

DANZÓN



*Circum-Caribbean Dialogues
in Music and Dance*

ALEJANDRO L. MADRID & ROBIN D. MOORE

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To Ginnie Moore, words can't describe my sense of loss, no one ever had a better mother. And to Lorraine Leu, my constant companion, my *media naranja*, my love, who inspires and supports me in so many ways. Thank you for coming all the way from Bristol to make my life complete. And thank you for our daughter Eva; what a joy to share that experience together.

—Robin

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—Alejandro

La memoria no hace nada por sí sola.
Sólo es fértil cuando el olvido la reverdece.
El olvido que recuerda a la memoria es la nostalgia.
La nostalgia no hace nada por sí sola.
Sólo el olvido.

Memory does not do anything by itself.
It is only fertile when forgetting revives it.
Nostalgia is the forgetting that triggers memory.
Nostalgia does not do anything by itself.
Only forgetting.

Jaime Moreno Villarreal, *Fracciones*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project developed out of interests shared by the authors that we discovered while we were both affiliated with the University of Texas at Austin (2005–2006). Each of us had spent time in Cuba and Mexico and were attracted to the *danzón*, in part due to its striking revival over the past twenty years. The fact that the *danzón*'s history spanned a century and a half and that its influence transcended national boundaries drew our attention, as did the surprising lack of academic interest it had generated of late. Our discussions would have never resulted in a book, however, if we had not received generous funding from multiple sources. The eventual fashioning of a joint research plan took inspiration from the Collaborative Research initiative of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS).¹ This program supports groups of two or three scholars who undertake research that none could complete effectively on their own. The intent of the grant is to expose scholars to literatures, regions, or even disciplines that they have little familiarity with and to encourage them to incorporate new material from those sources into their work. Our *danzón* proposal received funding from the ACLS during the 2011–2012 academic year, and thus we approached the project together. Alejandro brought to it a background in musicology with specialization in Mexico and familiarity with literature on cultural studies, transnationalism, performance theory, and other topics. Robin contributed his training in ethnomusicology, cultural anthropology, and expertise on literature related to Cuban music and history. The writing of the manuscript progressed quickly, as Alejandro had received previous funding from the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, the Institute for Research on Race and Public Policy, and the Office of Social Science Research at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and made multiple research trips to Cuba and Mexico between 2006 and 2011. Robin received similar support from the Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies at the University of Texas, and from the university's central administration during the 2009–2010 academic year.

1. www.acls.org/programs/collaborative/. The National Endowment for the Humanities has established a similar program: www.neh.gov/grants/research/collaborative-research-grants.

Prior to undertaking this work, scholarship for both of us had been a relatively individualistic affair; collaborative research thus represented a significant change. The ACLS does not define the nature of collaboration for its awardees or provide guidelines to follow, so we first had to define the logistics of the partnership. Initially we considered writing separate chapters for the volume, but eventually rejected that idea in favor of a model involving close collaboration on virtually all essays. The need to collectively organize the content of each chapter led to more discussion, occasional delays, and sometimes last-minute changes. In the end, however, collective writing generated text in a fairly consistent style and helped reconcile our distinct academic voices and perspectives on the page more effectively than working individually.

The many advantages to collaborative research soon became obvious. Multiple authors bring a greatly expanded knowledge base to any project, of course, both theoretical and region-specific. The large number of professional contacts each of us had greatly facilitated access to material in various countries. Collective writing resulted in a constant process of external evaluation, much like having a built-in peer reviewer looking over the other's shoulder at every step. Reading each other's work thus helped us avoid minor pitfalls such as problems with wording or terminology. We also helped each other draw connections between music making in Cuba, Mexico, and the region that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Of course, the success of collaborative projects depends greatly on the rapport of the individual participants, their respect for each other's opinions, and their willingness to compromise as appropriate. If collaborators don't have a strong personal relationship they may prove unable to complete their work. In our case, happily, the process proved enjoyable. Support from the ACLS and from our respective institutions allowed us not only the opportunity to collaborate on writing but also to conduct fieldwork together in Havana, Matanzas, and Santiago, Cuba, which we found especially rewarding.

