

selection of mostly commercially recorded *jùjú* or *jùjú*-related musics from 1936 to 1982, introduced in the irresistible intonation of the Yoruba drummer Adebisi Adeleke.

Perhaps the book's greatest accomplishment is to raise important, sometimes fundamental, questions about music and musical life in urban West Africa. I single out three for comment. First, Waterman relies heavily on the notion of an *ijinlèè* or deeply grounded Yoruba tradition. Although values associated with this tradition are invoked frequently, the tradition itself is not defined explicitly or comprehensively. Nor is there proper attention to evolving *ijinlèè* values. Yet one can well imagine fundamental changes between, for example, I. K. Dairo's sense of Yoruba tradition and Ebenezer Obey's. Second, Waterman relies on one of the more controversial of ethnomusicological constructs: the supposed homology between musical structure and social structure. Beginning with casual connections between music and Yoruba foodways, or between music and the supernatural, Waterman advances the conclusion that 'the relationship between Yoruba musical and social order is not trivial' (p. 213). His argument might have been stronger had he entered more fully into the intricacies of this homology, rather than leaving the reader to substitute mutual coexistence for a genuine homology. Third, although the book does not claim to be solely about music, the discussion of musical style, especially the elements of stylistic absorption and reabsorption, and the effervescent plurality of styles in the inter-war period, might have been captured in more detailed technical analysis. Readers may well find the cassette helpful in this regard, even if the worlds it opens up are not the ones described in Waterman's prose.

The valuable sixth chapter includes a description of a long (fifteen-minute) excerpt from a live performance of *jùjú*; the emphasis, however, is not on the music itself. But what, after all, is 'the music itself'? Waterman is unambiguous on this point: 'an adequate analysis of "the music itself"... must be informed by an equally detailed understanding of historically situated human subjects that perceive, learn, interpret, evaluate, produce, and respond to musical patterns' (p. 6). While knowledge of context never hurt anyone, the attendant devaluation of musical analysis suggests that Waterman disagrees entirely with John Blacking's claim that 'the meaning of music rests ultimately "in the notes" that human ears perceive' (*How Musical is Man?*, p. 19).

By considering previous research on *jùjú*, adding new data and introducing some fresh perspectives on its significance, Waterman has made an important contribution. The book deserves the attention of all who are fascinated by musical life in urban West Africa.

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SYLVIE FAINZANG, *Pour une anthropologie de la maladie en France: un regard africaniste*, Cahiers de l'Homme: Ethnologie, Géographie, Linguistique, n.s. 29. Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 1989, 109 pp., FF 90, ISBN 2 7132 0913 17.

The opening chord of Fainzang's study is splendid: 'Si l'on remplaçait, sous la plume de Georges Canguilhem, le mot *philosophie* par le mot *anthropologie*, on pourrait lire, avec sans doute autant de raison: "L'[anthropologie] est une réflexion pour qui toute matière étrangère est bonne, et nous dirions volontiers pour qui toute bonne matière doit être étrangère"'. *Pour une anthropologie de la maladie en France* is an attempt to turn Canguilhem's supposititious statement around and

bring anthropology home. The author looks at her own society as if it were an African culture.

Sylvie Fainzang did fieldwork in West Africa. She studied how explanations and images of illness contribute to the structure of the Bisa people's society in Burkina Faso. Kinship relations and economic and religious practices are expressed and shaped there by the way in which people present complaints of not feeling well.

During the past fifty years, awareness that illness cannot be adequately understood in biomedical terms has been more alive for anthropologists working abroad than for those studying medical science at home. Their position as outsiders has enabled Western ethnographers to view illness and therapeutic practices in African communities as social and cultural phenomena; they have nevertheless often failed to see the cultural dimensions of disease and medicine in their own societies. Fainzang attempts to take on the outsider's role in order to study a community in which she is—more or less—an insider. She attempts to apply anthropological concepts and 'data' from Africa in a study of a French semi-urban community near Paris, la Ville-du-Bois, which has about 5,000 inhabitants, many of whom are immigrants.

The experiment is not new, but I have seldom seen it explained so elaborately in methodological and philosophical terms. The methodology is, of course, the same type of participant observation which Fainzang had practised in Burkina. The philosophy is expressed in her belief in 'l'unité de l'Homme social'. Her major aim is to find the 'universals' in European and African symbolic thought, in particular with regard to being ill. The main 'hypothesis', derived from her African research, is that speaking about illness is usually a metonymic way of indicating social disorder; it is 'metonymic' because social experience is represented by the suffering body.

