

*I think of this as a book about music*, but it is as much a book about the journeys I took to find the music. I realized more than half a century ago that I couldn't write about music in northeast Brazil or on an island in the Bahamas, or in Trinidad, Jamaica, New Orleans, Harlem, or the Georgia Sea Islands unless I'd made the journey there. I couldn't write about a place if I didn't know what the sun felt like on the streets, how the food tasted, what the earth smelled like, how couples moved when they danced. I took along the usual traveler's guides, dictionaries, and phrase books, and since each journey was in search of music, I also had any notes I'd found to recordings, along with any books or articles or pamphlets that had something to do with the music I hoped to find. I've cited in the bibliography the materials I took with me or consulted, including books that I found in later years that helped me understand what I had heard.

A helpful companion for many of the things I was looking for was John Storm Roberts's *Black Music of Two Worlds*, and I would have missed many things in the Carnival season in Trinidad without Dr. Hollis Liverpool's rich history of calypso, *Rituals of Power and Rebellion*. I often encountered newer writing that appeared after I had returned from my journeys, and there was useful information I wish I'd had at the time. An example of this is Michael Tisserand's fine *The Kingdom of Zydeco*. My journeys in western Louisiana went on for more than ten years beginning in the 1970s, but Tisserand's book wasn't published until 1998.

I also later drew on the notes I'd made on many of the trips when I was either recording the artists I was meeting or talking with record company owners and studio engineers who were involved with the music I was interested in. Anyone who has read my earlier books or notes to the recordings will recognize the source of some of the incidents I included here. Of all the writing I found, two very different sources were most helpful. One was the letters written in 1838 from a Georgia Sea Islands plantation by the English actress

Fanny Kemble, published under the title *Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation* in 1863. Her insights into the psychological damage that the conditions of their bondage had inflicted on the slaves around her made me conscious of much that I was seeing and hearing. The other useful source was the three volumes of his collected interviews with living calypso artists that were transcribed, edited, and published by Rudolph Ottley in Trinidad in the 1990s. Ottley's love for his subject and his objectivity in his writing about the artists remained the standard I tried to maintain for myself.

I can only extend my thanks to everyone who has made some of the same journeys and who left a chronicle of their experiences for readers like me. I also hope that they enjoyed the music as much as I did.

SAMUEL CHARTERS

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