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# Musicking across Hemispheres: A Transatlantic Approach to Western Music History and Curricular Reform at a Hispanic Serving Institution

ANDRÉS R. AMADO

Recent calls for music curriculum reform increase as scholars in the fields of music education, music theory, musicology, and ethnomusicology continue to denounce the inadequacies of current curricular frameworks and seek solutions to address them.<sup>1</sup> These calls advocate for programs of study that better attend to the concerns of professional musicians, engage the musical traditions of local communities, increase global awareness, and advance social justice. In this context, traditional music history courses that survey composers and repertoires from different periods in Western European music seem especially problematic for their epistemological shortcomings and their limited application for students wishing to pursue careers in diverse musical traditions, scenes, and industries that do not necessarily engage with the European art music canon. As the subdisciplines of historical ethnomusicology (within the field of ethnomusicology) and global music history studies (within historical musicology) continue to grow, they seem well poised to contribute to reforming and reframing music history courses at institutions of higher education.

1. Patricia Shehan Campbell, David Myers, and Ed Sarath, “Transforming Music from Its Foundations: A Manifesto for Progressive Change in the Undergraduate Preparation of Music Majors. Report of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Music Major” (The College Music Society, Santa Fe, 2016), <https://www.music.org/pdf/pubs/tfumm/TFUMM.pdf>; Timothy J Cooley, “Sustainable Curricula (Roundtable)” (Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, 2018), [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ethnomusicology.org/resource/resmgr/2018\\_annual\\_meeting/sem\\_program\\_finalfinal\\_11..pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ethnomusicology.org/resource/resmgr/2018_annual_meeting/sem_program_finalfinal_11..pdf); Philip Ewell, “Music Theory’s White Racial Frame” (Society for Music Theory 42nd Annual Meeting, Columbus, 2019), <https://societymusictheory.org/sites/default/files/events/programs/2019-program.pdf>; Alejandro L. Madrid, “American Music in Times of Postnationality,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (2011): 699–703; Sara Haefeli, editor, “Special Issue: Decolonization,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy*, 10, no. 1 (2020). Robin D. Moore, *College Music Curricula for a New Century* (Oxford University Press, 2017).

Although not primarily known as music historians, many ethnomusicologists study musical traditions from around the world from a historical perspective. As David Hebert and Jonathan McCollum note, despite the reputable ethnographic approach that often characterizes ethnomusicology, “contemporary music cannot be fully understood in the absence of a rich awareness of its historical context and the outstanding success of ethnographic approaches does not offer a compelling case for the neglect of history.”<sup>2</sup> Concomitantly, many musicologists surpass the predominant Eurocentric focus of historical musicology and participate in “global music history” or “global musicology,” which Daniel Chua characterizes as an all-inclusive, methodologically indiscriminate, and collaborative endeavor.<sup>3</sup>

From these and other vantage points, the chorus for curricular reform continues to grow as innovative changes develop at institutions all over the world. In the United States, Texas State University has included a mariachi minor in a program focused mostly on Latin American music, and The University of Texas at Austin and Harvard University have rethought their respective undergraduate music history sequences in significant ways.<sup>4</sup> Teaching materials addressing music histories in diverse settings have also emerged, such as the volume *Listening Across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom* edited by James Davis and Christopher Lynch, which gathers experiences and resources from instructors in different parts of the world and includes perspectives on internationalism, transnationalism, and global citizenship.<sup>5</sup>

Professional societies regularly contribute to these developments by programming panels in which instructors and scholars share their experiences, ideas, and concerns. To name but three examples, in 2015 the American Musicological Society Ibero-American Music Study Group hosted a panel that later resulted in the roundtable “Ibero-American Music and the Music

2. Jonathan McCollum, and David Hebert, eds., *Theory and Method in Historical Ethnomusicology* (Guilford, CT: Lexington Books, 2014), 17.

3. Daniel K. L. Chua, “Global Musicology,” *New Sound: International Journal of Music* 50, no. 2 (2017): 13.

4. Ludim Rebeca Pedroza, “Latin Music Studies at Texas State University: The Undergraduate Minor in Mariachi and Its Implications for Expansive Curricula in Mainstream Institutions of the United States,” in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, ed. Robin D. Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 135–54; William Robin, “What Controversial Changes at Harvard Mean for Music in the University,” *National Sawdust Log* (blog), April 25, 2017, <https://www.nationalsawdust.org/thelog/2017-04-25-what-controversial-changes-at-harvard-means-for-music-in-the-university>; Sonia Tamar Seeman, “Embodied Pedagogy: Techniques for Exploring Why and How Music Matters,” in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, ed. Robin D. Moore (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 191–203. All links in this article were last accessed by the date of this article’s publication unless otherwise specified.

5. James A. Davis and Christopher Lynch, *Listening across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom*, *Modern Musicology and the College Classroom* (New York: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group, 2022).

History Curriculum,” which Susan Thomas coordinated and then published in this journal.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, the pre-conference symposium of the Society for Ethnomusicology in 2018 featured a panel in which instructors at U.S. institutions near the border with Mexico discussed their experiences with decolonial pedagogies.<sup>7</sup> More recently, the American Musicological Society programmed a panel and workshop entitled “How to Integrate Global Music History in Our Teaching” that included discussions with Gavin Lee, Amanda Hsieh, Andrew Dell’Antonio, Luisa Nardini, Kunio Hara, Gabriel Solis, Chris Stover, Jon Silpayamanant, and myself.<sup>8</sup>

As conversations in the aforementioned AMS workshop illustrated, despite the increased desire to incorporate diverse narratives and repertoires in music history courses, instructors continue to face obstacles. The list of theoretical and practical challenges raised there surpasses what I can address in this article, so I focus on two points. First, as ethnomusicologists who teach “world music” courses may attest, the task of designing a truly global survey of music history is not only daunting, it is also impractical. Instructors, especially those with little discretion over their course assignments, course design, and course content, must then carefully consider to what extent their music history courses can adapt. Can they include international perspectives to adequately respond to calls for reform and inclusivity, while also fulfilling the expectations of the curricula they have inherited?<sup>9</sup> Second, even while instructors benefit from the growing scholarship and new instructional materials on diverse musical traditions, we could also benefit from specific models and examples on how to approach our teaching differently. In this article, I address these points by

6. Susan Thomas, “Ibero-American Music and the Music History Curriculum: Reform, Revolution and the Pragmatics of Change,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 94–129. Note that while the citation refers to Thomas’ introductory essay, the roundtable includes essays by Drew Edward Davies, Ana Alonso Minutti, Jacqueline Avila, and Alejandro Madrid. Although his remarks do not appear in this publication, Walter Clark also participated in the AMS panel.

7. Andrés R. Amado, León García Corona, Lauryn Salazar, and Amanda Soto, “Decolonizing Pedagogies in Ethnomusicology: Challenges from the Borderlands” (Society for Ethnomusicology Pre-Conference Symposium, Albuquerque, 2018). [https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ethnomusicology.org/resource/resmgr/sem\\_2018\\_program\\_book\\_final.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.ethnomusicology.org/resource/resmgr/sem_2018_program_book_final.pdf).

8. Gavin Lee, et al., “How to Integrate Global Music History in Our Teaching” (American Musicological Society, Society for Ethnomusicology, Society for Music Theory Joint Meeting, New Orleans, November 12, 2022), [https://www.conftool.pro/nola2022-ams-sem-smt/index.php?page=browseSessions&form\\_session=577](https://www.conftool.pro/nola2022-ams-sem-smt/index.php?page=browseSessions&form_session=577).

9. Most institutions limit music history instruction between 6 and 12 credit-hours in 120-hour degree plans, so adding new courses on global music history to already saturated degree plans is seldom an option. Matthew Baumer, “A Snapshot of Music History Teaching to Undergraduate Music Majors, 2011–2012: Curricula, Methods, Assessment, and Objectives,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 5, no. 2 (March 18, 2015): 31.

sharing my experience teaching at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, a large Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) in the United States.

To the question of how much global musicology or historical ethnomusicology should be included in standard music history courses, I answer that engaging the cultures of the communities the institution serves should take priority. Drawing from my own expertise as a Latin Americanist, I approach graduate and undergraduate music history courses at UTRGV from a transatlantic perspective. In this sense, I depart from the terminology of “global” music history,<sup>10</sup> to instead foreground narratives of transnational flows that more directly resonate with the cultural background of most UTRGV students. These flows often involve exchanges across the Atlantic between Europe and the Americas, between Africa and the Americas, and between Africa and Europe. This approach does not preclude the inclusion of other perspectives from around the world. Instead, following notions of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, it attempts to make relevant connections between the contents of traditional music history courses and student positionalities. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy builds upon the cultural heritage of students as legitimate and as a worthy content of study in the formal curriculum. It promotes the exploration of students’ own and each other’s cultural heritages. Focusing on an individual’s connection to shared practices and traditions within a community, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy focuses as much on the individual as on the communal aspects of identity.<sup>11</sup>

10. As the reader may have inferred by now, I share many of the goals and strategies of historical ethnomusicology and global musicology. However, I do not fully subscribe to some of the terminology used in global musicology due to the complicated and contradictory connotations the word “global” can suggest. For example, Christopher Lynch prefers the term “internationalization” due to the hegemonic connotations of “globalization.” For his part, Thomas Turino has challenged the totalizing and essentializing dimensions of the “global” construct. Similarly, many scholars in anthropology and cultural studies have debated at length the merits of the local/global dichotomy (and even the ensuing “glocal” designation that merges both) to extents I cannot revisit here at length. James A. Davis and Christopher Lynch, *Listening across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom*, Modern Musicology and the College Classroom (New York: Routledge, Taylor, & Francis Group, 2022), 3; Thomas Turino, “Are We Global Yet? Globalist Discourse, Cultural Formations and the Study of Zimbabwean Popular Music,” *British Journal of Ethnomusicology* 12, no. 2 (December 31, 2003): 51–79.

11. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy informs the content of the courses discussed here inasmuch as they seek a better integration of music relevant to the histories of Hispanic/Latinx populations in the Western Hemisphere. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy also includes other forms of student engagement I also attempt in my courses but do not directly address in this article. Sarah M. Ray, “Teaching Case—Applications of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in a Community College Classroom,” *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development* 31, no. 4 (2019): 65–66; Lisa Scherff and Karen Spector, eds., *Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: Clashes and Confrontations* (Lanham, MD: R&L Education, 2010), 12–13; Gloria Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children*, 2nd ed. (Somerset: Jossey-Bass,

To address the second concern regarding teaching practices and models, this article discusses two examples of a transatlantic approach to teaching Western music history. I draw the first one from Music History and Literature 2, an undergraduate course at UTRGV that surveys Western music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Using a *villancico de negros* from the cathedral of Santiago de Guatemala, I highlight historical and stylistic issues relating to late eighteenth-century music in the Spanish colonies, including notions of race and colonialism. This example illustrates how the study of colonial repertoires can contribute meaningful insights to the narratives already present in traditional surveys of Western music history, including the development of the galant style and the expansion and limitations of the Enlightenment. This example also challenges the nationalistic assumptions that often underpin music history surveys. In my second example, I describe an intersectional approach to the study of nineteenth-century music in a graduate survey of the Western music of that era. In the most recent iteration of the course, I attempted to teach various topics employing perspectives from gender studies.

