Project Kalinda’s Final Year

BY SAMUEL A. FLOYD JR.

PROJECT KALINDA is entering its third and final year, having produced several performances of Ensemble Kalinda Chicago and four issues of Kalinda! newsletter, acquired numerous sound recordings of Latin-American and West Indian music for the CBMR Library and Archive, and prepared an exhibit consisting of maps, compact-disc covers, and musical instruments related to the goals and objectives of the project. Organizations that have participated in the project or hosted its lecture-performances include the Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center, DePaul University Latino Research Center, and St. Augustine College. Events at these venues, in addition to those at Columbia College’s Getz Theater, the college’s Dance Center, and the Chicago Cultural Center, have been made possible by the financial support of the Joyce Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, and the Chicago Community Trust.

For this third and final year of the project, lecture-performances will continue at the Carter G. Woodson Library and at Malcolm X College; and events are now being scheduled at the Haitian American Community Association and the DuSable Museum. Kalinda! newsletter will continue for two more issues, and an exciting concert of music by Latin-American and West Indian composers will be presented in August 1996 as the crowning event of the project (see page 4 for a description of the concert program). In addition to these project activities, the Center for Black Music Research will hold an Inter-American Conference on Black Music Research in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, just two days after the project’s final concert (see page 13 for a description of the conference).

The purpose of Project Kalinda is to explore the common roots of Latin-American, West Indian, and U.S. black musics, and it has been doing so successfully. This final year of the project will bring together the fruits of these explorations in exciting presentations of new music and new information. Stay tuned for announcements of events in your neighborhood.

For further information about Project Kalinda and its programs, call Carlos Flores, Project Coordinator, at 312/663-1600, ext. 5573.

Displays Highlight African Influence

FOR THE CBMR’s June open house, the CBMR Library and Archives unveiled a long-term display highlighting music of Africa and the African diaspora. Displays in four cases in the Center’s main hallway focus on music of Africa, the Caribbean, South (continued on 6)
The Puerto Rican Plena

BY PETER BLOCH

ALTHOUGH the bomba is Puerto Rico's only purely African dance, the plena is also marked by Afro-Caribbean characteristics, but its roots are more complex. The bomba originated with the slaves on the island's plantations, mostly in the northern coastal plain; and the plena emerged from the black and mulatto city proletariat of Ponce on the southern coast, the traditional capital of Puerto Rican music.

The plena is a dance-song in 2/4 time, like much of Afro-Caribbean music, and consists of two parts that can be repeated endlessly. The lyrics are topical, dealing with recent popular events. One Puerto Rican writer has referred to the plena as the gossip column of Puerto Rican folk song and to the aguinaldo of the mountain areas (not exclusively of the mountains) as the editorial, dealing with more elevated matters.

Appearing in its present guise at the time of World War I, the plena is the youngest of Puerto Rico's folk music forms. One of the early plenas was called "The German Submarine," another that became very popular was "Cortaron a Elena" ("They Knifed Elena"). From Ponce, the plena soon spread all over the island. At first disdained by the bourgeoisie, bandleader-composer César Concepción was responsible for its acceptance by "society" as well. Quite a few distinguished musicians such as Manuel Jiménez "Canario," Jesús Tapia, Joe Valle, Ismael Santiago, Ismael Rivera, Antonio Romero, Cepeda el Plenero, singer Ruth Fernández, Ramito, and folk guitarist Yomo Toro (in some of their repertoire) have been identified with the plena.

Taino Influences

Historically, there is more to the plena than meets the eye, so to speak. No one denies the African influence, but the late Ramito (Florencio Morales Ramos), Puerto Rico's foremost folk singer and expert on Puerto Rican musical folklore, emphasized that the plena descended from the drum signals of the pre-Columbian Taino Indians of Borikén (Puerto Rico). He pointed out the similarity between the small drums of plena musicians and those of the Taino. Although the Tainos disappeared as a group in the early nineteenth century, Taino influences have not. Rhythm instruments like the guiro and the maracas are generally traced to the Tainos. The similarity of climate and vegetation in parts of tropical America and tropical Africa explains the development of similar musical instruments; for example, the people of both Guatemala and Africa claim the invention of the marimba.

Mergers of Indo-American (Native American) and African cultural influences frequently occurred in the New World. For example, the roles of dance and religion in the lives of Indo-Americans and Africans are not basically different.

