

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4 by Heitor Villa-Lobos:
A Conductor's Perspective on Analysis and Performance

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Abstract

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) is widely recognized as one of Brazil's most esteemed composers, with his cycle of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* (1930-45) standing as a pinnacle of his creative output. Despite the growing scholarship on Latin American music, few studies have delved into the performance practice of the *Bachianas Brasileiras*, particularly in English. This paper seeks to address this gap by analyzing *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* and showing how such analysis can inform the perspective and performance of conductors. By examining elements such as harmony, articulation, structure, phrase rhythm, orchestration, and the influences of Brazilian and foreign musical traditions, this study aims to provide conductors with essential tools for interpreting Villa-Lobos's music. Additionally, the paper investigates neglected aspects of Villa-Lobos's oeuvre, specifically focusing on the conductor's perspective in performing *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*. By shedding light on specific musical elements and utilizing score analysis methodology and study of historical recordings, this thesis contributes to a deeper understanding of Villa-Lobos's compositions and their interpretative nuances.

Résumé

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) est largement reconnu comme l'un des compositeurs brésiliens les plus estimés, avec son cycle de neuf *Bachianas Brasileiras* (1930-45) figurant comme un sommet de sa production créative. Malgré le nombre croissant de recherches sur la musique latino-américaine, peu d'études se sont penchées sur la pratique de l'interprétation des *Bachianas Brasileiras*, en particulier en anglais. Cet article cherche à combler cette lacune en analysant les *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* et en montrant comment une telle analyse peut éclairer la perspective et l'interprétation des chefs d'orchestre. En examinant des éléments tels que l'harmonie, l'articulation, la structure, le rythme des phrases, l'orchestration et les influences des traditions musicales brésiliennes et étrangères, cette étude vise à fournir aux chefs d'orchestre des outils essentiels pour interpréter la musique de Villa-Lobos. De plus, l'article examine des aspects négligés de l'œuvre de Villa-Lobos, en se concentrant spécifiquement sur la perspective du chef dans l'interprétation des *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*. En mettant en lumière des éléments musicaux spécifiques et en utilisant une méthodologie d'analyse de partition et l'étude des enregistrements historiques, cette thèse contribue à une compréhension plus profonde des compositions de Villa-Lobos et de leurs nuances interprétatives.

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Introduction

Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) is one of the best-known Brazilian composers, and many consider the cycle of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras* (1930-45) among his most important works. However, despite the expanding scholarship on Latin music, very few studies have addressed the performance practice of the *Bachianas Brasileiras*, especially in English. This paper analyzes *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* and explores how this analysis can inform the conductor's point of view and interpretation. Furthermore, I will highlight how the harmony, articulation, structure, phrase, rhythm, orchestration, and combination of Brazilian and foreign influences make this composition unique, providing conductors with critical tools for their interpretations of the music.

The *Bachianas Brasileiras* are part of Villa-Lobos' neo-classical period, marked by a return to traditional formal structures and tonality. Before writing the *Bachianas Brasileiras* suites, Villa Lobos spent time in Paris, working on his *Choros* cycle (composed between 1920 and 1929), written in a more experimental style featuring musical episodes that were rarely repeated. In Paris he had the opportunity to listen to music from several different composers. After he came back from France, Villa-Lobos said that he heard the Rite of Spring by Igor Stravinsky in Paris, which was important to develop Villa-Lobos musical language.

Another theory [...] is that Villa-Lobos would have found his mature musical language only in Paris, after listening ecstatically to the "Rite of Spring." This theory is based on a note published in the Ariel magazine in January 1924 by Manuel Bandeira, who, having met the composer, says he heard that *Le Sacre du Printemps* would have "shaken him dangerously."¹

¹ Guilherme Bernstein Seixas, "Procedimentos Compositivos nos Choros Orquestrais de Heitor Villa-Lobos" (PhD Dissertation, Rio de Janeiro - Brazil, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, 2007), 66–67.

However, in the *Bachianas Brasileiras* series, nineteen out of the twenty-nine movements are in ABA form. Also, most of them have a clear tonal center, even though some movements present several modulations and complex harmony shifts. Notably, musical quotations and external stylistic references played a role in these pieces.² They were composed between 1930 and 1945, which coincides precisely with the years of the “Era Vargas” in Brazil.³ The musicologist Michael Round, quoting Simon Wright’s EMI recording note, says, “their composition may indeed have been a shrewd move towards a ‘popular Brazilianization’ of Villa-Lobos.”⁴

Score analysis is my primary methodology in this thesis (focusing on the formal structures, phrase rhythm, and harmony), and I will also consider significant influences on Villa Lobos, whether Brazilian or foreign. Additionally, I will investigate a neglected aspect of Villa-Lobos scholarship: the analysis of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* from a conductor’s performance perspective. Through this study, light will be shed upon specific musical elements to give conductors the necessary apparatus for interpreting this piece.

² For instance, the influence of Richard Wagner on Villa-Lobos in *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2* in Cm, where the “Tristan” chord is used as compositional element for the motive and harmony. Also, the lyricism of Italian operas presented in the Aria of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* in Am or the complexity of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 9* in C with the “explosive opening chord (C-A-D-Bb-E-G)” in Fredi Vieira Gerling, “Performance Analysis And Analysis For Performance: A Study Of Villa-Lobos’s *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 9*,” n.d., 62.

³ The Vargas Era was a period that began in 1930 and ended in 1945 with the deposition of Getúlio Vargas. In this period of Brazilian history, power was centralized in Getúlio Vargas, who took over as president of Brazil. Vargas’s posture in power in Brazil during this period can also be related to populism, mainly due to the following aspects: the direct and non-institutionalized relationship between the leader and the masses, defense of the union of the masses, leadership based on charisma, and a fragile party system. Based on Daniel Neves Silva, “Era Vargas,” Brasil Escola (blog), accessed February 3, 2024, <https://brasilescola.uol.com.br/historiab/era-vargas.htm>.

⁴ Michael Round, “‘Bachianas Brasileiras’ in Performance,” *Tempo* 3, no. 169 (1989): 34, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0040298200025146>.

Tarasti suggests that there are six codes to be taken into account when analyzing the

Bachianas Brasileiras cycle:

[...] the *Bachianas* must be viewed at least from the following viewpoints of “codes”: 1) the code of baroque music: to what extent the title “*Bachianas*” is justified and what place the series has in the history of Bach imitations, 2) the code of Brazilian folk music: to what extent the different parts really are stylizations of those genres of folk music to which their titles refer, 3) the code of musical form: how the form of these works is organized, 4) the sonorous code: the choice of instruments and their use; how they create the individual sound image of each work, 5) the referential code: what place the works in general – regardless of the Bach influences – have in the history of twentieth century art music, 6) the esthetic code: how the esthetic value of these works can be described or determined and by what terms.⁵

I would add the codes of harmony and interpretation; even though they could be included in the sonorous code, they are so important that they should have a specific label. The harmony code would consider to what extent the harmony is influenced by other composers such as Bach or Wagner and how Brazilian elements are presented in the harmonic choices. Such different musical languages as Bach’s and Wagner’s are important to identify compositional procedures, for instance the use of pedal passages (Bach) and the Wagnerian cadences described in the following sections. The interpretation code suggests the choice of tempos and phrasing and the resolution of notation issues in the score; also, the use of Villa-Lobos recordings to shed light in some passages on what could be his view of the music while conducting it.

The four movements of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* were not written simultaneously.

Peppercorn states:

The words *Bachianas Brasileiras*, in this writer’s opinion, are artificially invented titles given to a versatile set of compositions, in order to demonstrate a contribution to Europe’s neo-classical trend by a Brazilian

⁵ Eero Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works, 1887-1959* (Jefferson, N.C: McFarland, 1995), 182.

composer seeking to appear original. But despite the Brazilianized-baroqueian name, this music mostly lacks baroque substance, except what has been artificially added.⁶

Contrary to this argument, we can point out that Villa-Lobos had a much broader vision of Bach's music as he saw Bach as a universal source of music. One can argue that the singing melody style of the *Bachianas Brasileiras* closely connects to the *Canto Orfeônico* project.⁷ Villa-Lobos incorporated Brazilian musical elements such as rhythm, harmony, and instrumentation into his music. Also, regarding the music structure, Villa-Lobos used collection of dances (especially Brazilian, even when not literally quoted) to build the series of *Bachianas Brasileiras*; similar to Bach collection of suites.

These elements, blended with the European tradition and the "back to Bach" trend of the 1920s created the unique cycle of *the Bachianas Brasileiras*. It is necessary to understand, as Gerard Béhague argues, that "The Bachianas were not intended, however, as stylized renditions of the music of Bach but as an attempt to adapt to Brazilian music, with great freedom, certain Baroque harmonic and contrapuntal procedures."⁸ Dudeque observes that "The eclectic imitation is characterized by the mixture of Bachian compositional techniques that are perceived and consistently applied by Villa-Lobos, along with elements that extrapolate the Bachian universe,

⁶ Lisa M. Peppercorn, "Villa-Lobos 'Ben Trovato,'" *Tempo, New Series*, no. 177 (1991): 32-35; 38-39.

⁷ *Canto Orfeônico* was a Brazilian educational program by the *Superintendência de Educação Musica e Artística (SEMA)*. Villa-Lobos was the head of *SEMA* from 1932 to 1941 during the Vargas regime. *Canto Orfeônico* has its origins in France: "The origin of the Orphéon in France, in the 19th century, occurred with the support of Napoleon III. The term "orfeão" (*orpheón*) referred to groups of students from regular educational institutions who gathered to sing in public performances and auditions" (Monti, 2008, 80). The project aimed to teach ethics and civic notions through collective singing.

⁸ Gerard Béhague, "Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul," in *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Search for Brazil's Musical Soul*, ILAS Special Publication (Austin: Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1994), 106.

such as the stylization of Brazilian popular music and allusions to Villa-Lobos's contemporary composers and their compositional procedures.”⁹

Charles Koechlin, when explaining what would be the “return to Bach,” describes the Neoclassical principles:

[1] Clear themes as in certain allegros of Bach (a remonstrance!); [2] no Beethovenian, Franckist, or Wagnerian pathos; [3] no Fauréan or Debussyist *expressionism* (I certainly cannot write “impressionism”) but [4] *pure music*, which does not claim to signify anything. [5] And fugues. Or rather, sketches of fugues, adapted to the needs of an epoch in which time is money.¹⁰

According to Paulo de Tarso Salles, Villa-Lobos has four distinct phases.¹¹ From 1900 to 1917, Villa-Lobos adopted French and Wagnerian models initially when he sought to be recognized by musicians and critics established in Brazil. Then, between 1918 and 1929, from his contact with Darius Milhaud and Arthur Rubinstein, still in Rio de Janeiro, Villa-Lobos' music began to present freer forms and structures, which was when he worked on the *Choros* cycle. Then, from 1930 to 1947, he returned to Brazil during the Vargas revolution, fully incorporating the image that was wanted of him as a symbol of Brazilian culture during Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras* cycle, his Neoclassical period.

Then, in his last phase from 1948 on, Villa-Lobos was ill and faced the growing expenses of health care. In that period, he accepted commissions for compositions and travelled to present his works in the United States and Europe.

⁹ Norton Dudeque, *Heitor Villa-Lobos's Bachianas Brasileiras: Intertextuality and Stylization*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2021), 11, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429323874>.

¹⁰ Charles Koechlin, “Le ‘Retour à Bach,’” *La Revue Musicale* 8, no. 1 (1926): 12.

¹¹ Paulo de Tarso Salles, *Villa-Lobos: Processos Compositivos* (Campinas, SP: UNICAMP, 2009), 14.

Even in his Neoclassical phase, Villa-Lobos still uses many foreign and Brazilian traits in *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, including the use of cadences, harmony, form, and phrase structure of the music. In his way, Villa-Lobos was aligned with European tradition and twentieth-century developments but also incorporated his own ideas.

Position of Villa-Lobos in the History of Brazilian Music

To create a link between Villa-Lobos' composing-conducting activities and his pieces, it is vital to provide some background on the composer's life, style, and personality. During the early 19th century, Italian opera and music held sway over the musical landscape of Rio de Janeiro. However, by the late 19th century, German music began to exert its influence, evident in the compositions of figures such as Leopoldo Miguéz, Alberto Nepomuceno, and even Henrique Oswald. Transitioning into the early 20th century, a palpable shift towards a more fervent reception and influence of French music, exemplified by the works of Fauré, Debussy, and D'Indy, becomes discernible. Several classical music clubs were founded in Rio de Janeiro (Haydn Club, Mozart Club, Beethoven Club) to promote concerts for their members. *Bel canto*, the opera singing style, was at its height in Europe and was appreciated by the Brazilian audience. Composers such as Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi had their operas staged across the country.

Folkloricism was the movement that preceded Nationalism in Brazil.¹² The rich national folklore, with diverse themes, melodies, and characteristic rhythms, were the main elements used

¹² Brazilian Folklorism: This movement began to gain prominence in Brazil during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Composers during this time, such as Heitor Villa-Lobos, explored and incorporated elements of Brazilian folk music, indigenous melodies, and rhythms into their compositions. Villa-Lobos's work, particularly his "Chôros" and "Bachianas

by some Brazilian composers in the second half of the nineteenth century. Through these, composers sought to extol the culture and musical richness of the nation.

It can be said that the embryo of the Brazilian music school officially began with the founding of the Conservatório Imperial de Música in 1841 in Rio de Janeiro (classes started only in 1848). Another important moment, was the creation in 1890 of the National Institute of Music by the composer Leopoldo Miguéz, where Villa-Lobos took some classes. Also relevant was foundation of the Imperial Academy of Music and National Opera in March 1857 in Rio de Janeiro to stage operas sung in Portuguese.