The results of her experiment are not found in this publication. The ethnographic data are sketchy and the theoretical overtones too dominant to allow the data to speak for themselves. It would not be fair, however, to criticise the author on this point. She herself would be the first to point out that the ethnographic material is used only to illustrate the possible effects of her research approach. *Pour* ('towards') in the title indicates that modesty; her book above all focuses on a research programme.

The value of this plea for an 'Africanist view' of France depends on whether it provides a new and enlightening perspective on autochthonous culture, in this case the culture of illness. Fainzang presents and discusses four types of illness attribution which are derived partly from African research and partly from studies in Western societies; she compares the use of these attributions in the French and African communities. The four types are: (1) self-accusation, (2) accusation of a nearby other, (3) accusation of a far-off other, and (4) accusation of 'society'.

Studying illness episodes from this perspective does indeed seem promising. It brings to light similarities as well as differences between explanatory models used in the two communities. The major step forward is the awareness that social explanations of illness (and other misfortune) are not an African prerogative. They are also likely to occur in Western societies. Conflicts within the conjugal family or in society at large (for example, along ethnic or class lines) are expressed and legitimised in the way people explain their health problems.

Ironically, Fainzang's heuristic device is more effective in pointing out the 'unity' of African and European people than she herself manages to indicate. The similarities which appear when European social practices are placed in the African framework are far more impressive than the differences. One prominent distinction which she mentions is that accusations against close relatives (of causing illness) are made privately in France but publicly in African society. However, I have

doubts about this. The formal witchcraft accusations so vividly described by anthropologists represent only the tip of the iceberg. Most 'accusations' are probably uttered in secret and could be better termed 'suspicions'. Nearby others are discredited via insinuation and gossip rather than by open accusation. References to such concealed witchcraft accusations are even found in the work of Marc Augé, Fainzang's main inspiration.

Her distinction between (African) intended and (French) unintended action leading to illness needs comment as well. More careful comparison of the two societies would reveal striking similarities in this regard. African societies have developed subtle styles of accusing but not blaming others for illness and other misfortune. Witches are sometimes excused for their evil practices because it is thought that they are unaware of what they do when asleep. In the same vein, people with the evil eye are often believed to cause harm unintentionally and punishment by deities and ancestors can be incurred without the trespassers being aware of their offence.

Similar objections can be made to Fainzang's suggestion that blaming far-off others for misfortune is more likely to occur in Western society and to her claim that accusations against society in general of causing ill health are practically non-existent in rural Africa.

My main difficulty with Fainzang's application of the 'Africanist view' lies in her total neglect of illness explanations which avoid accusing people and try to strike a 'neutral' tone. Her view of the African explanatory model is surprisingly exotic, as it turns a blind eye to non-social aetiologies. If her perspective had included the latter, she would have been able to draw even more parallels between the two types of culture. In her concluding chapter she briefly criticises Foster for his alleged evolutionist view of non-Western aetiologies; she fails to see, however, that Foster's concept of 'naturalisation' could have prevented her from overlooking the non-social varieties of illness explanations. Placing the cause of illness in the world of 'nature', beyond human intervention, is an effective way of escaping responsibility or avoiding social complications. Such a style of reasoning may be as socially relevant as personalising the origin of illness. In most cases, however—as Foster also points out—these two styles are meshed. The anthropologist is invited to suggest when and how people emphasise social (personalistic) or naturalistic explanations. My tentative suggestion is that shifts in emphasis depend as much on the informant's *hic et nunc* situation (including the interview situation) as on his/her 'culture' (be it African or French).

My somewhat paradoxical conclusion is that Fainzang's plea for an Africanist perspective on Europe is crucially important for the development of cultural and, in particular, medical anthropology, but that her demonstration of the benefits to be gained from that perspective could have been more convincing.

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W. ARENS and IVAN KARP (eds), *Creativity of Power: cosmology and action in African societies*. Washington, D.C., and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989, 344 pp., \$24.95, ISBN 0 87474 617 5 paperback.

The work of anthropologists has made a valuable contribution to our understanding of politics in Africa in both an empirical and a theoretical sense. The writings of scholars such as Gluckman and Schapera through to Swartz and Lan and many others are essential reading for any political observer who realises that the study of politics is not just about the study of national governments and formal constitutions. Micro-level studies allow us to see not just local politics but also the