

Choro Maranhense

Peter Ninaus



**Translated version of the German language
dissertation "Choro Maranhese" Graz, 2020,
University of Music**

ABSTRACT

Der Begriff *Choro* ist ein vielschichtiger Ausdruck eines Genres, eines Stils und einer Besetzung. Diese Diversität wird noch durch Regionalität ergänzt und bildet mit der Choro-Tradition im brasilianischen Bundesstaat Maranhão eine besondere Ausformung. Die vorliegende Arbeit stellt den ersten Versuch dar, diesen Choro systematisch zu erforschen und versteht sich als Beitrag zur Grundlagenforschung in der Musikforschung Maranhãos. Dieser Choro Maranhense ist eine lebendige Tradition, die sehr aufnahmefähig gegenüber benachbarten Musikstilen ist und sich durch die besondere Musikpraxis von anderen Chorostilen Brasiliens abhebt. Die Praxis dieser Musik des Nordostens hat eine lange Geschichte und war prägend für die gesamte Musik des Landes. Ungeachtet des Streits um die Vorherrschaft zwischen den Zentren Rio de Janeiro und São Paulo im Südosten und den Zentren des Nordostens, wie São Luís und Maranhão, zeigen die Analysen, dass sich bei diesem Choro viele Variationen und Imitationen der Folklore von Maranhão, wie zum Beispiel Bumba-meu-Boi oder Lelê einbringen lassen, die dieser Choro-Tradition ein völlig anderes Bild verleihen wie die klassischen Vorbilder Pixinguinhas.

Diese Arbeit versteht sich als Grundlage für weiterführende Forschungen und als Beitrag zur Erforschung der Musik im Nordosten Brasiliens.

Abstract English

The term *choro* is a complex expression of a genre, a style and a cast. This diversity is complemented by regionality and forms a special appearance with the choro tradition in

the Brazilian state of Maranhão. This work represents the first attempt to systematically explore this choro and to open it as a contribution to the basic research about the music in Maranhão. This Choro Maranhense is a living tradition that is very receptive to neighboring styles of music and sets itself apart from other choro styles in Brazil in its musical practice. The practice of this music of the Northeast has a long history and was influential for the entire music of the country. Notwithstanding the dispute of domination between the centers of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in the southeast and the centers of the northeast, such as São Luís and Maranhão, the studies show that this choro has many variations and imitations of the folklore of Maranhão, such as Bumba-meu-Boi or Lelê, which give this choro tradition a completely different picture in comparison to the classical models of Pixinguinha.

This work is intended as a basis for further research and as a contribution to the study of music in northeastern Brazil.

Português

O termo *choro* é uma expressão complexa de um gênero, um estilo e um elenco. Essa diversidade é complementada pela regionalidade, e forma uma aparência especial com a tradição do choro no Estado do Maranhão no Brasil. Este trabalho representa a primeira tentativa de explorar sistematicamente este choro. Como uma pesquisa básica, abre o tema entre outras pesquisas sobre a música maranhense.

O Choro Maranhense é uma tradição viva que é muito receptiva aos estilos de música vizinha e se diferencia em sua prática musical de outros estilos de choro no Brasil. A prática dessa música do Nordeste tem uma longa história e influenciou toda a música do país. Apesar da disputa de

dominação entre os centros do Rio de Janeiro e São Paulo no Sudeste e os centros do Nordeste, como São Luís, MA, as análises mostram que esse choro tem muitas variações e imitações do folclore maranhense. Por exemplo, Bumba-meu-Boi ou Lelê dão a essa tradição do choro, uma aparência completamente diferente comparada dos modelos clássicos de Pixinguinha.

O trabalho pretende servir de base para pesquisas futuras e como uma contribuição para o estudo da música no nordeste brasileiro.

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Foreword

The Brazilian Choro impresses with its varied use of the clarinet and its virtuosity, which is typical of Brazilian music. Brazil as a country of the diaspora(a far-reaching topic that cannot be dealt with in this work) and as a country of emigration(from an Austrian perspective) interests and connects me personally with this region. After a concert in Graz in 2015, where choro was also played as a coincidence, I wanted to learn more about this choro, which was completely unknown to me at that time.