While the plena seems to have Taino-Indian and African ancestors, César Concepción also found Spanish folk tunes that resemble the plena. Thus, we cannot exclude Spanish influences either—and why should that surprise us in Puerto Rico? But might those Spanish folk melodies be part of the Moorish heritage in Spain? The cultural contributions of the Moors, who stayed in Spain for seven hundred years, remain potent.

The Moors came to Spain from Morocco, a country that links North Africa, with its Arabic civilization, to black Africa. In fact, for centuries the term "Moor" was equated with "black," for example, "Othello the Moor." We can hardly doubt that, while Moorish culture in Spain was predominantly Arabic, it also carried elements from black Africa.

"La-le-lo-lai," a vocal exclamation that is typically found in Puerto Rican mountain music, is also found in the music of farm

Peter Bloch heads the Association for Puerto Rican-Hispanic Culture in New York City which was founded in 1965. Since, the organization has sponsored concerts of Latin music as well as poetry and theater events.
workers in Castile, Murcia, and Almería, Spain. The various versions of “La-le-lo-lai” may well be part of the aforementioned Afro-Moorish element in Spanish culture.

The Musical Mix
Ramito felt that the plena originally came from the mountains, although it first appeared, in its present form, in the city of Ponce. And it is precisely in the mountains of Puerto Rico where, in former centuries, immigrant country folk, soldiers, and sailors from Spain who desired a little piece of land, runaway slaves from the coast, and the remnants of the Taíno people all met and developed specific Caribbean music forms. African elements were not only contributed by runaway slaves but indirectly by Spaniards as well, whose regional songs continued Afro-Moorish traditions, among others.

Among the many people who made music in Ponce in the early twentieth century were those who had come from the country and from the mountains of Puerto Rico, attracted by the “big” city, whose proletariat was largely non-white. Musical influences that particularly appealed to this population were bound to make an impact after stewing there for a while; and the plena exploded onto the scene about eighty years ago.

The plena is still alive and bouncing—and not necessarily limited to the “gossip column,” for one of the most popular plenas is patriotic, “La Bandera Puertorriqueña” (“The Puerto Rican Flag”).

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**Calendar 1995**

**August 26-27**

Viva Chicago!
Celebrating Latin-American music, the 1995 event will feature Conjunto Cepedes, Conjunto Libre, and Oscar De Leon.
Mayor’s Office of Special Events (312) 744-3370.

**August 30-September 3**

Chicago Jazz Festival
This five-day event will feature a Jazz Club Tour; a Tribute to Charlie Parker, featuring James Moody; Jackie McLean, and Roy Haynes; celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Chicago Jazz Institute; and the 17th Annual Jazz Festival in Grant Park. Featured performers will include Eddie Palmieri, Stanley Turrentine, Bobby Hutcherson, Cassandra Wilson, and Ellis Marsalis.
Chicago Jazz Institute (312) 427-1676.

**September 1-4**

African Festival of the Arts
DuSable Museum, Washington Park
Sponsored by the African International House, the African Festival of the Arts promotes cultural exchange between people of African descent. The festival will include food, music, vendors, and discussion panels. (312) 955-9682.

**September 2**

Ethnic Heritage Parade
Dearborn Street, Noon
The Ethnic Heritage Committee will hold its annual parade to celebrate and promote ethnic harmony, growth, and development. (312) 684-6775.

**September 9**

Central American Independence Day Parade
Dearborn Street
Bands and floats will represent Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. (312) 744-3315.

**September 9-10**

Third Annual African/Caribbean International Festival of Life
Cityfront Center, North Pier
Illinois Street at McClurg Court
This event will feature a wide variety of musical styles, including reggae, calypso, soca, soukous, highlife, souk, salsa, samba, punta, and many
(continued on 4)
August 12, 1996: The Conclusion of Project Kalinda

THE CONCLUDING EVENT for the Center for Black Music Research’s Project Kalinda will be a gala performance on August 12, 1996 in the Rubloff Auditorium of the Art Institute of Chicago. The event will include performances by the Center’s Black Music Repertory Ensemble, Ensemble Kalinda Chicago, the Boston Camerata, and Les Amis de la Sagesse, a Haitian women’s choir from the Boston area.

