

Although established on the basis of ethnographic, linguistic and musical data, these zones, as Kubik is careful to point out, do not constitute areas with clearly discernible boundaries. They mark, first and foremost, the focal points chosen for the purpose of Kubik's book and in part also reflect the main areas of fieldwork of Kubik and his co-authors. Whatever the merits of such a regional classification may be, the Introduction as a whole represents a major attempt at providing the foundations for a musical history of West Africa.

The main body of the book is a stupendously rich documentation of some 150 pages, densely packed with ethnographic detail and more than 200 mostly black-and-white glossy photographs. Kubik devotes about equal space to each of his nine zones, most of the materials presented having been obtained during his own fieldtrips. As is to be expected in an area of such vast expanse and cultural diversity, the range of topics discussed in the main part of the book is enormous.

The accounts of early European travellers figure prominently as do detailed descriptions of performances and instrumental playing techniques. There are also fascinating accounts of modern Yoruba musical theatre as well as careful biographical portraits of individual performers. Brass bands in Sierra Leone are discussed alongside colonial postcards of *kora* players and the labels of Decca records of Krio music.

A small appendix and a massive bibliography complete this remarkable book. *Westafrika* does not claim to represent West African musical history from a single vantage point, nor does it organise its many narratives and episodes around a single theoretical model. In the possibly best tradition of empirical research in Africa, Kubik offers, with a great deal of circumspection and imagination, perspectives and materials from which others may and will construct their own accounts of one of the world's most extraordinary regions of musical creativity.

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EXTENSIONEN AFRIKANISCHER KULTUREN IN BRASILIEN, by Gerhard Kubik, Alano, Edition Herodot, Aachen, 1991, German text.

During the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries a massive influx took place of Africans into the Americas. In South and Central America the agents of the slave trade were the Spanish and especially the Portuguese. When we come to compare British North America with Portuguese Brazil the contrast is startling. While the settlers of the Carolinas and the British West Indies made few concessions to the traditions and cultures of their slaves, black or white, the more accommodating though sometimes no less cruel Portuguese made a point of retaining a classification of their slaves which contributed to the retention of African speech, customs and music both domestically and on the plantations. This served principally as a kind of trade-mark when it came to sale and the allocation of tasks, but it also emphasised rather than discounted their roots.

Gilberto Freyre has shown that this arose in its turn from Portuguese historical orientations. Portugal, on the edge of Europe, having cast off the rule of the Moors and able to approach Africa on at least equal terms, became a bicontinental nation; and the smooth synthesis that this receptivity led to emerged most successfully in yet a third continent.

Freyre is inclined to ascribe this to the shortage in Portugal of artisans and other craftsmen. Since few could be spared for overseas settlement, it made sense to educate at least some slaves, whereas in the British colonies the niche was filled either directly from the superfluity of tradesmen in England or from among those who were freed after completing indentures. The hierarchy within slavery was broader, and that among the settlers narrower, in Brazil than in the British sphere. The far greater ease of retention of tradition among Brazilians than among North Americans of African origin meant ultimately that while the North Americans have periodically to stoop to imagination to help them to reconstruct a supposed past, there is little need for Brazilians, many of whom grow up lapped in African manners and traditions, to do so.

The syncretism which had first emerged in European Portugal is very apparent from the art and architecture of Brazil, and from an imaginative efflorescence almost unique in Latin America. The religion, music and theatre of the streets, however, where African traditions persist in their purest forms, have often been relegated to the status of tourist attractions and have had to wait until relatively recently to engage the serious attention of scholars outside Brazil itself. These scholars have been principally either Africanists, such as Herskovits, Verger or Merriam, or students of Portuguese cultural history like Morais and Mendonça. The eventual involvement of Kubik, whose work on music and its part in the cultures of lusophone Africa has been both comprehensive and illuminating, was inevitable, and in the production of this book, small in size, large in accomplishment, it has been especially fruitful.

It is twenty years now since Kubik and his team first began work in Brazil. By that time it had been recognised for more than a century that the folk music of North America was heavily influenced by somewhat garbled African styles. By 1979 Kubik was able to make a differential identification of the African, and even more specifically the Angolan, traits not only in Brazilian music but also in the associated games and dances. He elaborated this in a paper seven years later; and in the present book, dealing with the spread of African cultures into Brazil, he brings together his findings and interpretations in a compact form.

The book opens with a foreword giving a brief account of its genesis. This is followed by an introduction in which earlier and contemporary studies of Afro-American interactions are discussed, and what the author calls the "tree-model", the obsessive search for 'roots', is dismissed as a kind of pseudo-history, which it is.

