



## REVIEW | Made in Brazil: Studies in Popular Music

*Martha Tupinambá de Ulhôa, Felipe Trotta and Cláudia Azevedo Eds.*

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*Made in Brazil* is the fourth volume in Routledge's Global Popular Music, a series intended to publicize new insights on popular music from countries outside the Anglo-American world. Recognizing the predominance of Anglophone studies dedicated to Anglophone popular music, this series of books proposes a new perspective on local musics often classified as "world music". The purpose of the series is not only to call attention to non-Anglophone contexts, musical practices and genres, but also non-Anglophone academic production on popular music, since the lack of access to original sources and local studies of these musics is recognized as a serious limitation to this area of study.

In Brazil, like in many other countries, until recently, publications on popular music were confined to folklorists, musicians, journalists and *aficionados* writing on an handful of topics like samba or *Tropicalismo*, discussing the issues of authenticity and tradition as resistance to "foreign musics" and commercialization. During the past twenty years, with the significant increase of Brazilian post-graduate research on popular music (from the perspectives of musicology, anthropology, literature, and communication studies), new themes have been addressed, mobilizing a modern conceptual toolkit (hybridism, cosmopolitanism, structures of feeling), and focusing on a variety of processes (identity, ideology, ethnicity, social classes). The goal of the present collection is to give an international voice to studies being developed in Brazil. Most of the

chapters are the result of doctoral dissertations completed since 2005 at Brazilian universities, demonstrating that a significant critical mass of researchers is currently coming from Brazil, academically trained in different fields.

*Made in Brazil* is divided into four parts and a Coda. The first two parts reflect on the social construction of “national identity” and the history of subaltern groups. The first part is dedicated to the making of a national musical identity (“Brazilianness”) represented externally through choro and samba genres and the local appropriation of that image. The essays explore the social construction of an international narrative on Brazil, such as the north-American “Good Neighbor” policy, materialized in the likes of Disney’s Zé Carioca, Hollywood’s Carmen Miranda, and samba as a main actor in the “global jukebox” of “world music”: a shared social imaginary of nation that shaped Brazil’s self representations of being a welcoming joyful and multicultural nation, a mestizo, afro-descendent, miscigenated cultural universe of “spicy exoticism” (24). Samba, as the musical emblem of Brazil, has been a recognizable commodity in the global market, influencing and being influenced by other internationally circulating musical genres. This current status of “nationalized” musical genres has fostered an intense debate on market versus “authenticity”, local versus international, “modern” versus “tradition”, which is discussed in several chapters. The second part deals with the memory of subaltern groups for whom music has a fundamental symbolic function of promoting social debate and the maintenance of their memory, for example as in Anderson’s “imagined communities” exemplified by the fado community of Portuguese immigrants in Rio de Janeiro.

In parts 3 and 4 – predominantly written from a cultural studies perspective – musical scenes (part 3) and the phonographic industry (part 4) are explored. In part 3, “scenes” formed around musical genres, styles and practices are presented, particularly the ones where the “national” clashes with the “foreign”, from *Manguebeat*’s cultural hybridity and miscegenation and the negotiation of local “authenticity” versus “media invasion”, to the drum’n’bass scene as a “Brazilianized version” of the international genre that is again fed into the international scene and returns as a transformed musical genre. The fourth part explores the impact of computers on music circulation and market configuration, namely through the Internet and “new media” (the famous “web 2.0”), not only as a top-down corporate-driven process but also as a bottom-up consumer driven process. As a consequence, the authors propose a new organizational model for the phonographic industry: a business for goods and services sold via digital channels by new intermediaries that have to be sensitive to idiosyncratic, interactive and hyperactive audiences with its own aesthetic demands, producing an informal “art world” (163). This is a process that can be identified in Brazil but also in other contexts.

The Coda is dedicated to the reception of Brazilian popular music in Europe and North America through the integration of Brazilian diasporic musicians in international professional circuits, their mediating role between local musics and transnational life, and their engagement in processes of hybridization intended to provide escape from the stereotypes of Samba and Bossa-Nova commonly associated with Brazilian music. “World music” festival circuits, UNESCO’s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and WOMEX fair, are actors that shape a multiple and locally constricted perception of a nation that celebrates

globalization but also critiques its homogenizing effect. The book then closes with a conversation with the Brazilian musician Lenine, a bibliography on musical genres (inevitably, in Portuguese) and a general bibliography with a significant number of publications in English (reflecting the interest of international academia in Brazil).

This book is a major contribution to popular music studies, not only because it presents new data on Brazilian popular musics but also because of the new insights it brings into this field of study. *Made in Brazil* draws a complex picture of contemporaneity, stressing the confrontation between “roots” and “networks”, “national” and “trans-national”, and the instrumental character of popular music in the establishment of groups and social classes (be they national or marginal, cosmopolitan or traditional, rural or urban). Throughout the book, musical hybridization, cosmopolitanism, identity negotiation, peripheral status, emulation, social class definition, global circulation of “exotic” cultural materials, and discursive appropriations are explored.

Notwithstanding its merits, this edited collection would have gained considerably by adopting a broader understanding of “popular music”, not limited to the “entertainment practices conveyed by transnational media for the use of a heterogeneous audience” (1), and by not subscribing to a clear cut opposition of standardized and non-hegemonic practices, subaltern and dominant groups (be they socially or technologically based) and the implied idea of a single “music industry”. It would likewise have been useful to define the musical characteristics of the various genres discussed, and to explore in depth the controversies inherent in identity and memory processes. It would also have been helpful to use more quotation marks throughout the book (marking distinct sources, and probably different meanings, of some concepts), especially when the notion of *música nacional* (“national music”) is used. And finally, the music production technology industries (like the recording or musical instruments industries) are not taken into consideration, a domain that would contribute to the understanding of the historical processes that characterize popular music in Brazil, overcoming the long established, in PMS, simplistic arguments of “technological determinism” (178).

In all, the introduction of concepts like Oswald de Andrade’s “*antropofagia*” or interpretative models like Martin-Barbero’s “map of mediations” to international readers has to be applauded. A very interesting set of methodologies and techniques drawing on the social sciences (from ethnographic data to the sound recording as document, among others) are also of great interest. In this sense, the study of recordings has received a new impulse from Brazil, in part as a result of the opening of record collections from private archives to public access. I also would like to highlight Marchi’s chapter on the music industries which presents a fresh review of the twentieth century phonographic industry in industrialized peripheral countries.

Routledge’s Global Popular Music series, of which this book is an impressive example, comes into press at a critical moment when it is urgent to inscribe non-Anglophone research and topics in academia, precisely from countries where the social sciences in general and music research in particular are threatened by national and international scientific politics.