The repertoire will be drawn from many different styles, genres, and periods and will demonstrate the common origins and characteristics of African, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latin, and U.S. black musics. The Boston Camerata, one of the world’s most renowned early music performance ensembles, will perform Latin and Caribbean works from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Black Music Repertory Ensemble will perform works by nineteenth- and twentieth-century Afro-Latin and Afro-American composers. And Ensemble Kalinda will perform vernacular musics representing many twentieth-century popular styles and genres from the West Indies and Latin America. The final portion of the program will feature works utilizing the combined performance forces of all the ensembles.

More detailed information about the repertoire and ticket sales will be available in future issues of Kalinda! newsletter and CBMR Digest, but mark your 1996 calendars now so that you won’t miss this spectacular concert.

<table>
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| **September 17** | Second Annual Boricua Festival  
Division and California Streets, Noon  
This street festival celebrates the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos Museum of Puerto Rican History and highlights Puerto Rican culture through music and food. (312) 342-4880.  
  
**September 28** | Ensemble Kalinda Chicago  
Malcolm X College,  
the Bruce Hayden Center for the Performing Arts  
1900 West Van Buren Street, 7:00 p.m.  
Lecture-demonstration. (312) 663-1600, ext. 5559.  
  
**September 29–October 8** | Dance Africa/Chicago  
Dance Center of Columbia College  
The Columbia College Dance Center will host Dance Africa/Chicago 1995, a ten-day festival that boasts an array of cultural and educational activities designed to bring the best of African and African-American dance and music to Chicago and to bridge culture differences in our city’s diverse communities. The festival will culminate in three spectacular performances on October 6, 7, and 8.  
  
**October 7** | 12th Annual Festival of Latin Music  
Old Town School of Folk Music  
The Old Town School of Folk Music presents its annual international festival representing musical traditions from Latin America. (312) 525-7793.  
  
**October 10–14** | Celebracion '95  
The Field Museum  
Celebracion '95 is a festival celebrating the heritage and diversity of many Latin American cultures. The festival will include a variety of traditional dance and music performances. (312) 922-9410.  
  
**November 1–30** | Let the Good Times Roll . . . Chicago Style!  
Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs will celebrate the traditions of jazz and blues through a series of concerts, lectures, workshops, and film screenings that will be presented throughout the month. (312) 744-1424.  
  
**1996** |  
August 14–18 | Inter-American Conference on Black Music Research  
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.  
(312) 663-1600, ext. 5559.  
  
*at the Medinah Temple, 600 North Wabash Avenue.*  
(312) 271-7928.  
  
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From Bomba to Hip-Hop

BY CARLOS FLORES

A COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP has existed between African-American and Puerto Rican communities since the migration of Puerto Ricans into New York City in the early 1900s. This relationship has been nurtured and maintained through the emergence of Latin jazz in the 1930s and 1940s, the Mambo craze, the rise of doo-wop in the 1950s, and the boogaloo and salsa in the 1960s and 1970—each a prime example of how the African-American and Puerto Rican-Latino communities have exchanged, collaborated on, and created these cultural/musical expressions.

The emergence of hip-hop culture in New York City during the late 1970s is another example of this continuing relationship. Juan Flores, director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College in New York, states that the beginnings of rap are connective not so much because they link Black traditions and Puerto Ricans traditions, but because they mark off one more step in a long and intricate Black–Puerto Rican tradition of popular culture, based primarily in the longstanding Black–Puerto Rican neighborhoods of New York City.

The experience of Puerto Ricans in rap has been the story of intense cultural negotiation, of jostling for a place within an ever-broadening field of expressive practices without relinquishing the particularities of their own community and heritage. . . . Puerto Ricans have been involved in hip-hop since the beginning, since it first emerged in the streets of Harlem and the South Bronx nearly twenty years ago. Along with their African-American counterparts, they were an intrinsic part of the forging of expressive styles which have become the hallmark of an entire generation and diffused throughout the country and worldwide.

Flores indicates that bomba, plena, and rap play significant roles in the communication among the people in a Puerto Rican community. The music serves as a diversion, and at the same time it allows people to communicate news and points of view, keeping people current and in touch with each other. For example, the bomba, which was developed in Puerto Rico in the early nineteenth century, originally allowed slaves to communicate among themselves and sometimes against those who tried to prevent them from communicating with each other. Rap is the musical language of contemporary young people, and it serves a similar function of allowing young people to communicate news and points of view as well as bringing them together.