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Alejandro L. Madrid, Cornell University
Robin D. Moore, University of Texas at Austin

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ABOUT THE COMPANION WEBSITE

www.oup.com/us/danzon

Oxford has created a password-protected website to accompany *Danzón. Circum-Caribbean Dialogues in Music and Dance*, and readers are encouraged to take full advantage of it. The website includes sound files, scores, and videos of the music examined in the book, images from the authors' fieldwork and archival research, and a list of external music and video links that further illustrate the authors' discussions. The authors hope these materials will prove a useful complement to the text that follows.

Recorded examples available on the website that relate directly to the authors' argument are signaled throughout the text with Oxford's symbol .

You may access the companion website by typing in username Music5 and password Book1745.

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Danzón

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CHAPTER 1

Danzón Matters

Mapping Out the Issues

For those raised in the United States, attending the many danzón gala events held throughout Mexico today feels like a journey into the past. Stepping into the expansive, glittering halls used for such occasions one is reminded of descriptions of the big band jazz era. On stage, large ensembles are arranged, often with fifteen or more members, that boast extended saxophone and trumpet lines in addition to trombones, percussion, and rhythm instruments. Musicians dress in colorful, coordinated outfits such as off-white double-breasted suits with contrasting shirts and ties. They adorn the stage and their music stands with banners, ribbons, or other items featuring the name and logo of the orchestra. The *salones* (halls) themselves provide ample dance floors of polished stone tile illuminated by glittering chandeliers. The dancers, primarily middle-aged couples or singles and a few younger enthusiasts, arrive in similarly immaculate attire. Women display their finest party dresses, styled hair, and shoes; men wear suits or linen *guayaberas*. They sit together around the edges of the hall, often eating multi-course meals or ordering bottles of rum or tequila with mixers for their table and consuming the contents over the course of the evening. For extended periods during live sets the tables empty as everyone rushes to the dance floor, waiting with their partners in front of the orchestra for the next song to begin or finding new partners among their friends. Danzón performances often last five or six hours or more; free dancing alternates with formally staged presentations by expert instructors or open dance competitions in front of a panel of judges. Similar to the case of tango and swing, the danzón revival of recent years has generated a large and devoted following. Mexican fans travel around the country to attend the many high-profile festivals held annually, in addition to taking part in local events or those abroad in Havana or Matanzas, Cuba. Danzón has become a central part of their lives, a passionate obsession.

Derived from European court dances of the eighteenth century such as the contradance and popularized in the New World thereafter through various French and Spanish colonies (including Louisiana), the danzón is a fascinating form that ties together the entire Atlantic region. The earliest references to the term “danzón” date

from the 1840s among the black community in Havana and Matanzas; by the 1870s, white social clubs began to embrace it as well, transforming it into a form of mass entertainment. The following decade, touring Cuban musicians and exiles of the Wars of Independence brought the music and dance to Merida, Veracruz, Mexico City, New Orleans, and other cities in the circum-Caribbean region. Between the 1880s and the 1920s, danzones represented one of the most influential forms of Latin American dance music, with enthusiasts in Costa Rica, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, New Orleans, Puerto Rico, and elsewhere.¹

Early danzón repertoire was played by ensembles known as *orquestas típicas* consisting primarily of European-derived instruments such as the violin, acoustic bass, clarinet, trombone, and cornet. In addition, they included the *timbales*, a Cuban percussion instrument with Middle Eastern and Spanish antecedents first used in black and mulatto military battalions about 1800, and the *güiro*, a gourd scraper. Both instruments played rhythmic patterns featuring a prominent *cinquillo* (five-note syncopated pattern; see Ex. 2.1) as well as related rhythms derived from Afro-Caribbean heritage.² Cuban performers increasingly rejected the *orquesta típica* format as of the 1910s in favor of the smaller *charanga francesa* featuring flute, violins, and piano as principal melodic instruments. Mexicans, however, continued to play in larger bands featuring brass and woodwinds known as *danzoneras*. Danzones reached an early peak of popularity in Cuba in the 1910s and 1920s, and in Mexico in the 1930s and 1940s. Subsequently, they fell out of fashion in both countries for a time, but (especially in Mexico) have experienced a strong revival since the 1990s.