In search of a research topic, I met Thomas Kupsch by chance through Helmut Brenner. At that time Dr. Thomas Kupsch was a post-doctoral student in Graz. He teaches at UEMA (Universidade Estadual do Maranhão) and was interested in cooperating with KUG(Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz, short: Kunstuniversität Graz (KUG) University of Music and Performing Arts Graz). On the one hand I had the Choro and on the other hand the connection to the state of Maranhão, although Choro is closely connected to Rio de Janeiro.

To start such extensive research with just one contact is quite risky. After an initial literature search it turned out that I will be researching on an almost unexplored area and that there is a lot to discover. At first it was still unclear whether I would research the entire state or only part of it.

Orientation to music research in São Luís is difficult because there is only one subject, music, which is dedicated to music from a practical and educational point of view. Ethnomusicology has been a study subject in Brazil since

1972, but there is no such opportunity in the state of Maranhão. Brazilian ethnomusicology, which originates from (musical) folklore, was shaped by Heitor Villa-Lobos, who has shaped the description and research of Choro in its form until today¹. Whether and to what extent this is the reason for the vagueness of the term choros requires an intra-Brazilian discourse and many other researches in this area, which also cannot be dealt with in this work.

The following research questions are examined in this work: WHAT: What does the term Choro Maranhense mean? What are the problems with the term choro? How can you define the choro as a genre? How does it differ from Choro in southeast Brazil? WHERE, FOR WHOM, WHY: Who identifies with this music and how? How important is the Choro Maranhense for the region, the musicians and the residents of Maranhão?

The structure of the work clarifies the terminology at the beginning: terms that are essential for understanding the identity of Maranhão and, in general, the northeast of Brazil. Terms like Choro claim to have a generally valid definition, but on closer inspection the term appears inconsistent and describes phenomena that have little or nothing to do with each other.

Against this background, the environment of the Choros Maranhense is subjected to a critical examination and analysis. It stands in a structure between a multitude of traditions and musical styles, and as a small phenomenon it is often not perceptible between *Tambor-de-Crioula*² or *Bumba-meu-Boi*³. Compared to the Choro from Rio de Janeiro, which is represented worldwide through a Choro movement and publications, the Choro Maranhense has a small, family tradition with many regional variations.

An important regional peculiarity is that the Choro in Maranhão can change significantly depending on the performance place and reason for the performance. His versatility makes it difficult to recognize him as a choro, especially when he appears during a *Samba, Boi*⁴ or *Forró*⁵ event. Choro in Maranhão is versatile and can be interpreted from dance music to classical chamber music. Every *chorista*⁶ has individual access to this music. This work analyzes the terminology, the musical characteristics, the performance places and the audience as well as the personal opinions of the *choristas*.

In addition to UEMA, there are EMEM⁷ and UFMA⁸ as institutions with academic musical training, which are important points of reference for (semi) professional musicians.

Unless otherwise stated, the images come from PN's⁹ transcriptions.

The most important terms that are important for understanding this work are briefly explained in a glossary at the end of this work.

¹ <http://akademiebrasileuropa.de/Chroniken/1972-Ethnomusikologie.html>, last checked Oct.7, 2019.

² *Tambor-de-Crioula*, often called *Tambor* or *Tambour* for short, is a religious music and dance tradition.

³ *Bumba-meu-Boi* is a dramatic dance tradition that is promoted in many variations in Maranhão. On December 11, 2019, it was added to the UNESCO list of intangible cultural heritage.