These relationships were demonstrated by Flores in a lecture titled “From Bomba to Hip-Hop,” which was presented on May 17, 1995, at the Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center and on May 18, 1995, at Columbia College. (continued on 6)
From Bomba (continued from 5)

The presentation also included a performance by Latin Empire, a rap group consisting of Tony Boston (Krazy Taino) and Rick Rodriguez (Porto Rock), two cousins from the South Bronx. They provided the audience with unique styles of Spanish, English, and Spanglish (combination of Spanish and English) lyrics. The event was co-sponsored by the CBMR's Project Kalinda, Columbia College student organizations, and community agencies. It was also partially funded by the Lilly Foundation.

Attending the event were students and staff from Columbia College and several young people representing various community agencies.

Boston and Rodriguez have participated in rap music for more than ten years, before it became a commercial success. They try to represent in a positive way the importance of respecting one another and of keeping the Puerto Rican culture alive.

Rap has come a long way since it first emerged in the streets and playgrounds of Harlem and the South Bronx nearly twenty years ago. It has become a tremendous commercial success around the world as it continues to evolve with the influences of other musical styles such as reggae-rap, Latino-rap, and others.

Rap originated among African-American and Puerto Rican youths when the process of their coexistence in an urban setting resulted in an exchange of lifestyles and cultures.

Reference

Displays (continued from 1)

America, and North America. The distribution of African and African-derived music styles is portrayed graphically through the use of maps of the areas and CD covers of recordings of the music of the various regions. The accompanying texts tie the three areas of the Western Hemisphere to their African music roots.

A companion display in the Library's Reading Room presents musical instruments, found in the Western Hemisphere, that have African prototypes. The instruments were kindly loaned by Rosario A. Aybar, Carlos Eguis-Aguila, and Evaristo Rodríguez.

A standing display case in the Reading Room holds materials from the papers of Alton Augustus Adams, whose collection was recently received by the Library. Adams, a native of the Virgin Islands, was a composer and the first black bandmaster in the U.S. Navy. The display centers on a highly successful concert tour by his Virgin Islands Navy Band to the U.S. Mainland in 1924.

The African diaspora display is a part of the two-year Project Kalinda, supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and the Chicago Community Trust.
IN EARLY Brazilian music, we have a Romeo and Juliet story. “Juliet” is the lofty modinha, a salon ballad brought by the Portuguese colonialists; “Romeo,” the lascivious lundu, a dance brought by the African slaves. But unlike Shakespeare’s play, there is a happy ending: both forms influenced each other through the centuries and would become the basis for popular Brazilian music in its myriad forms.

While the modinha, after a rocky start, enjoyed a smooth path to success, the lundu did not have it so easy. Condemned for its lasciviousness and persecuted for its connection to African religious cults, the lundu is a parent of the samba and maxixe. It influenced classical compositions in Brazil and Europe and helped catapult to fame Brazil’s first entertainment superstar, the legendary Joana Castiga.

First Accounts
The earliest reference to the lundu comes from a letter to the Portuguese government from the former governor of Pernambuco dated June 10, 1780. In it, he described two distinct styles of slave dances: one in which the slaves divide into “nations”—a phenomenon seen throughout the Americas—and “dance and turn like harlequins,” and the other, the tamer “lundu of whites and colored, . . . similar to the fandangos of Castile and the fojas of Portugal” (quoted in Kiefer 1977, 32).

The Portuguese government wasted no time in issuing a notice to the current governor of Pernambuco. Less than a month later, it warned that His Majesty would not tolerate “heathen and superstitious dances,” but that others could be tolerated “to avoid greater evils” (quoted in Tinhorão 1972, 129–130).

Thus, our first account of the lundu begins with a rare permissive attitude from the officials. Indeed, although the blending had of course begun many years before, it seems likely that the authorities tried to discourage the “heathen and pagan dances” while encouraging those showing a synthesis of African elements with those from the Old World.

The lundu was the result of such a mixture, specifically of Afro-Brazilian dances and the Iberian fandango. From Africa it took the clapping ring around the dancers, the repeated choruses, the short verses, and the instrumentation—elements that we so often find in other musics and dances throughout the Americas. From the fandango it took the choreography of the dancing couple within the circle: arched arms overhead, hip movement, rhythmic stomping of the feet, and the umbigada, the scandalous touching of the navel as an invitation to the dance (from the Portuguese umbigo, or navel).

