

modernas de consumo como las máquinas de coser Singer, además de la venta de armas. Complementando estas indagaciones, R. Liehr y M. G. Toxqui pasan revista a una empresa familiar textilera que se instaló en Puebla, fundada por empresarios españoles, la cual se consagró a importar algodón de Nueva Orleans y maquinaria en Inglaterra y Estados Unidos en abierta competencia con otras empresas localizadas en el interior del país.

A pesar de la brevedad y el hilvanamiento fragmentario de algunos ensayos debido a la carencia relativa de datos primarios, esta selectiva colección de ensayos dispensa importantes luces a la historia económica latinoamericana. No cabe soslayarla.

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ALEXANDRA T. VAZQUEZ: *Listening in Detail: Performances of Cuban Music*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013.

“*Listening in detail*”? The title made me initially raise an eyebrow. Much of popular Cuban music offers a multi-sensual experience, and is danced to, as well as listened to. I soon, however, understood what Vazquez means by this title and was captured in a fluent and passionate journey into some uncovered terrains of Cuban (mostly Cuban-Diasporic, or as the author describes it “Greater Cuba”) psycho-musical/cultural experiences.

Even more than “listening in detail,” this book provides a “reading in detail” experience, and not only thanks to its engaging and flowing text. “Reading” in its deepest sense, between the lines of performances of Cuban musical moments, reading the hidden messages reflecting the colonial, racial and cultural history of Cuba.

Unlike most books on Cuban music, it does not offer an overview and analysis of the different genres, artists and musical forms, but isolates a few musical “moments” as axis for an in-depth reflection on *cubanidad* and on the American-Cuban relationship. It is motivated by a search for meaning and based on interpretation, rather than on musical analysis, relying on what anthropologist Clifford Greetz defined as “thick description,” impressions and musicians’ accounts, rather than transcriptions and technicalities. As the author puts it, she offers “an *experience with*, rather than *account of*, Cuban music” (38).

Details in music are, on the one hand “essential living components that contribute, in very specific ways, to an event and its aftermath,” and on the other hand “might be interruptions that catch your ear, musical tics that stubbornly

refuse to go away ... idiosyncrasies" (19), but not to worry, Vazquez skillfully and beautifully manages to guide us through the process, and the details she makes us listen to become gates to gardens of knowledge, feeling and understanding.

Vazquez rightfully challenges stigmas and clichés associated with Cuba and Cuban music in the post- Buena Vista Social Club era – the numerous compilations albums and guides featuring “elderly black men sitting on old cars and smoking cigars, *mulatas* in miniskirts – usually but not always soaked in sepia” (11), and the urgency to experience Cuba “before it all changes.” It is a sense of faux urgency that leads to instant consumption and a “fantasy that Cuba can be known fully and known quickly.” This book avoids this “temporal abbreviation” of the Cuban musical experience and leads us to dwell on magical moments of Cuban music experience, absorbed in history, yet not time-dependant.

Another important issue Vazquez challenges is the tendency to analyze Cuban music through a singular or univocal scholarly mode, avoiding an aesthetic approach. In fact, she argues that “to listen in detail is to enliven Cuban music’s relationship to aesthetics, rather than solely to the ethnographic” (27), and immediately defending listening to details as an aesthetic category from accusation of superficiality, she argues that it does not “ignore their immediate relationship to struggle and experimentation with freedom” (27).

In spite of its focus on details, the scope of the book is rather vast. Its historical range covers the entire recorded music era, i.e. the last 100 years – starting with Chapter 1 in the 1990s, then a deep plunge back to the 20s, climbing up through the 40s, 50s, and 60s, and then forward to the present time in Chapter 5. Geographically, as earlier mentioned, it looks at “greater Cuba,” mainly the Cuban Diaspora in the USA and Mexico, and even at a “Cuba in the mind,” the perception of Cuba in the US and among Afro-Americans, and the historic cultural relationship between the US and Cuba, a virtual rather than physical, yet not less important, Cuban domain, carrying some heavy emotional and political cargo.

In the first chapter Vazquez uses “Cuba Linda,” a 1996 album by Cuban-American pianist Alfredo Rodríguez, to open up a discussion about the relationship between Cuban music and American Jazz, Havana and New Orleans. Only at the end of the chapter does she guide us through detailed and enjoyable listening to the album tracks themselves.

The second chapter analyzes the work of Graciela Pérez, vocalist for a New York based Cuban-Jazz 1940s band, via “listening in detail” to her interviews. Through Graciela’s story we get to learn about life in Cuba in the 1920s, about women in the history of Cuban music, and about the Cuban “adaptive techniques,” a major aspect in Cuban psychology and way-of-life. This chapter is a great example of the multi-layered “listening in detail” experience offered by this book.

The third and very entertaining chapter tells the story of a grunt made famous by the 1950s “king of Mambo” Pérez Prado, perhaps the only globally-known musical figure in this book. Chapter Four deals with two documentaries on Cuban music made in the early 1960s following the Revolution. The final chapter deals with music and politics in the 21st century, by looking in detail at a performance of Cuban band Los Van Van in Miami, and the complex interaction of Cubans in exile with those who remained in Cuba.

The book has no concluding chapter, and does not really need it, as rather than concluding the subject(s) raised, it whets the appetite for further “in detail” listening, reading and observing. The last chapter which brings us “up to date” historically, offers, according to Velazquez, “a conclusion for the book and an opening for another” (42).

One comment regarding the endnotes: there are 64 pages of notes compared to 201 pages of main text. Some of the notes feature important and lengthy explanations crucial to the understanding of the topics presented and should have been, in my opinion, incorporated into the main text.

Reading in detail “Listening in Detail” is a very enjoyable experience. The book could benefit from a CD with the featured tracks. I highly recommend reading it with YouTube on hand. All in all it is a unique and valuable addition to the growing volume of literature on Cuban music, written with passion and love, and should be read not only with open ears as the title suggests, but with an open mind and an open heart.

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JENS ANDERMANN, ALVARO FERNÁNDEZ BRAVO (EDS.): *New Argentine and Brazilian Cinema: Reality Effects*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

El resurgimiento de las cinematografías en Argentina y Brasil desde mediados de la década de los noventa es explicado por los autores como un proceso donde coinciden políticas estatales de estímulo a la producción, con un interés global por las expresiones multiculturales que tienden a destacar la personalidad estética del autor-director, matizada por convenciones cinematográficas. Las películas proveen imágenes auto-etnográficas de las consecuencias de la globalización y de distintos modos de resistencia a la misma, pero frustran el deseo por una visión simplemente descriptiva de la realidad. El Nuevo Cine Argentino y el Cinema de la Retomada manifiestan una crítica a la capacidad del cine de di-