Danzón structure is highly sectional with multiple contrasting segments, reflecting the influence of nineteenth-century military marches, dance suites, and other

1. Information about the widespread sale of recorded danzones in Colombia around 1910 and the 1920s has been compiled in Edgar J. Gutierrez S., *Fiestas: once de noviembre en Cartagena de Indias. Manifestaciones artísticas, cultura popular, 1910–1930* (Medellín: Editorial Lealón, 2000), 146–49; and in Egberto Bermúdez, “From Colombian ‘National’ Song to ‘Colombian Song,’ 1860–1960,” *Lied und populäre Kultur / Song and Popular Culture*, No. 53 (2008), 167–259. Discussion of danzón compositions within Guatemalan repertoire is found in *Música guatemalteca para piano: antología histórica, siglos XIX–XXI* (Guatemala City: Universidad de San Carlos de Guatemala, Dirección General de Investigación, Centro de Estudios Folkloricos, 2008), 24, 32; and throughout Julio César Sánchez Castillo, *Producción marimbística de Guatemala* (Guatemala City: Impresos Industriales, 2001). The danzón appears to have been introduced to Costa Rica and other nearby countries by Cuban refugees who resettled there, fleeing the Wars of Independence against Spain. In the case of Costa Rica, Antonio Maceo himself led a settlement of 100 families that established themselves in Guanacaste beginning in 1892. See Amparo María Ballester López, “Antonio Maceo y la mansión de Nicoya,” <http://verbiclara.wordpress.com/2011/12/06/antonio-maceo-y-la-mansion-de-nicoya/> (accessed on June 28, 2012). Peter Manuel discusses the influence of danzones on Dominican dance music in “The Dominican Republic. Danza and the Contradance Merengue,” *Creolizing the Contradance in the Caribbean* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 180); Edgardo Díaz Díaz (electronic communication, February 20, 2012) notes that it became popular in Puerto Rico following the US occupation of 1902.

2. Partial examples of early danzón recordings can be heard on iTunes, for instance, samples of the CD *The Cuban Danzón: Its Ancestors and Descendants* (Smithsonian Folkways FE 4066, 2004), as well as on the website accompanying this book.

repertoire of the day. Danzones have almost always been composed and notated by trained musicians, but often allow performers to interpret the score with a certain degree of melodic and rhythmic improvisation more characteristic of traditional/folkloric repertoire. The pieces feature European harmonies, yet both melodic lines and percussion patterns incorporate rhythms characteristic of West African traditions, as mentioned. Rhythms performed on the timbales involve tapping on the shell of the drums and playing on both dampened and open heads, techniques derived from Afro-Caribbean hand percussion. Finally, danzones incorporate a sense of *clave* or timeline: the constant repetition of a single two-measure rhythmic cell that serves as a structural basis for each composition. This practice is characteristic of West African music as well and is found widely in Afro-Latin dance repertoire, including salsa. Danzones thus demonstrate a fundamental hybridity, reflecting musical influences from Western and non-Western sources.

The danzón today is considered emblematic of Cuba's national music, yet for decades the elite of society rejected it as "African" and "barbaric." Commentaries in Cuban newspapers of the 1880s and 1890s attacked it because of its associations with prostitution and "improper" racial mixing. Mainstream attitudes shifted substantially in the early twentieth century, however, owing in large part to new racial discourses that emerged during the final years of the war against Spain. In the context of a heightened sense of nationalism after 1898 and a desire on the part of Cuba's white leadership to avoid discussions of ongoing racial inequality, references to the danzón's origins among the black population all but disappeared. The music enjoyed a period of broad acceptance as a result. Shortly thereafter, the influence of other local and regional musics such as Cuban *son*, jazz, and the bolero first transformed the sound and structure of the danzón and eventually eclipsed its popularity.