It is no accident that black slaves took a liking to the fandango, (continued on 8)

Marcos Sueiro, a musician and graduate of Columbia College, is the assistant librarian of the CBMR library.

1. The “greater evils” it mentions is a reference to slave revolts. Throughout the colonial period in Brazil, quilombos, colonies of runaway slaves, sprouted, the most famous of which was the Quilombo de Palmares (1631–1697) in the northeast state of Alagoas.
Lundu (continued from 7)
since the African influence had created it (and its related genres such as the saraband and the chaconne) in Europe almost two centuries earlier. The first African slaves were brought into Portugal in 1436, and by 1535 Lisbon was ten percent black by some accounts. Their cultural impact is evident in the prohibition of black dances in that city as early as the sixteenth century; nevertheless, a form of fandango became the fashionable dance in Brazil during Spain’s rule over Portugal (1581–1640). In the mid-1500s, a Spanish historian lamented the emergence of the related saraband, having “such lascivious verses and ugly sways that it is enough to kindle fire in the most honorable of people” (Juan de Marina, quoted in Tinhorão 1972, 120).

Meanwhile, in Brazil, the other half of the Lundu’s ancestry was not getting much better reviews. The African slaves’ religious dances, with their “horrific drums,” “horrendous screams,” and “lascivious movements,” caused “fear and confusion” to more than one European onlooker” (quoted in Tinhorão 1972, 122, 123).

One of these dances is described in Peregrino da América Pereira ([1728] 1939, 123–136). The main character hears “the roar of drums, fifes, jugs, and castanets, and such horrific screams, that I likened them with the confusion in Hell” and learns that they were the sounds of the slaves’ oracle/party/dance, a custom from their homeland. Appalled, he warns the slave owner that he will be excommunicated if he continues to allow such pagan rituals on the plantation. Later, the African instruments are burned in a great pyre.

The general term for any black dance that used percussion was batuque, from the Portuguese batir, meaning “to beat.” But the word used by Pereira is “calundu,” which, in the mid-eighteenth century, had several meanings: divinity, oracle, religious dance, or orgiastic ritual. Many African dances in the Americas are part of religious rituals, so the word “calundu” could have all these meanings.2 With no clear connection to the Latin language, it seems likely that calundu was just the African word for batuque; and as the word dropped the first syllable, the dance acquired more Iberian elements. This would also imply a lexicographic connection of the Lundu to the kalinda (calinda, colinda), the universal Caribbean dance from the same period. Interestingly enough, the descriptions of the kalinda match almost exactly those of the Lundu, including the arching overhead arms and the clapping circle around the dancing couple (see 2. The word “calundu” eventually developed the meaning of a bitter, secretly-plotting slave, and in some areas of Brazil it has come to mean just a “bad humored” person.
Indeed, by the early 1800s, as the lundu became more popular, in Brazil its name became interchangeable with batuque. An Englishman, Thomas Lindley ([1802] 1969, 139), says that it was common for the families of Bahia to end their banquets (during which they drank “an exceptional quantity of wine”) with a “mixture of dance of Africa and the Spanish and Portuguese fandango.” Lindley also says that all social classes, when they put aside formality, “give themselves to the interest and rapture that the dance generates” (quoted in Tinhóroio, 135). Despite opposition from many observers, the lundu had crossed racial lines and become a dance craze—at about the same time that the kalinda did in the Caribbean.

The Lundu Goes to the Theater
Lindley also mentions a guitar accompaniment, which implies a stronger Europeanization, as compared to Pereira’s calundu of sixty years earlier in which the only hint of European elements is the mention of castanets, an Iberian instrument (albeit taken to Spain by the Moors). The presence of the guitar also signals the beginning of a gentler variant of the lundu, the lundu-song. Although the lundu dance continued to be practiced by blacks and lower-class whites, the lundu-song became a sentimental but sensuous genre, accompanied by guitar and with a repeated refrain. It enjoyed ever-increasing success, and its novel and “exotic” origin aroused the interest of classical composers. In 1819, Austrian composer Sigismund Neukomm wrote “O Amor brasileiro,” a “capriccio written for the piano on a Brazilian lundu”; and other piano lundus would appear later in the century.

