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of European classical music and Negro spirituals. At the age of 40 he received a master's degree from Columbia University. He spent the last decades of his life as an influential educator, heading the School of Music at Adams College near Durban, which (in part under the authority of Hugh Tracey and Percival Kirby) included indigenous music in its curriculum. Caluza collected, recorded, and led performances of "traditional" music. Drawing on the insights of John Blacking, Erlmann is quick to point out how composers such as Caluza negotiate a narrow path through constricting white attitudes toward Black expressive innovation, assimilation, and accomplishment. It was a damned-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't predicament, making Caluza's music vulnerable to criticism for not being European enough, and yet not being African enough. Similar criticisms, of course, are often applied to composers and performers throughout much of the postcolonial world even today.

The final case study, in Chapter 6, examines *isicathamiya*—the choral music of Zulu migrant workers—in the context of rural to urban migration. In Erlmann's hands, this musical form is treated not as a rural genre that modernizes in an urban environment, but as a type of symbolic mediation between worlds radically different from one another. Here the author draws on the works of John and Jean Comaroff, viewing music as a cultural strategy for reconciling the contrasts between rural production and urban wage labor.

One of Erlmann's most impressive accomplishments is his collection and integration of data from a variety of sources. Much of the book relies heavily on press coverage from the period under examination. The author also conducted interviews with 19 individuals, and their accounts are painstakingly referenced. Erlmann does not hide behind scholarly authority, but lets the reader know exactly who said what. Most of the book's research and writing was carried out in South Africa, primarily Johannesburg, from 1981 to 1987. Amid the crises and turmoil of the time, "the ultimate goal of the research . . . could not merely be a book about a past that had little bearing upon the country's cruel present. . . . Ultimately, this research became a quest for the very foundations of a new South Africa" (p. xvi).

Together with other recently published volumes regarding popular musical traditions in Africa, *African Stars* should be received as an outstanding contribution to the documentation of African performance in all its variety. Christopher Waterman's 1986 *Juju: a Social History and Ethnography of an African Popular Music* and Wolfgang Bender's 1991 *Sweet Mother: Modern African Music* are also published in the Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology series. Collectively, these works complement one another in regional and topical foci. Readers may also wish to listen to Erlmann's recordings: *Isicathamiya: Zulu Worker Choirs in South Africa* (Heritage HT 313; 1986); and, documenting the stylistic development of male choral singing, *Mbube Roots: Zulu Choral Music from South Africa, 1930–1960s* (Rounder 5025; 1987). These and other South African recordings are discussed in *JAF* 402:348–349.

Icanchu's Drum: An Orientation to Meaning in South American Religions.

By Lawrence E. Sullivan. (New York: Macmillan, 1988. Pp. xi+1003, preface, map, notes, selected bibliography, indexes.)

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How many scholars today are concerned with ultimate questions—the great puzzle of existence? Crawling around in the ant farm of academia, so many of us are forced to spend so much of our time on such narrow topics that we forget the mystery of the world that originally attracted us, like some invisible magnet, to the byzantine maze of knowledge. And in those moments in which we do manage, despite ourselves, to express a sense of wonder in writing, our colleagues bring us up short with sobering criticism, like a sharp slap on the face to an idle daydreamer.

Lawrence Sullivan, however, with this big, rambling, rough-hewn essay, has managed to step back from specialization, to slip around superego restraints, to poke his way into forbidden dark corners, and to hang-glide above the terrain of ordinary anthropological scholarship, asking what South American Indian mythology and ritual can tell us about the

experience of being. Of course, he comes out of a unique tradition—history of religions scholarship. Indeed, working one's way (and I do mean working) through *Icanchu's Drum* is a bit like reading Mircea Eliade with Joseph Campbell on the television in the background. On the one hand, there is great erudition; on the other, awe at the spectacle of life.