I selected these two examples for several reasons. First, although I study musical traditions from these centuries in Latin America, they are not my primary area of research.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, many instructors find themselves in the position of teaching beyond their immediate areas of specialization, so I wish to show how we can expand the scope of our teaching in situations where we are expected to teach the canon.<sup>13</sup> Second, although some examples of music in the Americas now appear in mainstream music history textbooks, I do not think it a coincidence that they are mostly relegated to earlier and later periods of music history. Indeed, the European pieces and composers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries constitute the core of the Western music canon

2013); Ruth Gurgel, *Taught by the Students: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Deep Engagement in Music* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015).

12. I recently published an article on nineteenth-century sacred music in Guatemala, but most of my research is on music in the twentieth century. Andrés Amado Pineda, “Benedicto Sáenz ‘Libera Me’: Occidentalisms in Latin America Nineteenth-Century Sacred Music,” *Diagonal: An Ibero-American Music Review* 7, no. 2 (2022): 100–130, <https://doi.org/10.5070/D87259378>.

13. I recognize that specialists on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century musics have much more to contribute to these conversations as well, as they already approach their teaching with a deeper knowledge of the literature and ongoing research on these topics. Guido Olivieri, for example, teaches a graduate course at The University of Texas at Austin entitled “18th-Century Music: Global Perspectives” that includes discussions on Western music in Asia and Latin America, covering topics such as the music of Ignacio de Jerusalem in Mexico, the Irmandades negras in Brazil, and more (Guido Olivieri, personal communications). Drew Edward Davies has also meaningfully contributed to teaching eighteenth-century music and has shared helpful digital resources that non-specialists may use. Drew Edward Davies, “The Digital Humanities and Teaching Iberian and Latin American Music History,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 99–105.



and surveys courses at many institutions. This makes it all the more difficult and necessary to integrate other perspectives and repertoires into these eras of music history. Finally, I hope these examples also invite conversations on interdisciplinarity and intersectionality in music history curricula. Indeed, calls for curricular reform in music resonate with broader discussions of the crisis of the humanities at institutions of higher education. As universities increasingly focus on training a labor force, many humanistic and artistic disciplines find themselves in the defensive position of having to justify their practical utility in the face of draconian austerity measures and the “overproduction” of PhD graduates. Rather than seeking to address this crisis in silos, I concur with Robin Moore and Alejandro Madrid, who argue that finding points of intersection and collaboration with other disciplines may yield better results.<sup>14</sup> Before engaging with these examples, I share the institutional context that informs my present approach to music history pedagogy.

### Music History at UTRGV

Founded in 2013 through the merger of the University of Texas Pan American (UTPA) and the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB), The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) functions as a distributed institution with programs on various campuses with no “main” campus.<sup>15</sup> Federally recognized as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI),<sup>16</sup> the university far surpasses the minimum 25% of Hispanic enrollment required for this designation. In Fall 2021, over 90% of the nearly 32,000 students enrolled identified as Hispanic or Latinx, while white students comprised slightly over 3% of the student body.<sup>17</sup> Given its demographics and geographical location, UTRGV aspires to become a national leader in bilingual education and to produce research that highly engages the

14. Alejandro L. Madrid, “American Music in Times of Postnationality,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (2011): 699–703; Robin Moore et al., “Ethnomusicology and Higher Education: Challenges, Trends, and Lessons from the Humanities,” *Ethnomusicology* 65, no. 3 (January 1, 2021): 413–43.

15. UTRGV achieved the category of “High Research Activity” (R2) in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education in 2019. The University currently enrolls around 31,000 students in the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses, the Harlingen campus (School of Medicine), and other satellite campuses through the region. News and Internal Communications, “UTRGV Moves Up in Carnegie Classification,” The Newsroom, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, May 8, 2019, <https://www.utrgv.edu/newsroom/2019/05/08-utrgv-moves-up-in-carnegie-classification.htm>.

16. “20 U.S. Code § 1101a – Definitions; Eligibility,” Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School, accessed August 3, 2023, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1101a>.

17. The Office of Strategic Analysis and Institutional Reporting, “Fall 2021: Fast Facts” (The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, 2023), <https://www.utrgv.edu/sair/fact-book/2021-stats-at-a-glance.pdf>.

needs of the region.<sup>18</sup> The school of music currently enrolls 425 students on the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses, most of them undergraduates majoring in music education or performance.<sup>19</sup> As of the writing of this article, 17 graduate students pursue degrees in music performance, education, composition, conducting, and ethnomusicology. While some of them are full-time students, many teach full-time as instructors in public schools or privately. Like undergraduates, the majority are Hispanic/Latina/o/x, either from the Rio Grande Valley or from neighboring Mexico.<sup>20</sup>

Given the location of the university near the U.S.-Mexico border, its student demographics, and the university’s goals to become a leading HSI and “bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural institution,”<sup>21</sup> I approach music history instruction from a transatlantic perspective allowing students to explore developments in Europe and the Americas side by side along with their engagement with African traditions in all subjects of music history.

Despite being the only musicologist/ethnomusicologist at UTPA, I did not have sole discretion over the music history curriculum.<sup>22</sup> My department tasked me with co-designing a new undergraduate music history sequence with colleagues at UTB in anticipation of our merger. After much discussion and compromising among instructors of music history and culture on both campuses and with other units in the department, we envisioned the new sequence structured in four semesters: 1) a first-year level World Music Cultures course that would lay broad theoretical foundations of which Western music would be but one part, 2) Music History & Literature 1, a sophomore-level course covering developments in Western music from the Middle Ages through 1750s, and

18. “Strategic Plan: Mission, Vision, and Core Values,” 2022–2023 Strategic Plan, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, accessed July 16, 2022, <https://www.utrgv.edu/strategic-plan/mvv/index.htm>.

19. While these degree plans predominantly maintain the traditions of Western art music (opera, orchestra, band, choir, chamber ensembles), UTRGV boasts a renowned mariachi tradition. Mariachi Aztlán was founded in 1989 at the University of Texas Panamerican. Despite its numerous accolades, mariachi formally entered the music curriculum only recently, with the creation of a mariachi concentration in the music education degree and a mariachi performance certificate, both approved alongside new certificates in jazz and popular music in 2019.

20. Occasionally we have international students from other places including, Iran, China, The Philippines, and Scotland.

21. B3 Institute, “B3 Institute,” Division of Academic Affairs, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, accessed August 3, 2023, <https://www.utrgv.edu/b3-institute/>.

22. When I first joined the faculty of UTPA, I inherited a fairly standard undergraduate music history curriculum, structured in three courses: a first year or sophomore music literature course aimed at familiarizing students with all stylistic periods of Western music history (Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Modernist) and two upper division courses, one surveying music from the Middle Ages to 1750, and one from 1750 to the present. At the graduate level, I was expected to offer ethnomusicology courses as well as Western music history courses for students pursuing master’s degrees in music education, performance, and ethnomusicology.

3) two upper division courses, Music History & Literature 2 and 3, that focus on music from the mid eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century and from the late nineteenth century to the present, respectively. To avoid adding new required courses to degree plans already full to their limits, we placed the first two courses in the university's General Education Core curriculum.<sup>23</sup>

I admit that this structure may not sound progressive, de/anti-colonial, or global, and risks reinforcing the evolutionist and teleological narratives we seek to overcome. However, the chronological approach to Western repertoires offered us a few advantages. Among them, 1) it helped ease the curricular transition as institutions merged,<sup>24</sup> 2) it helped ensure we could offer enough courses on both campuses with instructors of different backgrounds and training in Western and non-Western music traditions, 3) it fit well with the repertoires studied in applied lessons, ensembles, and music theory, and 4) it offered a convenient framework for students to approach the often unfamiliar repertoires they encounter in lessons, ensembles, and music theory courses. For my part, I seek to use this sequence to address the colonialism and Eurocentrism inherent in it, most notably, by highlighting transnational flows in Western music history, especially focusing on exchanges between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. In graduate-level courses, I have more flexibility over course contents but must still respond to the departmental need of offering courses that fulfill degree requirements for diverse concentrations including ethnomusicology, performance, conducting, composition, and music education. Furthermore, I seek opportunities to connect graduate courses with interdisciplinary programs.

### **An Example of a Transatlantic Approach in an Undergraduate Music History Course**

Among the theoretical and practical considerations for developing a transatlantic approach to teaching music history, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy inspired me to prioritize the inclusion of the cultural heritage of the student population at UTRGV. As mentioned above, most come from Hispanic/Latinx backgrounds and are natives to the borderlands or Mexico. Even though efforts to “decolonize” music history courses in the United States and Canada tend to

23. World Music Cultures meets the Texas General Education Core requirements for “language, philosophy, and culture,” and Music History 1 meets requirements for “creative arts.”

24. At one point we had students on four different curricula simultaneously: the different degree plans of each legacy institution (students close to graduation who started on such degree plans), the curriculum transitioning from the old legacy curricula into the new university curriculum (students half-way through their degree plans), and the curriculum of the new university for entering students. Our transitional curricula needed to ensure everything we covered in music history would roughly correspond with what students were doing in each of these degree plans.

highlight musical practices among Indigenous and African American populations, the music of Hispanics/Latinx, now the largest ethnic minority in the United States, barely appears in the curriculum.<sup>25</sup> Note, however, that framing curriculum from a nationalist perspective (i.e. music relevant to “minorities” in nation-states) masks and distorts the historical influences of diverse populations throughout the hemisphere, the transnational trajectories of musical practices, and cross-cultural connections among people across shifting borders.