More importantly, white theater musicians did not miss the opportunity to bring the increasingly popular lundu into their entremezes, or little dance and music pieces between acts. Along the way, they shocked and offended members of their audience, but then, as now, controversy sold. Eventually, their entremezes became the defining aspect of Brazilian theater. Joana Castiga, perhaps the first legend of Brazilian entertainment, became tremendously popular through a racy routine inspired by the lundu. However, the upper class was repelled by the “vulgarity” of these dances, and in 1836 the police chief of Bahia banned Joana from performing.

After 1840, Brazilians became more preoccupied with elements of European music and culture in general, including waltzes and polkas. Consequently, new genres, often European styles with a Brazilian twist such as the polca-lundu, began to emerge. In the meantime, the modinha, a more classical-sounding genre, had also developed, becoming the other basis of Brazilian popular music.

Although the lundu itself declined in popularity, a new urban genre was developed by black musicians who had flooded the cities after the abolition of slavery in 1888. The maxixe, a mixture of the lundu, the polka, and the Cuban habanera, appeared at the turn of the century. Once again, it was dubbed scandalous, and, of course, became very popular—so much so that it was exported to the United States where it was very popular during World War I. Who knows how many Americans danced to the ancient beats of the lundu?

References
Clave (continued from 14)

and contractive, or the poles of a magnet. As the pattern is repeated, an alteration from one polarity to the other takes place creating pulse and rhythmic drive. Were the pattern to be suddenly reversed, the [momentum within the] rhythm would be destroyed.

The Clave Concept

The clave found in salsa, also known as “son clave” is notated in Example 4 (see page 11). How a song begins determines which measure of the clave will be played first. The phrasing of the melody is the determining factor, that is, where the accented rhythms of the melody occur. This is referred to as either 3-2 or 2-3, meaning either the measure with the three strokes is played first with the two-stroke measure following, or the two stroke is played first followed by the three-measure measure. According to tradition, once a song begins, the clave does not change its measure order. For instance, there could never be a 3-2-2-3 clave sequence.

Once the song has begun, the clave pattern functions like the continuous bell patterns found in West African musical traditions by providing a rhythmic formula that serves as the foundation. As Roberta Singer (1982, 168) states, “Clave is a rhythmic time line that . . . functions as a rhythmic organizing principle for the entire ensemble.” The rhythm may be overtly played or implied. Competent musicians in salsa must develop a “clave sense” similar to Richard Waterman’s “metronome sense,” where a subjective pulse is felt by the participants which may not be overtly heard but functions as an ordering principle (Waterman 1952).

The clave concept reaches far beyond the musical context, as demonstrated by the following excerpt from the inscription found on the inside cover of the first issue of New York’s Clave magazine, published throughout the 1970s:

Clave . . . To us the word goes beyond explanations and definitions. It means life, salsa, the food of our leisure time, the motion of intense rhythm, the emotion of 20,000 people simultaneously grooving to the natural sounds of life. It’s being in beat, on key, on clave . . . It means to be on top of things, to be playing it right . . . Clave is history, it’s culture. African drums from far off places like Nigeria, Dahomey, and Ghana married the Spanish guitar to bring us clave. The seeds were planted in the Caribbean and now their grandchild is Salsa.

This declaration effectively illustrates the broad range of the clave concept and some of its descriptive uses. More importantly, it reaffirms the African roots of the rhythm.

The following evolutionary theory concerning the clave rhythm’s origins, which may explain why Africa and its hereditary nature are mentioned in the Clave publication, is based on three assumptions.

1. When the 700,000 African slaves arrived in Cuba during the 1770s, they did not forget the bell patterns from the traditional music of their past but rather incorporated them into music making in their new surroundings.

2. The pan–West African bell pattern shown in Example 1, or something similar, existed during the 1700s.2

Ex. 1. West African bell pattern

This assumption is based on the pattern’s prevalence today among many different African peoples covering an expansive area.

3. As new practices emerged from the combining of various African peoples in the New Worlds, new performance styles arose.

As the Clave inscription suggests, the performance of clave is a living and breathing tradition shaped by the performance practice of

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1. The proposed theory was formulated during conversations with scholar and percussionist extraordinaire Steve Cornelius in 1991. He demonstrated the rhythmic similarities in the music and proposed this evolutionary connection. I am grateful and indebted for his shared insight.