Danzón has been one of the most prominent forms of music and dance in Mexico since the late nineteenth century as well, and has been continuously appropriated by distinct groups and social classes. The bourgeoisie first embraced the music at the turn of the twentieth century as one of many imported cultural forms; later, it resounded in the working-class dancehalls of Mexico City, Veracruz, and elsewhere, reflecting the rise of a vibrant urban popular culture and social liberalization in the years after the Mexican Revolution (1920–1950). The music provided a means of experiencing/embodying Afro-diasporic heritage, but also displacing it at a time when state cultural discourse largely excluded blackness from constructs of *mexicanidad*. As a result of its gradual resignification as a marker of local heritage, the danzón has retained a core base of support; today, many Mexicans consider it their music, disregarding its Cuban origins.³ In recent years, imbued with influences from salsa and big-band jazz, it has served as a powerful referent of Mexican urban culture for composers of symphonic music, film music, mariachis, vocal artists, and others.

3. Such views have led the Centro Nacional de Investigación y Difusión del Danzón, A.C. (CNIDDAC), on a campaign to have the danzón officially declared cultural patrimony of Veracruz. See Rosario Manzanos, "Proponen al danzón como Patrimonio Cultural de Veracruz," *Proceso*, no. 1751 (May 23, 2010). The initiative has not prospered.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the dynamic musical style that would eventually come to be called jazz was emerging in New Orleans, shortly to become North America's signature music. In its earliest manifestations, it featured brass and wind instruments such as the trumpet, trombone, and clarinet; often the trumpet would play variations on a primary melody while the clarinet and trombone invented countermelodies above and below the original, all supported by the rhythm section and percussion. Though clearly unique, this style of performance had parallels in the *danzón* and related forms. In the early recordings of artists such as Pablo Valenzuela, Felipe Valdés, and Enrique Peña one can hear the same sorts of instruments, performance styles, and improvisational approaches adopted by early jazz pioneers. Yet this fact is largely unrecognized by jazz scholars, and the specifics of the process by which popular Caribbean dance music overlaps with performance traditions in New Orleans remain to be explored.

Throughout the twentieth century, *danzón* repertoire influenced (and frequently was influenced by) many other forms such as Cuban *son*, bolero, cha cha chá, and mambo. Its early recordings are among the first styles of African American music to be recorded as played by African Americans themselves, nearly a decade before jazz discs appeared. The music has developed countless variants for audiences of distinct classes and races, often straddling boundaries between traditional, popular, and classical music and confounding simplistic categorization. Its many creolized elements speak to processes of exchange and dialogue between countries more than to particular forms of national expression. Finally, its social meanings and associations have changed radically through time, the result of incorporation into distinct ideological projects. For all of these reasons it merits further attention. A dialectical approach is fundamental to understanding the *danzón* as well as arguably early jazz and many other fin-de-siècle forms of music and dance (Argentine tango, Brazilian *maxixe*,⁴ Cuban *habanera*,⁵ etc.) that are stylistically similar to the *danzón* and have circulated widely throughout the Atlantic region.

Despite its historical significance, its popularity in Mexico, its links to early jazz and to current Latin dance repertoire, the *danzón* remains poorly researched. Academic studies of it are virtually nonexistent; most current literature on the topic is far from rigorous, long out of print, and concerned with only a single dimension of its history or practice. Literature from Cuba typically focuses on the music's early development there; writings from Mexico describe only specific scenes in that country. The current study addresses some of these shortcomings by combining multi-site research, historical/archival work, and ethnography; by linking *danzón* history to recent literature related to race, transnationalism, performance, revivalism, and other topics; and by framing present-day *danzón* performance as a dynamic component of African

4. The *maxixe* is a Brazilian urban popular dance music that appeared in Rio de Janeiro around 1870. Like the *danzón*, it was extremely sectional and employed many of the same melodic figures as popular Caribbean musics of the period.