Let us consider for a moment the theoretical exercise I propose to World Music Cultures students when we begin discussions on Latin American music. Asked to delimit “Latin America” in their own terms, students define the region in various ways including 1) a region sharing similar colonial histories, and 2) a region sharing a common language, or related languages. As they contemplate these definitions, I ask them whether they would be willing to consider including the United States in Latin America. After sharing puzzled looks for a moment, students begin to reason that given that Spain and France colonized many places now part of the United States, and thus the first definition could apply. With respect to the linguistic definition, the United States currently has almost as large a Spanish-speaking population as Spain, and exceeds Spanish-speaking populations in many Latin American countries.<sup>26</sup>

These definitions overlook significant cultural and historical differences between the United States and Latin America and obfuscate power dynamics in the hemisphere, but they invite a critical view on nationalist narratives about music. As I recently discussed elsewhere,<sup>27</sup> music textbooks in the United States curiously do not engage with the rich traditions in the Spanish colonies during the eighteenth century that include elaborate polyphonic masses, symphonies, and villancicos, all of which point to complex social networks in a world of colonial imperialism, religious hegemony, expanding capitalism, and shifting

25. Alejandro L. Madrid, “American Music in Times of Postnationality,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (2011): 699–703; Walker, “Towards a Decolonized Music History Curriculum,” 4–5.

26. Journalistic sources have reported that the U.S. surpasses Spain's Spanish-Speaking population, citing a study from Instituto Cervantes from 2015. The validity of this assertion depends on what criteria defines Spanish speakers. Conservatively, I refer to the 2021 report by the Instituto Cervantes, which designates all people who speak Spanish at home either as their native language or bilingually as “Grupo Dominio Nativo” (GDN). The GDN does not include people who speak Spanish as a second language outside the home. By this definition, Instituto Cervantes reports the GDN in Spain comprised of 43,636,756 people and in the USA of 41,757,391 people. Instituto Cervantes, “El Español: Una Lengua Viva. Informe 2021” (Madrid: Instituto Cervantes, 2021), 9–12.

27. Andrés R. Amado, “Más Allá Del Nacionalismo: Fronteras Disciplinarias de Los Estudios Musicales Centroamericanos,” *TRANS: Revista Transcultural de Música/Transcultural Music Review* 24 (2020): 7–8.

notions of race, modernity, and Enlightenment.<sup>28</sup> By contrast, such texts make it a point to highlight eighteenth-century protestant hymnody in New England, an arguably simpler and far more geographically contained musical phenomenon that nevertheless implicitly serves as a starting point for nationalist narratives of “American” (meaning “Anglo-American”) music.<sup>29</sup> Including Hispanic eighteenth-century music in the curriculum shows Hispanic populations in that period not merely as a national minority in need of greater representation and inclusion, but as a transnational majority population, part of a global colonial empire, and enmeshed in complex relationships with other peoples and cultures.

In Music History & Literature 2, I make this point by discussing the eighteenth-century Christmas villancico “Negros de Guaranganá” (1788) by Rafael Antonio Castellanos (1725–1791), chapel master of the cathedral of Santiago de Guatemala. I begin the class session by discussing eighteenth-century maps depicting the Americas, calling students’ attention to drawings they often include, which exoticize the continent. Following a brief class discussion of exoticism (a notion introduced earlier in the semester), I share a brief overview of the colonial history of New Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We then explore the social hierarchies imposed by the colonial caste system by examining together the famous caste paintings (*pinturas de castas*) of the eighteenth century. In said caste system, Europeans born in Europe (mostly from the Iberian Peninsula, or *peninsulares*) occupied the top echelon of the hierarchy. Children of Europeans born in the New World (*criollos*), enjoyed many privileges but not as many as *peninsulares*. Indigenous peoples and Africans occupied the lower castes. Different levels of racial mixture (*mestizaje*) between European-descendants, indigenous people, and afro-descendants, and all possible mixtures between their already-mixed descendants, yielded a plethora of other castes occupying intermediary levels in the hierarchy—theoretically, at least. In practice, the system was hardly followed except to reinforce the hegemony of the top social echelons.<sup>30</sup> Ironically perhaps, the taxonomical endeavor

28. As a case study, see for example Jesús A. Ramos-Kittrell, *Playing in the Cathedral: Music, Race, and Status in New Spain, Currents in Latin American and Iberian Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

29. In a recent article, I discussed textbooks by Grout/Burkholder, Wright and Simms, and Bonds and their coverage of music in the Western Hemisphere. Citing from the 2019 edition of the Burkholder textbook as a representative example, I argue that nationalism remains a bias in these texts and historical narratives more generally. This bias explains why music in eighteenth-century New England (which would function as a type of proto-nationalist music for the United States), is favored over the more widely spread musical practices of New Spain. Amado, “Más Allá del Nacionalismo,” 7–9.

30. There were practical reasons for this. Upper class *peninsulares* and *criollos* could better keep genealogical records to show their place in colonial society, whereas the accuracy of genealogical records for lower castes or intermediary castes varied widely.

of the *pinturas de casta* very much aligns with the rationalistic ethos of the Enlightenment, in this case used to “rationally” rank colonial racial constructs. With the backdrop of colonialism, racialization, and Enlightenment, I then ask students to consider how music fits into these colonial narratives, by studying Castellanos’ villancico.

In “Negros de Guaranganá,” Black people celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with songs. As other pieces in the *villancicos de negros* subgenre, it problematically represents people of African descent. The lyrics caricature their appearance with “long fingernails” (“*largas uñas*”) characterize their language as “half a tongue” (“*con su media lengua*”), and their speech as “grumbling” (“*refunfuñar*”). When portraying the words of Black people, lyrics imitate Afro-Caribbean pronunciation of Spanish by, among other things, omitting consonants at the end of words and “s” sounds in general, and replacing “d” with soft “r.” The villancico also depicts Black people musically. Rhythmically, it follows the conventions of the genre, transcribable as compound duple meter with occasional 3:4 hemiolas. Known as *sesquialtera*, this rhythm likely derived from the Arabic saraband that found its way to Spain through North Africa; by extension, it may obliquely stand in for African rhythms at large.<sup>31</sup> Castellanos antiphonally sets a dialogue section between Tío Antoño (Uncle Antonio) and Tata Gaspá (Daddy Gaspar), two Black characters that lead the adoration of baby Jesus in this song. The antiphonal style appears to evoke the call-and-response African idiom as the villancico progresses. In the following section representing the song of Black people from Guaranganá, the lines sung by the narrator (imitating Black speech) alternate with instrumental phrases played by pizzicato strings.<sup>32</sup> Then, in later iterations of this section, the call/response becomes more explicit with a chorus joining the pizzicato strings to echo, word for word, the narrator’s song.<sup>33</sup> Stylistically, the villancico features galant elements. The predominantly homophonic texture supports melodies of

31. David Hiley, E. Thomas Stanford, and Paul R. Laird, “Sesquialtera,” in *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, <https://doi.org/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.40114>.

32. Dieter Lehnhoff interprets the annotation “punteado” that denotes the desired percussive articulation of the pizzicato as a reference to the characteristic sound of the marimba, an African-derived instrument widely used in Guatemala since colonial times. Dieter Lehnhoff, *Rafael Antonio Castellanos: vida y obra de un músico guatemalteco* (Universidad Rafael Landívar, Instituto de Musicología, 1994), 110–15. The performance in the recent Naxos recording replaces the first response by the strings with harpsichord, so the articulation is less obvious. Ryland Angel, Richard Savino et al., *Archivo de Guatemala: Music from the Guatemala City Cathedral Archive (El Mundo, Savino)*, album (Germany: Naxos, 2021). Before the publication of the Naxos recording, I used Lehnhoff’s version in the CD *Capilla Musical: Musica Histórica de Guatemala* vol. 3, (Guatemala: Fundación para la Cultura y el Desarrollo, 1992).

33. The recent Naxos recording of the piece further accents the African character of the music by slightly bending melodic notes (portamento) to imitate vernacular styles of singing. This arrangement also features added percussion such as shakers and woodblock to further Africanize the music. Savino, et al., *Music from the Guatemala City Cathedral Archive*.



regular length, delineated by clear cadences and unfolding over a relatively slow harmonic rhythm.

After analyzing the lyrical and musical features of the villancico, as well as its style in relation to the time period, I ask students whether they would program and perform this piece for a live audience. Most students admit to enjoying Castellanos' charming musical setting, but express conflicting feelings. Excited to discover a historic repertoire, some argue for its performance based on its potential historical value. Others admit (with ambivalence) to feeling intrigued for having experienced music from this time period that includes representations of Blackness, because even as demeaning as these representations appear, most music-historical narratives of this period overlook Black cultures completely. This view echoes the opening lines of the Castellanos's villancico: "Black people from Guaranganá / known by so few [people]."<sup>34</sup> Other students argue that listening to this music only feels appropriate in the context of academic discussions, but they themselves would never choose to perform it for general audiences to avoid perpetuating racist and offensive stereotypes. Finally, some students seek a compromise, agreeing with the importance of performing this repertoire to preserve an important aspect of music history, but would only do so providing abundant context and making significant disclaimers to audiences.<sup>35</sup>

Our class discussions on this villancico raise important points. First, study of this villancico invites more student engagement and participation than most topics in Music History & Literature 2, suggesting that it is more relevant to them. Second, one cannot escape issues of colonization and the racial dynamics of the empire-building projects from that period when studying music in the Spanish colonies. Once addressed in the context of the Spanish repertoire, colonialism remains in sight as an important backdrop for discussing other music, even the Western canon. The study of this villancico thus prepares students for discussions of other forms of musical (mis)representations such as exoticism in opera and blackface minstrelsy, which we also address in Music History and Literature 2.

34. In Music History & Literature 2 we also study music by Joseph Boulogne Chevalier de Saint George, so students do encounter other examples of Black representation in music history. However, while Boulogne himself is a Black composer of mixed-race, he does not attempt to represent Black music in his works.

35. Musicologist Geoffrey Baker and conductor Tyron Clinton Jr. have also offered perspectives on the performance of problematic repertoires from the colonial New World. Geoffrey Baker, "Latin American Baroque: Performance as a Post-Colonial Act?," *Early Music* 36, no. 3 (August 1, 2008): 441–48, <https://doi.org/10.1093/em/can082>; Tyrone A. Clinton Jr., "Historically Informed Performance of the Baroque Villancico de Negro Subgenre in a Contemporary Setting" (DMA dissertation, Evanston, IL, Northwestern University, 2019).

Third, in this lesson students relate both the galant style of the villancico and the taxonomical goals of the *pinturas de casta* to the rationality of the Enlightenment; thus, they can begin to explore how the Enlightenment also intersects with colonization and racialization projects.<sup>36</sup> In this sense, I incorporate this colonial villancico not as a token to American musical production, or an interesting piece of trivia one may cover in a music history class if one has the time, but as an important contribution to the musical study of the Enlightenment.