2. The limitations of this notational style are vast, primarily because it does not represent “feel,” instead denoting exactly where the rhythms are actually placed in relation to the beats. The starting point of the rhythm has been chosen only to facilitate the following demonstration. African musicians would not necessarily condone this initiatory choice.
individuals. Each musician contributes to the proliferation and evolution of the tradition by his or her own subtle variations of feel and nuance. Over time, a subtle peculiarity or feel may become the standard, replacing an older practice.

**Rumba Styles**

Rumba is a style of music originating from African slaves and their descendants living in Cuba. Some of the oldest recorded Cuban rumba styles, such as rumba colombia originating from the small towns of the island’s interior, are performed with a 12/8 feel, similar to musics where the bell pattern in Example 1 is performed. However, in rumba colombia the bell pattern or clave is slightly different from the West African bell pattern. Instead of consisting of seven strokes, the rumba colombia clave contains only five (see Ex. 2).

In some Haitian musical styles, the rumba colombia pattern started on the third stroke instead of seven strokes to five may never be known since it occurred before recording technology was available. It may have started with an individual variation or was the result of the fusing of two or more African styles.

Another later style of rumba, guaguancó, emerged from urban areas in a quasi-4/4 feel instead of 12/8. The duple meter feel may have been the result of the influence of marching bands and other Spanish styles often heard in the larger cities throughout the 1700s. The clave used in guaguancó appears to be an adaptation of the clave rhythm found in rumba colombia to fit the new metric feel (see Ex. 3). This pattern is most often referred to as rumba clave.

The next step of the evolution came from a simplification of styles. The son clave, used in salsa, displaces the final stroke of the three-stroke measure of the rumba clave by one eighth note (see Ex. 4).

As with all of the other adaptations, this consequently changed the musical parts. The name “son clave” was coined because of its use in son, a Spanish-influenced musical style originating in the rural areas of Cuba in the early 1900s. The rhythm of son tends to be much less complex—less syncopated and less polyrhythmic—than the rumba styles requiring the modification of the clave rhythm.

Another factor that led to this simplification was the growing popularity of Latin music in countries other than Cuba. The foreign dancers were not always able to assimilate the complex rumba dance styles, so changes were made to accommodate the new audience.

The rumba tradition has continually been a stylistic influence on salsa music and performance, but the predominance of this new expanding market required change. The result was the preference of the son clave over the rumba clave to facilitate learning the new dance styles. This theory can be tested with any newcomer to Latin music. The son clave will be inevitably easier to clap than the rumba clave. The son clave grew to prominence during the mambo dance craze of the 1950s in the United States and Puerto Rico and has remained in use in salsa performance today. Occasionally, salsa arrangements will have short rumba sections, or interludes, but will invariably resume the son clave for the body of the arrangement. (continued on 12)

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3. Refer to Gerard (1989, 66) for a demonstration of how the instrument parts change between rumba and son clave.
4. One example is Pete “El Conde” Rodriguez’s recording of “Tambú.”
Clave (continued from II)

Current drumming styles in Ghana also suggest that a similar process of rhythmic adaptation has occurred. Patterns resembling rumba and son clave in both rhythmic construction and function are occasionally found. For instance, in David Locke’s book *Drum Gahu* there is a description of a “gankogui” pattern (see Ex. 5) that “establishes the overall rhythm of Gahu.” Locke says that, when playing this music, one should “always try to establish your feeling for timing and groove by concentration on this sounded phrase” (Locke 1987, 16; emphasis in original). This is precisely how salsa musicians use the clave rhythm. Notice that the gankogui has five strokes and only differs by one stroke from the son clave. It is not clear how long this style of music has been performed in Ghana. This pattern may have been in existence during the slave trade era.

Ex. 5. Gankogui pattern

The search for Africanisms in the music of the Americas has been one approach scholars have taken throughout the last fifty years to understand the roots of black music. It is a quest that is fraught with difficulties because the lack of objective documentation in written or recorded form requires a large degree of generalization and speculation. The processes of acculturation provide a complex of issues that are too vast to address in this short discussion. However, the similarities of the clave rhythm and its function to African bell patterns is worthy of note and may demonstrate the origins of the clave concept found in salsa today. Throughout this constantly evolving and changing process, a process of simplification appears to be occurring, as less rhythmically complex styles are fused and merged with the African roots. This is not to say that new types of complexities are not formed with the newer styles but simply that music is constantly changing. This one evolutionary possibility is presented here in hopes of stimulating future inquiries.