The growth of musical activity developed with the emergence of music schools, universities, record labels, and radio and television stations, some with their own symphony orchestras and classical music programs. Other innovations like sheet music publishers, instrument factories, and music festivals spread throughout Brazil, giving a fresh perspective to the arts, and making classical music more accessible. Creating new symphony orchestras and diverse instrumental ensembles (both in Brazilian popular and art music) fostered music production in Brazil, making it known and appreciated worldwide.

Brasileiras" series, exemplify this trend. The peak of musical folklorism in Brazil can be considered to have occurred roughly between the 1920s and 1940s.

Brazilian Nationalism: Musical nationalism in Brazil also emerged around the same time as folklorism but had a broader scope. This movement aimed to cultivate a sense of national identity through music, often drawing inspiration from native folklore, landscapes, and historical events. Composers like Alberto Nepomuceno and Francisco Braga contributed to the development of Brazilian musical nationalism. The period of musical nationalism overlapped with folklorism but extended beyond it, continuing into the mid-20th century.

While these movements do not have specific start and end dates, they represent significant periods in Brazilian musical history characterized by a focus on indigenous and folk elements, as well as a desire to establish a distinct national musical identity. Based on Sérgio Malheiros dos Santos and Leandro Garcia Soares, "Mário de Andrade and the Brazilian Musical Nationalism," *Modus* 5, no. 1 (2008).

Several musical currents took place or succeeded each other in Brazil's twentieth century. In addition to nationalism, European aesthetics such as dodecaphonism, *musique concrète*, and even electronic music were present in the works of Brazilian composers throughout the twentieth century, demonstrating the enormous breadth of music production in the country.

Among several composers in this history who made use of folk elements such as traditional tunes, popular songs, bird songs, rhythmic influences, and indigenous and African instruments, Heitor Villa-Lobos stands out as one of the leading Brazilian composers of all time.

Biographical Background

Villa-Lobos was born in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and lived from 1887 to 1959. It is essential to mention that only one year after his birth in 1888, the Brazilian Golden Law abolished slavery, which led to the Proclamation of the Republic in 1889. These critical facts demonstrate how the composer was raised in a new environment of freedom, a shared sense of a “new era” with new social movements.¹³ In those days, Brazil's musical scene was dominated by Western European traditions. Orchestras in Brazil played mostly European repertoire like Beethoven, Liszt, Chopin, and Schumann.

Although there was already an art music scene in Rio de Janeiro, including the recently founded Conservatório Imperial de Música (1841), the musicologist Simon Wright says that Villa Lobos was a self-taught musician, “His few formal harmony lessons were unsuccessful,

¹³ In this context, after slavery was abolished, there were debates on how to proceed with job's regulamentation of the recently freed people. Also, the African culture started to become more prominent in the Brazilian culture, with its music and dances. Based on Abreu, Martha, and Matheus Serva Pereira. *Caminhos da liberdade: histórias da abolição e do pós-abolição no Brasil*. 1st ed. Niterói - RJ: PPGHistória-UFF, 2011.

and his knowledge of instrumental technique and sonority was grounded in illicit observance from the top of the stairs of the informal musical evenings held regularly at the house of his parents.”¹⁴

However, the assertion regarding Villa-Lobos being self-taught is presently a subject of contention. Evidence suggests his attendance at the National Institute of Music where he participated in classes led by Frederico Nascimento (harmony), Alberto Nepomuceno, and Francisco Braga (composition).

In 1941, Villa-Lobos stated the significance of D’Indy’s Cours de Composition Musicale (1909) as an important reading during his formative years, which he dated from around 1914. [...] Nóbrega, reporting on the controversial autodidactic studies of Villa-Lobos, writes that the composer briefly attended classes on harmony with Frederico do Nascimento and Francisco Braga in the National Institute of Music in Rio de Janeiro. He also mentions that Villa-Lobos was grateful to Alberto Nepomuceno, Henrique Oswald, and Francisco Braga for their advice on music composition. More importantly, Leão Veloso brought from Paris, during the 1910s, a copy of D’Indy’s treatise to Villa-Lobos, and by studying it, Villa-Lobos completed his formative years. [...] VillaLobos’s music itself corroborates that. His music from the 1910s—Trios 1 and 2, Symphonies 1 and 2, for example—shows a tendency towards cyclic form, an approach favored by D’Indy.¹⁵

In 1899, his father suddenly died, and Heitor’s mother wanted him to become a lawyer or a doctor, which was against his liking. Villa Lobos moved to his aunt’s house, and she introduced him to Bach’s pieces on the piano. This could be the first time the composer encountered Bach’s work, which would play an essential role in his later compositions including the nine-piece series *Bachianas Brasileiras*.

¹⁴ Simon Wright, *Villa-Lobos*, Oxford Studies of Composers (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 2.

¹⁵ Dudeque, *Heitor Villa-Lobos’s Bachianas Brasileiras*, 43.

From 1906 to 1907, Villa-Lobos took lessons with Antonio Francisco Braga, a renowned Brazilian composer and conductor. These two facets of music, composing and conducting, started to influence the young Villa Lobos significantly. Another important fact in Villa-Lobos's life is that he was born into a low-income family, and after his father's death was forced to help pay home expenses as his mother was unable to bear all the bills. Therefore, Villa-Lobos started playing in several professional music groups, from typical Brazilian music such as *choros* and *samba* with his guitar, to orchestral works by Rossini in the Rio de Janeiro cinemas and theatres with his cello. From an early age, Heitor was used to transitioning between various musical genres and styles, from popular music to orchestral works, working with both self-taught musicians and renowned conductors.

Villa-Lobos played cello in cinema and theatre orchestras in Rio de Janeiro, where he learned the music of Cesar Franck, Wagner, Puccini, Berlioz, Tchaikovsky, and Debussy. In July of 1915, he had his first piece, "*Suíte característica para instrumentos de corda: Tímida, Mistérios, Inquieta*,"¹⁶ played by the orchestra of the *Sociedade de Concertos Sinfônicos* at the Municipal Theatre in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁷

In 1922 a movement called "The Week of Modern Art" took place in São Paulo. This movement claimed for more modern art, not necessarily nationalistic art. Villa-Lobos presented seventeen pieces in three days. In the same week were also performed pieces by Debussy and Satie. Villa-Lobos was invited to lunch at Tarsila do Amaral, a Brazilian famous painter. Were presents there Erik Satie (composer), and Jean Cocteau (poet and painter). Villa-Lobos played the piano and Cocteau immediately criticized Villa-Lobos's style.

¹⁶ Museu Villa-Lobos, *Villa Lobos: Sua Obra*, 4th ed. (Rio de Janeiro: Museu Villa-Lobos, 2021), 117.

¹⁷ L. M. Peppercorn, *Villa-Lobos: Collected Studies* (Aldershot, Hants, England : Brookfield, Vt: Scolar Press ; Ashgate Pub.Co, 1992), 75.

At the end of Villa-Lobos's improvisation, however, Cocteau returned to his chair and fiercely attacked what he had heard: in his opinion the song the composer had presented was merely an emulation of Debussy and Ravel's styles.¹⁸

The last and perhaps most controversial aspect of Villa-Lobos's biography is his travels. Undoubtedly, he travelled to many Brazilian states, such as Bahia, Espirito Santo, and Amazonas, where there is a record of the composer playing at the Amazonas Theater. Peppercorn writes, "There he organized and played the cello in two concerts at the *Teatro Amazonas*. However, this was as late as September 7, 1912."¹⁹ However, Villa-Lobos is also famous for his fantastic stories about his travels in the Amazon River. "He later told outrageous and unfounded stories about being captured and almost boiled alive by cannibals during these expeditions," says Wright.²⁰ Despite all the fantasy he might have been involved in, these travels helped Villa-Lobos accumulate a great deal of folk music and knowledge of Brazil's indigenous people, absorbing all kinds of cultural elements.

The *Bachianas Brasileiras*

During the period Villa-Lobos composed the *Bachianas Brasileiras* (from 1930 to 1945), Brazil underwent profound socio-political changes. The country was in the Vargas Era, marked by the authoritarian rule of President Getúlio Vargas. Vargas's government sought to promote a

¹⁸ Paulo Renato Guérios, "Heitor Villa-Lobos e o Ambiente Artístico Parisiense: Convertendo-Se Em Um Músico Brasileiro," *Mana* 9, no. 1 (April 2003): 81, <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0104-93132003000100005>.

¹⁹ L. M. Peppercorn, *The World of Villa-Lobos in Pictures and Documents* (Aldershot, England : Brookfield, VT, USA: Scolar Press ; Ashgate Pub. Co, 1996), 47.

²⁰ Wright, *Villa-Lobos*, 3.

sense of national identity and cultural unity through various cultural policies, including supporting indigenous art forms and establishing state-sponsored cultural institutions. Villa-Lobos, who had been appointed as director of music education by Vargas, found himself navigating the complexities of this political landscape, balancing his artistic autonomy with the expectations of the government. This national project provided fertile ground for Villa-Lobos's artistic vision. His earlier experimentation with European forms led to a deliberate focus on incorporating Brazilian musical elements into his compositions.

Against this backdrop, Villa-Lobos composed the *Bachianas Brasileiras* as a series of nine works (see Table 1), each inspired by the compositional style of Johann Sebastian Bach while incorporating elements of Brazilian folk music. The *Bachianas Brasileiras* represent a synthesis of Villa-Lobos's musical influences, showcasing his mastery of counterpoint, rich harmonic palette, and evocative orchestration. Each piece in the series explores different aspects of Brazilian music and culture, from the rhythmic vitality of Afro-Brazilian dance forms to the lyrical beauty of Brazilian folk melodies.

The *Bachianas Brasileiras* occupy a central position within Villa-Lobos's compositional output, exemplifying his lifelong exploration of Brazilian musical identity and commitment to forging a distinctively Brazilian musical language. These works reflect Villa-Lobos's artistic vision and serve as a testament to the rich cultural tapestry of Brazil, capturing the spirit of a nation in transition.

While the *Bachianas Brasileiras* project spanned a decade and a half, the period surrounding the composition of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* (1930–41) was particularly significant for Villa-Lobos. The death of his mother in 1939 deeply affected him, casting a shadow over his creative process. However, this period also witnessed a surge in his nationalistic

fervor. The threat of Fascism in Europe and Brazil's efforts to strengthen its national identity fueled Villa-Lobos's desire to create music that resonated with the Brazilian soul.

Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* underwent multiple revisions by the composer. Originally composed for piano, the work was conceived in three distinct periods: the *Dansa (Miudinho)*, later repurposed as the finale, in 1930; the *Ária (Cantiga)*, which constituted the third movement, in 1935; the *Prelúdio (Introdução)* and *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, comprising the first two movements, in 1941. Villa-Lobos arranged the piano pieces for orchestra in 1941, and the orchestral version of the suite was premiered in 1942. Subsequently, Villa-Lobos modified the second movement, *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, to serve as the inaugural Seed of God segment in his Broadway musical, *Magdalena*.²¹

The *Bachianas Brasileiras* are a landmark achievement in Heitor Villa-Lobos's illustrious career, encapsulating the composer's artistic evolution and enduring legacy in Brazilian music. Through these compositions, Villa-Lobos not only pays homage to the legacy of Johann Sebastian Bach but also celebrates the vibrant musical traditions of his homeland, ensuring his rightful place as one of Brazil's most revered musical figures.

²¹ The opera *Magdalena* was composed by Villa-Lobos in 1947 and premiered in Los Angeles, EUA on July 26, 1948. When discussing the second movement of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, the manuscript of the violin part of *Magdalena* will be provided as reference.

Work	Movements	Date of composition Villa-Lobos Museum Catalog	First performance	Instrumentation	Alternative date of composition
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 1</i>	Introdução (<i>Embolada</i>) Prelúdio (<i>Modinha</i>) Fuga (<i>Conversa</i>)	1930	1938, Rio de Janeiro 1932, Rio de Janeiro	Orchestra of cellos	1938 1930
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 2</i>	Prelúdio (<i>O canto do capadócio</i>) Ária (<i>O canto da nossa terra</i>) Dansa (<i>Lembrança do sertão</i>) Tocata (<i>O trezinho do caipira</i>)	1930 1930 1930 1930	1934, Venice [1938 corrected] 1941, Rio de Janeiro	Orchestra cello/pno ^a pno.	1936/38
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 3</i>	Prelúdio (<i>Ponteio</i>) Fantasia (<i>Devaneio</i>) Ária (<i>Modinha</i>) Tocata (<i>Picapau</i>)	1938	1947, New York	Pno. Solo/Orchestra	After 1942
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4</i>	Prelúdio (<i>Introdução</i>) Coral (<i>Canto do Sertão</i>) Ária (<i>Cantiga</i>) Dansa (<i>Miudinho</i>)	1941 1941 1935 1930	1939, Rio de Janeiro (incomplete)	Piano solo	1941
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 4</i>	Orchestral version	1941	1942, Rio de Janeiro	Orchestra	1941
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 5</i>	Ária (<i>Cantilena</i>) Dansa (<i>Martelo</i>) [<i>Embolada</i>]*	1938 1945	1939, Rio de Janeiro 1947, Paris (complete)	Soprano/orchestra of cellos	
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 6</i>	Ária (<i>Choro</i>) [<i>Ponteio</i>]* Fantasia (<i>Allegro</i>)	1938	1945, Rio de Janeiro	Flute and bassoon	
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 7</i>	Prelúdio (<i>Ponteio</i>) Giga (<i>Quadrilha Caipira</i>) Tocata (<i>Desafio</i>) Fuga (<i>Conversa</i>)	1942	1944, Rio de Janeiro	Orchestra	
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 8</i>	Prelúdio Ária (<i>Modinha</i>) Tocata (<i>Catira Batida</i>) Fuga	1944	1947, Rome	Orchestra	
<i>Bachianas Brasileiras no. 9</i>	Prelúdio Fuga	1945	1948, Rio de Janeiro 1975, Rio de Janeiro	String orchestra Orchestra of voices	

Table 1: All nine *Bachianas Brasileiras*, from Dudeque, 2022, 4.

