

understanding music within the context of a South African reality. On the other hand it takes cognisance of the relationship between music and other disciplines, and music scholarship in South Africa in dialogue with music scholarship in more progressive institutions elsewhere. But the book is also a proposal, again, much like Lucia's, which requires validation through further research and wider interrogation – and here I wonder too about Byerly's 'revolution' – for while the book makes the right noises, there are yet many silences in South African music scholarship.

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*In Township Tonight: South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre*, David B. Coplan, University Of Chicago Press; 2nd edition. 2008, 455 pages, Paperback: ISBN-10: 0226115674, ISBN-13: 978-0226115672.

Coplan's second edition of *In Township Tonight* is a fascinating account of the relationship between city life and the performing arts in South Africa. It covers the vast and various terrain of black music, from slave orchestras at the Cape in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, to current day Afro Pop groups like *Mafikizolo*. Considering that the first edition was published in 1985, the new revisions and additions do not merely serve as updates, rather they have completely reshaped Coplan's narrative so that it is no longer only concerned with how the performing arts facilitated urbanization and continue to sustain urban life, but more importantly, how black city music and theatre have contributed to the imagination and achievement of freedom.

Coplan locates the articulation of this ideology through three lenses: colonialism, apartheid, and democracy; whilst his cultural framework is that of mobility and hybridity. These frames illustrate important moments in which new understandings about the relationship between racial and specifically musical identities were conceived in South Africa; however, his concern with collective social experience detracts from this primary objective. I have read the book more as a commentary on black society and the role of the performing arts within certain communities, as opposed to examining these mediums as stepping-stones to freedom and democracy.

Having said that, Coplan's rooting of the book's narrative in issues of race and racism resonates in interesting ways the complexity and diversity of South African society; and although I do not find his racial, ethnic and social tags to be inappropriate, perhaps more desirable would have been a better explanation or preparation of the reader for the rather complicated use of the designators "African", "black", "coloured". Implicit in this terminology, are connotations of power, class and most importantly, difference; and they do not mean the same things in South Africa as they do elsewhere in the world. Granted, Coplan does include a preface note on his use of terminology and an extensive glossary of definitions, though these merely serve as explanations of inclusion and exclusion amongst various ethno-racial groups. As a young coloured man growing

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up in Cape Town, and researching social and dance practices indigenous to particular communities there, I have found that without a richer, more complex explanation and analysis of cultural nationalism, collective memory, and individual personal experiences, scholarship dealing with concepts of race, community, and identity does not provide the correct historical and social contextualization for readers not familiar with South African demographics.

I was fortunate enough to discuss these concerns with Coplan when he recently visited the University of Pennsylvania, and his response was that this book is as much for the non-academic readership of ordinary South Africans to reflect on their artistic heritage as it is a scholarly and critical piece of literature, and that his use of terminology is reliant on current day vernacular and colloquial hegemonic understanding. This is useful for a non-South African reader to keep in mind, since whilst this does not detract from Coplan's study at all, a foreign reader may be at a slight disadvantage in terms of appreciating the broader scope of the implications of his chosen terminology.

One of the primary differences between the first and second editions is that in addition to a new introductory and concluding chapter, Coplan is also able to trope the old historical text, which read much like a dissertation, with his now more poetic, often self-reflective voice. The introduction reflects on the author's objectives for the previous edition, as well as his ideals for the current volume. It also accounts for the 25 years of musical transformation between the first and second editions. The book begins by tracing the performance culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the influence of European and African American culture. We then quickly move to the formation of new urban centers in Kimberly and Johannesburg and examine how these sites contributed to the development of new performance styles. Chapters 4 and 5 examine the interwar periods, specifically looking at associations between performance and social identity and class. Sophiatown, the township which became symbolic of black culture in the 1940s and 1950s and which was later destroyed by the apartheid government, becomes the case study of Chapter 6, whilst Chapters 7 and 8 are concerned with the period up to the 1980s. Chapters 9, 10, and 11 are the new additions, presenting a historiography and survey of changes in black popular music, jazz and theater, in both the pre- and post-apartheid periods. The concluding chapter argues that the aesthetics of contemporary black South African performing arts practices is always in flux, and serves as a reflection on what this book and the subject matter represents.

*In Township Tonight* successfully brings into dialogue an array of black South African performing arts practices, and goes far in explaining how South Africa developed its array of syncretic cultural systems. This second edition will no doubt maintain Coplan's status as the most quoted source in the literature on black South African music.

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