Fourth, while standard curricular materials may neglect this music, it is not at all subaltern or the music of "minorities," rather it reveals hegemonic eighteenth-century European views on race. Thus, musical examples from the Spanish colonies invite a deconstruction of the racial binary implied in nationalist narratives (e.g., "white" music vs. music by "people of color"). Indeed, while "Hispanics" may constitute a "minority of color" in some racial constructs in the present-day United States,<sup>37</sup> Spanish people and their descendants occupied different places and racial designations according to the colonial hierarchies of the eighteenth century. This example thus underscores the fluidity and social contingencies of racial constructs.

Lastly, by asking students to contemplate the suitability of this repertoire for performance, they begin to think intersectionally about how the histories of Spanish-speaking peoples may relate to their own experiences and the experiences of their audiences today. The exercise empowers them; it challenges them to see themselves as college-educated artists and educators who, given their specialized knowledge, have the agency and responsibility to influence artistic and curricular decisions on problematic repertoires that advance Eurocentric worldviews. Thus, the study of this repertoire offers students an opportunity to build citizenship skills and to consider ethical issues they may encounter as they perform music from past eras.

36. See, for example, Roger Mathew Grant, "Colonial Galant: Three Analytical Perspectives from the Chiquitano Missions," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 75, no. 1 (April 1, 2022): 129–62, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jams.2022.75.1.129>.

37. Depending on how nuanced the data collection is, sometimes Latinx or Hispanics are designated as a minority that includes people of different racial backgrounds, "white Hispanics," and "black Hispanics" being the more common designations. For instance, the U.S. 2020 census excludes "Hispanic" from racial categories. U.S. Census Bureau: Population Estimates Program, "Race," Quick Facts, U.S. Census Bureau, accessed August 3, 2023, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/note/US/RHI625221#:~:text=OMB%20requires%20that%20race%20data,report%20more%20than%20one%20race>.

### Musicking and Transatlantic Narratives in a Graduate Music History Course

In Fall 2021, the director of the Gender and Women's Studies program asked if I was planning to teach a course that she could include in the list of GWS graduate course offerings the following semester. Her inquiry prompted me to reconceive the course on nineteenth-century music history I was scheduled to teach. I reasoned that if women comprised half of the people in the nineteenth century, why shouldn't content on women and gender amount to half of course materials?<sup>38</sup>

Skeptics might wonder whether including women so prominently might misrepresent music history. The late Richard Taruskin articulated the point thus:

I have been critical nevertheless of some of the mainstreaming efforts that have been mounted on behalf of women composers, since representing them disproportionately can distort the historical picture in a fashion that actually weakens the main political point of feminist scholarship: namely, that women have been not merely excluded from the historical account but denied the access and opportunities that would have enabled them to earn their place within it.<sup>39</sup>

I do not find this concern compelling for three reasons. First, we have not begun to approach the point where women are overrepresented in music historiography or music history curricula; no such distortion can occur at present. Second, more scholarship on any given topic does not necessarily lead to its overrepresentation. Often times the scholarly goal is to attain, not more, but *better* representation. Scholars, teachers, and students can more accurately historicize and contextualize composers and their influence by considering more diverse contexts, analyses, interpretations, and sources. Third, concerns of overrepresentation of women composers also assume that music history primarily revolves around composers and their works, which excludes women's musical contributions as performers, patrons, and listeners. Thus, despite Taruskin's well-intentioned desire to highlight historical silences in composition, his decision to ultimately approach music history as the study of musical *monuments*—the “textual remains” of history—in his own *Oxford History of Western Music* perpetuates exclusion.<sup>40</sup>

38. The UTRGV Center for Gender and Women's Studies requires that a course include around 50% content on gender and women's studies to meet requirements for their programs.

39. Richard Taruskin, “Non-Nationalists and Other Nationalists,” *Nineteenth Century Music* 35, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 133.

40. Taruskin understood the issue and expressed sympathy for approaches to music history that decenter monuments (musical texts), but chose to maintain the traditional focus:

To decenter composers and their works, music history instructors have proposed a range of alternatives that include focusing on performance, centering contexts, addressing problems and answering questions, and foregrounding themes (the environment, gender/sexuality, etc.), among others.<sup>41</sup> And yet the primacy of the musical text remains central to many textbooks and curricula, which seem to work under a tacit tripartite hierarchical division of music. In this paradigm, composition occupies the top echelon in the hierarchy as “music.” Performance then follows below not as “music” but as the “interpretation” of music. Lastly, reception occupies the bottom echelon as perhaps listening as an act of consumption,<sup>42</sup> or listening as a form of Kantian disinterested contemplation.<sup>43</sup> At any rate, as the most undertheorized part of this model, given its low hierarchical position, listening is defined by its passivity.<sup>44</sup>

“another way of restoring women to music history is to change the nature of the story, giving less emphasis to composition and more to performance, patronage, and other areas in which the contributions of women have been more commensurate with those of men (...). And yet to the extent that it remains the aim and obligation of a text like this not only to narrate the story of past musical activities and deeds but also to provide an introduction to the material products—the textual remains—of those activities, the literate repertory must, despite all caveats, retain its privilege and remain the primary focus of the story.” Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: The Oxford History of Western Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82.

41. Daniel Barolsky et al., “Roundtable: Performance as a Master Narrative in Music History,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 3, no. 1 (2012): 77–102; Sara Haefeli, *Teaching Music History with Cases: A Teacher's Guide* (Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2022); Natalie R. Sarrazin, *Problem-Based Learning in the College Music Classroom* (Boca Raton, FL: Routledge, 2018); American Musicological Society, “Teaching Music History Conference 2022,” *Teaching Music History* (blog), January 19, 2023, <https://www.teachingmusichistory.com/events/tmhc2022/schedule/>.

42. Beyond considering listening as consumption in the capitalist sense, Nicholas Cook alerts listeners of Western classical music to the fact that concert-hall listening closely resembles consuming food at a restaurant, where the music created by the composer/chef is served by a performer, not coincidentally dressed as a member of the waiting staff at formal restaurants. Nicholas Cook, *Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 25–26.

43. Gary Tomlinson views opera as voicing expressions of subjectivity theorized by various philosophers such as Kant in the context of their respective sociohistorical moments. Gary Tomlinson, *Metaphysical Song: An Essay on Opera* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

44. While most musicologists would agree that this tripartite model is inadequate, I've experienced it in teaching contexts as recently as last year, when I was invited to speak in a graduate seminar on music and queerness. In that context someone asked me why so much literature on music and queerness seems to focus on reception rather than composition. The question insinuated a lacuna and undervalued the creative listening that often characterizes the experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals, especially while “in the closet.” Just as Small transforms the word music into a verb, “musicking,” Queer theorists describe creative acts of appropriation and repurposing as “queering.”

Instead of thinking in those terms, I follow Christopher Small's definition of music, or rather "musicking," as an action that may encompass any and every activity related to the musical experience: "There is no such thing as music. Music is not a thing at all but an activity, something that people do. The apparent thing 'music' is a figment, an abstraction of the action, whose reality vanishes as soon as we examine it at all closely."<sup>45</sup> In this view, a musical composition cannot exist apart from its performance and reception. The hierarchical relationship between composition, performance, and reception vanishes with the recognition that all aspects of the musical experience are creative actions. This perspective opens many possibilities for music history instruction. It allows us to approach issues of gender and sexuality in music history and helps us examine transnational flows of music within economic and political systems. Furthermore, it encourages us to analyze musical traditions that the "music as text" or "music as monument" paradigm excludes.

In concrete terms, aligning my graduate nineteenth-century music history class with the Gender and Women's Studies program at UTRGV through "musicking" meant exploring different ways in which women participated in musical activities. In addition to studying the life and works of female composers such as Clara Weick Schuman and Fanny Mendelssohn Hansel, we discussed depictions of women in parlor songs by Stephen Foster, the careers and influence of the performers Guiditta Pasta, Adelina Patti, and Anna Caroline de Belleville,<sup>46</sup> and piano playing by amateur women in bourgeois households.

Musicking also supports an exploration of the construction and contingencies of gender categories and norms in different times and places.<sup>47</sup> Beyond the inclusion of women's musical activities, it allows us to consider discursive, performative, and musical constructions of femininity, masculinity, and sexual orientations in nineteenth-century Europe and beyond, all in relation to musical practices. For instance, our exploration of the debates on Schubert's sexuality published in the 1990s raised many important questions regarding gender constructs in nineteenth-century Vienna where Schubert lived, in nineteenth-century Victorian England where his first English-language biographies were published, in the 1990s when the debates about his sexuality emerged,

45. Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1998), 2.

46. Peng Liu gave a guest lecture to my class on the subject of his forthcoming article on Belleville. Peng Liu, "Constructing a Versatile Virtuoso Persona: Anna Caroline de Belleville and Mediating the Competing Tastes of Critics and Audiences." *The Journal of Musicology*, forthcoming.

47. In *Music History and Literature 1*, I illustrate this point by discussing the portrait of Louis XIV by Hyacinthe Rigaud and contrasting current constructions of masculinity with those of the seventeenth century represented there. Andres R. Amado, "In Defense of Performativity: How 'Performativity' Helps Us Understand the World Around Us," *Conceptions Review* (blog), June 12, 2021, <https://conceptionsreview.com/in-defense-of-performativity/>.

and even today when we explore them with the benefit of hindsight and more recent scholarly developments.<sup>48</sup> Studying music via gender can also productively engage ostensibly disembodied subjects, such as absolute music, a genre that developed over the nineteenth century, and which, as Daniel Chua shows, also resulted from specific gender ideologies.<sup>49</sup>

Furthermore, since the concept of musicking decenters composition, it not only supports a richer discussion of gender and music; it also supports an argument for non-Western musics in global and transatlantic music histories. If the goal of my course were to present a canon of composers from the Americas equivalent to the European canon, the task would not only be daunting but most likely impossible; it assumes that people in both hemispheres musicked in the same ways and for the same reasons, producing similar musical corpuses. If people musicked differently in the Americas, however, the value of their musicking need not reside in its parity with European musicking, in which case different methods for analyzing music and assessing the historical value of musical practices would apply.