Recordings

The recordings made by the composer are an essential tool for better understanding the possible interpretations. Villa-Lobos conducted recording sessions of the *Bachianas Brasileiras* with the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française between 1955 and 1957 in Paris.

Unlike most composers, Villa-Lobos actively conducted and recorded his works throughout his career. The recording of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* presents a rare opportunity to witness the composer shaping his music's interpretation. Musicologists and performers can gain valuable insights into how Villa-Lobos envisioned his work's emotional core and rhythmic vitality by analyzing his tempos, phrasing, articulation choices, and overall approach to dynamics.

While detailed, the score of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* score leaves room for interpretative decisions. The composer was known for not revising the score, even when he made changes in the performances that he conducted. For that reason, sometimes there are passages for which the recording proves to be fundamental in resolving doubts regarding various elements in the score. Throughout the text, these elements will be highlighted and mentioned where the recording proves to be most pertinent to enlightening the subject in question.

Villa-Lobos's recording serves as a bridge between the written notes and a lived performance. Analyzing his choices regarding tempo fluctuations, *rubato*, and phrasing helps performers understand how to breathe life into the score and capture the spirit of Villa-Lobos's conception. His recordings serve as authoritative interpretations of his works, offering a benchmark against which subsequent performances can be measured.

As a composer-conductor, Villa-Lobos was uniquely positioned to convey his intentions to the musicians under his direction, ensuring that his vision for the music was faithfully realized. By closely examining Villa-Lobos's recordings, performers can have deep insights into his compositions' stylistic conventions, expressive gestures, and technical challenges, enhancing their own interpretations.

1 - First Movement: *Preludio (Introdução)*

The first movement lasts only forty-one measures and is orchestrated for a string orchestra, contrasting with the other movements that use the full orchestral instrumentation. It is in the key of B minor and draws inspiration from Bach's "Royal Theme" from the *Musical Offering*. Both pieces have the same thematic material. However, Villa-Lobos adapts the last note of the theme. Instead of a descending diminished seventh, he uses a descending minor seventh, resolving virtually in a different voice. Appleby points out the incorporation of the character of the old *Modinhas Sertanejas* introductions, representing pieces from the interior of Brazil.²² Melo characterizes this movement as "the most abstract of the four pieces, and its sober and meditative character recalls the sustained majesty of the Baroque sarabande."²³



Figure 1.1: *Musical Offering*, Royal Theme by J.S. Bach

²² David P. Appleby, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: A Life (1887-1959)* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2002), 125.

²³ James Melo in Sonia Rubinsky, *Villa-Lobos, H.: Piano Music, Vol. 4 (Rubinsky) - Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4 / Children's Carnival*, CD, Latin American Classics (Naxos, 2004), 3, <https://www.naxos.com/MainSite/BlurbsReviews/?itemcode=8.555717&catnum=555717&filetype=AboutThisRecording&language=English>.



Figure 1.2: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement I *Preludio (Introdução)*, Measure 1

Another exciting aspect of this movement is the use of a repeated motif as a constructive element. As Moreira points out, ascending arpeggiated triads are a characteristic of the Baroque Era, used for example by Bach in the Prelude in C major from the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1.²⁴



Figure 1.3: The triadic arpeggio as a thematic element in the Prelude in C major by J. S. Bach

With these observations in mind, it is apparent that this movement exhibits more Baroque traits than Brazilian ones. However, Melo's observation about the sarabande emphasizes a

²⁴ Gabriel Ferrão Moreira, "O Nacional e o Neoclássico no Prelúdio das Bachianas Brasileiras n.4 de Heitor Villa-Lobos: observações analíticas," *USP*, Simpósio Internacional Villa-Lobos, 2009, 106.

distinction; unlike the sarabande, typically written in 3/4 time, the Prelude adopts a 4/4 time signature.²⁵ Another discernible difference, not only in this movement but also in subsequent ones, lies in Villa-Lobos's creation of longer sequences compared to Bach. Villa-Lobos employs patterns that repeat up to four or five times, contrasting with Bach's compositions, which typically feature no more than three repetitions.

Furthermore, Rust draws attention to a resonance in the movement resembling a Baroque instrument.²⁶ She posits that Villa-Lobos endeavors to capture the sound of an organ, evident in the octaves within the bass line and the grandeur of the culmination of the piece. We can also perceive the composer's desire to have an organ-like sound in the second movement, Coral (*Canto do Sertão*); in the piano version, he writes "como um órgão", meaning "like an organ", and also instructs "Press the keys down without letting hammers strike the strings." This technique is to be used in the first chords from measures 71 to 85. Villa-Lobos is trying to achieve a resonant sound with sort of an echo effect. This nuanced exploration of tonal qualities and structural elements underscores Villa-Lobos's deliberate engagement with Baroque influences and the rich tapestry of Brazilian musical traditions within the *Bachianas Brasileiras*.

²⁵ James Melo in Rubinsky, *Villa-Lobos, H.: Piano Music, Vol. 4 (Rubinsky) - Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4 / Children's Carnival*.

²⁶ Roberta Rust, "Piano Works from Hietor Villa-Lobos' Middle Period : A Study of Choros No. 5, Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4, and Ciclo Brasileiro" (University of Miami, 1991), 68.

Exposition (m. 1-17) - Bm	Development (m. 19-32) - Em	Recapitulation (shortened) (m. 33-36) - Bm	Coda (m. 37-41) - Bm
a (m. 1-5) – melody in Violins I	c (m. 19-22)	Melody in cellos with extended triplets in violins	Basses join the melody
b (m. 6-9) – Violin solo	c' (m. 23-28) – Vlas and cellos counterpoint	-	-
b' (m. 10-13) – Basses an octave lower	d (m. 28-32) – new choro elements: significant variation in range, use of triplets to break the previous pattern, greater use of chromaticism	-	-
a (m. 14-17) – prepares the modulation to Em		-	-

Table 2: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement I *Preludio (Introdução)*: form of the movement

From the conducting perspective, it is essential to listen to the recordings conducted by the composer himself with the Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française. In this case, it is even more relevant for the conductor to listen to the recording. Villa-Lobos was known for not revising his published compositions but nonetheless asking for changes in the parts during rehearsals and recordings. A great example in the first movement is the passage in measure eight. Both times this passage is played in the recording, the violin solo plays a high G natural on the third beat instead of a D natural as written in the score.



Figure 1.4: Written in the score, violin solo, measure 8.



Figure 1.5: Played in the recording, violin solo, measure 8.

Another invaluable insight for conductors based on the recording involves the tempo shifts. In the first repetition, Villa-Lobos does precisely what is written in the score. The *poco a poco animando* starts in measure 28 and goes until the *rallentando* in measure 31. However, in the second repetition, the composer starts the *poco a poco animando* much earlier in measure 19, right where the development section starts. This could inform the conductor's interpretation and hint at how flexible the composer was with the various interpretative possibilities of his music. This indicates how Villa-Lobos understood the form while performing the piece and highlights the importance of the romantic elements in his music such as fluctuations of tempos in favor of musical phrases, great dynamic differences, large use of vibrato, and *divisi*.

Returning to the initial measures, the way Villa-Lobos treats the harmony and note choices indicates the sophistication of his composition in this movement (Figure 1.6).

i v VII III iv I V F#7(b9)

Bm F#m7/E A7 D Em/G Bm

Figure 1.6: phrase a, Measures 1-5.

At first glance, it seems a straightforward chord progression, even superficial. However, with a closer look at each element, it will be apparent that the compositional process is more intricate than it seems. Villa-Lobos composed the first movement so that the listener always has the key B minor in mind. He writes horizontally and vertically at the same time.

First, the bass line is a progression by fourths, a standard procedure in the baroque era. The composer uses the notes of the B minor triad (highlighted in green) to emphasize the piece's key, even though the harmony changes every two beats. He uses a dominant chord (F#m7/E) in the first measure but in an inversion with the minor seventh in the bass. Villa-Lobos delays the appearance of F# in the double basses until measure four, where the dominant in root position is heard for the first time. Nevertheless, it is not a simple dominant; there is a unique "flavour" from the minor ninth (G natural) and seventh (E natural) of the chord.

Also circled in green, in Violins I, we see the resolutions of suspensions, always in a note of the tonic triad. It is interesting to notice that the dissonances in red (Violins I - horizontal) are

the exact extensions of the dominant (C#, E, G) heard in measure four (Violins II and Violas - vertical). This shows how Villa-Lobos's ingenious use of a simple motif to build all musical elements in the first movement. While all of this is happening, we also hear the B minor scale moving downwards in the violas (highlighted in purple). It is crucial to note that this material will later be used as the bass line in phrase **b**.

Regarding the conductor's job, there are some critical technical moments across the entire movement. In measure 31, there is a *rallentando* after the *poco a poco animando*. The *allegretto* comes only in measure 33, which implies that the *rallentando* goes all the way through from the third beat in measure 31 until the end of 32, and not only to the two last beats of measure 31, as some conductors might think.

The two last bars also present a challenge (Figure 1.7). The *allargando* in measure 40 opens the possibility of subdividing the last beat, which is an excellent approach to get all violins and violas to articulate the sixteenth note together. Making the cellos audible in the last measure is even more challenging. The composer indicates that the G in octaves should be heard, placing a *fff* under the note. The conductor must balance the string section so that the orchestra still plays *fortissimo* as indicated but not so loud that the cellos cannot be heard. It is highly recommended that all the strings play a down bow in the last measure, while the cellos should retake bows, making two down strokes in the last measure.

The image displays a musical score for two measures, organized into two systems. The first system consists of seven staves, and the second system consists of two staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

First System (Seven Staves):

- Staff 1:** Starts with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 2:** Similar to Staff 1, with a half note and a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 3:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 4:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 5:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 6:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 7:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.

Second System (Two Staves):

- Staff 8:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.
- Staff 9:** Features a half note with a fermata, followed by a measure with a half note and a fermata. The dynamic marking *ff* is present.

Dynamic Markings and Performance Instructions:

- ff* (fortissimo) is used throughout the score.
- Div.* (divisi) is used in the first measure of the first system.
- Uniti* (united) is used in the first measure of the second system.
- D.C. al 8* (Da Capo al fine) is used at the end of the second system.

Figure 1.7: Two last measures.

One of the most significant challenges for the conductor in this movement is to keep it attractive and engaging to the audience, as the composer asks for a complete repetition of the movement. Listening to the recording made by Villa-Lobos can provide some ideas on how to vary the repetition. When Villa-Lobos conducts the piece in the first repetition, he starts around $\text{♩}=37$ and keeps the tempo stable for almost all the first repetition except for measures 28 to 32, where he asks for *poco a poco animando* and *rallentando*. He makes a small *ritenuto* at the end of measure 13 in both repetitions. In measure 33, where *a tempo* is written, he returns to the initial tempo.

In the second repetition of the movement, Villa Lobos returns to the first tempo of $\text{♩}=37$. However, in measure 19, he shifts to a much faster tempo, starting at around $\text{♩}=54$ and continuously accelerating until measure 30, where he reaches around $\text{♩}=85$. After that, in measure 33, where he previously returned to the initial tempo ($\text{♩}=37$), he goes back to a faster pace, around $\text{♩}=44$ the second time. The fermata in the last measure also lasts longer than the first time.

When I conducted the movement, I made a few similar choices to Villa-Lobos' interpretation but also added some musical decisions of my own.

a) In measure 8, I asked the solo violin to play a D for the first repetition, as in Figure 1.4.

In the second repetition, I asked him to play the high G as in Villa-Lobos' recording (both times) as in Figure 1.5.

b) In measure 10, as the composer writes *f cantabile* for the cellos, I also asked the double basses to add this indication to their part and for both sections to use *molto vibrato* to show the downward line of almost an octave from B to C. I also asked the double basses to use the extension to reach the low C in measure 13 to add more weight to the sound.

- c) In measure 13, I did not do any *rallentando* in the first repetition. I left it for the second repetition to create something different for the audience and prepare the theme's reappearance in *p* in measure 14.
- d) In measure 18 of the first repetition, I asked cellos and double basses to play a slight *crescendo* on the sixteenth notes to create direction to the development section starting in measure 19, and I kept the tempo. In the second repetition, I asked the opposite. I asked the orchestra to play a *decrescendo* on the sixteenth notes to create a surprising effect of what was heard before. After that, I followed Villa-Lobos's interpretation and continuously accelerated until the *rallentando* in measure 31.
- e) I treated the fermatas in the last measure like Villa-Lobos. The fermata on the second repetition was longer than the first one.
- f) In general, I also had a faster tempo both times than Villa-Lobos. As the movement repeats completely, and thinking strategically about the overall concert program, in which this piece was the last to be performed, I thought it would be a better musical idea to keep it fluent. Conductors need to have a bigger picture when choosing this piece as part of the program.