The thesis is that South American Indian myths and rituals represent an intellectual and emotional wrestling match with being, addressing questions such as: How did the universe of things spring into existence? What is the nature of space and time? Why are human beings the way they are? What are we to make of the end of existence through death and apocalyptic destruction? We read about the "primordial jaguar" (p. 80); the "cosmic tree" that separates "the celestial from the terrestrial mode of being" (p. 61); "quartz crystals, which are embodiments of celestial light and heat" (p. 416); "the lightness that aids one in entering the upperworld" (p. 624); the "puzzling transformations" that "create the possibility of multivalent symbolic links among all conditions of being" (p. 624); and much more.

What about the organization of this massive work? In 1971, as a college student, I walked up to the famous Chartres Cathedral outside Paris and heard the voice of a man, who, I later learned, was an art historian named Malcolm Miller, saying: "Step right up, ladies and gentlemen, last English-speaking tour of the day. This is the story of time, from the beginning, to the end." His reference was to the stone friezes located around the cathedral, each of which tells a Biblical story. And the stories ran from the creation scene in Genesis to the apocalypse of Revelations—the story of time, from the beginning to the end. This also is the ordering of Sullivan's book.

The first major chapter is on cosmogony, how things came into being in the first place, why there is something rather than nothing. The chapter is concerned primarily with comparative mythology. From here, we move to considerations of cosmological space—beliefs about what the physical universe is and what place humans occupy within it—and then to time, where the focus shifts to rituals and calendrical cycles. A chapter on the human condition explores concepts of the person—souls, dreams, naming, sounds, diets. Another on

human growth and development, what ethnographers usually call the life cycle, explores beliefs about conception, rituals surrounding birth and initiation, ceremonial friendships, and so forth. This is followed by a chapter on specialists—shamans and priests—and then the last major section on death and eschatology.

What makes this book distinct from ordinary folkloristic and anthropological scholarship is its history of religions-style thesis: every aspect of the South American Indian beliefs and practices discussed can be understood with reference to a fundamental religious experience of the world, and that experience is not reducible to material forces—economics, politics, social structure. It is a more basic awe, a sense of wonder mixed with terror at the brutal fact of existence, an at once inspiring and dreadful sacredness.

This experience, according to Sullivan, accounts for the myths that Native South Americans tell about an early era filled with unique and uniquely powerful beings, an era that eventually came to a screeching cataclysmic halt through deluge, conflagration, or "occultation" (the original onset of darkness). (Oh, yes, the Icanchu, in Sullivan's title, is a bird in Toba mythology that survived the conflagration; its drumming regenerated life on the planet.) The religious experience apprehends the world as creative rather than predictable and replicable; it apprehends it directly rather than with the aid of symbolic mediation. The same experience renders explicable beliefs about the physical cosmos, calendrical and life cyclic rituals, shamanism, and millenarian movements—although the ones we know about in South America are also responses to European conquest.

Ethnographers will ask: Whose experience is this? Is it the native people's experience of their myths and rituals, or is it Sullivan's superimposition of a largely Christian understanding? The strength of this book is its vast acquaintance with the anthropological literature on Native South America, a literature written in many different languages and often hard to come by. Its weakness is its lack of grounding in an intensive ethnographic encounter, through which the anthropological writings might be better filtered, an empirical confrontation with what people are like.

And Sullivan's task is to take on anthropology, and the social sciences more generally, which he believes are "diversions that hasten their own end" (p. 682). Because these sciences deny the "sacred sources of reality," because they delimit, categorize, de-mythologize, because they explain away religious experience in terms of historical, political, social, and economic factors rather than embrace it on its own terms, they fail to grasp the creative and powerful forces—forces that cannot be simply categorized—that culture represents and embodies.

Too much poking around in dark corners, some will say. Yet, although we disagree with its ethnocentrism, with its casting of South American myth and ritual in Western and too transparently Christian terms, Sullivan's work, difficult as it is to slog through, rekindles our sense of the magic in the world. Here we can try to find ground for a meaningful dialogue between disciplines, a dialogue that renews our sense of wonder and mystery, reawakens us to ultimate questions we have grown too narrow or too wary to comprehend. Or, again, maybe this is just idle daydreaming, after all.