Select Discography

___, *Hecho en Puerto Rico*. Sony Tropical CDZ-81040/2-469580.
Cruz, Celia. *Celia Cruz sings*. Palladium PLP-131.
___, *Eddie Palmieri*. Barbaro LPS-99420.
___, *Salsa meets jazz*. Concord Jazz Picante CJP-354.
___, *Exitos de Arsenio Rodriguez y su conjunto*. Tropical TRLP-5005.
Rodriguez, Pete “El Conde.” *A touch of class*. Fania 00519.
**Collections**

*Caliente = Hot: Puerto Rican and Cuban musical expressions in New York.* New World Records NW 244.

*Latin roots.* Carño DBM/1-5810.

*Roots of rhythm: A carnival of Cuban music.* Volumes 1 and 2. Rounder C-5049/5050.

**References**


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**1996 Inter-American Conference on Black Music Research**

THE CENTER'S 1996 conference on black music research will be the first to be held outside the continental United States. The Inter-American Conference on Black Music Research (August 14–18, 1996 in St. Thomas, U.S.V.I.) has been designed to augment the scholarly research and performance components of Project Kalinda. Scholars and performers from around the world will present a total of twenty-six papers covering a wide range of research topics that explore black music from Latin America and the Caribbean and the relationships of these musics to black music in the United States. These relationships are much alluded to but seldom pursued by scholars because of the necessities of local specialization. But we will never possess a complete understanding of black music in the Americas until these relationships have been thoroughly explored. In addition to the paper presentations, a special "Tradition Bearer" component will feature four practitioners of traditional music and dance, each representing a specific region of the Caribbean and Latin America. These presentations, coordinated by Lorna McDaniel, will also feature four scholars who will work with the tradition bearers and present the performances to the conference.

Make your plans now to join us at the Stouffer Grand Beach Resort in St. Thomas for the 1996 Inter-American Conference on Black Music Research.
Clave

The African Roots of Salsa

BY CHRISTOPHER WASHBURNE

IN MANY musical discussions, styles of music found in the Americas and the Caribbean are often referred to as African-derived. Salsa is no exception, and the following discussion explores what is particularly African about the music: clave, a rhythmic concept found in a variety of Latin-American styles. Similarities of sound and function to African bell patterns provide both evidence supporting a theory of the African origins of clave and an evolutionary link between African music and salsa.

Salsa is a Latin musical style that incorporates a variety of influences. Originating in Cuba and Puerto Rico and emerging from the musical climate of New York City in the 1950s, it has found popularity throughout the Americas and the other Caribbean islands as well as in Europe and Japan. Salsa has its roots in Cuban popular and folkloric music and is enhanced by jazz textures. The name salsa, literally meaning “sauce,” has been in use since the late 1960s, popularized by New York’s Fania Records as a “catchy” marketing label. Salsa is often thought of as Latin essence, just as the word “soul” has been a description for black American essence (Baron 1977, 217).

In Spanish, “clave” literally means key, clef, code, or keystone. Fernando Ortiz ([1935] 1984, 9) believes that it is derived from “clavija,” meaning wooden peg, reflecting the appearance of the instrument that plays the clave rhythm, called claves. Claves are two wooden sticks that are struck together to produce a high piercing sound. If no clave player is present in a salsa band, timbale players will often attach a hollowed-out, hard plastic, open-ended box to their cowbell stand and strike it with their sticks to produce a clave sound.

In Latin music terminology, the word “clave” refers not only to these instruments but also to the specific rhythmic patterns they play and the underlying rules that govern these patterns. Concerning these rules, Amira and Cornelius (1992, 23) choose the analogy of a “keystone—the wedge shaped stone placed at the top of an arch which locks all the other stones in place” to describe the function of the clave in relation to all of the other parts in the music. All musical and dance components in salsa performance are governed by the clave rhythm. In some way, they must correspond at all times to the clave rhythmic pattern. Amira and Cornelius (1992, 23) continue:

Clave is a two measure pattern in which each measure is diametrically opposed. The two measures are not at odds, but rather, they are balanced opposites, like positive and negative, expansive (continued on 10)