⁴ short for *Bumba-meu-Boi*

⁵ a dance and rhythm of the northeast of Brazil

⁶ Muscian who plays choro, pl. choristas

⁷ a kind of conservatory

⁸ the federal university in Maranhão

⁹ PN stands for the abbreviation for the author Peter Ninaus

1. INTRODUCTION: MUSIC RESEARCH IN THE MARANHÃO (TERMS, QUESTIONS)

The structure of this work is aimed primarily at a non-Brazilian readership, although this is where a problem arises that is not clear at first glance. First of all, a lot of terms have to be explained to illustrate the complexity and diversity of the Brazilian music tradition. In this work, *Choro Maranhense* should deliberately stand out and be distinguished from the Choro of the Southeast (*Choro Carioca* - Choro from Rio de Janeiro, *Choro Paulista* - Choro from São Paulo). Choro Maranhense is a musical tradition that is difficult to isolate from other musical practices, especially in Maranhão. The term *musical practice* used is intended to refer to the terms *música* (music), plural *músicas* (musics) used in Brazil. These musics are equivalent, you hear opera arias, then rock and then reggae. This musical anti-discrimination is alien in Europe. In this work only persons who were important for the research environment and who are not included in the *Chorografia* by Ricarde Almeida (2015) are treated. *Chorografia* is a word creation made up of the words *chorista* (choro musician) and *biografia* (biography). Other works, such as those by Costa Neto (2015), deal with historical material. My scientific contribution relates to the systematic reappraisal of the currently existing Choro tradition in Maranhão and the identification of its special features. It is also about relativizing and supplementing the existing scientific literature and creating an ethnomusicological basis for further research. The essence of this work is the experience of participating observation, grade analysis and tone analysis, which show the peculiarities of this choro tradition using rhythm and accent analyzes (impact notation). There

are only a few written pieces. Most come from the Zezé Alves' Choro book (Caderno). Recordings at various performances or rehearsals. Most of the notes were taken during or after rehearsals. The peculiarity of this music practice lies in the detail and in the personal identification with this tradition, with São Luís, with Maranhão, the northeast region, as well with Brazil.

In order to receive information about the performance practice and the identity of the choro in São Luis, inside knowledge and a view from the inside are necessary, which I only get to a certain extent as a stranger. The occasion and the locations change the execution of pieces, which can be read in the chapter about the performance places, the choro locations. Separate works could be written about the many actors and their areas of activity, which would go beyond the scope of this work. The improvisational development during an informal meeting alone would provide a lot of material.

My role in this research is the attempt to learn the *Choro Maranhense* with all its peculiarities like a student (in the EMEM) and thus to grasp the essentials. Since I do not come from a family of the Choro tradition, nobody expects me to contribute or already know anything. The pedagogical principle of Paulo Freire, also used in the music school (EMEM), learning with and from each other, opened up the possibility for me as a field researcher to get to know different perspectives and opinions. This student position also solves the question of whether and how much Choro knowledge would be necessary before starting the field research. The tightrope walk between the Choro expert, who now wants to investigate the variety in Maranhão with a lot of knowledge about the Choro of the Southeast, and the impartial researcher, who goes into the field without prior knowledge and does research there, is just hiding a specific

problem: An expert could try to interpret the Choro Maranhense with his / her experiences in a biased manner, and it takes the novice too long to learn the basics that are necessary to understand the subtleties. The expert will be critically observed as a stranger; the choro musicians will adapt to their playing style and avoid local manners. The novice of playing Choro, but a music expert in a different music genre, is definitely a foreign body since he / she doesn't even know the Brazilian choro standards, but you are accepted politely and patiently as a student. Furthermore, as an outsider you will not be drawn into the internal Brazilian discussion about the dominance of the Southeast. I got access to the social networks of the musicians and was gladly invited as musical refreshment over time. In this position I became part of the economic, social, and cultural problems of the Northeast and got a lot of insights. At the beginning of the field research, I quickly noticed that I had several deficits: I am a stranger who does not know many local customs. I am also a guest who brings my own experience and must meet the musical expectations of the local musicians. I knew Choro, but I didn't see the complexity of the term behind it, rather I was surprised by the strangeness compared to the Choro in Rio. One of my goals was to immerse myself in the choro practice in São Luís. I was only able to achieve this goal to a limited extent because I could not become part of the region and / or local traditions in such a short time. My role in this research is to look at the peculiarities of the choro in Maranhão from as neutral a perspective as possible, to lay the foundation for further research and to show the rich cultural diversity of the region.

An important aspect of this work is to present the diversity and heterogeneity of Brazil and its regions. This applies in all areas, from the climate to the economy to music. There are many areas that are Brazilian at the national level, but

due to the size and historical and economic changes in the country, the geographic distinctions between states are very important. This terminology also flows into genre names.



Fig. ¹⁰

In order to understand the terminology and discourse, some political and geographic terms need to be explained. Brazil consists of 26 federal states, which in turn are grouped into five regions¹¹. The state of Maranhão¹² belongs to the northeast (*Nordeste*). In addition, there is the region center-west (*Centro-Oeste*), which is often called *mata*¹³ or *interior* (inland¹⁴) and in which the capital Brasilia¹⁵ is located, the north (*Norte*), which is known as the Amazon region¹⁶, the southeast (*Sudeste*), which includes the economic and cultural metropolises of São Paulo¹⁷ and Rio de Janeiro¹⁸ and the south (*Sul*), which is shaped by German immigrants.

