

fondie sur la création socioculturelle de cette musique indo-trinidadienne.

La conclusion (222-233) revient sur la musique *chotal bhojpuri*, sur sa popularité et sur le manque d'intérêt des chercheurs régionaux pour ce phénomène musical qui connaît pourtant un regain de vitalité à Trinidad.

Pour résumer, Peter Manuel tient à se distinguer des recherches à caractère syncrétique axées sur les problématiques identitaires et de résistance. L'approche retenue par l'auteur ne s'inscrit nullement dans ce paradigme, cherchant surtout à mettre en relief les filières existantes entre les milieux diasporiques et les milieux d'origine dans les musiques traditionnelles et néo-traditionnelles. L'accent est alors mis sur les modalités expressives des musiques et sur les comparaisons entre l'Inde et Trinidad. Ceux et celles qui sont interpellés par la problématique de la rétention et de la réinterprétation syncrétique apprécieront certainement cet ouvrage que je considère comme une référence en la matière. À travers les genres musicaux qui sont ici très bien décrits et analysés, le lecteur saisira aisément la profondeur historique du terrain, un des traits singuliers de la démarche de Manuel à travers ses nombreux écrits. On déplore toutefois l'absence de références à des chercheurs francophones qui ont également œuvré au sein de l'aire culturelle indo-créole. Je pense entre autres aux travaux de Catherine Servan-Schreiber à l'île Maurice où bien aux miens, à la Martinique et à la Réunion. Enfin on aurait souhaité voir davantage d'exemples visuels des faits indo-trinidadiens présentés. De même, un CD d'accompagnement ou un DVD aurait

certainement donné une valeur accrue à cette publication que je recommande à tous les chercheurs interpellés non seulement par les aires culturelles couvertes par la recherche de Peter Manuel, mais par la problématique du processus de rétention et d'innovation en contexte de diaspora. 🍀

Singing Across Divides: Music and Intimate Politics in Nepal. 2017.

Anna Marie Stirr. New York: Oxford University Press. 304pp, 25 figures.

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Singing Across Divides: Music and Intimate Politics in Nepal is a book of great breadth and ethnographic richness. It is a study of dohori, a genre of sung couplets of poetry. Dohori derives from Nepal's rural areas, where many variations still flourish. It also became a national genre, lauded as a traditional rural essence of Nepal. Not surprisingly, after the advent of cassettes, it developed mass-mediated and more commercialized forms and since the late 1990s, dohori bars have also emerged in cities in Nepal and some abroad. Both rural and urban dohori form the focus of this multi-layered study.

Dohori is conversational and/or competitive in format. As Stirr explains, it is "often performed in contexts that bring neighbours and strangers together" (3), be this secret singing in rural areas or performances in public bars in cities. Dohori singing is also an important arena of courtship, acting as a medium

of flirtation, or, in the form of binding dohori contests, sometimes resulting in someone winning the losing opponent for marriage, possibly transgressing norms of caste. Stirr's focus goes to the heart of the ways that dohori connects people, how it bridges divides, its transgressiveness in terms of gender, sexuality and caste, and how it is also incorporated into conservative, hegemonic social norms. Her main frame of analysis is what she terms "intimate politics," following work on cultural intimacy by Herzfeld (2005). This involves the intersection of explicitly named politics, such as political parties, the nation, and the civil war with human-to-human, emotional interconnections, notably, visceral questions of gender and caste. Thus, the chapters trace nationalism and social movements, combining these questions with a focus on love, marriage, gender, sexuality, sorrow and happiness, status, honour, and violence.

In addition to the focus on both overt and intimate politics, Stirr's book homes in on the core nexus of social relations that dohori performance mediates and engenders through theoretical work on exchange and value deriving from economic anthropology. This approach has been used by very few ethnomusicologists and this book makes an important contribution. For example, Stirr explores the exchange of songs in rural dohori singing sessions and festivals in terms of the exchange of "substance" (85). "Substance" has referred to bodily substances and also food in anthropological literature, and the norms and taboos that govern their exchange between people of various kin, gender, or caste. Seeing the exchange of song and dance as an exchange of "substance" like food and drink (also present

at rural dohori meets) or like bodily fluids (e.g., in sexual intercourse, which can be a result of relationships forged while singing dohori), we gain a new way of thinking about the embodied, physical, and sensual nature of music and dance and their ability to connect people, transgressively or otherwise. Stirr also explores dohori in terms of its highly reciprocal forms of conversational or competitive repartee in, typically, rural areas (Chapter 3), as well as the context of bars, where there is patronage with performers tipped by audiences who may behave in a hierarchical fashion or with a sense of ownership of performers (sexual or other) (Chapter 5). Thus, Stirr interrogates the different kinds of exchange and the position and intimacy of dohori and its performers and participants in a range of contexts.