For example, while Latin American audiences wholeheartedly embraced Italian opera throughout the nineteenth century, Latin American composers rarely picked up the genre themselves. To Latin Americans, opera needed to be "authentically" European. As José Manuel Izquierdo König explains:

48. For example, Rita Steblin and Maynard Solomon discussed Schubert's eligibility to marry under the Viennese marriage laws to debate his motivations on the subject. This debate reveals many conceptions on gender roles for men and women in 19th-century Vienna. David Gramit discussed stereotypes of female and male genders in Victorian England and how they were applied to contrast Schubert's work from Beethoven's. Of course, Solomon's article which sparked the controversy referenced peacocks as a euphemism of homosexuality in the times of Benvenuto Cellini, which led other scholars to explore the cultural significance of peacocks and sexuality, not only for Schubert and Cellini, but also in Victorian England as well. Our class discussion also addressed why such a topic would surface in the 1990s, and what the discourse on gender and sexuality entailed at the time. Students drew direct connection between Schubert dying of syphilis, and the AIDS epidemic spreading in the 1990s, and the direct links between these diseases and sexuality. Rita Steblin, "The Peacock's Tale: Schubert's Sexuality Reconsidered," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 5–33; Maynard Solomon, "Schubert: Some Consequences of Nostalgia," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 34–46; David Gramit, "Constructing a Victorian Schubert: Music, Biography, and Cultural Values," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 65–78; Maynard Solomon, "Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini," *19th-Century Music* 12, no. 3 (1989): 193–206; Kristina Muxfeldt, "Political Crimes and Liberty, or Why Would Schubert Eat a Peacock?," *19th-Century Music* 17, no. 1 (1993): 47–64.

49. Chua demonstrates that notions of femininity and masculinity were closely related to concepts of genius and creativity. Daniel Chua, *Absolute Music and the Construction of Meaning*, vol. 4, *New Perspectives in Music History and Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).



Opera, inside opera houses [in the emerging Latin American republics], was an extension and a projection of 'Europe,' and thus it not only had to be felt as, but also be 'European.' Opera was accepted by many as a sign of Europeanness and its associated values: modernity, progress, cosmopolitanism, a certain sense of Occidentalism, and the commodification of a model of the imagined West.<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, without creating works in that genre, composers in the Americas engaged with opera in other ways. Most notably, Italian opera literally became sacred music as chapel masters increasingly programmed arias and opera choruses during church services, replacing secular lyrics with sacred contrafacta.<sup>51</sup> In other cases, local composers incorporated fashionable operatic styles in newly composed liturgical pieces.<sup>52</sup>

Early in our graduate course, Izquierdo's article on the Rossinian style featured in sacred works by the Chilean chapel master José Bernardo Alzedo (1788–1878) opened our exploration of these issues. Commenting on Alzedo's works, students were fascinated by this repertoire that they found significant and yet had never encountered in previous music history courses. They also found an appreciation for this music, not as mere imitation of European music, but as a local adaptation that manifested the values and culture of the individuals and communities that produced it. Studying this music enriched our study of Rossini as well. Students began to appreciate the Italian composer as a major influence throughout the Western Hemisphere, even though his transatlantic fame remains understated in undergraduate music history surveys.

Acknowledging how people from different cultural backgrounds engage with specific musical traditions may not only lead to a better appreciation of musicking in previous centuries, but also has practical ramifications for students today. Many graduate music students at UTRGV make a living as performers and teachers of the Western classical tradition and find themselves in difficult professional environments where financial resources shrink and audiences dwindle. Advocates for curricular reform have denounced how most curricula fail to address such commonplace circumstances.<sup>53</sup> In this nineteenth-century music course, one of our liveliest discussions concerned this issue. It followed our exploration of the rise of symphonic music in Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century and of the simultaneous struggles of advocates working

50. José Manuel Izquierdo König, "Rossinian Opera in Translation: José Bernardo Alzedo's Church Music in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Chile," *The Opera Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (December 15, 2019): 251–75. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oq/kbaa008>. Original emphasis.

51. Dieter Lehnhoff, "El 'Plan de reformas piasos' y el 'Apéndice histórico' (1843) de José Eulalio Samayoa: Primera Historia de la Música en Guatemala," *Cultura de Guatemala*, (September–December 1996): 55–89.

52. Amado, "Benedicto Sáenz 'Libera Me.'"

53. Moore, *College Music Curricula*, 3–6.

to make the genre take root in the United States. The sources we studied in our transatlantic exploration of the symphony reveal that, to a great extent, concerns for growing audiences and securing funds for European classical music have existed in this country for a very long time.<sup>54</sup> The current disconnect between "highbrow" music and most local audiences is therefore more than a current trend needing correction, but has deep cultural and historical roots that merit careful consideration.

Besides helping us consider the reception and production of Western music outside of Europe on deeper levels, the focus on musicking also allows for the inclusion of music otherwise cast aside as "unremarkable."<sup>55</sup> Significant nineteenth-century vernacular musicking practices in my classes included ghost dancing among Native Americans, various approaches to religious musicking among Protestants in the United States, and zarzuelas in Spain and Mexico. The transatlantic orientation of the course also highlighted the multidirectional circulation of musical trends and the transmission of musical ideas across genres and national borders. We investigated the reception of African American spirituals in Europe,<sup>56</sup> the transnational origins of the *danzón*,<sup>57</sup> and the rise of blackface minstrelsy as a phenomenon of international proportions through case studies in the United States and Latin America.<sup>58</sup>

As a crucial period in the construction of nation-states in Europe and the Americas, the course on nineteenth-century music also offered us opportunities to investigate musical nationalism as a transnational cosmopolitan phenomenon.<sup>59</sup> Besides approaching the topic through music in the Western classical tradition in both hemispheres—studying works by composers such

54. Our primary reference was Levine's overview of the development of symphonic music in the U.S.A. Lawrence W Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 104–146.

55. Bohlman examines nineteenth-century views that dismissed so-called "functional" music for serving specific social functions, as opposed to serving only an artistic goal. This article was a required reading in the 19th-century graduate course discussed here. Philip V. Bohlman, "On the Unremarkable in Music," *19th-Century Music* 16, no. 2 (1992): 203–16. <https://doi.org/10.2307/746266>.

56. Kira Thurman, "Singing the Civilizing Mission in the Land of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms: The Fisk Jubilee Singers in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Journal of World History* 27, no. 3 (2016): 443–71. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jwh.2016.0116>.

57. Alejandro L. Madrid and Robin D Moore, "Danzón as a Performance Complex," in *Danzón: Circum-Caribbean Dialogues in Music and Dance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 22–74.

58. D. Domingo Gómez, "Los Cantores Africanos. Llegada y recepción del blackface minstrelsy en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX en Chile (1860)," *Revista Musical Chilena* 75, no. 235 (June 2021): 152–76.

59. Thomas Turino, "Nationalism and Latin American Music: Selected Case Studies and Theoretical Considerations," *Latin American Music Review / Revista de Música Latinoamericana* 24, no. 2 (Autumn–Winter 2003): 169–209. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3598738>.

as Tchaikovsky, Grieg, Dvořák, Beach, and MacDowell—we also explored the geographical changes of national boundaries and their impact on local populations through the study of border music. On this topic, we studied the foundational work of Americo Paredes on the *corridos* of the Rio Grande Valley in the nineteenth-century.<sup>60</sup> As an eminence on the folklore of the region where we live, and a native from Brownsville, Texas, Paredes's work had special significance for us.

### Challenges and Outcomes of a Transnational Approach

Covering such a diverse array of musicking practices on two continents in the aforementioned graduate survey presented challenges. As each one of the topics discussed above could constitute the subject of an entire seminar, students understandably found the amount of content overwhelming. Interestingly, when I solicited student feedback informally, almost all students uttered a variation of “there's too much reading, but please don't assign any less reading!” One student articulated the sentiment formally in a self-evaluation assignment: “At first, I was overwhelmed by both the volume and coverage of the topics ... [But] I found several topics extremely interesting. ... I have discovered composers and musicians that I have never encountered prior to this course and my knowledge now extends beyond the classical music canon.”<sup>61</sup> Another student suggested as an improvement to the course to add content on music for wind bands, accurately noting that as expansive as the survey was, it did not adequately include this important type of musicking.

In addition to the problem of allotting time to each topic appropriately within the limitations of what students could reasonably manage in one semester, I struggled with keeping the course coherent. Furthermore, I worried about potentially tokenizing underrepresented topics, peoples, and repertoires. Organizing the course mostly chronologically—rather than topically or geographically—minimized these problems. Instead of segregating female composers from male composers in units of their own, or European music from music in the Americas, or concert music from vernacular music, introducing topics somewhat chronologically allowed us to explore a rich world of transatlantic encounters where different musical practices coexisted and traveled multidirectionally across geographies, genres, and social groups at specific moments

60. Paredes discusses a rich tradition of *corridos* that developed in the Rio Grande Valley in the nineteenth century, debunking the idea that the *corrido* originated during the Mexican Revolution in the early twentieth century. Américo Paredes, “The Corrido on the Border,” in *With a Pistol in His Hand: A Border Ballad and Its Hero* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958), 129–50.

61. Student quotes edited for conciseness and clarity, quoted with permission.

in history. We pondered how musical and historical developments influenced each other. We also reflected on the presentism inherent to historical narratives and our own agency as researchers and artists in influencing which stories and musics from the past will endure in the twenty-first century. The chronological approach, not without its problems, served our purposes well.

Judging from the student projects produced and the feedback students offered,<sup>62</sup> the course succeeded at advancing the aforementioned goals of curricular reform, perhaps best summarized as offering courses relevant to the needs and circumstances of music students today.

Student 1: I'm happy to have found a course that helped me learn and understand this era on a deeper level, [by studying] topics that touched on politics, nationalism, and gender.

Student 2: It took me a while to realize the connections and deeper meanings of the articles we were assigned. It wasn't until we talked about Schubert and “peacocks” that I noticed that his class wasn't merely covering the “facts” of history.<sup>63</sup> It didn't occur to me that a class could look at history with a critical eye and dig deeper into the social, political, and cultural aspects of history. These contexts were fascinating to look at with a modern perspective and to identify how other writers and researchers have looked into these issues with their own biases and perspectives.

Student 3: One of my greatest challenges, which became one of the most important [lessons] from the course, was learning to think outside the box. From a young age I was programmed to study music from Eurocentric, misogynist, and intolerant perspectives, which I internalized. This course has opened my eyes.

Student 4: I feel this course has allowed me to grow not only intellectually but also as a performer. Through some of the readings and discussions ... I have become aware of different ways of considering the music I perform. There are concepts that I would like to challenge and explore further. These assignments helped me reconsider and analyze my music.

62. Students produced projects that explored topics related to the Western canon (like projects on Schubert Lieder and Bruckner symphonies), gender in the nineteenth-century (such as the rise of the mixed choirs or letters and journal entries by Clara Wieck Schumann), and also music in the Western hemisphere (like connections between Manuel Ponce's *Balada Mexicana* for piano and the Chopin ballades, or music by Costa Rican composer Rafael Chávez Torres). Projects also varied in nature and included pedagogical projects, compositions and arrangements, analytical papers, and research papers.

63. Solomon, “Franz Schubert and the Peacocks of Benvenuto Cellini”; Muxfeldt, “Political Crimes and Liberty, or Why Would Schubert Eat a Peacock.”