5. A slow duple-meter song and dance form employing the famous "habanera bass" rhythm found in Bizet's *Carmen* and many other European works, as well as in some US ragtime. See Chapter 2.

diasporic culture. We investigate the initial dissemination of the *danzón*, how different groups have embraced it, and how it has come to reflect new social realities. Our study uses music and dance as a lens through which to examine the transnational construction of culture in the Americas, both historically and in the present. In order to keep the project manageable, detailed case studies focus only on the Gulf of Mexico region, primarily Cuba, Mexico, and New Orleans.

Danzones and related forms demonstrate the common influences found in North American and Latin American culture and suggest that both are part of the same broad process of colonization and adaptation. They underscore that traditions throughout the region developed as local reinterpretations of European repertoire, often by musicians of African descent, and that such artistry has circulated widely for centuries. The history of the *danzón* is intimately linked to the Atlantic slave trade through particular melodic/rhythmic figures, instruments, and/or styles of performance. Likewise, it is tied to the growth of international commerce since it largely spread along trade routes to Cartagena, Veracruz, New Orleans, San Juan de Puerto Rico, and elsewhere. It provides important insights into various historical periods in the countries where it became popular. Its constant movement helps to expand frames of musical and cultural analysis beyond national boundaries and to concentrate on broader movements and interactions. From questions of colonialism to changing local imaginaries, from struggles over individual emancipation and pleasure to questions of social control, the *danzón* is a unique manifestation that provides important insights into lived practice. It allows us to observe how local experiences result from sustained interactions within regions often not understood as interrelated areas.

QUESTIONS OF GENRE, STYLE, AND MEANING

The focus of our study on what is usually described as a music genre has necessitated reflection on what exactly a genre is, whether the *danzón* is best described by such a term, and whether it might potentially contribute new insights into theories of genre. In various disciplines such as literary studies, linguistic anthropology, film criticism, and folklore, genre studies have a long history dating back at least to Mikhail Bakhtin's influential essays of the 1920s. Musicologists came later to the discussion but since the 1980s have published substantially on genre theory as well.⁶

6. Examples of publications on musical genres since the 1980s include Franco Fabbri, "A Theory of Popular Music Genres: Two Applications," in *Popular Music Perspectives*, ed. David Horn and Philip Tagg (Exeter: A. Wheaton, 1982), 52–81; and Johan Fornäs, "The Future of Rock: Discourses that Struggle to Define a Genre," *Popular Music* 14, no. 1 (1995), 111–25. Simon Frith's *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998) includes a chapter on the topic; Keith Negus wrote the first book-length work devoted to it, *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures* (London: Routledge, 1999); Steven Pond also challenges traditional notions of genre in his discussion of musical fusions at the core of *Herbie Hancock's Head Hunters: The Making of Jazz's First Platinum Album* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005). Latin American music

Notions of genre serve as organizing principles for academics and the mainstream public alike, as well as for industry groups, performers, and others. They establish shared conventions, helping define appropriate behaviors, contexts for, and readings of cultural expression. Genres are established through acts of repetition and made meaningful through performance and related discourse. They are simultaneously enhanced and/or challenged through experimentation, the playful transgression of style boundaries through time. We view genres as dynamic, socially defined categories in constant dialogue with broader social processes and transformed structurally and/or conceptually according to the needs of the moment. The *danzón* offers potential insights into such processes, given the striking degree of its transformations in meaning and form over time.

