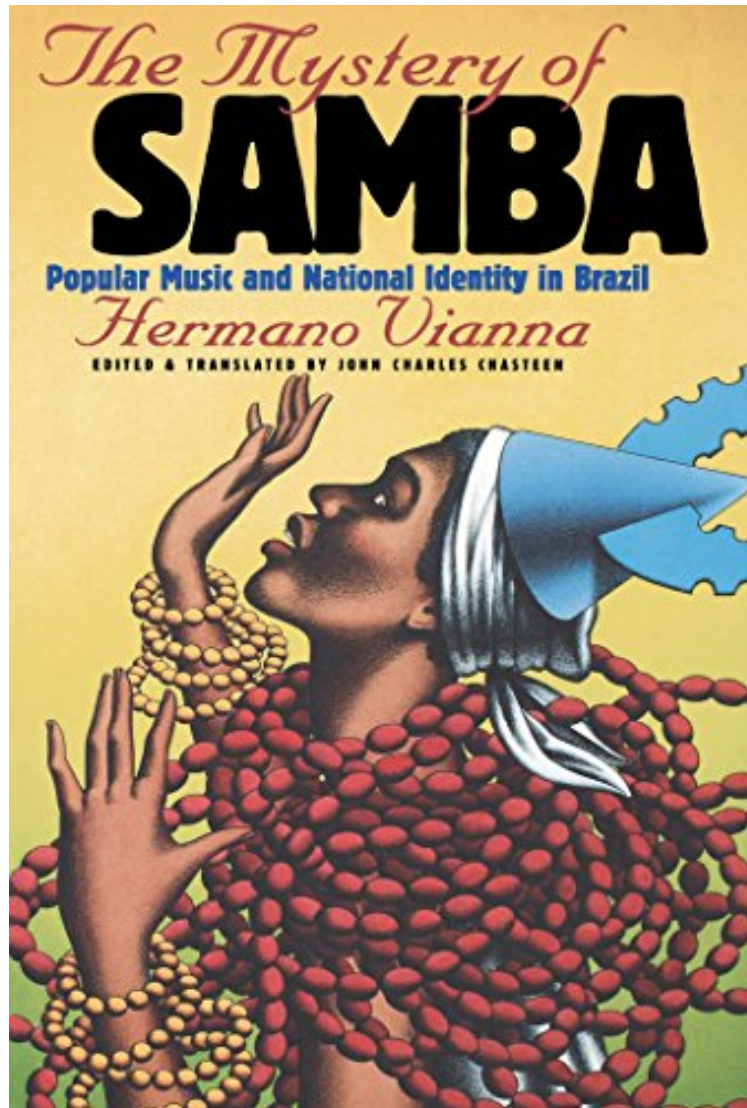


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The Mystery of Samba : Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil

Hermano Vianna

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Hermano Vianna : The Mystery of Samba : Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Mystery of Samba : Popular Music and National Identity in Brazil:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. provocative interesting read By gergelim38 This is a straightforward, easy to read, enjoyable and informative book about how samba dance and music moved from a marginalized position to one now considered to be at the "heart" of Brazilian identity. Vianna, a scholar of music, introduces the reader to

important samba musicians, intellectuals, and government officials in this story that centers around the rule of Getulio Vargas which began in the 1930s and lasted into the 1950s. Vianna connects samba to ideas of national identity and race, offering insight into why, despite the celebration of samba and Afro-Brazilian roots, Brazilians of African descent continue to face discrimination. This book would make a great read for non-scholars and students alike, who are interested in music, Brazil, and the African diaspora. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fast and Easy ReadBy BrittneyIt was a good book. I could visually imagine what was going on throughout the book. It was also very easy to read, except for some of the names (because they were Portuguese). Overall it was a fast and easy read0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As expectedBy Bridget GrahamI had to read this for a class, so it wasn't something I loved. However, the writing is very accessible and the topic fairly interesting, if you enjoy the complexities of culture formation.