## Conclusions

Music history courses constitute but a fraction of large and complex curricula whose reform requires concerted efforts among specialists in various fields of music study. Consequently, seldom do music history instructors work in situations where they can singlehandedly implement major reforms. In my case, I was fortunate to join the faculty of UTRGV as a brand new institution and thus have some influence in shaping the music history sequence. Since then, faculty at UTRGV have continued to diversify the music curriculum in various ways, adding new concentrations in mariachi, jazz, and popular music. Even now, proposals for new major and minor concentrations exist in various stages of development. The current state of the music curriculum at UTRGV could perhaps be described as including elements of Moore's "enhanced core model" where content of courses can be changed without significantly altering course names, and the "pluralist model" that seeks to diversify music specializations.<sup>64</sup> Even so, the traditional conservatory paradigm still predominates.

Like in Moore's "enhanced core model," I seek to share with students global and local views of music in all music history and culture courses, even if their titles and catalog descriptions suggest a narrower focus. In courses specifically designated for the study of Western music history, a transatlantic approach helps address the Eurocentric and nationalist narratives often implied in them, while also offering students a broader view of music history and better representations of their own musical heritage. Given that I also invite students to consider the broader social implications of the musical traditions we study as well as their relevance to them as twenty-first-century musicians, the transatlantic focus addresses all four guiding principles for curriculum reform proposed by Moore and his collaborators, namely: 1) commitment to community, 2) commitment to the practical concerns of professional musicians, 3) commitment to global awareness, and 4) commitment to social justice.<sup>65</sup>

Concerned with the epistemological inadequacies of a musicology that primarily serves the curricular goals of conservatory-like intuitions, Madrid has suggested that instructors take note of developments in other fields to find more relevant approaches to music studies at institutions of higher education.<sup>66</sup> Based on my experience designing graduate music courses aligned with programs of Mexican American Studies and Gender and Women's Studies, I concur. Thinking beyond the immediate needs of the department, as pressing as they may be, allows for richer and more relevant courses that make connections

across the university.<sup>67</sup> Building on the success of interdisciplinary graduate courses, I now seek to bring greater interdisciplinarity to my undergraduate teaching as well. Starting in Spring 2023, my sections of World Music Cultures will also count towards the minor in Religious Studies.<sup>68</sup>

Recognizing the transatlantic approach as but one possibility in a specific cultural and institutional context, and not wishing to literally equate curricular development with scientific advancements, I cannot help but see parallels between curricular changes and Thomas Khun's process of shifting paradigms.<sup>69</sup> It seems that music education finds itself near a moment of "crisis" in which the old curricula do not serve us well, so we must explore alternatives. Whether a new dominant curricular paradigm will emerge and substitute the older conservatory model, or whether different paradigms will continue to emerge and co-exist, increasingly de-standardizing music curricula, is unclear. Clearer, however, is the exciting potential new relevance of music studies at institutions serving broader and more diverse student bodies. The Western European canon need not disappear from such curricula altogether, but must be better contextualized and historicized. A transatlantic approach to Western music history that foregrounds musicking as encompassing a broad range of creative endeavors can contribute to this goal.

64. Moore, ed., *College Music Curricula for a New Century*.

65. Moore, "Introduction," in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, 10–22.

66. Madrid, "American Music in Times of Postnationality," 702–3.

67. Although not discussed in this article, I have also taught graduate ethnomusicology courses that also meet requirements in anthropology programs, and currently team-teach a course on healing and music in the school of social work, where I introduce students to concepts and literature in medical ethnomusicology.

68. In World Music Cultures courses, I already cover many musical practices in various religious contexts around the world, from the bira ceremony among the Shona in Zimbabwe, to Afro-Cuban santería, to the sema ceremony among sects of Sufis, to gospel music in the United States, and more.

69. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

## On Musicology's Responsibility to Music Education: The Case of Praxis II

VILDE AASLID AND ALLISON ROBBINS

The *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* has been the home of lively discussion about the undergraduate music history sequence since its founding in 2010. Many musicologists have applied these ideas in their own pedagogical practice, whether by expanding beyond the canon's boundaries, rejecting colonial and supremacist framings, or shifting towards skills-based approaches.<sup>1</sup> We celebrate these developments and how they improve students' understanding of and engagement with music history. In these discussions, however, there has been little dialogue with the field of music education, even though at many universities a significant proportion of the students taking music history coursework are studying to become K–12 music teachers. Curricular change in music history coursework has consequences for these students as they prepare to join the teaching profession.

In this article we examine one of music education's gatekeeping exams to argue that musicologists have a responsibility to engage with these broader applications of music history. In most states, music education students must pass a series of certification exams in order to teach in public schools. One commonly required test is the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge Exam, a two-hour, multiple-choice exam that covers pedagogy, theory and aural skills, and music history and literature.<sup>2</sup> For successful completion of the music his-

1. See Alejandro Madrid, "Diversity, Tokenism, Non-Canonical Musics, and the Crisis of the Humanities in U.S. Academia," *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 124–129; and the "Decolonizing Music History" issue of *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 10, no. 1 (2020). An excellent summary of curricular discussions can be found in Lucie Vágnerová and Andrés García Molina, "Academic Labor and Music Curricula," *Current Musicology* 102 (Spring 2018): 98–101. The recent antiracism colloquy published in the *Journal of the Society for American Music* also contributes to this curricular dialogue. See "Antiracism and the Undergraduate Curriculum," *JSAM* 15, no. 4 (November 2021): 447–473.

2. The test is administered by Educational Testing Services (ETS), an organization that runs over 90 different Praxis II exams in different subject areas. Students must pay for each attempt at the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge Exam; the current price is \$130. States that currently require the Praxis II Music are Alabama, Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, D.C., Idaho,

tory portion, a student should "understand the history of major developments in musical style and the significant characteristics of important musical styles and historical periods" and should be "familiar with the style of a variety of world musics and their function in the culture of origin."<sup>3</sup> In other words, the exam requires knowledge of the traditional canon as well as "world music," reinforcing colonialist approaches that many curricular reforms have been seeking to change. The exam is a firm barrier between music education students and the classroom; if they cannot pass the exam, they cannot teach in public schools. Our curricular reforms have the potential to positively influence the way that music educators teach, but what happens if failing a certification exam bars them from entering the classroom in the first place?

Musicologists have not yet had an extended conversation about what obligation we have, if any, in preparing our music education students to take this exam. Those among us committed to curricular revisions might be tempted to dismiss the Praxis II exam as irrelevant or antithetical to what we teach. But instead of disengaging, we argue that a genuine commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion requires that we face the exams on multiple fronts, preparing current students for the existing problematic exam while working to update how future iterations assess music history knowledge. As a case study, then, the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge exam illustrates the larger stakes and complexities of curricular reform in music history.

Further, the Praxis II exam draws attention to a long history of missed opportunities for musicologists to collaborate with music education scholars and public school teachers. Our field's nascent disciplinary ideology and deliberate separation from music education, we argue, still informs our interactions with students and colleagues invested in teaching music in public schools. We aim to confront the division between musicology and music education, exemplified by the troubling gap between the music history pedagogy represented in the pages of this journal and the music history knowledge tested on most teacher certification exams.

Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Tomisha Price-Brock and Heidi Welch, "NAfME Collegiate Chat: Praxis Practice: Prepare to Pass," NAFME Collegiate Advisory Council, January 31, 2022, <https://nafme.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Praxis-Practice-Slides-NAfME-Collegiate-Chat.pdf>. Most states that do not require the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge Exam have other required assessments (not all of which are multiple-choice exams) and test students on similar knowledge. For details, see NAFME's "2020 Analysis of State Music Education Certification Practices in the United States," accessed March 30, 2022, <https://nafme.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-Teacher-Certification-Update-7.1.2020-1.pdf>.

3. Educational Testing Services, *The Praxis Study Companion: Music: Content Knowledge* (2022), <https://www.ets.org/pdfs/praxis/5113.pdf>, 7.

We begin with a series of introductions: first of ourselves and our curricular approaches and then of the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge Exam and related music teacher certification exams. A brief survey of research in equity and assessment outlines the stakes of our curricular decisions. We recommend some actions musicologists can take at the individual, departmental, state, and field level to address the Praxis II exam and the concrete challenge it poses for curricular revision. In closing, we summarize the history of the larger divide between musicology and music education, positioning the Praxis II as a symptom of a broader disciplinary conflict.

### Our Curricular Approaches

Both of us completed our doctoral work at the University of Virginia in a department with no music education degree. With little exposure to the concerns of that field, we experienced relatively steep learning curves as we began our positions in departments with active music education programs. We both initiated music history curricular revisions with very limited knowledge of music teacher certification exams.

Vilde has been teaching at the University of Rhode Island, the state's flagship public research university, since 2016. As the only musicologist in a lively department with many degree programs, Vilde has implemented revisions with the goal of addressing the distinct music-historical needs of all undergraduate majors. Currently, approximately 45% of the music majors are pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree in music education.<sup>4</sup> The new music history sequence, which launched in the fall of 2019, has three core classes. In their first semester, music majors take Music as Global Culture, a course inspired by the Vanderbilt curriculum, in which they consider musicking (both familiar and unfamiliar) through themes such as performance, ritual, dance, and migration.<sup>5</sup> In their second musicology class, students learn about the history of Western classical music from Gregorian chant through 1900. The course balances canon conversancy with canon critique in a fast-paced tour of style and cultural history. The third and final course in the sequence examines genre and identity in 20th and 21st century music, with an emphasis on music in the United States. This course is heavily skills-oriented, with an emphasis on finding and working with

4. Included in this number are the first- and second-year students who have indicated that they are planning to become music education majors but are pending acceptance in the School of Education, an application that happens during their sophomore year. The department also has a rapidly growing music therapy degree program that is likely to change this number significantly in the coming years.

5. For more on the Vanderbilt curriculum, see Melanie Lowe, "Rethinking the Undergraduate Music History Sequence in the Information Age," *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 5, no. 2 (2015): 65–71.

sources and developing cultural analysis and interpretive skills. For Vilde, the question of how her curricular revision will affect her students' certification chances is most pressing in the second class, which compresses the timeline of a traditional two- or even three-semester survey into a single semester.

Since 2013, Allison has worked at the University of Central Missouri, a regional public university with a long history of educating teachers. Like Vilde, she is the only musicologist employed in the department and is responsible for teaching all undergraduate music history coursework. The University of Central Missouri music department currently offers B.M.E. degrees in instrumental and vocal music, with music education students currently representing about 43% of the overall undergraduate music major population.<sup>6</sup> As part of their general education coursework, all B.M.E. students take an introductory course entitled Music of the World's Cultures, which examines music from a cultural perspective and introduces ethnographic methods. B.M.E. students are also required to take two courses in a chronological three-semester music history sequence, which Allison revised in 2017.<sup>7</sup> All B.M.E. students take the course that addresses music of the "common practice era," which she continues to revise in ways that challenge the traditional narrative of the European canon. But B.M.E. students no longer take the entire sequence. The teacher certification exam that they are required to pass in the state of Missouri assumes that they do.