Genre-related publications have been prominent among musicologists in many countries, though they have not always entered into dialogue with broader literatures. Eduardo Sánchez de Fuentes, an early scholar of Cuban music, wrote extensively on genres including the *danzón* beginning in the 1920s, as did Emilio Grenet in the 1930s, both within a larger discussion of African- and Spanish-derived cultural influences on the island.⁷ Their approach was largely descriptive, generating categories of national repertoire and noting prominent stylistic features. In Mexico, Rubén M. Campos took a similar approach in the 1920s, followed by Gabriel Saldívar and Vicente T. Mendoza in the 1930s and 1940s; they focused their taxonomic efforts on the *canción mexicana* (Mexican song), the *romance* (epic ballad), local *son* and *jarabe* traditions, and the *corrido*.⁸

From the 1940s through the 1960s, Cuban Odilio Urfé introduced the notion of “genre complexes” in presentations during public lectures, as well as in program notes accompanying stage productions designed to educate the public about historical forms of popular music (see Chapter 5).⁹ His notion, linking broader styles of performance perceived as related, proved influential on later generations of Cuban scholars. Argeliers León, a preeminent musicologist of the mid-twentieth century and a student of Fernando Ortiz, adopted Urfé’s term in the 1960s. He also introduced “multigenre

scholars who have published on the topic include Martha Ulhoa, “Pertinência e musica popular-Em busca de categorias para análise da musica brasileira popular,” www.hist.puc.br/iaspm/pdf/Ulhoa.pdf; and Rubén López Cano, “Favor de no tocar el género: géneros, estilo y competencia en la semiótica musical congitiva actual,” in *Voces e imágenes en la etnomusicología actual*, ed. Josep Martí and Silvia Martínez (Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, 2004), 325–37 and available online at http://lopezcano.org/Articulos/2004.Favor_tocar_genero.pdf. See also the other authors mentioned in the introduction.

7. See, for instance, Eduardo Sánchez de Fuentes, *El folk-lore en la música cubana* (Havana: Imprenta El Siglo XX, 1923); and Emilio Grenet, *Popular Cuban Music. 80 Revised and Corrected Compositions Together with an Essay on the Evolution of Music in Cuba*, trans. R. Phillips (Havana: Secretary of Agriculture, 1939).

8. E.g., Rubén M. Campos, *El folklore y la música mexicana* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1928); Gabriel Saldívar, *Historia de la música en México* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1934); and Vicente T. Mendoza, *El romancero español y el corrido mexicano. Estudio comparativo* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1997 [1939]).

9. Danilo Orozco, electronic communication, February 13, 2012.

complex” a few years later in an apparent attempt to further emphasize interrelations between at least partially distinct musical genres or subgenres. León’s written work is heavily influenced by Marxist thought and provides a nuanced discussion of Cuban genres in the context of Caribbean history and socioeconomic development. He emphasizes the emergent nature of forms such as the *danzón* and their many permutations through time, yet neither he nor Urfé theorize the concept of genre.¹⁰

Through the mid-1980s, discussions of genre still tended to be descriptive rather than providing a dynamic model for musical study, thus reflecting the state of musicological research internationally. Victoria Eli Rodríguez and Zoila Gómez García in Cuba extended past studies of genre complexes to the entire Latin American region, inspired by earlier work along similar lines by Argentine Carlos Vega.¹¹ Others such as Olavo Alén wrote about Cuban music in the 1990s using notions of genre complexes as an organizing principle.¹² Alén’s work adopts problematic categories, for instance, contrasting the racially unmarked phrase “Cuban music” (implicitly white/Hispanic) with “Afro-Cuban music” and thus implying distance between Afro-Cuban and national heritage. No “Hispano-Cuban” category is used to complement “Afro-Cuban,” for instance, which would make a special category for black genres more appropriate. Additionally, many of the “Cuban” musical categories Alén mentions such as *son*, *rumba*, and *danzón* could as easily be considered “Afro-Cuban,” given the prominence of black and mixed-race performers and audiences to their development.