2 - Second Movement: *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*

The piano version of the second movement was composed in 1941 and dedicated to the Brazilian pianist and composer José Vieira Brandão. Villa-Lobos orchestrated this movement also in 1941. Contrasting with the first movement, orchestrated for string orchestra, the second movement, *Canto do Sertão* calls for a much larger ensemble, containing:

Woodwinds	Brass	Percussion	Strings
1 Piccolo flute	4 French Horns	Timpani	Violins I
2 Flutes	2 Trumpets	Tam-Tam	Violins II
2 Oboes	2 Tenor Trombones	Bass Drum	Viola
1 English Horn	1 Bass Trombone	Celeste	Cello
2 Clarinets	1 Tuba	Xylophone	Double Bass
2 Bassoons	-	-	-
1 Contra Bassoon	-	-	-

Table 3: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement II, *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, instrumentation

The movement has *Largo* as a tempo and character indication and is composed in the key of C minor. The movement is called *Coral* and has a second Brazilian title of *Canto do Sertão*, translated in the score as “Song of the Jungle.” It is crucial to understand that the English translation does not capture the exact meaning, mainly because the word *Sertão* does not represent just a regular “Jungle.” *Sertão* represents a specific Brazilian northeast region with a particular food, dance, and music culture.²⁷

²⁷ The word “sertão” has the most diverse origins and meanings, often leading to inappropriate or imprecise use. In the Brazilian Northeast, the *Sertão* corresponds to the semi-arid region. It presents a clear contrast with the *Agreste* and *Zona da Mata*, forest regions. The most typical countryman in this region is the cowboy, heir to a tradition that dates back to the beginning of the colonial period and the legendary *Casa da Torre de Garcia D’Ávila* in the 16th century. In

As Felice (2016) points out, Tarasti suggests the melody is inspired by a Catholic *sertaneja* song of the northeast, but he does not provide the source.²⁸ Noteworthy in this movement is the persistent recurrence of the B \flat pedal note, functioning as an ostinato throughout a substantial segment of the composition. Tarasti calls this ostinato “the sad and monotonous song of *Araponga*.” This B \flat is emblematic of the vocalization of the *araponga* bird, characterized by its white plumage and black beak.

The second movement’s formal organization can be outlined as follows. All phrases are repeated twice with some differences. The exception is phrase **d** in Section B, which is not repeated.

Section A – mm. 1-32	Section B – mm. 33-87	Coda – mm. 87-end
Phrase a – mm. 1-8	Phrase c – mm. 33-44	mm. 87-end
Phrase b – mm. 9-16	Phrase d – mm. 44-50	-
Phrase a' – mm. 17-24	Phrase e – mm. 51-58	-
Phrase b' – mm. 25-32	Phrase c – mm. 59-70	-
-	Phrase e – mm. 71-87	-

Table 4: Movement II, *Coral (Canto do Sertão)*, *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*; form.

The opening material of the second movement was later reworked to be used in the song “The Seed of God” in the composer’s musical *Magdalena*, written in 1947 (see Figures 2.1 and 2.2.) Villa-Lobos uses the same key for both pieces, C minor. The main differences are in the instrumentation. In *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, he writes for oboe and English horn

David Antonio Filho, “Sobre A Palavra ‘Sertão’: Origens, Significados E Usos No Brasil (Do Ponto De Vista Da Ciência Geográfica),” n.d., 84–86.

²⁸ Tarasti, *Heitor Villa-Lobos: The Life and Works, 1887-1959*, 203.

accompanied by the french horns. In *Magdalena*, he writes both melody and harmony for the violins. That can inform the conductor's interpretation as how Villa-Lobos thought melody and harmony as whole and note separated musical elements. Moreover, it shows the importance of this thematic section for the composer as he reframe it to use in *Magdalena* while also giving some insight into his compositional process of utilizing themes previously used for other purposes.

6

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (C. i.), Bassoon (Fg.), Contrabassoon (C. Fg.), Cor Anglais (Cor. Fa), Saxophone (Xf.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The second system includes staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in B-flat (C. i.), Bassoon (Fg.), Cor Anglais (Cor. Fa), Saxophone (Xf.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.).

Key musical markings and annotations include:

- Flute (Fl.):** Solo, *rall.*, *a tempo*, *a.*
- Oboe (Ob.):** I. Solo, *mf*
- Clarinet in B-flat (C. i.):** Solo, *mf*
- Bassoon (Fg.):** *a 2*, *mf pesante*, *p*
- Contrabassoon (C. Fg.):** *p*
- Cor Anglais (Cor. Fa):** *mf*
- Saxophone (Xf.):** *mf*
- Violoncello (Vc.):** *Pizz.*, *p*, *rall.*, *a tempo*
- Contrabass (Cb.):** *p*

N. Y. 1555

Figure 2.1: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4, Coral (Canto do Sertão)*: Melody in the oboe and English horn from rehearsal mark 1.

VIOLINS I

MAGDALENA

H. Villa-Lobos

1

Top line thruout

THE SEED OF GOD

Lento
div a 2
consord.
ppp
SENZA SORD.

div a 3
consord.
ppp

Andante religioso
1
7
senza
A
in 2
mp
1
senza
mp

p
crese.
p
crese.

div. a 2
poco a poco
C
rallent.
mf
a tempo
ff
IN 2

Figure 2.2: Violin I part of *Magdalena* (1947). Melody from letters A to B.

2.1 - Section A

A common Baroque technique used in Section A by Villa-Lobos is the elided cadence.²⁹

As Felice describes, “Bach often began the subject of fugues with a note tied to the previous note in the episode. This occurs in all musical phrases of this movement (Sections A and B), except for phrases **d** and **e**.”³⁰

Regarding the harmony, Dudeue writes:

One of the most desired aspects that Villa-Lobos pursues in the *Bachianas* is a classic harmonic atmosphere that would refer to traditional tonality. Several common-practice tonality procedures are often found in the *Bachianas*. For instance, the composer employs modulations, frequently to close regions, certainly, intending to allude to the Baroque music practice. Another instance, circle of fifths progressions, so frequently found in the *Bachianas*, is an allegory intended to represent a Baroque music practice. Furthermore, dominant-tonic cadences are decisive in the articulation of this music, even if the composer adapts the common-tonality practice for his compositional needs.³¹

²⁹An elided cadence occurs when a new phrase begins simultaneously with or before the cadence chord of the first phrase. Sometimes this cadence is also achieved by overlapping. Leon Stein, *Structure & Style: The Study and Analysis of Musical Forms*, expanded ed. (Princeton, N.J: Summy-Birchard Music, 1979), 14.

³⁰ Regina Célia Rocha Felice, “Referenciais Neoclássicos E Originalidade Nas Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4 De Heitor Villa-Lobos” (São Paulo, SP, Universidade Estadual Paulista, 2016), 56.

³¹ Dudeque, *Heitor Villa-Lobos's Bachianas Brasileiras*, 36.

Largo

Chord progression for the first eight bars:

Measure	Chord	Roman Numeral
1	G(b9)#5	V
2	C(b6)/G	I
3	Dbmaj7/G	♭ II
4	Gm7(b9)	v
5	Fø7	ivø
6	Db7/F	♭ II(dom.)
7	Cm(b6)/Eb	i
8	(Continuation of Cm(b6)/Eb)	

Figure 2.3: Reduction of the choral style section in the first eight bars

The analysis of the first phrase of eight measures shows that although the composer uses several alterations and extensions in the chords, the harmony still broadly follows the traditional tonic-subdominant-dominant-tonic progression. Another exciting aspect of this music is the use of repeated notes in the bass line (measures 1 to 7: G-G-G-G-F-F-E-E-C-C-C-C-B-B) to give more stability to the already dissonant harmony. That also refers to a common Baroque practice, where the composer would conduct the voices in a way that avoided big leaps or undesirable movements. Many times, he moves in a stepwise fashion, but the general ideal is to not draw attention to a specific voice by creating big leaps or drastic range shifts. Villa-Lobos resolves the voices with sevenths, keeping them in the same position or moving them downwards, the typical tension resolution in the Baroque era. This section's range is the same as a regular choir, respecting the range of each voice. He also uses Baroque ornaments, such as passing tones and neighbor notes.

From the conducting perspective, there are a few points worth mentioning. The first is the balance of the orchestra. In the piano version, the pianist has more control over the balance and the dynamic of the notes. In the orchestra version, Villa-Lobos orchestrated the choral passage for four french horns, and the oboe plays the main line (the soprano line) in the beginning. The conductor must know that the A section still uses a choral style but is often played as an accompanied melody. The conductor should balance the orchestra so one can hear all the notes in the french horns alongside the soprano line in the oboe from measure 1 to 8 and then joined by the English horn doubling the oboe line.

Another common balance issue is the *araponga* bird represented by the B \flat in the flute and the xylophone in unison. The composer writes a tie, suggesting that the note should continue until the beginning of the next measure. The challenge faced is that the flute can hold the note much longer than the xylophone. Also, the articulation in the xylophone tends to be more prominent. Villa-Lobos notates *mf* for the xylophone but only *piano* for the flute, which could suggest that the flute should sound like a continuation of the attack made by the xylophone.

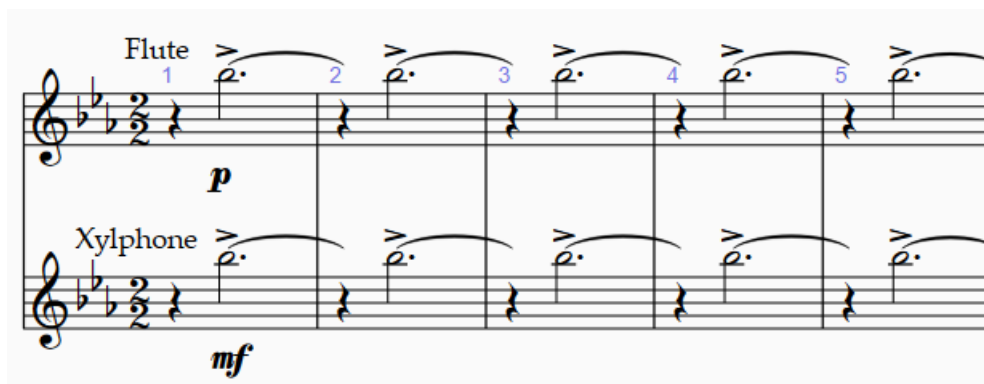


Figure 2.4: Flute and Xylophone playing the B \flat representing the *araponga* bird.

As elucidated by Appleby, the composer furnished the following characterization of the choral: a “slow song of a religious nature... resonating in the open expanse of the tropical dawn in northeastern Brazil, where the mournful and monotonous call of the *araponga*, the blacksmith

bird of the Brazilian jungle, can be heard in the distance.”³² From these statements, it becomes clear that the choral is deeply rooted in Brazilian musical tradition and, more significantly, in the rustic milieu of rural Brazil. However, the Baroque influence remains salient in this movement; its religious character, chorale architecture, polyphony featuring an interplay of voices, and the utilization of fifth progressions affirm the stylization of Baroque practices.

The conductor should notice the importance of the ostinato in Villa-Lobos’s orchestration. It begins, in unison, with one flute and xylophone. Later, in measures 17 to 32, it is heard in the flute, oboe, celesta, and xylophone, but always in the same octave. Then, in measure 33, it comes back in octaves in the clarinets. Finally, in measure 44, the bird keeps singing but now is present in three octaves.

In measure 8, the conductor should notice that although there is a *staccato* sign over the cello and bassoon lines, the composer writes *pesante* for the latter. Therefore, the *staccato* should not be too short but more resonant.

Afterwards, in measure 17 – the **b’** phrase, Villa-Lobos asks for a significant change of pace, writing *Piu mosso*. From measures 1 to 16, the tempo indication is *Largo*, and in Villa-Lobos’ recording, the quarter note is performed at around 82 bpm. From measure 17 onwards, with the *Piu mosso* indication, the composer speeds up to a quarter note around 114 bpm, which represents an increase of almost 40% in tempo. Also, in the **b’** phrase is the *gruppò*, a Baroque feature consisting of a pattern of four notes where the first and third notes are repeated. The composer makes his intentions clear by articulating this passage by grouping the notes by four, meaning the bow should change directions in the strings accordingly.

³² Appleby, *Heitor Villa-Lobos*, 125.

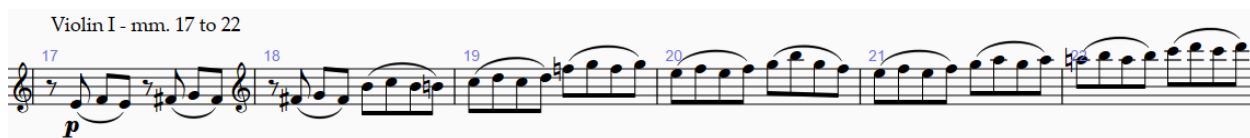


Figure 2.5: *Gruppo* in Violins I – *Piu mosso* in measure 17

Also, from measures 17 to 32 (**a'** and **b'**), the primary line shifts from the woodwinds to the low register played by violas and cellos doubled with the colours of the English horn and clarinet. The composer indicates *cantabile* as a reminder that the character should remain in a *cantabile* tone despite the tempo change.

2.2 - Section B

The B section (measure 33) starts with another shift in the orchestration. The phrase starts in measure 32, the *anacrusis* for measure 33, in Trumpet II and Trombones I and II. The glissando highlights the beginning of the section in the french horns in measures 32 – 33. The conductor should carefully listen for this effect and pay attention so the horns do not cover the central line pickup in the same measure. Here, Villa-Lobos doubles the Bb “araonga” in octaves in the clarinet, as mentioned and shown in Figure 2.6. Also, Villa-Lobos is gradually giving more importance to the Bb ostinato. In the beginning, he started with a *p* dynamic; after that, in measure 17, he asks for *mf*, then in the B section, *f* is written.