Unidades político-administrativas



Pais



Fig. 19 Regions of Brazil

The northeast region (*Região Nordeste*), which is economically weaker than the centers in the southeast, is characterized by its climatic conditions and a different colonial history. There is a lack of water and there is often only raw material production. It consists of nine of the 26 Brazilian federal states. The northern part of this region is populated much thinner than the southern part. In these nine states (figure below) there is a population: in (1) *Maranhão* 7.1 million, in (2) *Piauí* 3.2 million, in (3) *Ceará* 8.8 million, in (4) *Rio Grande do Norte* 3.4 million, in (5) *Paraíba* 3.9 million, in (6) *Pernambuco* 9.3 million , in (7) *Alagoas* 3.3 million, in (8) *Sergipe* 2.2 million, and in (9) *Bahia* 15.2 million people.

Historically, geographically, climatically, and culturally, Maranhão is a link between the North Region and the Northeast Region.



Fig. 20 Federal States of the Northeast

Maranhão is located in the northeastern region of Brazil, which is why the inhabitants of Maranhão call themselves not only *Maranhense* but also *Nordestinos*. The north of the state is historically, culturally and climatically influenced by the Amazon region, whereby the largest region in the country in the so-called *interior can* be assigned to the "*Sertão*". There is a savannah climate with rainy and dry seasons. On the coast of the country is the only sandy desert in Brazil, *the Lençóis Maranhenses* (sheets of

Maranhão). The name of this area comes from the white dunes, which look like a huge, wrinkled cloth.

The question of research on Choro in Maranhão and not research on Choro in general can be explained with one clear statement: Who examines Choro in Rio de Janeiro has a different picture of this tradition than someone who researches Choro in Maranhão. There are parallels, but there are significant differences between the two phenomena.

That is why this work contrasts the *Choro Maranhense* with the Choro in the southeast.

The term *choro* is an expression that, due to historical reasons, blurs the problem. So in this work I use the term choro for the choro as it is described in the literature, in contrast to that there is the choro as rhythm and piece name. In order to avoid confusion, I try to use more precise terms in this work that are added to this ambiguity. So I contrast the *Choro Maranhense* with the Choro from Rio, which represents the Choro practice in the southeast of Brazil. In the analysis of the choro rhythm, the choro accompaniment or the choro melody, it should be clearly shown that it is a variety of the choro in the southeast. Many facets within the choros and outside the choro traditions are indicative of independent characteristics and identifications within other choro traditions. These extra-musical characteristics must be taken into account. Models such as *patchwork identity* according to Heiner Keupp (Keupp 2005) or the *genre rules* by Franco Fabbri²¹ are discussed.

In order to understand these characteristics, the environment and the research field must first be examined. The literature on Maranhão's music and especially the *Choro in Maranhão* sheds light on the plurality of this tradition.

This plurality shows the problem of the term *choro*, which is used as a name for many phenomena. As an example of such a problem, it should be mentioned here that there are only a few groups and some do not call themselves *choristas* and others represent many styles depending on the season.

Systematizing this situation on the field was the special challenge.

¹⁰ Screenshot of a promotional video of the Núcleo de Choro do Maranhão, commissioned by the author of this work, Peter Ninaus. From left to right: Prof. Nonato Soeiro Oliveira (Nonatinho), Gabriel Fernandes, Peter Ninaus, Wilson Miranda Silva.

"This is an official division by the Brazilian statistical office IBGE.

¹² *Maranhão* is said to be derived from the Tupi languages and means something like big sea or raging sea. <https://maniadehistoria.com/mini-dicionario-tupi-guarani/> accessed on August 17, 2019. Another source says it could mean little island of the devil after Tupi-Guarani. <https://povodeamanda.wordpress.com/2007/12/03/mini-dicionario-tupi-guarani/> accessed on August 17, 2019.

¹³ Portuguese for forest, forest area

¹⁴ in Portuguese: *interior*

¹⁵ Brasilia is located in the DF, *Distrito Federal*. Federal District, which behaves similarly to DC in the United States.

