

Book Reviews

Geographies of Cubanidad: Place, Race, and Musical Performance in Contemporary Cuba. Rebecca M. Bodenheimer. 2015. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. xiv, 308 pp., black-and-white photographs, tables, map, musical examples, glossary, references. Printed case binding, \$60.00; paper, \$30.00.

In *Geographies of Cubanidad: Place, Race, and Musical Performance in Contemporary Cuba*, Rebecca M. Bodenheimer critiques the notion of a homogeneous Cuban identity by studying how regionalism in the island reveals a hybrid and hardly monolithic cultural landscape.

Cuba's history is one of unequal regional economic development. Growth occurred early in the western region, including the provinces of Matanzas and Havana, with slavery-based sugar production, while Cuba's eastern half began a long process of marginalization and poverty. Likely because of this uneven development, the revolutions for Cuban independence started in the East and met resistance in the West, where colonial elites racialized "Oriente" as a "blacker" part of the nation and feared that a repeat of the slave-led Haitian revolution might occur there.

As the title suggests, separate economic development was defined by geography. Before 1900 the trip from Santiago in the East to Havana took weeks by land and days by boat. Only in 1911 were the two ends of the island connected by a railway, and only in the 1930s did a highway make travel easier from end to end. Cultural and economic unification took off in the ensuing decades. The 1959 revolution initially accelerated the process of socioeconomic and cultural homogenizing of the island.

In the last twenty-five years, unification has been reversed and regionalism exacerbated with the advent of the "Special Period," the decline in economic conditions that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union and the cessation of Soviet economic support for Cuba. Transportation between East and West became difficult, leading again to relative isolation. Oriente has now been equated in

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Havana's popular discourse with a "blackness" linked with criminality, a situation manifested in the treatment accorded to *orientales* who migrate to the capital in search of jobs.

In musicological circles, a Havana-centric privilege has dominated after the 1959 revolution. Folklore and music studies have relatively neglected the *folklore oriental* while favoring Havana-centric traditions. This relative neglect, Bodenheimer explains, may be the consequence of an established, facile, academic dichotomy of Cuban culture as a mixture of "Spanish" and "African" elements. Oriente represents a challenge to that hypothesis because of the presence of other factors, such as Haitian influence via *vodú* and *radá*, as well as the existence of communities of indigenous Taino descendants. Perhaps the most widespread grass-roots religious practice in Oriente (and least studied by Havana-centered scholars) is *espiritismo*.

Bodenheimer examines new expressions of regionalism in the lyrics of popular dance tunes, as well as in rumba. Texts of songs reveal a variety of attitudes that establish contrasts between Havana and the eastern region. The author delves further by excavating subregional distinctions in the cultural imaginary, such as between Havana and Matanzas in the West. The distinction established between these two cities is founded upon a racialized discourse of place (i.e., Matanzas is constructed as the cradle of Afro-Cuban culture and Havana as a site of cultural mixing). This construction of "blackness" for Matanzas is a symbolic artifact that is quite distant from the contemporary construction of blackness as applied to Oriente and its inhabitants. Matanzas was, to be sure, a central port for the importation of slaves in the first part of the nineteenth century and the most important province in terms of sugar production at the time. *Matancero* musicians, as Bodenheimer points out, strategize their essentialized African rootedness, while *habanero* musicians proclaim their synthesis of all Cuban cultural forms.

With rumba this racialized contrast between Matanzas and Havana, the two strongholds of the genre, plays out in the choice of drums. In Matanzas, led by the group Afro-Cuba, musicians began to incorporate the *batá* drums of the *santería* religion into the traditional conga ensemble, developing a style known as *batárumba*. At the same time, in Havana the main instrumental shift was the introduction of the *cajón* drum (one or more), with a diminished role for the *quinto* lead drum, in a rumba variation baptized *guarapachangueo*.

This book is a rich case study of crisscrossing ideas about race, place, authenticity, and music. For example, the author questions why in Cuban scholarship it appears that musical influences flow from the rumba to the *son*, not the other way around. Returning to the different signifiers for blackness, Matanzas representing a kind of museum of preservation of African traditions and Oriente a contemporary black (i.e., marginal), even threatening current presence, Bodenheimer

points to another contradiction in Cuban cultural circles. The son has always been represented as a mixed genre, the synthesis of a mixed nation, African and Spanish, black and white. It was also well established in the musicological canon that it came from Oriente. But if the son is a mixed genre, how can it develop in the region now viewed, negatively, as the blackest?

According to Bodenheimer, recent musicological approaches in Cuba are trying to cut this Gordian knot, perhaps channeling popular discourse by changing the established wisdom, some suggesting that the son, after all, did not originate in Oriente! Bodenheimer concludes that in the end, while the rumba wins a battle of "African" authenticity over the son, the son wins the battle for the title of the national music, which requires now that it not be born in such a liminal black area as Oriente.

This is a truly refreshing book about Cuban music and culture that, by connecting current notions of race and place, explores how regional/racial identities in the island define musical practices and the reverse. Bodenheimer provides a close-up, granular analysis of a less than monolithic national culture with important racial and musical implications for Cuba scholars in all disciplines.

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Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq.

J. Martin Daughtry. 2015. New York: Oxford University Press. xi, 344 pp., black-and-white photographs, illustrations, glossary, bibliography. Cloth, \$29.95.

In *Listening to War*, Martin Daughtry presents a captivating account of listening methods, practices, and strategies within the context of the Iraq War. The book presents important theoretical tools for understanding the relationship between sound, listening, trauma, and violence. Daughtry challenges ocular-centric depictions of war with detailed descriptions of battle zone soundscapes containing rich aural material for strategic, offensive, tactical, and defensive behaviors. While journalists have long documented the sounds of combat, explicit attention to different types of audition creates new avenues for theorizing the relationship between violence and sound. This book has much to offer that is novel to listening theory and to our understandings of sound and trauma. Daughtry convincingly shows that sound is not epiphenomenal to the lived experience of war but central for the soldier, the citizen, and the scholar who seek to understand conflict.

The varieties of sound found in armed combat are many and diverse, overlapping in layers of potentially disorienting cacophony. Some sounds can be