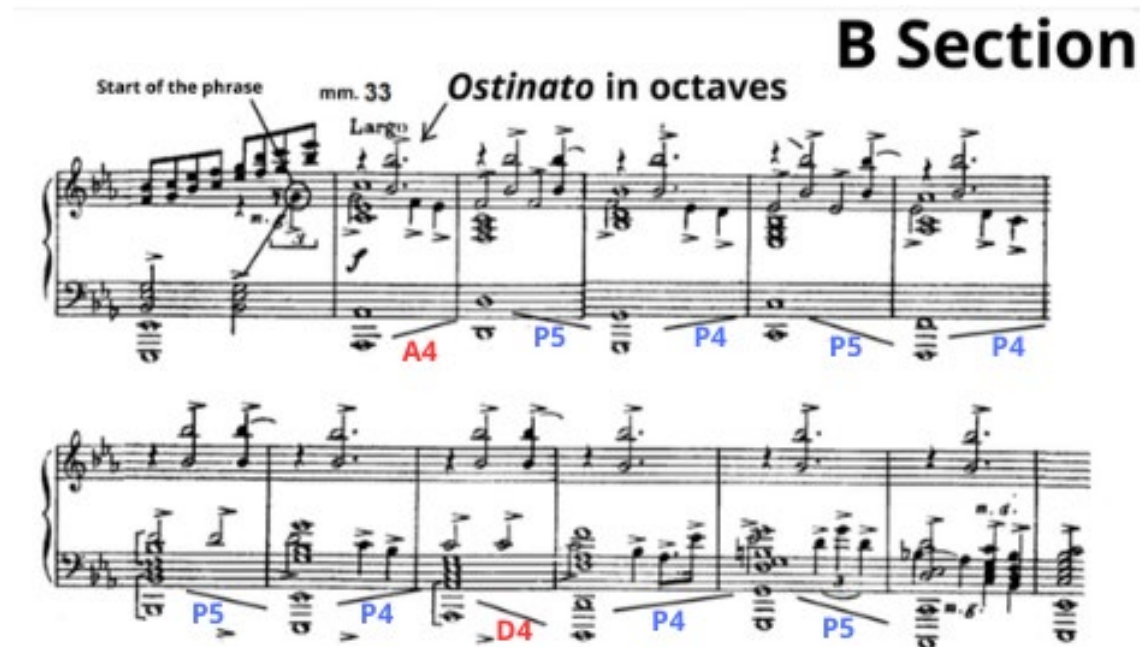


Figure 2.6: First measures of the B Section, based on Felice 2016, 60.

The B section returns to the *Largo* tempo indication. Another exciting feature of Villa-Lobos's writing is the movement in the double basses. He uses the circle of fifths progression to create a Baroque reference, moving up by a perfect fourth and down by a perfect fifth. The conductor should notice that unlike Section A, where the main line goes up, the phrase goes down in Section B. It starts on a G4 and finishes a fifth below on a C3.

Measure 44 starts the **d** phrase, the only phrase in the second movement that is not repeated. Also, this is where, for the first time, the Bb ostinato is written in three octaves. There are a few essential differences between the piano and orchestra versions. In the piano version, measure 47, there is a *cres. poco a poco*, and the melody in the last beat goes down from A to E. In the orchestra version, measure 47, there is no crescendo, and the melody goes up.

Another exciting aspect of this phrase is that in measure 44, Villa-Lobos writes piano *decrescendos* for the Violins I and II. In measure 45, he writes *mf* for the Violins II, and then he writes *p* when the Violins I join the Violins II in measure 47. Another concern in measure 45 is

that the double bass has not been given a dynamic indication for an extended period since measure 17. However, the bassoon II doubling the same line indicates *mf*. The accompaniment line should be *mf* for this phrase. Hence, the conductor should know that it might be necessary to adjust the dynamic of the Violins I when they join in measure 47.

Also, the orchestra version in measure 48 has a decrescendo for the violins that is not present in the piano version. It is crucial to notice that the composer creates two distinct effects here. In the piano version, there is a crescendo starting in measure 47 and culminating in a *ff* in measure 51; and in the orchestra version, there is a decrescendo in measure 48 and a *ff subito* in measure 50, the pickup to measure 51.



Figure 2.7: Piano version, measures 47 to 51.

Figure 2.8: Orchestra version, measures 44 to 51.

At the beginning of phrase e, the conductor must check the piano version to understand the sound Villa-Lobos is trying to achieve. In measure 71 of the piano version (Figure 2.9), there is the word *Grandeoso* and the notational instruction in the score, “*como um órgão*” (like an organ). Villa-Lobos specifies that the keys should be depressed without the hammers striking the strings. This effect is achieved by depressing the pedal while playing the initial chord in the

lower octave; subsequently, the upper octave chord is played, lowering the keys to the bottom without generating sound. Villa Lobos aims to capture some of the resonance of the *fff* $A\flat maj7$ chord and hold it with the depressed keys. Finally, the pedal is raised, as depicted in the figure, while the hands persist in depressing the keys.

In the orchestra version (Figure 2.10), the composer had to reorchestrate this technique which is possible only on the piano. He wrote *molto legato* for all the instruments playing the whole note “choral” line. He orchestrated this main line primarily for brass instruments to get the organ sound, while strings now have a written-out echo. Also, they have a variation of the “araponga” $B\flat$, now with step motion downwards and upwards. The section ends up culminating in the loudest point in the movement, a *ffff* in the french horns and trumpets starting the coda.

Grandeoso

(*) como um órgão

fff (*)

Ped. _____

(*) Afundar as téclas sem deixar bater os martelos nas cordas.
Press the keys down without letting hammers strike the strings.

Figure 2.9: Measure 71, phrase e – Piano version

- 43 -

Michael Round addresses the challenge in both versions to achieve the desired effect of sounding like an organ:

A literal reading of the instructions produces not the intended eight-note echo chord on the second semiquaver but instead an inadvertent loud pickup of just the minor triad on middle C, obliterating anything else in the way of harmonics—the sustaining of the bass note precludes any solution involving half-peddalling. Comparison with the orchestration (normally useful when clarifying the intentions of composers such as Ravel) reveals a totally different effect [...] of no help to the pianist, and itself posing balance problems demanding some unwritten diminuendos in the brass.³³

It is common practice among conductors to ask the brass section to play a small diminuendo on held notes to give transparency to the string or woodwind section. This is not a practice exclusive to Villa-Lobos's music, and it is done in most of the mainstream orchestral repertoire.

2.3 - Coda

The coda starts with a C minor chord, reaffirming the tonality at the loudest point of the movement. After that, in the three last bars (Figure 2.11), Villa-Lobos uses a Wagnerian cadence with a low C in the timpani and low strings (cellos and double basses), while the other instruments play a Bb in octaves.³⁴ The Bb ostinato still rings to the end but is now fading to a *piano*, while the repeated C dissipates all the chromatic tension built before.

³³ Round, “‘Bachianas Brasileiras’ in Performance,” 40.

³⁴ For Salles there are two characteristic cadences in Villa-Lobos music: wagnerian and varesian cadences. An example of the wagnerian cadence is when “[...] all the harmonic agitation of the work concludes in octaves [...] harmonically ‘pure’, warned us about the impossibility of satisfactorily concluding the entire chromatic process unfolded up to that moment.” Salles, *Villa-Lobos*, 144.

The image displays a musical score for three bars, organized into three systems. The first system consists of ten staves. The top two staves feature notes with accents and slurs. The third staff has a whole rest. The fourth staff contains a half note with an accent. The fifth staff shows a melodic line with eighth notes. The sixth and seventh staves are for a low instrument, likely a cello or double bass, with long horizontal lines indicating sustained notes. The eighth staff has a triplet of eighth notes. The ninth and tenth staves show a melodic line with eighth notes. The second system consists of three staves, with the top two having notes with accents and slurs, and the bottom staff having notes with accents and slurs. The third system consists of four staves. The top three staves are empty. The bottom staff is divided into two parts: the left part is marked 'Pizz.' (Pizzicato) and 'Div.' (Divisi), and the right part is marked 'Unifi' (Unifido). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'pp' (pianissimo).

Figure 2.11: Three last bars.

3 - Third Movement: *Aria (Cantiga)*

The third movement, *Aria (Cantiga)*, dates from 1935 in its piano version. In this movement, Villa-Lobos employs a folkloric popular song that he arranged and called it *Itabayana (Ó mana deixa eu ir)* – (see Figure 3.1), it can be translated as “Oh, sister, let me go.”³⁵ The composer develops it through juxtaposition and overlapping of typical Brazilian rhythms. In section A, the theme is presented in the upper voice in quarter notes, while in section B it is played an octave higher.

Introduction	m. 1-6
A1 section (<i>Moderato</i> ♩=84)	m. 7-37
B section (<i>Vivace</i> ♩=132)	m. 38-80
A2 section (<i>Moderato</i> ♩=88)	m. 81-115
Recapitulation of the Introduction with final cadence	m. 116-end

Table 5: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement III, *Aria (Cantiga)*, form.

³⁵ The term *Itabaiana*, an indigenous name, is the result of the union of the prefixes "Ita" which means stone (the stone is a mountain), "Taba" which means village (indigenous *taba*), and "Oane" which means someone. From the combination of the three words, the name *Itabaiana* emerged. Therefore, *Itabaiana* means: In that mountain there is a village, where people live, in that village someone lives.

In this ternary form movement (ABA), the middle part (B) is a contrasting section in rhythm and tempo. The movement's tempi are *Moderato* (though they differ in the A1 and A2 sections) and *Vivace*. It is written in F minor, and its middle section and the fourth movement are the most rhythmic dances of the suite.

Similarly to the *Coral* in the second movement, the composer described how in this movement, “with the aspect of a popular song, sung in certain cities of the northeast, the main melody of the Aria rests in a measured and serene march, in Bach’s style.”³⁶ Although the composer’s words are important, they are just a contribution to the search for the influences he used in the creation of his *Bachianas Brasileiras* since, as can be seen, he often offers somewhat superficial statements.

³⁶ Luís Paulo Horta, *Villa-Lobos: Uma Introdução* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Zahar Editor, 1987), 82.

No Sylvio's Salena
Itabayana

Andante

mp

ma-na dei x'eu i, ma na eu vou

so' ma-na dei x'eu i pa-x'o sa-ta'o do Bai.....

có! có!

eu lou dan sueto a Chris-to nos- sen. sa oris

Figure 3.1 – *Itabayana*, the song that served as the basis for the third movement of the *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 4³⁷

³⁷ Unpublished manuscript reproduced in Nahim Marum, *Revisão crítica das canções para voz e piano de Heitor Villa-Lobos: publicadas pela editora Max Eschig* (Cultura Acadêmica Editora, 2011), 84.

3.1 - Introduction

The introduction (bars 1-6) presents a pedal point in F, affirming the F minor key. Pedal notes are one of the characteristics of Baroque cadences, but the F pedal here has an even more critical role: to hold the key while the melody moves by descending chromaticism in the french horns, second violins, violas, and cellos, as shown in Figure 3.2. The use of descending chromatic motion is a crucial rhetorical element in Baroque music called *passus duriusculus* (a topic in topic theory). Marshall points out that the *passus duriusculus* is “typically employed in the Baroque era to convey pain and suffering, such as Christ’s suffering on the cross—or, its theological analogy, man’s suffering in this world.”³⁸

As shown in Figure 3.2, Villa-Lobos also writes accents to increase drama while also adding extra weight to the *passus duriusculus* passage. That can inform the conductor’s interpretation to not conduct it so fast. Another important insight is the Villa-Lobos’s recording. Although the notation in the score is *Moderato* ♩=84, the composer conducts it around ♩=69, showing that he was also considering doing this passage (Figure 3.2 - *passus duriusculus*) a bit slower for extra drama.

The first four measures have a counterpoint in the outer voices holding the F pedal. The F pedal notes alternate on the first and third beats (see Figure 3.3). It is interesting to notice that the only instrument articulating the F4 through the first four beats with an accent is the trumpet, while the violins sustain the F for the whole introduction. It is essential to mention that there is no dynamic indication for the trumpet at the beginning of the movement. A recommendation would be to ask the trumpet to play *mf*, as the other pedal notes are being played in the same

³⁸ Robert L. Marshall, “Truth and Beauty: J.S. Bach at the Crossroads of Cultural History,” *Bach* 21, no. 2 (1990): 7.

dynamic. Bars 5 and 6 are a cadential confirmation of the F minor tonality, and special attention should be given to French Horn I in measure 7, playing as an “echo” of the prolonged F, as shown in Figure 3.4.