¹⁶ The Amazon River shapes the climate and the economy here.

¹⁷ Capital of the state of the same name, abbreviated SP. The residents of the state are called *Paulista*, the residents especially in the city of São Paulo are called *Paulistana*.

¹⁸ Capital of the state of the same name, abbreviated RJ, borders on São Paulo. The residents of the city are called *Carioca* and the residents of the rest of the state of *Fluminense*.

¹⁹ IBGE, Área territorial: Brasil, Grandes Regiões, Unidades da Federação e municípios 2017. Rio de Janeiro: IBGE, 2018. online: <<https://www.ibge.gov.br/geociencias-novoportal/organizacao-do-territorio/estrutura-territorial/15761-areas-dos-municipios.html?=&t=acesso-ao-produto>> Last checked on 4.11.2019.

²⁰ Raphael Lorenzeto de Abreu, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regi%C3%A3o_Nordeste#/media/File:Brazil_Region_States_Nordeste.svg, last checked on 19.11.2018.

²¹ Fabbri, Franco: A Theory of Musical Genres: Two Applications, First International Conference on Popular Music Studies (Amsterdam, 1980), was originally printed in Popular Music Perspectives (ed. D. Hom and P. Tagg; 1981, Göteborg and Exeter: International Association for the Study of Popular Music, pp. 52–81). <http://www.tagg.org/others/ffabbri81a.html> , last checked on 31.5.2019.

Fabbri, Franco: Browsing Music Spaces: Categories And The Musical Mind: Paper delivered at IASPM (UK) conference, 1999. Reproduced online by permission of the author. <http://www.tagg.org/others/ffabbri9907.html>, last checked on 31.5.2019.

has to be registered, there are only official estimates of the population. The current figures assume that the population of this approximately 332,000 km² country exceeded the seven million in July 2018 (Feitosa 2018). An estimated 1.6 million people live in the São Luís metropolitan region (approx. 9,400 km²). With 40% of GDP, this city contributes most of the state's economic output. The economic sectors in the metropolitan area are, for example, transportation, aluminum industry or technology (space travel). The interior mainly supplies soy and other agricultural products for international export.

Flávio Dino of the Communist Party has ruled the state since 2015. Previously, this state had been ruled continuously by the Sarney clan. Maranhão is considered the poorest state in Brazil as well as has a high infant mortality rate and a high crime rate. Only at the beginning of 2018 was São Luís removed from the list of the 50 most dangerous cities in the world. Nevertheless, gang crime, robbery, kidnapping for organ trafficking or police murders rule the day and the news. It is not advisable to leave secured areas after 10 p.m. Drugs and excessive alcohol abuse are a sign of internal division parallel to abstinent evangelical Christians. For many, the colorful church landscape has become the inner refuge of their own world. The result is an escape from reality in both directions. I have been told time and time again that the rival (drug) gangs in São Luís originally came from São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. On the occasion of the 2014 World Cup and the subsequent Olympics, many criminals were driven out of their areas and were looking for new territory in northeastern Brazil.

After the intermediate high in 1997, when the old town of São Luís was declared a *UNESCO World Heritage Site*, political and military decisions shook the fragile social fabric. The new political course can only be felt weakly as an

advantage for the population. Political structures still prevent many initiatives. Investments are placed in the media, folklore festivals such as *Bumba-meu-Boi* or *Tambour de Crioula* are promoted. This is also reflected in the literature. I am using the term folklore here as a direct takeover from Portuguese *folclore*, which is used in Brazil for these musical traditions.

1.2 Literature in general (books and articles on music in Maranhão)

The topics about Maranhão, which have already been sufficiently dealt with, should be deliberately excluded here for reasons of space. There is exhaustive research²³ on Bumba meu Boi²⁴, *Tambour de Crioula* and sketches of a music history. With the *Chorografia do Maranhão* (Santos 2018 c), the sociologist and radio maker Ricarde Almeida Santos has written a journalistic work on some well-known choro musicians. This work, which appeared in print at the end of 2018, is available on the blog *Chorografia do Maranhão* (2015) at wordpress.com. In addition to these individual blogs, there are many sources from the archives that are available online and wealth of online videos or music collections from various portals with music and cultural performances that convey a picture of the diversity of the Choros do Maranhão. Old books often quoted by Brazilian authors, which are neither available in reprints nor for borrowing, can be found at least in part on *Google books*. Choro [from Rio] is often written in sheet music books (Cadernos) as an introductory instruction (Vitale 1997) or in booklets on CDs.

