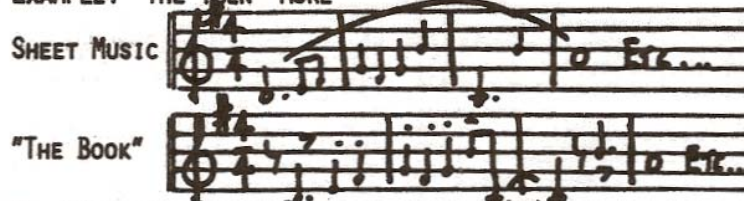
29 Evans, Lee: *Lee Evans Arranges Antonio Carlos Jobim Piano Solos*. Hal Leonard Publishing Company 1991.

PREFACE

THIS COMMERCIAL MUSIC BOOK WAS DESIGNED TO PROVIDE ACTIVE PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS OR ASPIRING STUDENTS WITH THE COMPLETE MATERIAL NECESSARY TO EMBARK UPON A CAREER AS A SUCCESSFUL, HIGHLY PAID COMMERCIAL MUSICIAN. THIS BOOK IS THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMMERCIAL MUSIC. WHY?

1. EVERY TUNE HAS BEEN REWRITTEN INTO THE STYLE AS CURRENTLY PERFORMED BY PROFESSIONAL COMMERCIAL MUSICIANS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

EXAMPLE: THE TIEN "MORE"



2. THIS IS THE ONLY BOOK IN WHICH METRONOME MARKINGS APPEAR WITH EVERY TUNE. THIS ELIMINATES ALL THE GUESSWORK IN TUNES OR ETHNIC MUSIC YOU MAY NOT BE FAMILIAR WITH.

3. THIS BOOK IS CONSIDERED TO BE A ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMMERCIAL MUSIC BECAUSE IT CONTAINS A COMPLETE VARIETY OF TUNES, DIXIELAND TO DISCO, AS WELL AS ETHNIC AND OFTEN REQUESTED TUNES.

Example 4: Preface of a Fakebook

In conclusion

Bossa nova as a historic style (1958–1964) has two distinct lines of approach: one by Tom Jobim and another by João Gilberto. The questions that arose regarding bossa nova's authenticity as a distinct Brazilian expression can be reformulated as how much of foreign influence the two approaches carry: Jobim's more, Gilberto's less. From the Jobim approach, bossa nova spread around the world as a true form of world music, resembling closely cool jazz and drawing a larger number of practitioners. On the other hand, only a few interpreters were able to follow Gilberto because his renditions were more difficult to grasp. Gilberto's approach favors the overall sound, without calling attention to one aspect of the music more than another. It is the soft blending of voice and guitar on a minimalistic interpretation that so much astonished the music world in the late 1950s. This paper addresses the style of João Gilberto, with emphasis on the rhythm. In Gilberto's interpretations, the melodic line floats on top of the accompaniment finding synchronized moments ever so often during the composition, usually at formal divisions or repe-

titions. The tempo is stretched out of synchronization between voice and guitar. The misalignment continues until the phrase is over, aligning itself again when a new verse begins. This misalignment produces a metric dissonance and a sense of rhythmic instability that can be only corrected when a new phrase begins.

Chico Buarque and Edu Lobo (as many others) have commented, with nostalgic reverence, that they remember exactly where they were when they heard *Chega de Saudades* for the first time. The sound they heard was so new and the blending was so complete that they immediately knew something revolutionary had come. As Ruy Castro puts it: »One minute and fifty-nine seconds that changed everything« (Castro 2000: 124).

Jobim's approach maintains the soft blending of instruments, but adds jazz-style improvisations and a small chorus (usually a group of women) at the song's refrain. The adding of solo riffs and voices goes contradictory to the overall blending, so praised as bossa nova's innovation. Today, we may not perceive this to be a problem, but for the intense political and cultural battles that took over the dialogue of popular music during the 1960s, this was a big problem, because it aligned itself with a ›foreign‹ aesthetic that easily fell into a commercial and more accessible commodity. Going back to Chico Buarque's questions at the beginning of this study we may indeed conclude that there are no easy answers to them and one's position depends on how much one wants to align with one approach versus another. And to further exasperate the discussion, I could also quote another affirmation Buarque made during the same documentary. He said »When Tom Jobim went to New York, bossa nova went with him.«³⁰

The battle over the ownership and performance practice of bossa is neither new nor over and there is no agreement about the authenticity of the style. Brazilians tend to claim it as their own. On the other hand, around the world, as a jazz sub-genre, it is not necessarily Brazilian. The problem with both positions is that by assuming that bossa nova can only be practiced by ›initiated‹ Brazilians presumes incapacity on the part of any foreign production, which is an unfounded claim, although not many jazz performers know that there is another way of doing it.