Broader data on music departments in the United States confirms that the programs in which we teach are typical; musicologists are more likely than not to have music education majors as a significant segment of their student population. Statistics on music departments are tricky, in part because degree offerings vary so much from institution to institution, but the National Association of Schools of Music's participation in the Higher Education Arts Data Services (HEADS) project offers a helpful, if incomplete, start. The HEADS data summarizes report statistics from NASM-accredited schools and breaks down

6. This percentage reflects the declared B.M.E. instrumental and vocal majors from the 2020–2021 academic year. Since 2013, the percentage of declared B.M.E. majors in the overall undergraduate music major population has averaged about 48%, with a high of 51% in the 2017–2018 academic year.

7. The vocal music education faculty were invested in keeping Renaissance music in the curriculum, so Allison compromised with a chronological approach spaced over three semesters, not all of which are required for B.M.E. students. Students pursuing a degree in vocal music education are required to take a course entitled Early Music, which explores medieval and Renaissance music and emphasizes the development of improvisation skills. Much of the curriculum in this course is inspired by Angela Mariani's book, *Improvisation and Inventio in the Performance of Medieval Music, a Practical Approach* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017). Students pursuing a degree in instrumental music education are required to take Music Since 1900, which places art music traditions in dialogue with American popular music.

enrollment numbers by degree programs.<sup>8</sup> According to the HEADS summary for 2020–2021, 49.7% of all music majors at NASM-accredited institutions in the fall of 2020 were enrolled in music education, music therapy, or music and some other related field (for example music technology), compared with 30.7% in performance degrees, and 19.5% in music liberal arts degrees.<sup>9</sup> The proportion of music education degree enrollment varies by institution type, as summarized in Table 1.

Number of music majors in department	Percentage enrollment in music education, music therapy, or other related field	Percentage enrollment in music performance or other professional degree	Percentage enrollment in a Bachelor of Arts or other liberal arts degree
1–50	40.6%	9.4%	49.9%
51–100	51.2%	21.2%	27.7%
101–200	49.4%	27.2%	23.4%
201+	31.7%	52.6%	15.7%
Overall Private	41.1%	34.5%	24.4%

**Table 1A.** Private NASM-accredited Institutions. Music major enrollment distribution by size of department

Number of music majors in department	Percentage enrollment in music education, music therapy, or other related field	Percentage enrollment in music performance or other professional degree	Percentage enrollment in a Bachelor of Arts or other liberal arts degree
1–100	47.4%	16.6%	35.9%
101–200	58.0%	20.9%	21.2%
201–400	54.5%	29.1%	16.4%
401+	51.9%	38.1%	10.0%
Overall public	53.5%	29.1%	17.4%

**Table 1B.** Public NASM-accredited Institutions. Music major enrollment distribution by size of department

Although the NASM-accredited institutions represented in the HEADS data are more likely to offer music education degrees than non-NASM institutions,

8. Enrollment in different degree programs does not directly transfer into statistics about numbers of students in part because of the large number of double majors in music fields. Music education majors who also major in music performance will count towards each of those enrollment numbers in the HEADS reports.

9. Comparison of the 2020–2021 report with the 2004–2005 shows that the distribution of degree enrollments has held roughly steady through this time span.

many students in non-NASM programs are still pursuing music education, either through official music education degrees or by way of more general B.A. in music degree as a step towards a master’s degree in education. Using Missouri and Washington states as cases, we can see in Table 2 that approximately one third of non-NASM schools in these states offer separate music education degrees.<sup>10</sup>

	Missouri	Washington
Number of 4-year institutions offering music degrees	24	17
Percentage of 4-year institutions offering music education degrees	83%	65%
Number of non-NASM institutions offering music degrees	5	8
Percentage of non-NASM institutions offering music education degrees	40%	38%

**Table 2.** Regional case studies in prevalence of Music Education degrees, including non-NASM institutions

### Introducing the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge Exam

The Praxis II study guide provided by Educational Testing Service (ETS) states that the exam “is designed to assess a beginning music teacher’s knowledge and understanding of music and music education.”<sup>11</sup> Material tested during the exam is drawn from four content categories with the following approximate distribution among the test questions: Music History and Literature, 15%; Theory and Composition, 16%; Performance, 22%; Pedagogy, Professional Issues, and Technology, 47%. One section of the exam tests across these topics using associated listening examples, and a second section is made up of standalone questions.<sup>12</sup>

10. The two non-NASM accredited institutions in Missouri that do offer music education degrees offer a B.A. in music education rather than a B.M. or B.M.E.

11. ETS, *The Praxis Study Companion: Music: Content Knowledge* (2022), 6. “Praxis II” refers to the Praxis II Music: Content Knowledge Exam for the remainder of the article.

12. Scoring processes for the exam are a bit opaque, as ETS uses a scaled score conversion to account for the difficulty of individual exam questions, but ETS reports an average score range of 160–176. Individual states determine what counts as a passing score, with a range from 139 to 161 out of a possible 200. Although music history content makes up a relatively small portion of the exam, the average score range’s proximity to the passing threshold for a number of states suggests that a student’s performance on the 15% music history content could make a significant difference in whether they pass or fail. “Praxis® Minimum/Passing Score

What music history knowledge is necessary for a beginning teacher, according to the exam? First and foremost, students need to demonstrate that they “understand the history of major developments in musical style and the significant characteristics of important musical styles and historical periods.”<sup>13</sup> Although it remains unsaid in the ETS materials, the unqualified category of “music” here is almost entirely classical music in the Western European tradition. The study guide lists periods from medieval through “mid 20th century to present” and concludes with the category “jazz, rock, folk, and other popular genres.” Students are tested on their knowledge of parameters like melody, harmony, tempi, and forms typical of the style periods, and are expected to be able to identify “representative” composers, ensembles, and performers. Sample questions give a sense of how the exam approaches music historical knowledge. For example, students are asked to:

- identify the period of composition given an audio example,
- identify the composer of an excerpt (in the sample question, the piece played was *In C*), or
- order a list of musical genres in their chronological order of development.

An explanatory answer key makes glaringly plain the values that underscore these test questions. A question that asks students to identify Aaron Copland as the composer of a listening example justifies the question with this statement: “This question tests your knowledge of important composers and masterworks found in music history.”<sup>14</sup>

But the music history and literature section is not entirely focused on the canon of classical music in the European tradition. The study guide informs potential test-takers that they should be “familiar with the style of a variety of world musics and their function in the culture of origin.” As before, the guiding statement is followed by a list but now, rather than style periods, it itemizes continents. Suggested study questions include both the relatively specific (differences in style and instrumentation between traditional Chinese opera and Japanese Noh music) and the extremely general (“given an excerpt of world music, can you identify its country or region of origin?”).

It is worth pausing at this point to consider the underlying epistemology of this required barrier exam. No one should reasonably expect students to be familiar with all the musics of the world, just as no one should expect them to be able to identify every single work within the European classical tradition. In order to ask the kinds of questions that it asks, the exam relies on the very thing many musicologists have been moving away from in curriculum

Requirements,” Educational Testing Services, accessed January 12, 2022, <https://www.ets.org/praxis/institutions/scores/passing/>.

13. ETS, *The Praxis Study Companion: Music: Content Knowledge* (2022), 7.

14. ETS, *The Praxis Study Companion: Music: Content Knowledge* (2022), 30.

revisions: the canon, both in terms of the Western classical tradition *and* the most frequently taught “world music” examples. Further, it reinscribes the colonial division between “music” and “world music” wherein the latter is best understood through its “cultural function” and the former through its style and history. Clearly the exam does not capture current musicological concerns nor, we suspect, would most music educators agree with its epistemology. Like so many standardized exams, the Praxis II displays a vestigial version of the field.

Given the subject matter of the test questions, it is clear that the Praxis II draws its content from textbooks like *A History of Western Music* and the accompanying *Norton Anthology of Western Music* and Cengage's *Worlds of Music*. ETS does not list exam authors, and our inquiries to the corporation about who writes the Praxis II were met with non-specific answers. Job listings on the ETS website indicate, however, that “assessment specialists” are responsible for test development. A recent job advertisement for an Assessment Specialist in Psychology notes, for example, that the person in that position “plans, develops, and evaluates tests and testing programs and related products that are closely aligned to the current subject-area standards and student-learning objectives and leads discussions with clients and stakeholders on the assessment of subject-related constructs.”<sup>15</sup> Identifying the specific author(s) of the Praxis II music exam in any given year is not really necessary, then, given that the authors of the most commonly used textbooks in undergraduate musicology courses are already known. These textbooks likely provide the “subject-area standards” from which the ETS employees construct the multiple-choice standardized exams.

### The Standardized Exam Problem

Public school teachers in the United States have long been required to meet certain credentials before entering the classroom, but the current Praxis II content exams for pre-service teachers are relatively new, taking hold within a broader standards and assessment movement initiated by politicians and corporate leaders in the early 2000s.<sup>16</sup> Certification exams like the Praxis II

15. Job Ad for Assessment Specialist I, Psychology, Educational Testing Services, accessed August 28, 2022, <https://etscareers.pereless.com/83080/talent.cfm>. Qualifications for assessment specialists include a master's degree in the related discipline and some collegiate teaching experience.