Choro²⁵ also has its place in the globalized world. By founding similar groups as the *Casa de Choro* in Rio de Janeiro, this music has been heavily marketed. That is why

there are also Play along publications from this area (Cadernos de Choro, 2009) and other publications such as CDs. A collection of the music educator José Alves Costa (Alves 2012) was created based on these models.

Bruno Azevedo (2012: 167) writes in his work about the identity of music in Maranhão as well mentions the choro, which consists in the musical plurality along with many other musical genres²⁶ that are important for the region. As in this work, Paulo Trabulsi and the Choro Club in São Luís are mentioned, but there are also references to the Choro of this club in other books (Diniz 2003: 83).

In addition to the works of Costa Neto (Costa Neto 2015), there are other historical works on the music of the state of Maranhão (Carvalho 2004). The historical literature on the Choro in Maranhão was edited by João Raimundo Costa Neto with his dissertation on flute choros, which can be found in the Acervo Mohana (Costa Neto 2015). However, it can be assumed here that further material would also be found in other archives. The most interesting and noteworthy book in this context is *Fragmentos para a chorografia do Maranhão* from 1901 (Jansen 1901), which is therefore somewhat older than the standard work *O Choro* by Pinto (1936).

Daniel Lemos Cerqueira²⁷ and Paula Figueirêdo da Silva are taking a different path (Silva 2015). Her works on the role of the piano and piano music in Maranhão deal with a historical subject matter. Here the choro only counts in its historical form as house music on the piano. This is a music practice that is to be revived through the activities and lectures of Daniel Cerqueira. He is a academic trained pianist.

Choro has a different meaning within Brazilian than at the local level, which is why many academic papers (e.g.

Cerboncini Fernandes 2012) deal with the sociological or political aspects around the Choro (in Rio).

The discourse on Choro (in Rio) shows that the knowledge gained there does not always correspond to the circumstances in Maranhão. But to clarify the term, a critical look at the literature on Choro is very revealing.

1.3 The term choro - what is choro?

Choro as a term in literature is complex and inconsistent. In Pinto (1986: 193-204) Ary Vasconcelos primarily writes about the choro groups. One relies on the appearance of the term Choro or variants that are equated with Choro. In this way, Choro can be seen in the original sense as a cast, group or music practice. Choro can also be described as the Brazilian manner of European fashion dances of the 19th century (Pinto 1986). The names of this dance literature can be found up to the present day. These dances included waltzes, polka, Scottish, mazurka, quadrilles or even the Brazilian tango. To date, the etymology of the term choro has been more or less discussed, and these terms and interpretations are reproduced without reflection so that they have nothing in common with current practice. Choro (read: shoro) could also be written in the same way as *Xoro*. It is believed (Raymundo 1949) that Choro could refer to the Xolo dances (Pinto 1986: 193). It is a statement from a book by Jacques Raymundo, *O Negro Brasileiro e Outros Escritos*, Rio de Janeiro 1949, cited very often from secondary sources. I was unable to verify this speculation because the term is only used in this publication. In this context, reference is also made to the source: *Cascudo, Luís da Câmara, Dicionário do Folclore Brasileiro. Rio de Janeiro, Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1962, 275*, which *Xolo* describes verbatim. It is possible that Xote was misspelled as *Xolo*.