The fact that most of the artists of the bossa nova era are no longer among us and already fifty years have passed since the release of *Chega de Saudades* contribute to a gradual distancing of bossa nova's original claims. However, Gilberto is still among us and for most, there is no question that he, as the only survivor of the

30 Chico Buarque: *Anos Dourados*, DVD.

›holy trinity‹, embodies all that is to be said about the style.³¹ Gilberto too seems to agree that he is the only one who could produce bossa nova; after all, in the short little song he improvised for both Jobim and Moraes, the melody, the rhythm, and the words too are his.³²

Appendix 1: List of Songs

Name of the Song	Duration	Album	Year
<i>Aos Pés da Santa Cruz</i>	1:34	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>A Primeira Vez</i>	1:51	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Amor Certinho</i>	1:52	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Bim Bom</i>	1:15	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Bolinha de Papel</i>	1:19	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Brigas, Nunca Mais</i>	2:05	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Chega de Saudade</i>	2:01	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Coisa Mais Linda</i>	2:51	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Corcovado</i>	1:58	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Corcovado</i>	4:16	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Desafinado</i>	1:58	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Discussão</i>	1:49	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Doralice</i>	1:27	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>É Luxo Só</i>	1:57	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Este Seu Olhar</i>	2:14	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Hô-Bá-Lá-Lá</i>	2:16	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Insensatez</i>	2:25	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Lobo Bobo</i>	1:20	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Manha de Carnaval</i>	2:35	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Maria Ninguém</i>	2:21	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Meditação</i>	1:45	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>O Nosso Amor/A Felicidade</i>	3:06	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Morena Boca de Ouro</i>	1:11	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>O Amor em Paz</i>	2:23	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>O Barquinho</i>	2:30	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>O Grande Amor</i>	5:27	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>O Pato</i>	2:00	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Outra Vez</i>	1:51	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	

31 As said before, Caetano Veloso has forcefully defended and promoted this idea. And as those who know Caetano will acknowledge, it is hard to argue with him.

32 See footnote 1.

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<i>Para Machucar meu Coração</i>	5:05	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Presente de Natal</i>	1:53	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Rosa Morena</i>	2:04	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Samba da Minha Terra</i>	2:21	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Samba de Uma Nota Só</i>	1:38	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Saudade da Bahia</i>	2:16	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Saudade Fez um Samba</i>	1:47	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Se É Tarde me Perdoa</i>	1:47	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Só Danço Samba</i>	3:34	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Só em Teus Braços</i>	1:47	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>The Girl From Ipanema</i>	5:16	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Trenzinho (Trem De Ferro)</i>	1:50	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Trêvo de 4 Folhas</i>	1:23	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Um Abraço no Bonfá</i>	1:37	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Vivo Sonhando</i>	2:52	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>Você e Eu</i>	2:31	The Legendary Joao Gilberto	
<i>The Girl From Ipanema</i>	5:16	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Doralice</i>	2:46	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Para Machucar Meu Coração</i>	5:05	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Desafinado</i>	4:04	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Corcovado</i>	4:16	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Só Danço Samba</i>	3:34	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>O Grande Amor</i>	5:27	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Vivo Sonhando</i>	2:52	Stan Getz & João Gilberto	1962
<i>Sem Compromisso</i>	4:14	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Menino Do Rio</i>	3:39	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Retrato em Branco e Preto</i>	6:11	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Pra Que Discutir Com Madame</i>	5:53	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Garota de Ipanema</i>	3:37	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Adeus America</i>	6:33	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Estate</i>	4:51	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Morena Boca de Ouro</i>	4:41	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>A Felicidade</i>	4:43	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Preconceito</i>	4:02	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Sandalia de Prata</i>	5:24	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Rosa Morena</i>	5:50	Live In Montreux	1987
<i>Aquarela do Brasil</i>	8:42	Live In Montreux	1987

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