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FACILITIES FOR MUSICAL RESEARCH IN THE CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean Sea touches the shores of more than twenty countries of widely varied historical, political, social, linguistic, and ethnic condition. During recent decades the Caribbean countries have provided a fertile field for study by scholars interested in such phenomena as the social effects of rapid economic change, cultural syncretism, and the New World survivals of European, African, and Oriental cultural traits. In many other fields of study the Caribbean is, at least in part, a known quantity. In matters which are of interest to the music historian and the ethnomusicologist, however, the region has not fared so well.

Surveys of the historical development of art music in some of the countries which border on the Caribbean Sea are readily available. Among these are Colombia and Venezuela particularly, and if we extend our geographical limits to include the Gulf of Mexico, the United States and Mexico itself. Cuba, historically one of the most important literary and artistic centers within the Caribbean, has profited from a number of more-or-less serious historical essays, while the smaller Caribbean countries are represented by a modest harvest of local musical histories, biographical studies, and descriptive pieces.

Publications concerning the folk music of the Caribbean have been limited almost exclusively to brief studies of local phenomena: here a scale-pattern, there an instrument or a song text. There are, of course, exceptions. The monumental work of Fernando Ortiz in the field of Afro-Cuban instruments will long stand as definitive, while the contributions of a number of other scholars extend far beyond the limits of local interest.

These important exceptions, however, do not alter the general picture. Existing musical research in the Caribbean consists mainly of superficial descriptions of local phenomena, without reference to parallel or related manifestations within the Caribbean or abroad. Little is known, for example, of the travels of European composer-performers within the region during the past four centuries, or of their influence on local musical styles. For that matter, extremely little is known of the historical development of the region's musical styles themselves, which extend beyond the shores of specific countries to form a common patrimony of Caribbean social and concert music. Important contributions have been made toward an understanding of the African contribution to the music of a number of countries, but until now few attempts have been made to study the strikingly uniform patterns which this element has contributed to the music of the region as a whole. There has been no attempt to examine the music which lies in church archives in the Caribbean nor, indeed, to estimate the extent of such holdings. In fact, the exploration of many aspects of the Caribbean's musical life has not begun. For this reason, it is impossible to speak of "the music of the Caribbean", either historically or with reference to the present; as regards concert life, biography, musical composition, social music, religious music, or musical ethnology.

One of the principal reasons for the lack of serious studies in the field of Caribbean music is that the location of musical source materials there has been an almost completely fortuitous matter. Most writers living within the region have depended upon the sources which lie immediately at hand, and in most cases have had little knowledge of what exists nearby. At the same time, scholars abroad are often unaware of, or have no means of locating, the Caribbean materials which could be of importance to their own work.

Until now, no attempt has ever been made to estimate the extent of the source materials

for musical research which may be found in the region as a whole. The Music Department of the University of Puerto Rico, in collaboration with the same university's Institute of Caribbean Studies, is presently conducting a census of Caribbean materials which could be of interest to musicologists. This office is in correspondence with such entities as government archives, ministries of fine arts, museums, and libraries; religious bodies; local concert societies; and individual scholars, composers, and collectors throughout the region. Through correspondence and personal visits we are securing detailed information on the existence and accessibility of such materials as files of local periodicals; government edicts and correspondence concerning musical matters; works of local description and reminiscence, particularly of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; music manuscript collections; depositories of printed music; folk instrument collections; and collections of recorded folk music. It is expected that by December 1972, the results of this census may be ready for publication in the form of a directory, with brief descriptions of holdings which might be of interest to musicologists.

Helmut Thürmer

ZUM DEKLAMATIONSPROBLEM IN DEN LIEDERN BEETHOVENS

Auf die Bedeutung der Deklamation in den Liedern Beethovens wird zwar von verschiedenen Autoren hingewiesen, doch eine Lösung der damit verbundenen Probleme wird nur beiläufig angestrebt. Ernst Bücken beschäftigt sich mit dem „Wort-Ton-Problem bei Beethoven“¹, Arnold Schering weist in seiner Studie „Zur Psychologie des Beethovenschen Schaffens“ auf deklamationsmelodische Vorgänge hin². Der gleiche Verfasser untersucht in seinem Aufsatz „Metrische Studien zu Beethovens Liedern“ die Abhängigkeit der Form von der Deklamation³. Allerdings vermissen wir in dem Buch von Hans Boettcher „Beethoven als Liederkomponist“ ein tieferes Eindringen in das vielschichtige Problem der Deklamation⁴. Immer wieder findet man den Ausspruch des Komponisten zitiert: „Ich schreibe nur nicht gern Lieder“⁵.

Das Problem, um das sich Beethoven müht, ist schon im sprachlichen Kunstwerk vorhanden. Metrum und Situationsakzent fallen nicht immer zusammen, und bei der Einbeziehung des Textes in einen taktmäßig gebundenen Satz treten die Schwierigkeiten erst recht hervor. Wenn der Komponist durch rhythmische oder melodische Mittel einen Ausgleich sucht, so wird er beim Strophenlied nur in der einen oder anderen Strophe eine befriedigende Lösung finden. Die Periodizität erweist sich unter Umständen als Widersacher der Deklamation.

Hier möchte ich die vier Fassungen des Gedichtes „Mignon“ von Goethe heranziehen, die Beethoven in den Jahren 1807-08 komponierte und über die Paul Mies eine Studie verfaßt hat, in der ein Wort des Komponisten zitiert wird, der diese Lieder als Versuche charakterisiert⁶. Mies meint, Beethoven sei mit dem Ausspruch im Unrecht. Dem kann ich mich allerdings nicht anschließen. Der Komponist hat hier sehr bewußt seiner Überzeugung Ausdruck gegeben. Die Reflexion über das deklamatorische Moment ist die eigentliche Ursache dieser Fassungen. Aus der Kompositionspraxis ergibt sich dann das Experimentieren mit verschiedenen Taktarten sozusagen zwangsläufig.

In der Studie von Paul Mies fehlt zum besseren Verständnis in der Melodienpartitur der zugehörige Text. Auch scheint mir die Auffassung, daß das II. und IV. Lied die