Samba is Brazil's "national rhythm," the foremost symbol of its culture and nationhood. To the outsider, samba and the famous pre-Lenten carnival of which it is the centerpiece seem to showcase the country's African heritage. Within Brazil, however, samba symbolizes the racial and cultural mixture that, since the 1930s, most Brazilians have come to believe defines their unique national identity. But how did Brazil become "the Kingdom of Samba" only a few decades after abolishing slavery in 1888? Typically, samba is represented as having changed spontaneously, mysteriously, from a "repressed" music of the marginal and impoverished to a national symbol cherished by all Brazilians. Here, however, Hermano Vianna shows that the nationalization of samba actually rested on a long history of relations between different social groups--poor and rich, weak and powerful--often working at cross-purposes to one another. A fascinating exploration of the "invention of tradition," *The Mystery of Samba* is an excellent introduction to Brazil's ongoing conversation on race, popular culture, and national identity.

From Library JournalThe "mystery" of the title is samba's transformation "from infamous outcast to (virtually official) national emblem." Brazilian anthropologist Vianna here casts a dry postmodern eye on issues of cultural invention and the identification of "authentic" folk idioms for political and commercial purposes. His long essay discusses Brazilian nation building, cultural mediators, essentialist attitudes, and individual cultural theorists. Vianna concludes that establishing the "Kingdom of Samba" was a complex process, not controlled by any one segment of Brazilian society. For contrast, readers should look at Alma Guillermoprieto's passionate *Samba* (LJ 1/90), a poetic report from an outsider allowed to participate in the dance. Both treatments enhance understanding. For large public and academic collections.ABonnie Jo Dopp, Univ. of Maryland Lib., College ParkCopyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. This very readable book provides an interpretation of an aspect of the Brazilian culture that has remained unexplored until now."Choice""A wonderfully knowledgeable and thoughtful investigation of how Brazil and samba helped create each other.Alma Guillermoprieto, author of "Samba""An important contribution . . . to today's lively multidisciplinary discussion about race, nation, and popular culture."Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y El Caribe""A wonderfully knowledgeable and thoughtful investigation of how Brazil and samba helped create each other.Alma Guillermoprieto, author of "Samba"An important contribution . . . to today's lively multidisciplinary discussion about race, nation, and popular culture."Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y El Caribe"Hermano Vianna's new book is a valiant effort to make sense of both [Brazil's music and culture]. "Lingua Franca"A subtle and convincing analysis of the connection between popular culture and its manipulation by the elite.Thomas E. Skidmore, Brown University A wonderfully knowledgeable and thoughtful investigation of how Brazil and samba helped create each other.--Alma Guillermoprieto, author of *Samba*The *Mystery of Samba* points to the Brazilian nation's strong expression of popular culture as a long term transcultural experience between cultural elites and popular voices both inside and outside Brazil. . . . This masterful work is a very current and major contribution to the debate about culture across the social sciences and the humanities.--Nelson H. Vieira, Brown UniversityA subtle and convincing analysis of the connection between popular culture and its manipulation by the elite. A major contribution to our understanding of the development of Brazilian national identity.--Thomas E. Skidmore, Brown UniversityDespite the fact that Brazil is one of the three most prolific sources for the continuing evolution of popular music (the United States and Cuba being two others), an outsider without a decent knowledge of Portuguese must struggle to grasp the significance of the country's music and its culture. Hermano Vianna's new book is a valiant effort to make sense of both. . . . Popular music isn't only what one turns to when taking a rest from important things like writing social history. It can actually work, if sometimes indirectly, to change the world.--Lingua FrancaAn important contribution not only to English-language scholarship on Latin American music, but also to today's lively multidisciplinary discussion about race, nation, and popular culture.--Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y El CaribeThis very readable book provides an interpretation of an aspect of the Brazilian culture that has remained unexplored until now.--Choice