

Book Review

Christine Dettmann. 2012. *Ein anderes Gesicht: Lokale brasilianische Musiker in Lissabon*. Intercultural Music Studies, 16. Berlin: VWB—Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung. 360pp. ISBN 978-3-86135-647-9 (pbk)

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Keywords: Brazil; ethnography; genre; Portugal; transnational migration

Ein anderes Gesicht: Lokale brasilianische Musiker in Lissabon (trans. “Another Face: Local Brazilian Musicians in Lisbon”) is a study of Brazilian musicians in Lisbon by the German ethnomusicologist Christine Dettmann. It is the German-language publication of Dettmann’s PhD thesis of the same title completed at the Rostock University of Music and Theatre (Hochschule für Musik und Theater Rostock), and is the sixteenth contribution within the series *Intercultural Music Studies*, edited by Max Peter Baumann. Based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Portugal’s capital city from 2003 to 2007, the book offers a sensitive portrait of 15 musicians and their plight to make a living through performing music from their country of original citizenship, Brazil. What emerges out of their narratives are issues of migration, genre and place, which Dettmann discusses over the course of the five main chapters. Also central is a reflection on ethnomusicological method, motivated by Dettmann’s research experiences and ethical considerations. Dettmann, currently Professor of Ethnomusicology at the University of Music and Performing Arts Munich (Hochschule für Musik und Theater München), engages in an impressive breadth of debates within ethnomusicology and other disciplines in order to inform and guide her discussion. Also included with the book is a CD with recordings of musical performances of numerous musicians featured in the book, and this audio accompaniment illuminates the text considerably. Overall, *Ein anderes Gesicht* adds insights into contemporary performance of Brazilian music, contributes to debates on migration and musical genre in Europe, and also calls for renewed reflection on ethnomusicological method and ethnographic representation to enable musicians and their voices to take centre stage.

The book begins with a brief “Preface” (*Vorwort*) and “Introduction” (*Einleitung*) where Dettmann provides a general context to her study. To highlight

the ubiquity of Brazilian musicians in Lisbon, Dettmann opens with a quote from 2006 by the satirical supplement to the Portuguese newspaper *Publicó* that, in the year 2036, Brazilians resort to mass protest at the lack of musicians in their country since they have all emigrated to Portugal. Indeed, Portugal has been a desirable destination for Brazilian emigrants, considering the continuing cultural and linguistic ties maintained since Brazilian independence in 1822, and also because of Portugal's relative economic stability since joining the European Union (EU) in 1986. Central to this sense of affinity is music, and thus performing music offers an opportunity for Brazilian immigrants to make a living in their newly adopted home city. Dettmann's own research coincided with what she terms the "second-wave" (*zweite Welle*) of Brazilian immigration to Portugal during the early 2000s. Her fieldwork, she explains, followed the musical lives of 15 Brazilian musicians during one year of fieldwork in 2003, annual follow-up trips until 2007 and continuous contact up until 2011.

Chapter 1, entitled "A/No Theoretical Framework" (*(K)ein theoretischer Rahmen*), offers an extensive overview of her fieldwork methods—participant/observation at concerts, shows, bars, restaurants, discos—and a discussion on the relationship between ethnographic theory and practice. Concerned with finding an appropriate theoretical framework, Dettmann summarizes debates on ethnographic method and the concept of "identity" drawing on ethnomusicology, postcolonial and poststructural theory. She warns of the dangers of theory-driven research, and instead calls for an ethnographic style in which theory and practice shape and inform one another in non-hierarchical ways: "it [my theoretical framework] is no conventional 'theoretical' framework, but will be presented as 'theoretical-practical'" (*Er ist kein herkömmlich „theoretischer“ Rahmen, sondern wird als „theoretisch-praktisch“ vorgestellt werden*) (35). Drawing on the American philosopher John Dewey and the concept of 'grounded theory', as coined by Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss (2009 [1967]), Dettmann puts forward her own model, whereby theory is built closely around empirical data. As she explains in the conclusion, she hopes that "future ethnomusicological research, in which individuals and their musical practice are central, draws on, and can bring success in employing this method" (*zukünftige ethnomusikologische Forschung, in der ebenfalls Individuen und ihre Musikpraxis im Mittelpunkt stehen, auf diesen Ansatz zurückgreift und für sich erfolgreich in Anwendung bringen kann*).

