

evinces the political complexities that thicken the black soundscape.

Africa in Stereo documents the ways in which Africans themselves theorize sound and media—often differentially to Euro-modern understandings. It locates the pan-African imagination in the “self-consciously inventive black modernism” that moves through popular media in the form of sound, aesthetics, and performativities (23). The archives and material artifacts associated with this sounded Africanness condense from these aesthetic practices. Together, they form a stratum of global belonging that draws from global media networks while remaining substantively sovereign.

Jaji’s attention to processes of sonic placemaking highlights the largely intangible but deeply political work popular media does for African and Afrodiasporic people. The book’s theoretical framework approaches Africa itself as an assemblage of people, practices, and media that condenses during the Pan-African movement and shifts to new modes in the current conjuncture, a formation Jaji calls post-Africa. Rather than survey the soundscapes of Africa, it traces the sound- and mediascape that is Africa. Sound is a critical substance to pan-African unification, Jaji shows, and a primary material by which its components relate to each other. This attention to the relationship between global infrastructures and local aesthetic practices suggests modes by which anthropologists of sound might situate their work—in addition to musical lyrics or styles, for instance, what Jaji calls stereomodernity can be mapped in terms of its sonic densities, its reverberations and noises, its representations in musical notation and poetics, or its correspondence to the exchange of certain commodities.

Anthropologists will also recognize the value of Jaji’s largely literary methods to emerging ethnographic practices of sound and the sensory. Here, archival excavation serves as a kind of historical anthropology that accompanies ethnographic methods, tracing sonic affect from immediate experience through historical transformations. The concept of echolocation inhabits *Africa in Stereo*’s chapter on the circulation and articulation of African and diasporic literatures on the slave dungeons, a process by which practitioners use media to sound their location amidst other cultural objects. Together, she finds, African literatures locate and situate themselves primarily in terms of their relationship to each other, rather than in their opposition to dominant world systems. Anthropologists of sound may consider approaching sonic practices and sounded objects in the field through the amplifier of echolocation, by which listening becomes an active mode of self-positioning within a relational history and a relational diasporic place.

A further study might extend Jaji’s insights to develop ethnographic methods attuned to the relationship of local sonic experience, performance, and consumption to global modes of belonging. Anthropologists are equipped to trace the global implications of performance, listening, and recording in resonance with distant, but resonant, practices. Ethnographic methods might trace the transposition of affect from one material (i.e., ritual performance) to another (i.e., a digital hip-hop sam-

ple of an African ritual song) through Jaji’s framework. In *Africa in Stereo*, anthropologists of sound will locate new methods by which they can weigh both the sonic substance of cultural experience and that of global belonging.

References Cited

Samuels, David W., Louise Meintjes, Ana Maria Ochoa, and Thomas Porcello. 2010. Soundscapes: toward a sounded anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 39:329–345.

Learning to Listen

Kristina M. Jacobsen

Departments of Music and Anthropology (Ethnology), University of New Mexico, Department of Music, MSC04 2570, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131, USA (kmj23@unm.edu). 22 VI 16

Singing for the Dead: The Politics of Indigenous Revival in Mexico. By Paja Faudree. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013.

Within the past fifteen years, scholars focusing on language revitalization movements in indigenous communities have concentrated their attention on the successes, complications, or failures of single projects (Davis 2016; Debenport 2015; Hill 2002; Hinton 2001; Meek 2012; Nevins 2013). Moreover, such studies have rarely included explicit focus on the significance of music or sound on its own terms. Linguistic anthropologist Paja Faudree’s ethnography, *Singing for the Dead: The Politics of Indigenous Revival in Mexico*, takes a different tack, comparing two language-based revival projects within the same Mazatec-speaking community in the state of Oaxaca, Mexico, showing us how art, culture, and singing are directly linked to politics.

Resisting the temptation to read interethnic conflict through economic and political lenses alone, Faudree’s analysis moves us beyond a framework of “invented tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), showing how contrasting and even competing revival projects interanimate one another and serve to deepen community-based discussion on the meanings of tradition, innovation, modernity, and change. Through in-depth ethnographic fieldwork and living with the families of two of her main interlocutors, Faudree delves into the intimate, family-based schisms within revitalization projects, foregrounding how many revival projects are the domain of educated elites and the ironies and contradictions inherent in this truth.

Focusing on two revival movements—the Day of the Dead, or *Día de los Muertos*, Song Contest and the Mazatec Indigenous Church—and on a handful of prominent indigenous authors involved in writing in the Mazatec language, the ethnography is set in the mountainous region of northern Oaxaca—the Sierra Mazateca—in the village of Nda Xo. Emphasizing the symbolic significance of writing in an indigenous language

over its functional, communicative role, Faudree finds that most Mazatec speakers do not read or write in Mazatec and, while choosing to use Spanish as their written form of communication, continue to strongly identify as Mazatec. Ironically, most indigenous language activists in Mexico and in the Sierra also use Spanish and not their mother tongues as their lingua franca to communicate with one another and sometimes their children as well. This is due not only to the tremendous indigenous language diversity in Mexico—eight distinct groupings and several language isolates—and dialectal diversity across Mazatec communities but also to the fact that Spanish is taught in all primary schools. Finally, woven throughout the text is an intervention into the politics of indigeneity as this relates not only to language use and revitalization movements but also to authenticity, modernity, and national imaginaries in the context of contemporary indigenous peoples.

