

Like Olive Senior, whose stories capture the rhythm of Jamaican life and speech, Earl Lovelace makes the West Indies the measuring stick for human behavior throughout the world.

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Peter Manuel. *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World*. (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) x, 287 pp., \$29.95.

This is a wide-ranging, insightful and often fascinating survey of popular ethnic musics of the world. The title is perhaps a bit misleading. By “western” Manuel clearly means modern Northern European and those parts of the Americas most directly influenced by the Anglo-Germanic traditions of Northern Europe. This is certainly a current and popular connotation for the word, and most readers should have no trouble with Manuel’s use of the term in this way. Readers who are used to thinking of “western” as comprising Europe, Africa and the Americas, however, will have to make adjustments. Manuel excludes consideration of “westernized” popular music forms as Greek *rebetika* and Jamaican *reggae* and *ska*.

Manuel begins with a fine introduction in which he discusses popular music as a vehicle for the expression and consolidation of ethnic (and frequently lower-class) groups undergoing rapid urbanization. Depending on particular social-historical-political circumstances, specific pop music styles can become symbolic of emerging ethnic, national or (especially in Africa) pan-ethnic identities.

The dynamics of these styles—their development and patterns of acceptance—make an interesting study of great relevance to students of ethnicity in the modern world. Although popular music styles tend to come from lower classes still in touch with their ethnic roots, they are often rejected at first by the upwardly-mobile members of those same groups in an effort to assimilate and gain acceptance by the dominant society. Only after the styles are “discovered” by an international audience (typically made up of middle-and/or upper-class youth), and thus “legitimized,” do they finally gain the acceptance of the local middle and upper classes. Jamaican reggae and Argentine tango are two good examples of this process. Manuel discusses these and many other examples of the process. It seems a shame that he had to omit “western” styles such as the blues from his analysis as it provides a perfect example of his thesis of development, avoidance, international acceptance and finally, national acceptance. It would have been interesting to compare

with the non-western musics.

The book covers Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Europe (Spain and Portugal, Greece and Yugoslavia), the Arab and the non-Arab Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, China and the Pacific. It is a bit uneven in its coverage—some of the chapters are much longer than others. Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, cover sixty pages, while there are only thirty pages for all of Africa.

Throughout, Manuel has taken great pains to consult with local experts on the music he is writing about. Still, his own familiarity with India, Cuba and Spain makes certain sections of the book stand out in contrast to others. The chapter on Latin America and the Caribbean is outstanding in its detail and analysis, for example, and the discussion of Indian film music is superbly detailed. The chapter on the Arab Middle East (by Virginia Danielson) is also very well written.

Some familiarity with either the music styles being discussed or with basic ethnomusicology is essential to get the most out of the book. There are occasional technical analyses of specific musical examples that require some background to follow. Also, Manuel occasionally contrasts and defines certain musical styles in terms of others which are only presented in subsequent chapters. (This occurs predominantly in the sections on Greece, Turkey, and India; perhaps the chapters were originally in a different order.) These are not major problems and could be overcome with examples in a classroom setting. Manuel makes no reference to the availability of a teaching tape, but such an addition would make this an ideal textbook for courses in World Popular Music or Ethnic World Music.

Manuel tends to place more emphasis on class than ethnicity in his analyses, frequently referring to the “lumpen proletariat,” the “lumpen classes,” the “lumpen slums and brothels,” and the “lumpen aspects of society” in general. Still, the fact remains that in most of the situations he is describing, questions of class and ethnicity are inextricably intertwined—a fact which Manuel occasionally notes. The members of rural groups, migrating to urban areas, frequently in countries which have undergone the experience of colonial domination, become lower-class citizens and develop their ethnic consciousness all at once, using music (among other things) as a convenient symbol. Although he does not discuss it, the process has occurred in the United States as well. Manuel has provided a valuable service in bringing together so much comparative material. It will be of interest to students and of special use to scholars of ethnicity.

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