Figure 3.2: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement III, *Aria (Cantiga)*, Introduction melody, *passus duriusculus*, measures 1-4

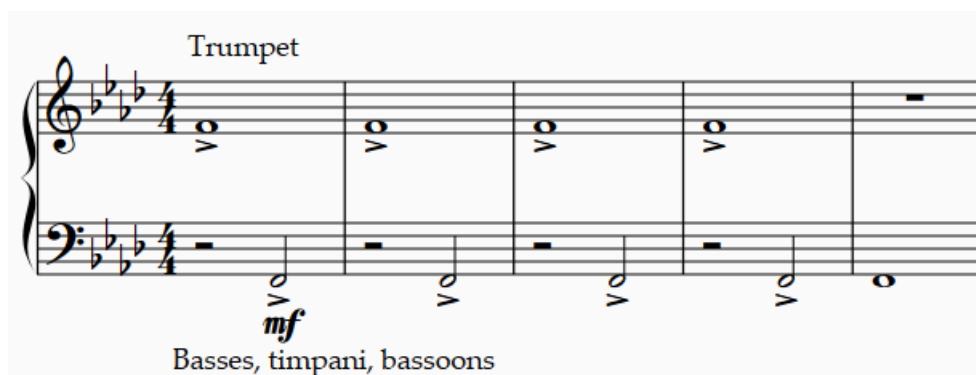


Figure 3.3 – Counterpoint of pedal notes in outer voices, measures 1-5



Figure 3.4 – “echo” in french horns, measures 6-7

3.2 - Section A

Section A can be subdivided into two smaller groups: phrase **a** (bars 7-21) and **b** (bars 22-37.) Phrase **a** starts with an accompanied melody that repeats four times (a1, a2, a3, and a4), but each time with a different orchestration. The first (a1) is in the clarinet, pickup for bar 7,

accompanied by the bassoons and one french horn. Dudeque points out the importance of authentic V-I cadence in the *Bachianas Brasileiras*.

Cadences V-I are frequently found in the *Bachianas*. They function in the traditional way, i.e., to finish phrases, themes, and sections of the works. An example of traditional cadence V-i is in mm. 9–10 of the Aria from *Bachianas* no. 4. [...] It is important to notice the melodic line design of the descending 3–2–1 scalar degree associated with the bass movement of 5–1.³⁹



Figure 3.5: Dudeque's analysis of a V-I cadence. Measures 8 to 10.⁴⁰

In bar 10, the conductor must be aware of the subtle differences. Villa-Lobos is precise writing staccato *p* for cellos and *pp* for double basses. He also writes *pp* for the bassoon, but here with a *crescendo* and in *legato*. Some conductors may be tempted to add the same crescendo for cellos and double basses. However, these instruments should only highlight the articulation of the bassoons in *legato* and *crescendo*.

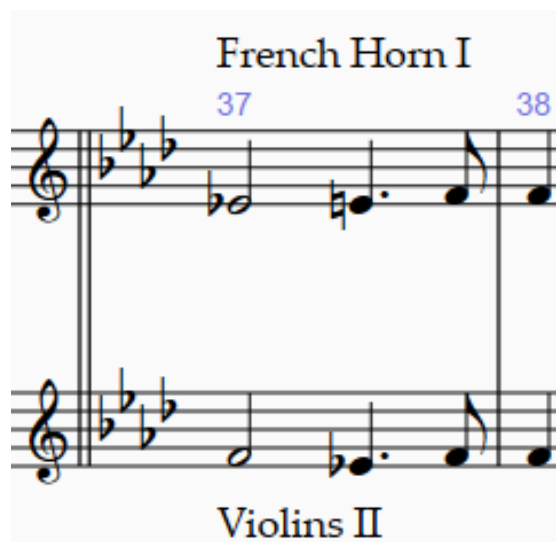
The second phrase (**a2**) starts on the pickup for bar 11 in the Violins I in octaves *divisi*, accompanied by the strings. The third phrase (**a3**) has a french horn solo with clarinets and bassoons in the accompaniment, and finally, a4 has the melody in the English Horn with the Tuba and French Horn IV playing the bass line.

³⁹ Middle cadences like V-I and 6⁺-I (augmented sixth resolving directly to tonic) are characterized by the traditional dominant-tonic function. Dudeque, *Heitor Villa-Lobos's Bachianas Brasileiras*, 58.

⁴⁰ Dudeque, 58.

The **b** phrase has two groups of 8 measures each. This section has a more prominent movement on the bass line and has a countermelody in the flutes and oboes. The conductor should listen for balance in measures 26 to 29 and 34 to 37. In these bars, while the Violins I and clarinets play the melody, the vital line of the flutes and oboes can be challenging to hear. The conductor should remind the Violins I and clarinets that this melody is written in *mf* only with no *crescendo*.

The conductor should carefully check the score and parts in measure 37. On the third beat, it is essential to note that the Violins II have a wrong E \flat note. The chord in measure 37 is a dominant of F minor, a C major with added minor seventh and minor ninth. The presence of the E \flat can drastically affect the musical result, creating a misleading harmony. If the chord had an E \natural it would be a minor chord, not a major one. Also, if not corrected, the E \flat would represent a clash with the French Horn I, which has a sounding E \sharp in the same spot as shown in Figure 3.6.



The image displays a musical score snippet for two staves. The top staff is labeled "French Horn I" and the bottom staff is labeled "Violins II". Both staves show measures 37 and 38. In measure 37, the French Horn I staff has a note that is a sharp E (E \sharp), while the Violins II staff has a note that is a flat E (E \flat). This creates a clash. In measure 38, both staves have a note that is a sharp E (E \sharp).

Figure 3.6 – Wrong note in Violins II, measure 37.

3.3 - Section B

This section brings back the phrase **a** from Section A, but in a redesigned fashion, with different style, orchestration, tempo, articulation, and rhythms.

m. 38-68	Pre-core: new elements
m. 69-74	Core: drama peak
m. 75-80	Codetta: dissolution of tensions

Table 6: Table based on Felice.⁴¹

Table 6 gives a good indication of the form of this section. Felice suggests that section B should be divided into three smaller sections: pre-core, core, and liquidation. However, the terms pre-core and core should be carefully evaluated. According to William Caplin, the pre-core is a structure present at the beginning of the development.⁴² “Since no single functional label adequately covers the initial part of a development, I use the neutral term pre-core instead.”⁴³

In the third movement of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, there is a clear ABA form, as shown earlier in Table 5. The B section represents a developmental material that derives from section A. The A section presents the central theme in a slow tempo (*Moderato* ♩=84) with a

⁴¹ Felice, “Referenciais Neoclássicos E Originalidade Nas Bachianas Brasileiras Nº 4 De Heitor Villa-Lobos,” 75.

⁴² The original use for the “pre-core” term is in sonata form, in the development section, in classical music.

⁴³ William Earl Caplin, *Classical Form: A Theory of Formal Functions for the Instrumental Music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 147.

choral-style accompaniment. Villa-Lobos introduces a new tempo (Vivace ♩=132) with a more agitated and articulated accompaniment in the B section. He also uses new timbres, such as the muted trumpet, in measure 40.

The first part of the B section (measures 38 to 68) has rhythmic variation and increasing tension, characteristic of a pre-core. The melody in the B section is the same as in the A Section, but now with short articulations. In the A section, the melody has a *tenuto* marking with a singing quality. In the B section, the melody is more energetic with *staccato* markings. This fits well with Caplin's description of a pre-core:

Whereas the core may draw on any ideas from the prior exposition, the opening of the pre-core is usually restricted to material derived from the basic idea of the main theme or from the closing section of the exposition.⁴⁴

However, some of the typical elements of a pre-core are missing. Although the B Section indicates a development, the harmony is still in F minor, with extensive use of pedal notes in the double basses throughout the whole pre-core part. In that sense, the B section does not fulfill the harmony requirement of a pre-core as described by Caplin:

The pre-core typically begins with tonic of the subordinate key, thus retaining the harmony from the end of the exposition. The pre-core may then remain entirely in that key or, more frequently, modulate to a development key (or to some initiating region in a development key) for the beginning of the core.⁴⁵

Even though a few of the standard features of the "pre-core" such as the harmony as mentioned above, "pre-core" still seems like the best label for this section (m. 38-68), in which

⁴⁴ Caplin, 151.

⁴⁵ Caplin, 147.

Villa-Lobos builds tension by adding chromaticism, articulations, and different rhythm textures in the accompaniment. A good example is measure 46, where he writes the melody for Piccolo, Oboe, and Violins I. The Violins II, Violas, and Cellos have a polyrhythmic texture, as shown in Figure 3.7.

The image shows a musical score for Measure 46. It consists of six staves, each with a label to its left: Violins I, Piccolo, Oboe, Violins II, Violas, and Cellos. The staves are grouped by a large bracket on the left. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Violins I, Piccolo, and Oboe staves have a melodic line with eighth notes and accents. The Violins II, Violas, and Cellos staves have a polyrhythmic texture with eighth and sixteenth notes. The measure is divided into three measures by vertical bar lines.

Figure 3.7 – Measure 46.

The core section lasts only six measures. Although the F pedal disappears from the double basses, it is continued in the rhythmic variations on the violins and clarinets. The melody is presented in three octaves, starting with trumpets, violas, and cellos in *ff* in measures 69 and 70. Then, it is played one octave lower in the bassoons, french horns, violas, and cellos in measures 71 and 72. Finally, the third octave lower is played in measures 73 and 74 in the bassoons, trombones, cellos, and double basses. The trombones and tuba are important from measures 69 to 71 during the core section, as they are the only instruments playing triplets and moving one octave lower each measure; measure 69 trombones 1 and 2, measure 70 the bass

trombone joins in, on octave lower, and finally measure 71 the tuba enters playing another octave lower with the same musical idea.

The peak in drama in the core section is reached by introducing new rhythms in the woodwinds and violins while the trombones play triplets. Also, the chords become denser, with added dissonant notes in the high register for the violins and oboes (Figure 3.8).



Figure 3.8: new rhythm and cluster in the core section. Measures 69 to 74.

The *codetta* is characterized by a more lyrical musical gesture in the trumpets and violins, playing a legato melody. Villa-Lobos keeps the intensity with the 2 x 3 rhythmic figures in the woodwinds and the triplets that now are also played by the violas, cellos, and double basses. From measures 78 to 80, the composer writes an *allargando* to prepare the recapitulation (A2) in the slower tempo that starts in measure 81.

Conducting the B section

The pre-core represents a significant challenge for the conductor. First, there is the transition from the *Moderato* ($\text{♩}=84$) to the *Vivace* ($\text{♩}=132$) on measures 37 and 38. There are no proportional *tempi* relationships, so the conductor must prepare the *rallentando* in measure 37 accordingly and immediately change the tempo in measure 38.

Another great challenge in this section is the articulation differences and discrepancies. For instance, in measures 40 and 41, the trumpet and clarinet hold a musical dialogue, and Villa-Lobos writes accents with a slur over the phrase, so the phrase sounds articulated but keeps the

melody's lyrical aspect. Once again, the recording made by the composer shows that these measures should be clearly articulated and not only reinforced as the score might suggest.

In measures 46 and 47, piccolo, oboes, and Violins I have the same material. However, the piccolo has a *staccato* marking, while the others have a *staccatissimo* symbol—see Figure 3.9. I asked all the players to play the same *staccatissimo* articulation in my performance, unifying the sound.

Still, in measures 46 and 47, violas and clarinets have the same chromatic material but different articulations. The violas have an accent on measure 46 and then *staccato* on the subsequent measures (see Figure 3.10), while the clarinets have only *staccato*. Also, the violas have a *mf* marking, while the clarinets have a *f*. When I conducted the piece, I asked violas and clarinets to play with accents from measure 46 to 49. With the texture of the melody played in the high register and the polyrhythmic accompaniment, it might be challenging to hear the chromatic line. With the accents and lengthier notes, it was possible to hear them.



Figure 3.9: discrepancies in articulation. Measures 46 and 47.



Figure 3.10: differences in dynamic and articulation. Measures 46 and 47.

In measure 54, the trombone joins in with the melody. However, where all other instruments playing the melody have a *staccatissimo* marking, the trombone has a tenuto articulation. The challenge here for the conductor is to balance the volume and show the differences in articulation.⁴⁶ In measures 56 and 57, the muted trumpets begin in two voices, and the conductor should watch for proper balance, so the second trumpet is also heard.

During the core peak from measure 69 to 74, it is crucial to ensure that the melody is heard all the way as it goes down an octave every two measures. Although the trombones have an important line playing the triplets from 69 to 71, it is only *f* against the *ff* in the violas and cellos with the melody. On the pickup for measure 73, the trombones and double basses will finally have primary material in *ff*.

From measures 75 to 80, the *codetta* has a more *cantabile* characteristic, with oboes, English horn, trumpets, and violins playing the melody in *legato*. The conductor should have made it clear that the phrase's direction reaches its peak in measure 79. The *allargando* from measures 78 to 80 should be organic, going from the *Vivace* (♩=132) to *Moderato* (♩=88).

3.4 - A2 Section

The A2 section is almost an exact recapitulation of section A. The difference is that in the A2 section, Villa-Lobos adds four extra measures, repeating the melody from measures 112 to 115. These measures also work as a *codetta* of the A2 section leading to the Introduction material that closes the piece. An exciting aspect of the A2 section is that the composer writes at

⁴⁶ A good strategy to achieve the balance is to ask the strings to play a bit off the string, so it is not so heavy, and one can hear the clarinet.

a slightly faster tempo. While the A section is marked *Moderato* (♩=84), the recapitulation on A2 has *Moderato* (♩=88). The faster *tempo* gives more fluidity to the section and compensates for the extra four measures. The conductor should be extremely careful with the tempo in this section, as Villa-Lobos will return to ♩=84 at the end of the piece on measure 116.

The challenges are the same as in section A regarding articulation and balance (for instance, bassoons, cellos, and double basses in measures 96-111). Once again, the conductor should watch for the flutes and oboes in measures 100 to 104 and 108 to 111; they are essential countermelodies and should be heard.