Recent scholarship in Cuba and elsewhere recognizes the need for more dynamic constructs of genre as a basis for future study. Mercedes de León Granda called in 1996 for greater attention to the various elements of genre (musical, social/contextual, ideational) and how they are produced and circulate among given groups.¹³ Leonardo Acosta criticized mainstream Cuban musicology for acceptance of an overly static concept of genre complexes and a fixation on discrete categories that often obscure as many musical relationships between forms as they illuminate.¹⁴ Danilo Orozco’s work notes that past discussion of genre tends to downplay both the complex amalgam of elements taken from a diversity of sources, local and global, and the creative ways individual artists compose or perform that transcend genre categories. Orozco uses a diversity of terms to describe the ways musicians combine

10. Jesús Gómez Cairo, “Dos enfoques sobre géneros de la música cubana: Odilio Urfé y Argeliers León,” *Clave* 13, no. 1 (2010), 34–38.

11. Victoria Eli and Zoila Gómez García, *Música latinoamericana y caribeña* (Havana: Editorial Pueblo y Educación, 1995).

12. Olavo Alén, *Géneros musicales de Cuba. De lo afro cubano a la salsa* (San Juan, Puerto Rico: Editorial Cubanacán, 1992).

13. Mercedes de León Granda, “Lo cubano, en música. Un problema de estilo o de género,” *Cúpulas* 1, no. 1 (1996), reprinted in *Clave* 12, no. 1–3 (2010), 55–59. Her particular interest was on the relationships between national musical style and genre.

14. Leonardo Acosta, *Otra visión de la música popular cubana* (Havana: Letras Cubanas, 2004), 38–72. The chapter in question is entitled “De los complejos genéricos y otras cuestiones.” It was published in English translation as Leonardo Acosta, “On Generic Complexes and Other Topics in Cuban Popular Music,” *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, 17 (2005), 227–54. Translated by Raúl Fernández and Daniel S. Whitesell with an introduction by Raúl Fernández.

stylistic elements that often contrast or conflict with one another: paragenre, intergenre, interstyle, dance intergenre, musics of transition, and others.¹⁵ In 2010, the preeminent Cuban musicology journal *Clave* devoted an extended special issue—the only publication that year—to the notion of genre and its place within musicology, contributing to critical reflection on past practices.

Any focus on the categories or stylistic features associated with a given music inevitably risks oversimplification, as well as the downplaying of linkages beyond a given category and the constant innovation that characterizes musical performance, composition, and dance. A focus on the normative features of genre tends to shift analysis from music making itself—from processes, performance, and individual agency—to fixed products and general tendencies, thus confounding a comprehensive understanding of style and form. In many countries, normative typologies of national music genres continue to dominate musicological discussion. The resulting constructs and discourses prove resistant to change, owing in part to support from elite institutions and/or governmental agencies invested in particular forms of heritage.¹⁶ By contrast, our study emphasizes the many unique manifestations of the *danzón* as conceived by individual performers and dancers, and the conscious aesthetic choices that gave rise to them.

With some exceptions, recent studies take more care to define the concept of genre and consider how particular musical categories emerge, how they change over time, how the experience of genre functions socially, how the same genre may be perceived differently by different communities, and so on. Literature from the United States and Europe emphasizes the role of the corporate music industry in defining and disseminating notions of genre and suggests that such categories may conflict with the views of grassroots communities.¹⁷ Growing consensus exists on the need to make social life and firsthand observation of musical practice the basis of any study of genre whenever possible. Likewise, more consideration has been given to the many groups potentially contributing to genre formation above and beyond the music industry including the mass media, educational institutions, or state officials, as well as individuals.¹⁸

Drawing on recent scholarship, we define the *danzón* as a “performance complex” rather than a genre or genre complex, emphasizing through this shift in terminology our primary concern with music making and human action as opposed to categories

15. Danilo Orozco, *Nexos globales desde la música cubana con rejuegos de son y no son* (Havana: Ediciones Ojalá, 2001), 10–11, 16, 42, 49. Orozco (1944–2013) was one of the Cuban scholars most closely in dialogue with interdisciplinary scholarship on genre from Europe and the United States.