In the ensuing three main chapters, Dettmann weaves in theoretical debates throughout her ethnographic fabric. In Chapter 2, "The Context of Migration" (*Der Migrationskontext*), we are offered a history of Brazilian immigration to Portugal. Here, Dettmann discusses issues of the legacy of Portuguese colonialism in Brazil, changing economic conditions in both countries

and the impact of EU membership for Portugal. Highlighting the first (late 1980s) and second (early 2000s) waves of immigration, she sets out the legal status of these Brazilian immigrants within Portugal. The next 20 pages are dedicated to introducing 13 of the protagonists, including the singer Silvia Nazário, the multi-instrumentalist Renato Corrêa and the composer and performer Fernando Terra. Considering the diverse experiences, motivations and lives of these musicians, Dettmann probes what the term “migrant”, which supposedly unites these figures, might actually mean by reviewing different theories. She discusses notions of “inner” and “outer” immigration (Han 2005) to highlight the discrepancy between social and personal perceptions of being an immigrant, as well as the constructed transnational space created through the connection between the countries of departure and arrival (Glick Schiller, Basch and Blanc-Szanton 1997 [1992]). In Dettmann’s words, migration is thus a “dynamic place in which the creative potential of humans continuously experience challenges, which at the same time transforms their professional profile as a musician” (*In Anbetracht dieses unabgeschlossenen Charakters der Migration konstruiert sich ein geradezu dynamischer Ort, in welchem das schöpferische Potential der Menschen immer wieder eine Herausforderung erfährt und zugleich ihr Berufsbild als „Musiker“ verändern kann*) (87). Drawing on Lundberg, Malm and Ronström’s notion of “expressive specialist” (2003), Dettmann then discusses notions of “musician”, considering the diverse ways in which migration could mark the “beginning, the building or continuation of a musical or artistic career” (*den Beginn, den Aufbau oder die Fortsetzung einer musikalischen bzw. künstlerischen Karriere*) (91). In particular, she highlights how varying ideas of professionalism, differing values of certain popular musics in Brazilian and Portuguese contexts, and unequal gender roles shape the notion of “musician”. The end of the chapter inspects different types of motivation for immigration, changing Portuguese legislation and the challenges of working as a migrant musician.

Chapter 3, “Musical Practice” (*Die musikalische Praxis*), is a closer study of Brazilian musical performance in particular locations in Lisbon. In order to do this, Dettmann first offers a history of Brazilian music from its roots to its transnational understandings. “Brazilian music” was used within her field context to denote *música popular brasileira*, a body of popular genres that emerged over the twentieth century and that were shaped by Brazilian academic discourse, problematic notions of “racial mixing” and a search for national identity. The transnational nature of this music—through artistic collaboration, the growth in the music industry and emerging musical media—allowed for the growth in popularity of Brazilian music in Portugal. In particular, this popularity was fuelled by the music’s incorporation in Brazilian *telenovelas* (which were marketed to Portuguese audiences from the

1970s) and not least Portugal's own crisis in searching for national popular genres. The repertoire of the musicians she focuses on draws on popular Brazilian music from the second half of the twentieth century, consisting mainly of cover versions of well-known hits, but sometimes also individual compositions. Often including voice and guitar, musical performance mainly takes place in bars, dance events and discos where the musician is not the central spectacle, but rather is meant to set the atmosphere. Taking the case study of the band Xingu, she argues that musicians' performance practice rests on the need to balance individual artistry and audience expectations.

The next section discusses genre as a discursive concept regulated by socio-economic factors. In particular, Dettmann highlights the ubiquitous urge to label Brazilian genres as being of good quality (*musica de boa qualidade*), which includes genres such as samba, bossa nova and pop/rock Brasileiro, and of bad quality (*musica de má qualidade*), which includes genres such as samba pagode, forró and funk carioca (149). Shaped by notions of "race", place and authenticity, these categories and the inevitable value judgements attached to them are central to the ways in which Brazilian music is practised and received in her study. Often there is more demand for "bad music", whereas "good music" comes with artistic prestige. The particular repertoire and the individual artistry invested by the musicians thus depends much upon the individual predilections of the musicians, the context in which they perform and their economic situation. In the next section, Dettmann reveals how the musicians articulated a sense of belonging to a wider community of Brazilian musicians and an attachment to place, drawing on Will Straw's term "cultural terrain" (1991). Whilst the musicians—through mutual acquaintance and musical collaboration—form a broad artistic network, there are nonetheless noticeable differences within the community. One way in which musicians might differentiate themselves from others is through allegiance to "good" or "bad" music genres, which thus also impacts upon performance spaces and audiences. Dettmann links this to ideas of "imagined communities" (Anderson 2006 [1983]) and music and identity (Frith 1996) to argue how the practice of musicians articulates notions of belonging and exclusion that have both ethical and aesthetic dimensions.