In the *codetta* of the A2 section, measures 112 to 115, the two flutes introduce the new accompanying material to the trumpet melody. The composer asks for metal mutes to have the proper metallic timbre in the trumpet.

3.5 - Codetta

From measures 116 to 119, Villa-Lobos brings back the Introduction material, which works as a frame at the movement's beginning and end. A more adequate name for this section, drawing on Caplin's categories of framing functions, would be postcadential.

The theme's structural beginning is articulated by the start of its basic idea; its end is defined by the moment of cadential arrival. Occasionally, the theme is framed by material that precedes and follows these structural limits. Such framing functions are termed introduction and postcadential, respectively.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Caplin, *Classical Form*, 15.

The codetta brings back almost the same instrumentation from the introduction. The main difference is that in the codetta, Villa-Lobos uses the oboes and English horn to hold the pedal F, while the trumpet (which held the F pedal in the introduction) plays the main chromatic line alongside other instruments instead.

The piece finishes in the last three measures with a musical gesture from the clarinet leading to a cluster chord in the second last measure in the strings, while Flutes I and II play quarter notes in perfect fourths. Salles points out that “the final chord is marked by resonances and sounds resulting from several aggregated dissonances.”⁴⁸ The third movement finishes with an F minor chord, with added sixth and ninth.⁴⁹

The conductor must notice that the *Meno* at measure 116 brings back the tempo to ♩=84, hence the importance of a well-paced *allargando* in measure 115 (see Figure 3.11). Also important for the interpretation is the V-I cadence on measures 119 to 120. Another essential detail is the last measure’s tam-tam, low strings, and clarinets. While all other instruments have a *pp* indication, the tam-tam and clarinets have *mf*. The clarinets play the extensions of the F minor chord (major sixth and ninth, D natural and G natural, respectively), the tam-tam brings a metallic timbre, and the slow strings hold the F pedal. An alternate interpretation may entail regarding the slurred chords as superimposed triads of flat II and natural III over the tonic (F), with the final chord representing a quartal chord over the F minor triad. This shows how the composer was especially careful with which instruments should be more prominent at the end of the piece, and it is the conductor’s job to bring that delicate balance to life.

⁴⁸ Salles, *Villa-Lobos*, 144.

⁴⁹ Salles calls this a “Varesian Cadence.” According to him, cadences with added resonances over the chords are common practice in Villa-Lobos’s music.

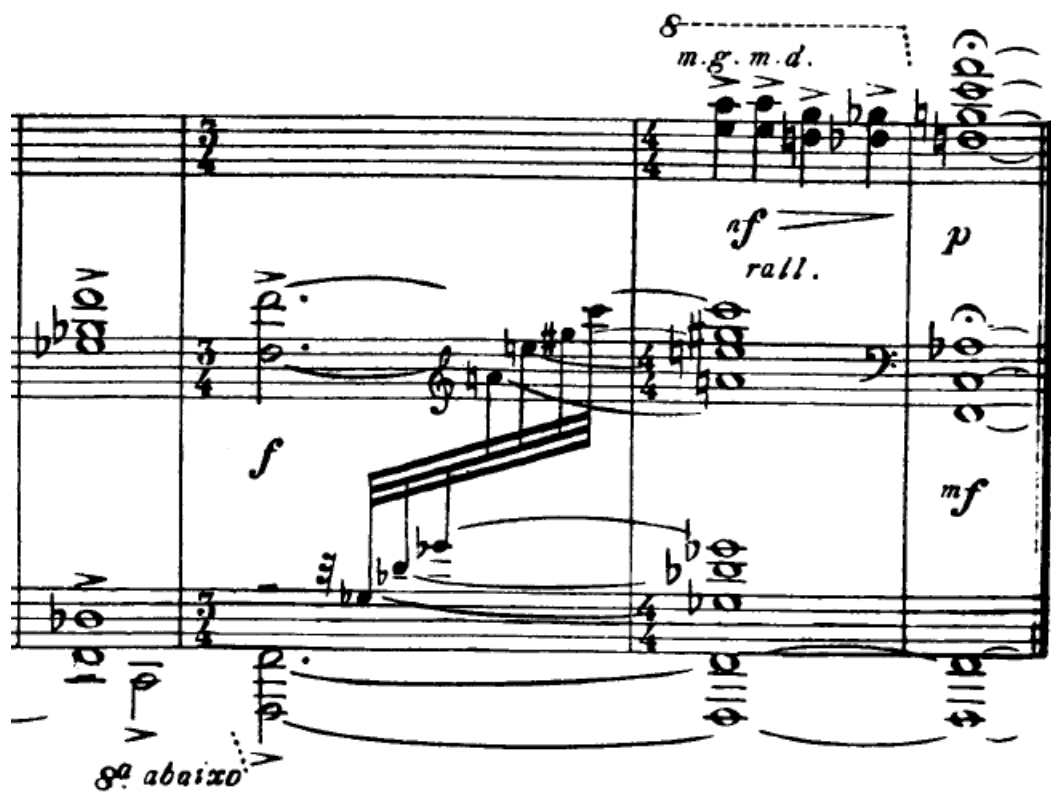


Figure 3.11: Movement III, four last measures. The piano version is used to facilitate understanding and visualization of the chords.

4 - Fourth Movement: *Danza (Miudinho)*

The last movement of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4, Danza (Miudinho)*, was premiered in 1939 by the pianist José Vieira Brandão. The term *Miudinho* originates from a typical Brazilian dance from the Regency period, 1831 to 1840,⁵⁰ As Luís da Câmara Cascudo writes,

The *miudinho* is a dance and one of the *samba* steps. I myself had the opportunity to see, in Bahia, women dance it in *sambas de roda*, in a prodigious way. They advance as if they were spring dolls, with their bodies motionless and an almost imperceptible movement of their feet, at a fast and always the same pace. [...] The little dance was introduced into less aristocratic salons, with great success and adapted choreography and linked pair, in “a short, bashful, tapered step, mimosa, delicate features, little pronounced in its features, popular dance or ballet”. At the time of the Regency, it was one of the dances and remained in vogue for a long time.⁵¹

It is imperative to address why Villa-Lobos called this movement *Miudinho*. From the beginning, the motive in the Violins I is built to highlight the pedal in C while simultaneously dislocating the rhythmic feeling three notes at a time. The accompanying motive in the Violins II and violas reinforces the figure in the Violins I, creating a feeling of three against four in a 2/4 measure (see Figure 4.1).

⁵⁰ The Regency Period began after D. Pedro I abdicated the Brazilian throne in 1831. As his son could not assume the throne as he was only five years old, a transition was made in which the country was governed by regents from 1831 to 1840, when the Majority Coup allowed D. Pedro II to assume the throne at the age of 14. During this period, Brazil had a brief experience of decentralization that resulted in a series of rebellions in different provinces.

⁵¹ Luís da Câmara Cascudo, *Dicionário do folclore brasileiro*, 10. ed (São Paulo: Ediouro, 2000), 580.



Figure 4.1: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement IV, *Danza (Miudinho)*, Measures 1-2.

Felice argues that the form of the fourth movement is through-composed:

Although there is a practically literal “repetition” of the first 42 measures at the end of the piece, the structure is that of a continuous composition (through composition), interspersing diatonic, chromatic and ambiguous settings, with contrast of texture, density and class of notes, which makes us understand it as a model of continuous composition.⁵²

The first 42 measures appear again with a few differences from measures 142 to 190. After that, a short ending of seven measures (191-197) uses the same thematic idea of the trombone solo. The form with such a large repeated section resembles more an ABA form where the B section is built as a through-composed borrowing some melodies from the A1 section. In that way it seems more reasonable to call it an ABA form with a through-composed section.

⁵² Felice, “Referenciais Neoclássicos E Originalidade Nas Bachianas Brasileiras N° 4 De Heitor Villa-Lobos,” 86.

Section A1: mm. 1-42	Trombone solo (mm.11-26)
Section B: mm. 43-141	Rhapsodic elements
Section A2: mm. 142-190	Trombone solo (mm.152-167)
Coda, Finale: mm. 191-197	Based on the trombone melody as material.

Table 7: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, Movement IV, *Danza (Miudinho)*, form.

In this sense, the movement could also be seen as an ABA form. The B Section uses elements from Section A1 to develop its musical ideas; for instance, the violin's melody from measures 49 to 64 almost resembles the trombone melody from measures 11 to 26 in Section A1. The A2 section is a repetition with minor differences from the A1 section. After that, there is a small coda from measure 191 to the end, using the thematic material presented by the trombone solo on measure 11. However, in the coda, Villa-Lobos asks for a slower tempo, probably to compensate for the shortness of the section and give it the sensation of a proper end to the piece.

4.1 - Section A1

The beginning of Section A1 represents a technical challenge for the first violins. As the original piece was written for piano, the sequence of sixteenth notes is not easy to play, and the conductor might need to work on those sections. Another important observation is that the score does not present the initial dynamic for most instruments. They start with a *sf*, and after that, there is a *mf*. A possible solution to make the *sforzando* more pronounced would be to start the music in *f* and then play the *mf*.

From the first measure, Villa-Lobos presents the ostinato in sixteenth notes that will be played throughout the whole movement, stopping only in the coda on measure 191. The sixteenth notes sequence is built in a way that fools the listener's perception of the downbeat. The upward movement every three notes, as shown in Figure 4.1, dislocates the feeling of the downbeat. The highest note of this motive also highlights the pedal C.

In the pickup for measure 4, the oboes play a different material that could be hard to hear if the strings are not well balanced. In measure 6, there is an indication of *arco* for violins II and violas; however, there is no indication of *pizzicato* before that. According to Villa Lobos' recording, the beginning of the movement should be *pizzicato* for violins II and violas until measure five. After that, they have *arco* in measure 6, and in measure 7 *pizzicato* again. After that, there is no indication in the score where it should be *arco* again. A good choice for including *arco* in their parts is from measure 29 on. In this section, the violins II and violas are the primary line alongside the bassoons and french horn.

Another challenge for the conductor in this section and throughout the movement is to keep a smooth transition in the sixteenth notes sequence. The composer passes the motive from one instrument to another or within the same instruments. For instance, in measure 14, the flutes are doubling in octaves the violins I line. In measure 15, the clarinets assume the accompaniment function but not in octaves (Figure 4.2). However, each of the clarinets plays for one beat at a time. This line must sound like one continuous motive like the violins I.



Figure 4.2: Movement IV, measures 14 to 16.

As Tarasti (1995, 202) points out, this movement's main melody (mm. 11-28) resembles the melody from the song *Vamos, Maruca*, which is also a folkloric popular song. Villa-Lobos arranged it for the piano collection *Guia Prático*, and he adapted it to the fourth movement. In that sense the third and fourth movements of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* become special, because they are the only two movements in all the *Bachianas Brasileiras* cycle to use folkloric popular songs.

It is also possible to recognize the upward triplet's musical gesture that leads to a new section in the fourth movement (mm. 42) also present in the song *Vamos, Maruca* (m. 13).

3. VAMOS, MARUCA LET'S GO, MARUCA

No. 128 do 12 Volume
do "Guia Prático"

H. VILLA - LOBOS
Rio, 1935

Allegro non troppo, espressivo (♩ = 80)

Figure 4.3: *Vamos Maruca*, N. 128, First Volume of *Guia Prático*, Album 7.

Vamos Maruca (mm. 2-9)

Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4, IV (mm. 11-25)

Figure 4.4: Similarities in the two melodies of *Vamos Maruca* and the *Bachianas Brasileiras* No. 4, IV

From measure 29, Villa-Lobos writes new material for the bassoons, horns, violins II, and violas. It is a polyrhythm against the written meter, where the internal subdivision follows the arpeggiated motive of three sixteenth notes. Every three measures, the motive aligns with the downbeat, until measure 35, when the composer returns to the accompaniment pattern he used at the beginning of the movement (see Figure 4.5). The timpani plays to match the Eb notes, except for measure 30 where it accents the Gb.

The image displays a musical score for measures 29 through 35. It consists of three staves. The top staff is for Violins I, written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The middle staff is for Bassoons, horns, violins II, and violas, also in treble clef with the same key signature and time signature. The bottom staff is for Timpani, written in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The Violins I part features a continuous arpeggiated figure of three sixteenth notes per measure. The middle staff part features a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, with a forte (f) dynamic marking at the beginning. The Timpani part features a series of eighth notes, with an accent mark over the G-flat note in measure 30.

Figure 4.5: measures 29-35.

The music in Figure 4.5 could be written as a 12/16 meter for the bassoons, french horns, violins II, violas, and timpani. The division into groups of three sixteenths implies that each half of the bar (dotted quarter) has a triple division. On the other hand, the music of the violins I music could been written in 12/16 meter. Later, in measure 43, the violins will express the written 2/4 meter. However, the clarinets and trombones will now play the line that sounds like a 6/8 meter, while the violas will play the busy accompaniment that sounds like it was written in 12/16, as shown in Figure 4.6.



Figure 4.6: Polyrhythm in measures 43 to 45.

Measure 36 represents a challenge for the orchestra and conductor regarding the balance. The clarinets have the principal line in eighth-note triplets. However, the intense accompaniment and texture make it hard to hear the clarinets. From measures 36 to 42, the strings play a busy polyrhythmic middle ground, while flutes and oboes play a C in octaves as a pedal in the background. The clarinet sounds squeezed in the middle of the accompaniment. Therefore, the conductor must work on this section to achieve the lightness necessary in the strings and transparency on the woodwinds playing long notes so that the clarinets have a clear line.

