



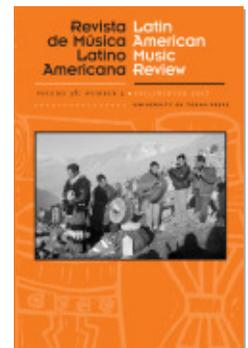
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*Geographies of Cubanidad: Place, Race, and Musical
Performance in Contemporary Cuba* by Rebecca M. Bodenheimer
(review)

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gesturing toward. Nonetheless, this book is a strong introduction to the dub genre and an intricate look at the dub diaspora.

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REBECCA M. BODENHEIMER. *Geographies of Cubanidad: Place, Race, and Musical Performance in Contemporary Cuba*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2015. 308 pp. ISBN 978-1-62846-239-5.

Rebecca Bodenheimer's *Geographies of Cubanidad* examines the intersections of place and race as they manifest in different musical practices throughout Cuba. Her ethnography analyzes nationalist discourses involving race in eastern and western regions, as well as in the cities of Havana and Matanzas, that point to cultural antagonisms between distinct locations. By tracing the historiography of divisions that were formed as a result of Spanish colonial rule and the sugar trade, she demonstrates that race was an intrinsic component of the kind of representation each region attained. Over time, Havana gained the upper hand in such discursive struggles because of its centrality to the spheres of economics and politics, while Oriente (the eastern part of the island) "often function[ed] as a discursive stand-in for rural and/or poor blackness, and backwardness generally" (35). Bodenheimer's ethnography therefore challenges unified notions of *cubanidad* (Cubanness) as presented in the writings of Martí and as supported by the current government, thus revealing ongoing divisions between groups associated with distinct areas.

Although Bodenheimer's work is not the first scholarly critique of regionalist discourses on race and place in Cuba, she is the first author to carry out a detailed ethnography of this nature. Her detailed exploration, supported by interviews and musical analyses, is an important contribution to understanding the contemporary music scene of the country. She examines a wide range of musical practices that include popular dance music, Afro-Cuban folkloric and sacred music, and rumba. She analyzes the lyrics of popular songs that contain messages of regionalism. One example, "La Habana no aguanta más" (Havana Can't Take Any More) by Los Van Van (a Havana-based band), shows the tensions resulting from an overpopulated capital filled with immigrants from other regions. The lyrics associate immigrants with delinquency, poverty, and blackness. A band from the eastern part of the country, the Orquesta Original de Manzanillo, responded to Los Van Van with "Soy cubano y soy de Oriente" (I Am Cuban and I Am from the East). The latter asserts the eastern provinces' extensive musical contributions to Cuban popular music and challenges the

notion that Orientales always move to Havana. The tensions demonstrated in the lyrics of these two songs underline regionalist sentiment and hegemonic struggles between the two regions.

Bodenheimer underscores Santiago's identity with the traditional folklore from which many Havana-based genres derive. She notes how national folkloric traditions typically align Santiago with Eurocentric, black/white categories, therefore overlooking indigenous and Haitian influences. In a later chapter, Bodenheimer deals with racialized discourses that describe Matanzas as the "cradle of Afro-Cuban culture." In colonial times, Matanzas was home to the largest population of black slaves. This led to the belief that Afro-Cuban genres were mainly derived from the area and later incorporated into more hybrid forms in Havana. Although it is difficult to trace the origin of individual styles, Bodenheimer points out that many accounts refute the claim and suggest instead that Matanzas is not "the 'cradle of Afro-Cuban culture', but rather a 'cradle of Afro-Cuban culture'" (151). She argues that Havana also "has a long history of African-derived religious and musical practice that calls in question the notion that Matanzas is the unequivocal source of Afro-Cuban traditions" (151). Yet the suggestion that Havana is a more hybridized city while Matanzas is more "authentic" or "pure" does inform musical practices that emerge from both locations.

The author shows how hybridity in Cuba is a phenomenon that has been displayed in different ways depending on location. In Havana and Matanzas, innovations in rumba performance have resulted in the emergence of new genres such as *batarumba* (the fusion of *batá* drumming and rumba) and *guarapachangueo* (a Havana-based rumba percussion genre). Bodenheimer focuses on how musicians have made choices regarding which genres to fuse on the basis of social and cultural histories in particular locales. For example, *batarumba* in Matanzas is based more in Afro-Cuban sacred music that fuses *batá* drumming with secular rumba rhythms. Finally, the last chapter analyzes previous scholarship on the origin of rumba and son and contextualizes it against the backdrop of ethnographic discovery of regional discourses.

The book's research is grounded in a strong ethnographic approach that weighs the advantages and disadvantages of multiple scholarly perspectives (e.g., Baker 2011; Sawyer 2006) and challenges simplistic stereotypes surrounding place, race, and music. Bodenheimer's research signals a thorough and detailed approach that sheds light on race and place divisions as displayed in popular Cuban music. The study could have benefited from the inclusion of more notated musical examples, which would have strengthened the author's analyses. While most scholarship attempts to associate distinct genres within regionalized constraints, Bodenheimer demonstrates that music cannot be forced into specific places but is constantly negotiated and transformed through waves of interaction between

different regions, thereby creating new styles that complicate specific geographical origins.

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MORGAN JAMES LUKER. *The Tango Machine: Musical Culture in the Age of Expediency*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. 218 pp.
ISBN 978-0-226-38554-9.

In recent years, music scholarship in Argentina has largely focused on tango, especially concerning the history of the genre and the various identity politics associated with the music and dance. Rather than focusing on defining tango as a genre, Morgan James Luker's *The Tango Machine: Musical Culture in the Age of Expediency* explores what tango does for Argentina, and how. Framing his narrative around George Yúdice's *The Expediency of Culture* (2003), Luker explains how tango has become a mode of cultural production that advances numerous political, social, and economic agendas from a multitude of actors after Argentina's neoliberal turn in the 1990s. These "managerial regimes," as he calls them, include tango artists, nonprofit organizations, transnational societies, and record labels, among others. Luker argues that "cultural-policy making has become the key mediator of cultural practice and artistic life at all levels and in nearly all places" (180), and as such, it must be considered a critical component of contemporary music scholarship.

Drawing primarily on fieldwork from 2004 to 2007, nearly every chapter begins with an ethnographic vignette, which then transitions into the goals and practices of a specific type of managerial regime. The early chapters start with local examples of managerial regimes such as the Buenos Aires-based contemporary tango groups 34 Puñaladas and Astillero. With each chapter, the scope broadens to include nonprofit arts organizations such as TangoVia, followed by larger, transnational organizations like UNESCO. The book concludes with an analysis of the cultural industries' increasing influence on economic development around the world. Luker consistently reassesses the mediation of global and local sensibilities along the way, suggesting that this "dual trend of detachment and connection"