The final ethnographic chapter, entitled "Site-Seeing" (*Site-Seeing*), is a closer inspection of the actual "cultural terrain" of Lisbon. Drawing on Straw's notion of "site" as both a geographic place and a constructed atmosphere (1991), Dettmann proposes a study of the spaces in which Brazilian musical performance takes place, hence the chapter's title *site-seeing*. To begin with, she reviews understandings of what is meant by "local". Referring to interview excerpts and theories proposed by ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin (1993), she shows how the "local" depends on visibility, is defined in relation

to the “regional” and can be an inclusive and exclusive term. Highlighting the aspirations of musicians to reach wider audiences, Dettmann argues that the local does not necessarily denote a static geographic place. She then provides a more detailed study of three of her key research sites: discos, restaurants and bars. Within each category, she takes particular case studies—Disco Armazém F, Restaurant Atira-te ao Rio, Bar Netjazzcafé—and traces, through interview material, issues of repertoire, media production and consumption, and the striving for wider visibility. Furthermore, Dettmann reveals how these sites map onto ideas of genre, “good” and “bad” musical taste and individual artistic ideals. In these ways, the “cultural terrain” of her study has a “dynamism” shaped by individual personal and artistic aspirations, audience desires, aesthetic values and socio-economic issues.

In the final chapter, “Summary” (*Resümee*), Dettmann recapitulates the main observations and arguments from the preceding chapters. She then attempts to link her own insights into genre with similar debates in a Brazilian context, as well as discussions of “good” and “bad” music within music studies more generally. Here, she emphasizes the continually transforming nature of these debates, which reveal both aesthetic and political dimensions. To close, Dettmann alludes to the potentials of ethnomusicology to voice the forward-oriented aspirations of musicians, explaining how her own study highlights the “steps with which humans approached their own envisioned future” (*Schritte, mit denen die Menschen einer von ihnen entworfenen Zukunft nähertraten*) (254). One should not skip the rich material at the end of the book, which includes an extensive bibliography of literature, journalistic material and discography; transcriptions of extracts of interviews arranged according to discussion topic; and a summary of the book in the English language.

Ein anderes Gesicht is an important contribution to ethnographic approaches to Brazilian music, music in Portugal and discussions of genre and transnational migration. There are nonetheless some weaknesses to the book that should be addressed. Firstly, the thesis-like structure of the text can prove a challenge to a wider non-academic readership. In particular, the long first chapter, which deals with methodology, means that there is a long wait for the introduction of the case studies. Likewise, some of the summaries of theory within the ensuing chapters detract from the overall flow of the ethnography, in spite of Dettmann’s desire to create a more balanced and dynamic relationship between theory and empirical data. Furthermore, I personally would have liked to see a more critical engagement with the literature of migration, diaspora and transnationalism within ethnomusicology and the social sciences. To be sure, there are sections within the text that deal with transnational imaginaries, migration and legal status in the adopted homeland. But, considering growing anxieties about migrants in European coun-

tries, migrants' experiences of racism and economic hardships (especially since the financial crisis) and the increasing impermeability of EU borders, this research offers the opportunity to voice more critical perspectives on the role of music in shaping issues that have become hotly contested in twenty-first century Europe. Dettmann, nonetheless, never loses sight of the continual plight of the musicians she has worked with. The title of the book itself draws on an older understanding of "face" (*Gesicht*) as "vision" (*Vision*): "what has continuously impressed me during my research is the power of (musical) imaginations, of visions which the artists follow on their life journeys and which become decisive signposts along those journeys" (*was mich im Verlauf dieser Forschung immer wieder beeindruckt hat, ist die Kraft von (musikalischen) Vorstellungen, von Visionen, denen die Künstler auf ihren Lebenswegen folgen und die dabei zu entscheidende Richtungsweisern werden*) (10). Dettmann's empathetic foregrounding of these voices offers a model for future ethically engaged ethnomusicological research.

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