While the clarinets play the main melody in arpeggios from measure 36 to 42, the double basses, cellos, and bassoons play a chromatic line downwards each measure. An interesting aspect of this transition section is that the composer did not write any E \flat s or E \flat s, creating an ambiguous tonality.

4.2 - Section B

From measures 43 to 48, Villa-Lobos again uses the polyrhythmic material from measures 29 to 35. However, what was in the foreground before becomes the middleground, working as a bridge section. From measure 43 to 59, the trombone plays the polyrhythm material, similar to Figure 4.6 as an accompaniment for the prime material on the violins, starting with measure 49.

At measure 56, the conductor should work on balance. The clarinets play triplets in *mf* legato. At the same time, the trombone is playing the “6/8 motive” with a busy background accompaniment from the violas and cellos; hence, it is crucial to ask the accompanying lines to play softer so the clarinets can be heard, much as in measures 36 to 42. After that, from measure 49 to 64, the Violins I and II play the melody with minor differences, in octaves and in thirds; that melody was presented before by the trombone (m. 11).

An exciting aspect of orchestration happens with the melody in the violins from measures 49 to 64. The piano version’s melody is written with grace notes (Figure 4.7). However, Villa-Lobos assigns the grace notes to the flutes in the orchestra version as sixteenth notes, as shown in Figure 4.8. In this section, the conductor needs to balance the orchestra properly. The flutes must come out right before the violins articulate the notes of the melody. That is why the composer places an accent on the sixteenth notes in the flutes with a *f* dynamic while the melody has only *mf*.



Figure 4.7: *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4, IV* – mm. 48-52 (piano version)

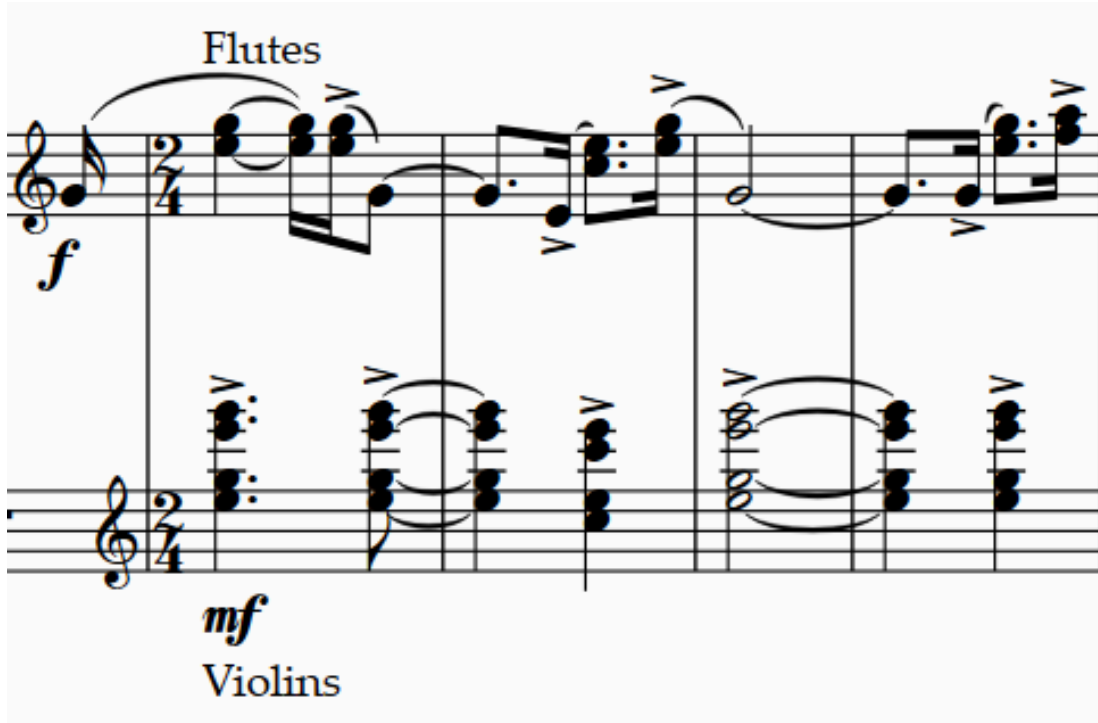


Figure 4.8: mm. 49-52 (orchestra version)

From measure 65 to 74, Villa-Lobos uses a “black and white” keys effect to build this transition section (see Figure 4.9). In the piano version, the left-hand plays one note on the black and one on the white keys. In the orchestra version, the phrase is split among the strings, going from violin I (mm. 65-67), violin II (68-69), violas (mm. 70-72), to cellos (mm. 73-74.) The challenge for the conductor is to get an even sound throughout the passage while getting a clear articulation of the grace notes. Since this passage was originally composed for piano, it might represent a more significant challenge for the musicians than expected.



Figure 4.9: mm. 65-75 (black and white keys)

In measure 74, the Violins I start a new melody that will be imitated by the trumpet and oboe on measure 76 with the pedal in C on cellos and double basses. This section repeats measures 4 to 8 in measures 79 to 82 with a few changes in the instrumentation.

Another significant challenge for the orchestra is the section from measure 84 to 88 (Figure 4.10). Villa-Lobos composed once again with the piano in mind, and when transcribing the piece to the orchestra, he wrote an intricate connection of small motives.⁵³ The conductor must remain stable and clear with the gesture in these measures.

⁵³ This section could be seen as a pointillism technique, that was also explored in the twentieth century by composers such as Webern, Ligeti, and Messiaen. Pointillism in music refers to a compositional technique where individual notes or brief motifs are isolated from each other, creating a texture akin to the visual style of pointillist painting. Each note or motif stands independently, and the composition is built by arranging these isolated elements in a manner that creates coherence and form. This technique often results in a sparse and fragmented texture, where the listener perceives the music as a series of distinct points rather than continuous lines or blocks of sound.

The musical score is for measures 84-88, in 2/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Oboe:** Measures 84-85: f (forte) eighth-note G4, quarter-note A4, eighth-note B4. Measures 86-88: Rest.
- Clarinet in Sib:** Measures 84-85: Rest. Measure 86: f (forte) eighth-note G4, quarter-note A4, eighth-note B4. Measures 87-88: Rest.
- Basson:** Measures 84-85: Rest. Measure 86: Rest. Measures 87-88: Eighth-note G2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note B2, quarter-note C3, eighth-note B2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note G2.
- French Horn in F:** Measures 84-85: Rest. Measure 86: Eighth-note G4, quarter-note A4, eighth-note B4. Measures 87-88: Rest.
- Trumpet in Sib:** Measures 84-85: Rest. Measure 86: f (forte) eighth-note G4, quarter-note A4, eighth-note B4. Measures 87-88: Rest.
- Trombone:** Measures 84-85: Rest. Measure 86: Rest. Measures 87-88: Eighth-note G2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note B2, quarter-note C3, eighth-note B2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note G2.
- Violin I:** Measures 84-85: f (forte) eighth-note G4, quarter-note A4, eighth-note B4. Measure 86: Eighth-note A4, quarter-note B4, eighth-note C5. Measures 87-88: Rest.
- Violin II:** Measures 84-85: Rest. Measure 86: f (forte) eighth-note G4, quarter-note A4, eighth-note B4. Measures 87-88: Rest.
- Viola:** Measures 84-85: Eighth-note G3, quarter-note A3, eighth-note B3, quarter-note C4, eighth-note B3, quarter-note A3, eighth-note G3. Measures 86-88: Rest.
- Violoncellos:** Measures 84-85: Half-note G2. Measure 86: Rest. Measures 87-88: Eighth-note G2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note B2, quarter-note C3, eighth-note B2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note G2.
- Double Bass:** Measures 84-85: Half-note G2. Measure 86: Rest. Measures 87-88: Eighth-note G2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note B2, quarter-note C3, eighth-note B2, quarter-note A2, eighth-note G2.

Figure 4.10: mm. 84-88

From measure 91 to 111, a new material develops in an antiphonal fashion in the violins (mm. 91-99), then in the woodwinds on the oboe and clarinets (mm. 100-106). After that, in measure 107, Villa-Lobos writes a 1/4 and a 2/4 measures that can be tied together and conducted as a 3/4 measure. At measure 118, it is essential to show the polyrhythmic development of the triplets against the sixteenth notes, 3 against 4.

From measure 130 to 140, a transition section occurs with G⁷ chords in the violins and violas alternating with a tritone below in the cellos and double basses. The dissonance continues until the fermata on measure 140. Finally, from measure 141 to 190, the A section is recapitulated.

In the coda (mm. 191), Villa-Lobos writes *Meno*, slowing down the tempo as he dissipates all the tension built before. During the whole movement, he conducts a stable *Molto animato* tempo around ♩=120 in his recording. When he reaches the *Meno* section, he slows to around ♩=80. These recordings can inform new conductors about dealing with different tempos when Villa-Lobos does not provide an exact metronome indication. In the last measure, for the first time, he uses the *fff* dynamic at a low C in the double basses, bassoons, and contrabassoons. Therefore, asking for five strings double basses or instruments with extensions is ideal.

5 - Conclusion

Heitor Villa-Lobos, a unique figure in Brazilian music, forged a distinctive style marked by the fusion of folkloric and erudite elements. The series of nine *Bachianas Brasileiras*, composed between 1930 and 1945, is considered a landmark in his production, and No. 4 stands out for its confluence of Baroque tradition with Brazilian musicality.

Although lacking formal musical education, Villa-Lobos' childhood was rich in experiences that shaped his musical sensibility. Early contact with rural areas of Brazil, listening to folk music (rhythms, indigenous instruments, melodies), the stories of indigenous legends told by his father, and the sounds of animals and the jungle were fundamental to his development. In his youth, he deepened his musical knowledge by travelling through Brazil, collecting melodies and traditional rhythms, and strengthening ties with the *Chorões*.⁵⁴

With the exception of J. S. Bach, Villa-Lobos always denied the direct influence of other composers, but yet acknowledged the importance of Brazilian folk and popular music in his work. The *Bachianas Brasileiras* demonstrate this relationship, particularly evidencing the influence of music from the north of the country. Contrary to the composer's claims, it is possible to identify the presence of other composers and styles in his work. Denying such influences does not mean that Villa-Lobos created an original style based solely on Brazilian music. Rather, the composer constructed a unique language, the result of his preferences, assimilations, and adaptations, in a mixture of tradition and innovation, nationalism and internationalism, Bach, Debussy, Stravinsky, D'Indy (among others), and the *choros*.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Group of musicians that are specialized in playing *chorinho* music.

⁵⁵ Reference to music style known in Brazil as *chorinho*, not the series of compositions made by Villa-Lobos called *Choros*.

Although, according to various authors, there are different stages in Villa-Lobos's life and work, the general agreement is that the *Bachianas Brasileiras* were written during a period of maturity in the composer's production. The series of *Bachianas Brasileiras* and the *Choros* are considered the most important works of the Brazilian composer. Both bear certain similarities, such as including works written for different formats and drawing on situations or themes related to Brazilian folklore. One can be contained within the other, as in the case of *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 6*, which features a *Chôros* movement.

Composed between 1930 and 1941, *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* is considered a work from Villa-Lobos' mature phase. It stands out for the fusion of Baroque and Brazilian folk music elements. Themes from Bach's *Musical Offering* intertwine with folkloric songs such as "*Vamos Maruca*" and "*O maná deixa eu ir.*" Baroque names merge with Brazilian terms: *Preludio e Introducao*, *Aria* and *Cantiga*, *Dansa* and *Miudinho*. Elements of Baroque writing, such as fifth progressions, ostinatos, pedal points, and polyphonies, are integrated into Brazilian melodies and rhythms, as shown throughout this paper.

From the conducting perspective, this paper has addressed some technical challenges, such as phrasing, balance, articulation, tempos, structure, and dynamics, giving recommendations on how to solve them. In some places where the edition (or the composer) was not clear regarding the musical notation (for instance, the *pizzicati* at the beginning of the fourth movement in the violins II and violas), the original recording made by Villa-Lobos was used to shed light on such questions. The recordings were also used to inform the conductor of possible tempos and interpretations based on the choices made by the composer himself.

As a conductor, it is crucial to know how to create a musical program that is interesting for musicians and the audience. Also, it is vital to have an efficient orchestra setup where the

orchestra plays pieces that share similar instrumentations. Another factor to consider is whether the pieces in a concert might share some concepts or general ideas. Some suggestions for integrating the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* into an entire concert program include:

- a) *Danzón No. 2* by Arturo Márquez. This piece for orchestra draws heavily from Mexican folk music, particularly the *danzón* genre.
- b) Symphony No. 9, “From the New World” by Antonín Dvořák. While not directly influenced by folk music from Dvořák’s native Czech Republic, this symphony incorporates elements of American folk music, particularly African American spirituals, and Native American melodies.
- c) Suite No. 2, *Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto* by Ottorino Respighi. Often, conductors chose to play only the first movement of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* as an opening piece. In those situations, Respighi’s Suite No. 2 could be an excellent choice. Respighi’s orchestration of ancient dances and airs for strings draws on Italian Renaissance and Baroque music, evoking a sense of the past and national identity.
- d) *Rodeo* by Aaron Copland. This ballet score by Copland incorporates American folk tunes and cowboy melodies, reflecting the spirit of the American West.

While these pieces may not have the exact instrumentation of the *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*, they share a similar approach of blending classical orchestration with elements of folk music or national identity while also sharing most of the instruments used in *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4*.

As a tribute to the German composer, *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4* transcends mere imitation of Bach's style. The work demonstrates Villa-Lobos' genius in assimilating different influences and creating a unique, original style that represents Brazilian musical identity.

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