One of the greatest strengths of this book is its ethnography. Stirr has done impressive participatory fieldwork for many years, including singing dohori in both rural and urban contexts. She has clearly connected with an immense range of people, forging lasting relationships, and her work is sincere and heartfelt. She also has a gift for ethnographic writing, with many evocative and engaging passages that give the reader a sense of being there, understanding through experience. The ethnography is also reflexive, with the author's interactions in the field revealing endless insights about gender and the status of performers. These are vivid excerpts of lived experience; what is clearly a much larger narrative of Stirr's life in the field over the years. I would also add that this reflexive ethnography does not fall into the all-too-common trap of being self-indulgent; the things revealed through the author's own experiences

– ups, downs, or awkward moments – illuminate the world of dohori for the reader.

Without detracting from these points, there are aspects of the theory and analysis that could have been strengthened. Stirr derives her term “intimate politics” from Herzfeld’s notion of “cultural intimacy” (2005), Berlant’s “intimate public” (2008), and other scholarship on intimacy. However, politics is always intimate in that it always hits at a visceral and personal level, whether directly or indirectly, or whether people are conscious of its agency or not. Feminism first used the rallying cry that “the personal is political.” Similarly, economic or environmental policy affect us in intimate ways in that they can make possible food on one’s table and a stable place to live or, on the other hand, devastation, despair, and death from unemployment, inflation, floods, etc. Stirr states after introducing the concept of intimate politics that, “In Nepal today, politicians, artists, journalists, activists, analysts, and others assert that the personal is political as they publicly debate what sorts of intimacies are appropriate in the ‘New Nepal’” (23). However, she does not connect this phrase to feminism, and tends to separate out “overtly political” politics such as party politics from intimate politics such as caste and gender. This suggests that overt politics are not intimate. Hence, I did not find the notion of “intimate politics” to have an analytical sharpness that helped foreground the issues of the book and it may have been better to simply talk of intimacy and the intimacy of politics or the politics of intimacy or the like.

Another theoretical point relates to gender and sexuality and notions of

transgression. Dohori is presented as transgressive, bringing men and women together in extra-marital and sometimes cross-caste liaisons. However, more deeply, it is the contradictions of gender itself that make female singers who perform in male company or public sought after and admired as well as ambiguous and sometimes reviled. Stirr makes several statements of the difference of dohori and courtesan or other bar dance traditions of South Asia. But there are in fact vast similarities in the struggles of female performers for respectability that she describes. Engaging more closely with this literature would have been helpful in bringing out some of the wider questions of gender, sexuality, patriarchy, and performance. For example, Schofield’s work on liminality (2007) would have been pertinent, or, beyond South Asia, Spiller’s work on the triangulations and fluidity of gender in genres of Sundanese dance (2010).

Finally, to return to the ethnography, as I have stated, the research and the ethnographic writing are superb. However, there are some gaps when stepping from ethnography to analysis. The author moves from passages of ethnographic writing to overarching, conclusive statements where it is not visible how she arrived at these from her conversations, interactions, and observations in the field. My tendency would be to trust the author’s interpretations, given her experience. But, the analysis should be worked through ethnographically and transparently. For example, following a description of the ways in which boys and girls sit in a two-sided circle to sing dohori in rural areas, placing food and drink in the middle, she goes on to state:

The center of the circle symbolizes their meeting in that it holds the food that is exchanged, and it is the space for dancing – while dancers do not touch, entering into that space is an act of intimate co-presence. To dance can be to show off individual skill, but it is also one of the strongest expressions of participatory identification with the group. To dance is to demonstrate a certain level of comfort with all present, a willingness to enter into the intimacy of being in the middle of the circle, in addition to exchanges of food and drink, and the dialogic lyrics and unison refrains of *dohori* singing. (82-83)

However, there has not been a previous discussion of dancing, or participants' experience of dancing, to lead up to this. Hence the ethnography-to-analysis has some elisions. I believe the material is there, just not presented.

Overall, this is a very stimulating and rigorously researched book, presenting a multi-faceted examination and analysis of this genre. It is a book about *dohori* itself, of course, and its spread beyond the rural areas to new contexts with new values. But it is also a wonderfully interconnected book about Nepal, politics and social and cultural change, from the intimate, individual, and emotional outwards. 🍄

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- Dans *Cape Verde, Let's Go: Creole Rappers and Citizenship in Portugal* (2015), Derek Pardue, professeur adjoint au département Culture et Société de l'Université d'Aarhus (Danemark), s'est concentré sur les luttes culturelles dans la ville de Lisbonne. Grâce à son investigation sur le terrain au sein des communautés lusophones de ce vieux centre impérial, Pardue vise à démontrer comment un groupe particulier de rappeurs capverdiens en est venu à utiliser le *kriolu* – une langue à la fois locale, créole et diasporique – pour contester les idées fixes des identités portugaises et européennes. Dans une arène urbaine postcoloniale dans laquelle les genres musicaux en sont venus à refléter des frontières raciales, le