

Librería
Bonilla y Asociados
desde 1950



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Although millions of slaves were forcibly transported from Africa to Brazil, the languages the slaves brought with them remain little known. Most studies have focused on African contributions to Brazilian Portuguese rather than on the African languages themselves. This book is unusual in focusing on an African-descended language. The author describes and analyzes the Afro- Brazilian speech community of Calunga, in Minas Gerais. Linguistically descended from West African Bantu, Calunga is an endangered Afro-Brazilian language spoken by a few hundred older Afro-Brazilian men, who use it only for specific, secret communications. Unlike most creole languages, which are based largely on the vocabulary of the colonial language, Calunga has a large proportion of African vocabulary items embedded in an essentially Portuguese grammar. A hybrid language, its formation can be seen as a form of cultural resistance.

Steven Byrd's study provides a comprehensive linguistic description of Calunga based on two years of interviews with speakers of the language. He examines its history and historical context as well as its linguistic context, its sociolinguistic profile, and its lexical and grammatical outlines.