The body of the book is made up of six parts. In the first, the ethnic composition and origins of African populations in Brazil are explained. Almost all the slaves brought to Brazil came either from the Guinea coasts or from the Congo/Angola region, with relatively few from south-east Africa, especially Mozambique. Kubik

makes clear what a good many other authors ignore, that slavery in most of Africa was originally a benevolent institution, with the slave not at any great disadvantage in comparison to other family members. Foreign need for labour led to a progressive harshening of conditions, not least in a brutalisation of the methods of procurement.

At first slaves of different ethnic categories were distributed accordingly in Brazil, those from the Guinea coasts mainly in the Bahia area, those from the Congo to an island off São Paulo and in Mato Grosso, southern Angolans to Minas Gerais, and so forth. The second part of the book describes how over the centuries there came a steady reassortment, with the pace accelerating and the drift to the cities intensifying after emancipation in 1888. Nevertheless, many Brazilians continued to claim membership of categories originating in Africa, sometimes adopting whatever suited them best, and even the Luso-Brazilians of mainly or entirely Portuguese descent took for granted customs, stories and songs characterising the Africa-oriented milieus in which they had grown up. They were especially receptive to 'Yoruba' influences; there seems to have been a conviction, which Kubik rejects, that the elaborate culture of the Yoruba was in some senses 'higher' than that of the other slaves.

The African presence in Brazil was expressed, even emphasised, in the realms of music, the theatre, dance, oral literature, religious concepts, the games of children, the techniques of artisans, and in the preparation of food. As the author hastens to make clear, however, no African language has maintained its identity and come to predominate in Brazil.

What has happened to the native languages of the slaves is bound up with the process of creolisation, the melding of languages of different origins into a new one which assembles elements from each and combines them in a way which eventually serves the descendants of the original comers as a *lingua franca* or, when appropriate, a secret code. Thus the third part of the book deals with African linguistic remains in the speech, everyday and ritual, of modern Brazilians, and in particular contains a detailed analytical discussion of the 'lingua africana' of Cafundo. The retention of African speech in the face of the obligatory assumption of the speech of the oppressor was an effective strategy for maintaining the integrity of the African populations, and extended beyond spoken language into other realms of expression.

The principal manifestations of this are described in the fourth and fifth parts. They consist in the development not only of a conspicuous syncretism in culture, and especially music and popular theatre, but also of a religious syncretism which has particular bearing on the musicality of the majority of at least the urban population and especially that along the eastern seaboard and inland from it. (This might also be characterised as an extralinguistic creolisation.) Kubik mentions numerous Afro-Brazilianisms of expression and communication over and above those which distinguished the defensive, exclusive African Code of slave days. Among these is an enduring knowledge of 'drum speech', and its syllabic basis.

A more truly syncretic manifestation appears in the popular historical dance-dramas known as *fulgedos*. These may be linked directly or indirectly with African

or Portuguese myths and *märchen* or with the secret or semi-secret 'games' which characterise male initiation across the whole matrilineal belt of central Africa. Almost more notable are such performances as the *Congada* or *Festa do Congo*, which commemorates in a form strikingly like that of an English masque the ancient connection between the kingdoms of the Congo and Portugal/Brazil. Some of the musical instruments played in it accord with forms still current in northern Angola, and afford indications of the ancestral origins of the performers. There are a number of similar or related manifestations stretching across the whole gamut of the formally entirely African to ones which might feature in any European street drama.

An extension of the ceremonial connotations of such performances emerges with the three major Afro-Brazilian religions — *Candomblé* in Salvador-Bahia, *Xangô* in Recife and *Umbanda* to the south in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. A great deal of attention has been paid to the Yoruba-derived *orixa* pantheon which represents the supernatural around Bahia; rather less to the *umbanda* healing cults which represent a strong welter of Angolan beliefs, with which Kubik, with his profound acquaintance with Angolan ritual life, is very well equipped to deal. Space does not permit any extended discussion of his description and analysis of this; but it is both comprehensive and thought-provoking.

Much of the syncretic element comes from the receptivity of the originally African cults to the more ornamental aspects of Roman Catholicism. The wild excesses which traditionally antecede Lent in southern Europe erupt into brilliance in the Brazilian carnival tradition; at the same time the essential characteristics of African beliefs are retained, often under pseudo-Christian aspects. The ceremonies are made nominally European, while their content, and especially their musical and invocatory content, remains African to the extent of allowing for ethnic distinctions to be made. African linguistic vestiges take on an almost liturgical significance and function.

Any review of this book must need be shallow; it is impossible in so small a compass to do justice to the wealth of description, analysis and explanation it contains. The sixth part of the text is concerned with research methodology, and lays appropriate stress not only on the need for scrupulous enquiry and recording, for the generation of rapport and the cultivation of some measure of self-involvement while at the same time retaining the necessary objectivity of an observer, but also on the need to assess critically the abundance of records dealing with the subject. This Kubik has most notably (and typically) himself accomplished. The book is not only a fine source of reference but also a convenient handbook for the use of future researchers.

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