In the introduction, Faudree chronicles her own trial-by-fire arrival narrative, in which she unwittingly chooses sides in a long-standing conflict between two political factions, resulting in a standoff that ultimately leads to a shift in the community in which she did her research. Methodologically, this is helpful, as it makes explicit the way internal community dynamics and the choices we make impact the data we gather and the ways we position ourselves as ethnographers. Examining the word “indigenous” and its usefulness—or lack thereof—as this term relates to revitalization movements in the Sierra Mazateca, Faudree suggests that revival projects should be understood as an incorporation of both tradition and “the modern,” as both innovation and restoration (29).

In chapter 1, Faudree examines Mexican state policies toward the so-called “Indian problem” and its assimilationist rhetoric of “whitening” or *blanqueamiento*. Faudree discusses how, in a manner similar to how Federal Indian policy has operated in the United States and for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Canada, the recognition of indigenous difference in Mexico is selective and focused primarily on an idealized indigenous past, where alterity is premised upon the “desire to erase such difference and replace it with cultural homogeneity” (57), creating what Cattelino (2010), Povinelli (2002), and Simpson (2014) have variously described as a sort of indigenous “double bind.” On the one hand, Mazatecs are expected to “show” that they are authentically indigenous through, significantly, speaking Mazatec and doing “Mazatec” things; on the other hand, there is no model allowing Mazatecs to be both Mazatec and to be full participants in contemporary national life and no recognition of the internal diversity existing between various indigenous communities or indeed within one community. One set of assumptions precludes the other.

Chapter 2 focuses on two events that led up to new traditions of Mazatec literacy and performance: mushroom veladas (ceremonies) and their discovery and recreational use by “hippie mycotourists,” and the incursion of the Catholic church and liberation theology into the Sierra in the 1970s. The latter was particularly important because of the introduction of Mazatec orthography alongside Spanish language texts and the sub-

sequent use of this orthography—or various versions of it—in the annual Day of the Dead Song contest, where songs are written and performed exclusively in Mazatec.

In chapter 3, Faudree describes the popular Day of the Dead Song contest, showing how the Muertos celebration constitutes an “uneasy site” (111) where practices conceived of as indigenous intersect with those conceived of as Mexican. At the same time, the contest’s ability to recruit new Mazatec speakers is remarkable, in part because of its nonstandardization of Mazatec orthography and willingness to accept an extremely wide variety of song submissions with varying degrees of Mazatec written knowledge. Analyzing how indigenous people are allowed to participate in greater Mexican society in scripted ways as long as they are not perceived as a threat to the “modern” nation-state, Faudree foregrounds the social work of the song contest, showing how singing during Muertos is as much for the living and the politics of ethnic revival as it is for the dead.

Chapter 4 interrogates the second revival project, the Mazatec Indigenous Church (Iglesia Indígena Mazateca). The author shows how, in contrast to the extremely successful Song Contest, this revival project has had limited popular appeal and draws only a small, ardent group of followers owing to its decision to replace the Catholic communion wafer with the ingestion of hallucinogenic mushrooms typically used in mushroom veladas. Through the Church’s own rigid interpretation of “tradition,” its repurposing of ceremonial mushrooms, and its focus on monolingual, Mazatec-language services and written texts, the Mazatec Indigenous Church has thwarted its own broader aims for cultural and linguistic revitalization throughout the state of Oaxaca.

The book’s final two chapters take a longer view, discussing the politics of ethnic revival through an examination of what makes “authentic” indigenous identity (chapter 5), then turning toward contemporary indigenous-language authors and publications in chapter 6. In the latter, Faudree emphasizes the symbolic, political, and social implications of writing in an indigenous language in which “writing is a fundamentally political act” and where, because reading and writing in Mazatec is primarily the domain of the educated elite, “the script chosen likewise becomes a vehicle through which power is exercised” (230).

Faudree concludes by a discussion of culture as a premiere venue through which social inequality is reinstated and reinscribed, foregrounding how the social hierarchies within revival movements are no different than ideological conflicts and small-town politics anywhere where cultural capital, prestige, and recognition are at stake. For anthropologists of sound, *Singing for the Dead* has much to offer. Faudree’s entry point is language, but her focus quickly broadens to include song, literacy, identity, authenticity, globalization, and ethnic tourism. Thus, her work is broad-reaching and engages anthropological work in all of our subfields while also speaking to interdisciplinary scholarship in critical indigenous studies, southwestern studies, sound studies, and ethnomusicology. Faudree insists

that sound cannot be interpreted outside of the framework of politics, writ large and small, and walks us adeptly through her own ethnographic sound world, so that we, too, can hear and recreate these worlds for ourselves.

References Cited

- Cattelino, J. R. 2010. The double bind of American Indian need-based sovereignty. *Cultural Anthropology* 25(2):235–262.
- Davis, J. L. 2016. Language affiliation and ethnolinguistic identity in Chickasaw language revitalization. *Language & Communication* 47:100–111.
- Debenport, E. 2015. *Fixing the books: secrecy, literacy, and perfectibility in indigenous New Mexico*. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press.
- Hinton, L., and K. Hale, eds. 2001. *The green book of language revitalization in practice*. New York: Brill.
- Hill, J. H. 2002. “Expert rhetorics” in advocacy for endangered languages: who is listening, and what do they hear? *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 12(2): 119–133.
- Meek, B. A. 2012. *We are our language: an ethnography of language revitalization in a northern Athabaskan community*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- Nevins, M. E. 2013. *Lessons from Fort Apache: beyond language endangerment and maintenance*. Vol. 4. New York: Wiley.
- Povinelli, E. A. 2002. *The cunning of recognition: indigenous alterities and the making of Australian multiculturalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ranger, T. O., and E. J. Hobsbawm, eds. 1983. *The invention of tradition*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Simpson, A. 2014. *Mohawk interruptus: political life across the borders of settler states*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.