16. Fabian Holt, *Genre in Popular Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 15.

17. E.g., Negus, *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*.

18. On the importance of centering genre study on social practice, see Danilo Orozco, “Qué e(s)tá pasando, ¡Aseré! . . . Detrás del borroso ‘qué sé yo y no sé qué’ en la génesis y dinámica de los géneros musicales,” *Clave* 12, no. 1–3 (2010), 64. For a discussion of the various actors influencing genre formation and discourse, see Liliana González Moreno, comp., “Género, forma, lenguaje, estilo y demás complejidades,” *Clave* 12, no. 1–3 (2010), 111.

or taxonomies.¹⁹ The *danzón* is best conceived as a particular kind of music and dance that exists within unique cultural webs of production, circulation, and signification. It can be viewed not only as a form of music making but as a space of affect²⁰ experienced in the minds and bodies of groups of people who share certain conventions.²¹ The *danzón* manifests itself in participatory events and performance. Individual and collective understandings of it derive from the same activities, mediated by conflicting ideologies, perspectives, and initiatives on the part of various groups. Performance complexes such as the *danzón* help organize cultural creation and reception, yet derive their meanings from broader realities. As suggested in the writings of Richard Bauman, William Hanks, and others, they are historically defined frameworks of orientation, interpretive procedures, and sets of expectations that structure music making and dance.²² They constitute a *habitus* in Bourdieu's sense of the term, a way of perceiving and cognitively organizing the world.²³ Rather than fixed structures, forms such as the *danzón* function as schemata, rough guidelines that dialogue constantly with other cultural and social practices. Performativity is a central notion in defining these complexes.²⁴ It emphasizes the power cultural of practices to do something as they are enacted by collectivities or individuals. Focusing on the *danzón* as a performance complex allows us to inquire into what happens when the *danzón* happens. Thus, we interrogate how the affective relations people establish

19. See Ramón H. Rivera-Servera, "Musical Trans(actions): Intersections in Reggaetón," *Trans. Revista Transcultural de Música*, No. 13 (2009), www.sibetrans.com/trans/a62/musical-transactions-intersections-in-reggaeton (accessed on July 20, 2012).

20. María de los Ángeles Córdoba and Natalí Méndez Díaz discuss genre similarly as a "mundo de sentido" or "world of feeling," drawing on the work of Spaniard Héctor Fouce, in "El género en la música: una aproximación a su estudio," *Clave* 12, no. 1-3 (2010), 91. The idea bears some similarity to Raymond Williams's earlier discussion of "structures of feeling" in *Marxism and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), 128-35.

21. Holt, *Genre in Popular Music*, 2, 7.

22. William Hanks, "Discourse Genres in a Theory of Practice," *American Ethnologist* 14, no. 4 (1987), 676-77, 687-88. Hanks is a linguistic anthropologist who draws on Richard Bauman's work as well as that of other folklorists and anthropologists in defining genre. See, for instance, Richard Bauman, *Verbal Art as Performance* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1977); and Joel Scherzer, *Kuna Ways of Speaking: An Ethnographic Perspective* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983).

23. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

24. Throughout the book we use the terms "performative" and "performatic" following the convention proposed by Diana Taylor for the field of performance studies, in which "the performative becomes less a quality (or adjective) of 'performance' than of discourse [and the performatic] denote[s] the adjectival form of the nondiscursive realm of performance." In other words, performatic refers to the theatrical qualities of performance while performative refers to discursive performativity or the realm of "what happens when music happens." See Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire. Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 6; see also Alejandro L. Madrid, "Why Music and Performance Studies? Why Now? An Introduction to the Special Issue," *Trans. Revista Transcultural de Música*, No. 13, 2009, www.sibetrans.com/trans/a1/why-music-and-performance-studies-why-now-an-introduction-to-the-special-issue (accessed July 20, 2012).