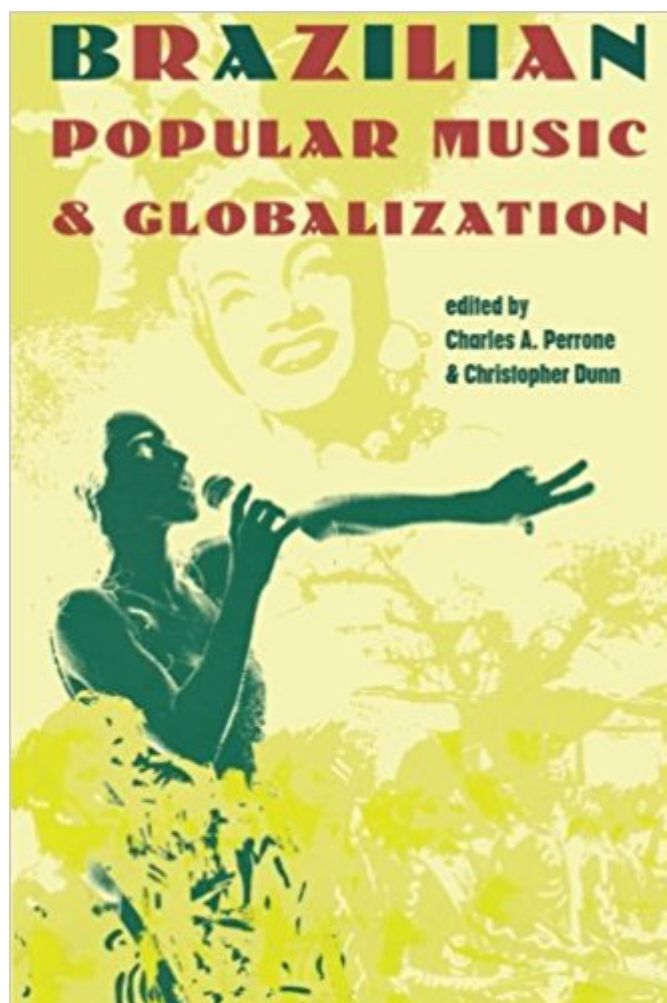


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Brazilian Popular Music And Globalization



Synopsis

This collection of articles by leading scholars traces the history of Brazilian pop music through the twentieth-century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Charles A. Perrone (PhD Texas 1985) is Professor of Portuguese and Luso-Brazilian Literature and Culture at the University of Florida. He is the author of *Masters of Contemporary Brazilian Song: MPB 1965-1985* (Texas, 1989), *Seven Faces: Brazilian Poetry since Modernism* (Duke, 1996) and translators/editor of several books. He lives in Jacksonville, FL. Christopher Dunn (Ph D Brown 1996) is Assistant Professor at Tulane University, where he holds a joint appointment in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and in the African and African Diaspora Studies Program. He is the author of a forthcoming book on the Tropicalist movement in Brazil and a contributor to *Encarta* on Afro-Brazilian topics including new popular music. He lives in New Orleans, LA.

This is a must-read for students of and experts in Spanish and Latin American Studies. I used it as a primary source in my doctoral dissertation in the field.

A must-read for anyone looking for a deeper understanding of the cultural forces shaping Brazilian music. Various contributors tackle the complexities of selling hybridized "world" music in a voracious, globalized world economy, and examine the ongoing stylistic, philosophical and

generational tensions between different groups in Brazilian popular music. Particular emphasis is given to the "tropicalia" scene, including several chapters on Os Mutantes and an excellent essay by Caetano Veloso regarding the mixed meaning of Carmen Miranda's legacy to the '60s generation. Working upwards from a standard-issue Marcsusian, colonial/postcolonial cultural critique, this book takes its cues from the Brazilian philosopher Osvaldo de Andrade, whose theories on "cultural cannibalism" were a key influence on the tropicalistas, and explains how the inclusive guerilla surrealism of the tropicalistas bypassed the stormy ideological divide between the left-wing cultural nationalism of the early MPB crowd and the vacant, prefab commercialism of the "jovem guarda" rock scene. Not content to lionize the tropicalistas, the book also shows how the '60s radicals later entered the status quo, and how their lofty superstardom has been rejected (or resented) by younger Brazilians, who came to see them as a fusty cultural aristocracy. A bit dense and mildly over-academic at times, but deeply fascinating and insightful, this is an invaluable resource for understanding the history of Brazilian pop, and for examining the metamorphoses of "local" music in a global market. Highly recommended!!

I wonder who this book is for? The writing styles of the essays are strictly academic -- except for Caetano's which is more of a reminiscence and similar in tone to his New York Times stuff -- and the price certainly reflects academic rather than mainstream press standards. On the other hand, the flashy jacket, numerous photos, and subject matter seem to indicate an appeal to non-academic Brazilian music fans. Like me. In any case, the 2 dozen or so essays span the time period between the Tropicalistas of the 60s, like Caetano, and recent phenoms like Chico Science and the "funk balls" of Rio and Salvador. I may not be qualified to judge it as an academic collection, but I noticed that almost all the scholarship is sociological in nature rather than musicological. For instance, there is only one page with any musical notation whatsoever, but there are very long essays on such themes as the pan-africanism, cultural "cannibalism", and the themes of carnival groups. The highlights of the book are small nuggets that fall out along the way. For instance, evocations of the cultural richness amid fetid swamps and massive poverty, the ironies of heavy metal in Belo Horizonte, or the offhanded anecdote of Caetano decrying the evil of a corrupt career politician at a show. The main lowlight is surely the tedious academic style of some of the writers and the endless repetition of certain themes. Some editing of this and a little less fawning over some of the performers would have made it an easier read. And inevitably with a collection of essays there is a feeling of randomness about the subject matter selections. (Compare it to the sassy and completely nonacademic "Bossa Nova" by Ruy Castro -- great fun.) Bottom line: there are very few books about

Brazilian music in English and most of those are for complete novices. This is therefore essential reading for anyone interested in Tropicalia and more recent developments in the most musical place on earth.

This book is mainly about the social side of Brazilian popular music. It gets five stars from me for the quality of its contents, although the title may be a bit misleading. Some of the views expressed may be debatable, but that is a positive facet; it makes you think.

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