This is pure speculation, but it is intended to point out the gaps and problems in choro research. Another derivation is that choro can be derived from the verb *chorar* (crying, complaining) because the bass line has an emotional effect. Accordingly, the choro musicians can also be called *Chorões* (cryer). The third explanation refers to the original cast of shawms. Accordingly, the term choro is derived from the wind groups that were called *pars pro toto* as *choromeleiros*. How this uneven picture of the instrumentation developed the *Quarteto Ideal* with two guitars (mostly Portuguese guitars), the *cavaquinho*²⁸ and the flute, is subject to speculation. However, if one looks at the practice in Maranhão in relation to this problem, one can assume that apart from this idealized cast, a cast after many coincidences can arise then as now. An approximately 150-year tradition is already divided into epochs. Vasconcelos (in Pinto 1986: 194) describes these in Choro generations. The first generation began in the last 20 years of the Brazilian Empire with the four fathers of the choro: the flutist and composer Joaquim Antonio da Silva Calado jr. (1848–1880), Viriato Figueira da Silva (1851–1883), Virgílio Pinto da Silveira (1850–1910) and Luizinho (Luiz Borges de Araújo, *? - 1920), about whom there is hardly any biographical data. This generation also includes Francisca Edwiges Neves Gonzaga (Chiquinha Gonzaga) (1847–1935), Ernesto Nazaré (1863–1934) or João Teixeira Guimarães (João Pernambuco, 1883– 1947). The compositions of this era are still part of the standard repertoire. Many of these pieces are written for the piano, but the guitar is gaining in importance. In the second generation, Choro reached a wider audience. Anacleto Augusto de Medeiros (1866– 1907) transferred the repertoire to brass bands and distributed them on vinyl. This second generation went through another major change, because with the early death of Medeiros and the ban on certain literature in military bands, the piano became more

important. The compositions *Odeon* by Ernesto Nazaré (1863- 1934) and *Tico-Tico no Fubá* by José Gomes (Zéquinha) de Abreu (1880-1935) are important classics of choro.

The third generation is shaped by Alfredo da Rocha Viana Filho (1897-1973), who became known as Pixinguinha. As a flautist, saxophonist and singer, he was involved in the choro scene early on and as a composer he left over 600 choros. He opened the choro internally through expansions and externally through his international appearances. During this time, the choro went out of fashion. Jazz bands played the Foxtrot as well as Maxixe or Samba. Instead of the choro groups there were jazz bands or salon orchestras. But the Choro did not simply disappear, because Choro was the music of folk festivals or private gatherings in the houses and gardens of Choro followers in the suburbs. (Pinto 1986: 201-202)

The fourth generation was associated with singing. In terms of personnel, there were hardly any differences between the third generation and this one. Nevertheless, the appearance of the first regional terms is remarkable: Choro Paulista (Choro from São Paulo) or Choro Mineiro (Choro from Minas Gerais) (Pinto: 1986: 202). Jacob Pick Bittencourt (1918-1969), known under the name Jacob (Jacó) do Bandolim, and Anibal Augusto Sardinha (artist name: Garoto) (1915-1955) belong to this era. The fifth generation reached a brief peak between 1945 and 1950. The compositions *Pedacinhos do Céu* or *Brasileirinho* by Valdir Azevedo (1923-1980) or *Canarinho Teimoso* by Altamiro (Aquino) Carrilho (1924-2012) are always highlights of a roda.

In Pinto (1986: 204) the list ends with the sixth generation. This generation from the 1970s brought many innovations. With the *Camerata Carioca*, this generation or era connects

to the history of the current choro in Maranhão. After many transformations and expansions, the sixth generation is directly connected to Joaquim Santos from São Luís.

Today choro can be seen as a collective term: it is almost everything a choro group plays, it can be a certain type or genre, it can be a classically composed piece or a piece from another era, which is now seen as a choro. The current choro can also be divided into regional traditions through good documentation of the practices.

Treating Choro as a unified term means that with more precise analyzes it becomes increasingly difficult to grasp or define. For this reason, I use extensions in the work that are intended to make it clear when there is talk of choro pieces, choro genre, choro tradition or choro environment. The term choro is probably younger than the choro tradition. The Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) knew the term and used it for his compositions. These compositions, bearing the Choro name, are pieces that were inspired by Choro but have little to do with the Choro tradition. Gonzaga's composition *Corta Jaca* was composed as a maxixe and does not see itself as a choro. However, this piece is an important part of choro literature. The ideal image of a choro cast consists of guitars, pandeiro and solo instrument, but choro remains a choro, even if it is played by a pure marching band. The choro in the brass music tradition will be discussed in more detail later. A piece like Gounod's Ave Maria can be interpreted as a choro, for example, and shows that choro is a *maneira brasileira* (Style and form of interpretation with local peculiarities). Conversely, if a choro is expanded rhythmically, it can also be interpreted as samba, for example. Samba and choro are very closely related here and thinking about it as an open model also means that choro and jazz can interact in the same way.