16. In 2001, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) passed Congress with bipartisan support. NCLB required public schools to administer standardized tests in reading and math and to report results. Schools that missed achievement targets two years or more were subject to sanctions. The law also required that teachers be “highly qualified” in their area, which typically translated into state certification and a bachelor's degree in their teaching subject. NCLB was replaced in 2015 with the Every Student Succeeds Act.



concerned music education scholar Julia Koza, who warned as early as 2002 that music content exams would challenge efforts in music education “to create a more diverse pool of music teachers and to institute culturally relevant music content.”<sup>17</sup> She argued that codified standards for music students would most benefit corporations like McGraw Hill, ETS, and Sylvan Learning, which garner profits from standardized assessments, and that teacher certification exams would distract from equity goals and inhibit needed curricular change within music education.<sup>18</sup>

Koza's concerns were well founded.<sup>19</sup> In 2015, Kenneth Elpus published data analysis of Praxis II music exam scores administered by ETS between 2007 and 2012 that indicates teacher certification exams could affect the racial demographics of public school music teachers. Among pre-service music teachers who took the exam, Elpus found that people of color were significantly under-represented: 86.02% of the teacher candidates self-reported as white, 7.07% as black, 1.94% as Hispanic, and 1.79% as Asian. Most damning, test scores were “significantly associated with race, sex, and other demographic characteristics,” with white candidates earning higher scores than Black candidates, and male candidates earning higher scores than female candidates.<sup>20</sup> Based on this empirical evidence, Elpus argues that “racial and ethnic minority music education majors—particularly those who are Black—may face an additional, and sometimes insurmountable, barrier toward earning teacher licensure after completing a music education program,” namely, a standardized multiple-choice exam.<sup>21</sup>

Elpus's data analysis indicates that pre-service teachers with higher grades were more likely to pass the Praxis II, leading him to argue that the exams are “valid measures of the knowledge learned in a postsecondary music education degree program.”<sup>22</sup> Linking grades to “knowledge learned” belies how many factors contribute to successful test preparation, a matter that needs further

17. Koza, “Corporate Profit at Equity's Expense: Codified Standards and High-Stakes Assessment in Music Teacher Preparation” *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 152 (Spring 2002): 1.

18. Koza, “Corporate Profit at Equity's Expense,” 13.

19. The most recent music education research shows that between 2000 and 2018, “the proportion of White music educators in U.S. public schools has remained at approximately 90%.” See David R. DeAngelis, “Recent College Graduates With Bachelor's Degrees in Music Education: A Demographic Profile,” *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 32, no. 1 (2022): 25. DeAngelis's research builds on the Kenneth Elpus's article cited below, as well as Elpus's research with Carlos R. Abril, “Who Enrolls in High School Music? A National Profile of US Students, 2009–2013,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 67, no. 3 (2019): 323–338.

20. Elpus, “Music Teacher Licensure Candidates in the United States,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 63, no. 3 (October 2015): 314.

21. Elpus, “Music Teacher Licensure Candidates,” 331.

22. Elpus, 323.

attention given the bleak data discussed above. Curriculum is one possible complicating factor. Praxis II assumes, of course, a curriculum that includes band, choir, and orchestra pedagogy; a two-semester chronological music history survey; several semesters of music theory that focus on harmonic analysis; and an introductory “world music” course. But coursework in a B.M.E. curriculum is rarely static within a music department, and B.M.E. curricula are not uniform across institutions, even with accrediting agencies like NASM. Elpus acknowledges that he received no data from ETS regarding how students from different colleges and universities performed and thus “could not determine whether there exists an institutional advantage on Praxis II music scores based on the admissions selectivity of a preparing institution or other institutional characteristics, for example, an institution's status as a historically Black college.” He also notes that curricula not aligned with the Praxis II “might account for at least a portion of the observed differences in individual Praxis II music scores” demonstrated in his study.<sup>23</sup> The changes that many musicologists have made to the music history sequence fall exactly in this category of curricula that may no longer align with the exam.

Koza foresaw a conflict between coursework and standardized exams, pointing to a 2002 case study in English education teacher preparation at Georgia State University. In a group of seventeen pre-service teachers taught by Peggy Albers, five students failed the Praxis II exam in English. All of those students identified as African American. In follow-up interviews, Albers found that the students were qualified to teach and knowledgeable in literature; however, the exam's focus on canonical white authors did not assess some of her students' knowledge of Black authors, nor the content generally prioritized at historically Black colleges and universities. The content exam in English, Albers noted, could potentially force teacher education programs at HBCUs “to align their curriculum to match the content of the Praxis II, often running against the very principles upon which these institutions were founded.”<sup>24</sup>

Since Albers' early study, education scholars have continued to study teacher certification exams, the content they assess, the requirements of education degrees, and the racial demographics of America's public school teachers.<sup>25</sup> The challenges musicologists face when reimagining music history coursework are thus not unique. As we revise the traditional music history sequence away from white supremacist and colonial frameworks, we may inadvertently cause

23. Elpus, 331–332.

24. Albers, “Praxis II and African American Teacher Candidates (or, Is Everything Black Bad?)” *English Education* 34, no. 2 (January 2002): 109–111, 121.

25. Emery Petchauer is but one education scholar who has worked on this broad topic. See, for example, his article, “Teacher Licensure Exams and Black Teacher Candidates: Toward New Theory and Promising Practice,” *Journal of Negro Education* 81, no. 3 (2012): 252–67, <https://doi.org/10.7709/jnegroeducation.81.3.0252>.

some of our B.M.E. students to fail a music teacher certification exam needed for employment and in the process contribute to the lack of diversity among music educators. And yet “teaching to the test” is not a reasonable solution.

### What Musicologists Can Do

So what are reasonable solutions? We want to be clear that our answer here is not to stop reforming curricula. But neither can we look the other way and expect the field of music education to address these newly forming gaps between what musicologists teach and how pre-service teachers are assessed. Among many possible courses of action, we offer thoughts at several levels: individual, state, departmental, and field-wide.

Faculty teaching musicology coursework in a department with music education students cannot change teacher certification requirements, but they should be aware of what certification exams their students face and how they are faring on those exams. Because teacher certification varies by state, the first step is identifying which exam is required in a given location. Music education faculty generally know this information and are excellent resources. The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) also maintains an updated list of certification practices by state, including required content exams.<sup>26</sup> This list does not, however, track the details of each state's requirements, like the required passing score for a state's certification exam, and passing scores vary from state to state.

Tracking the scores of one's own students requires administrative legwork. Some schools of music may already be collecting data for their own self-study or program assessment. For example, as the chair of her department's assessment committee, Allison requested that the university's testing service provide her students' scores from the state's required certification exam, the Missouri Educator Gateway Assessment, Music: Instrumental & Vocal. Historically, her department has embedded certification exam data in NASM self-study materials and in reports the university submits in its accreditation process.<sup>27</sup> This

26. “2020 Analysis of State Music Education Certification Practices in the United States,” National Association for Music Education, accessed January 12, 2022, [https://nafme.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-Teacher-Certification-Update\\_7.1.2020-1.pdf](https://nafme.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/2020-Teacher-Certification-Update_7.1.2020-1.pdf).

27. Accreditation requirements in higher education and related assessment programs can vary quite a bit between different kinds of institutions and departments. Most colleges and universities are accredited by outside agencies (like the Higher Learning Commission or Middle States Commission on Higher Education), which require assessment data linked to learning outcomes that are designed by each degree program. Similarly, accrediting associations like NASM ask departments to conduct self-study reports to demonstrate how they meet their goals and objectives. Regarding music history curricula, NASM requirements are rather flexible and do not dictate how courses should be structured. See Don Gibson, “The Curricular Standards of NASM and Their Impact on Local Decision Making,” this *Journal* 5, no. 2 (2015): 73–76.

administrative approach to tracking test scores may not be possible or even preferable in other institutional settings, however. Some universities and colleges do not have a testing center on campus, and universities that do maintain a testing center may not have a culture of sharing data between administrative and departmental units. Moreover, if one's goal is to challenge the idea that standardized certification exams demonstrate a music educator's preparation and ability to teach, using the exams as part of an assessment plan is counter-productive, lending more authority to the exams than they deserve.

In the end, tracking exam scores is not necessary if students know that their professors are aware of teacher certification requirements and are interested in helping them pass required exams. Again, this does not mean teaching to the test within musicological coursework. Instead, musicology professors should maintain open communication with their music education students in regard to their exam preparation and exam scheduling, especially if they know students from their institution have struggled with certification exams in the past. Offering a test preparation session that drills historical eras and classical music terms might be of help for some students. Distributing basic study guides that pull key concepts and musical examples from the recent editions of musicology textbooks is another option. Finally, reminding students of effective testing strategies will aid them not only in the music history portion of the exam but other sections as well. Standardized certification exams will likely be around for the foreseeable future, and musicologists bear some responsibility in helping pre-service teachers plow through the testing barrier that stands between them and their future music classroom.

Simultaneously, musicologists can advocate at the state level for changing teacher certification requirements, supporting education scholars and other stakeholders who continue to challenge the cultural bias of certification exams and their effect on recruiting teachers of color. This might mean advocating for a slightly lower state-wide passing score on the Praxis II exam, especially in states like Colorado, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Virginia, which require a comparatively high passing score of 160 or above. In states where there are arguments for raising minimum certification scores in the name of teacher preparation, one might advocate for retaining a comparatively low minimum score, given that existing research on other kinds of standardized teaching tests has shown that raising a required passing score reduces the number of teachers of color.<sup>28</sup> Elpus warns, “Raising minimum cut scores may

28. See, for example, David M. Memory, Christy L. Coleman, and Sharron D. Watkins, “Possible Tradeoffs in Raising Basic Skills Cutoff Scores for Teacher Licensure: A Study with Implications for Participation of African Americans in Teaching,” *Journal of Teacher Education* 54, no. 3 (May/June 2003): 217–27, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487103054003004>. They found that “a one-point increase in the PPST reading test qualifying score for teacher licensure eliminates approximately 5% of African American test takers from entry into teaching, a one-point

seem like a worthwhile policy maneuver to increase the rigor of teacher licensure. However, if present trends continue, at least for the Praxis II, changes in passing scores may not substantially alter the overall academic performance of those who pass but may exacerbate further the lack of diversity in the music teacher workforce.<sup>29</sup>

In other contexts, education advocates might have the opportunity to challenge teacher standardized certification exams altogether. The COVID-19 pandemic led a few states to temporarily suspend other certification exam requirements, and anecdotal evidence suggests there are benefits to doing so. *Education Week* reported, for example, that when California suspended two standardized teacher exams in May of 2020, public universities saw more teachers of color entering the teaching profession.<sup>30</sup> The broader movement to dispense with college entrance exams like the SAT and ACT during the pandemic also offers a helpful parallel. As universities and colleges made standardized admission exams optional, some admissions officers have rethought their own admissions requirements, accelerating decades-long efforts to challenge standardized testing.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) issued a report in January 2022 that once again advocated for rethinking standardized admission testing due to the “significant and long-standing concerns about inequitable differences in test score outcomes.”<sup>32</sup> The pandemic has brought new energy, and most importantly, new ideas for those seeking an alternative to third party standardized testing in the realm of education. Musicologists and music educators frustrated by the Praxis II exam would do well to harness the energy of this broader wave of change.

Within our individual departments, a simple action we can take is to initiate conversations with our music education colleagues about contact points between our fields. Methodological divides within music departments are often necessarily wide as we engage with music using different tool sets for different outcomes, and musicologists might understandably bristle at the suggestion that our teaching be guided by what other music subfields think music history

increase in the PPST writing test qualifying score eliminates approximately 9% of African American test takers, and a one-point increase in the PPST mathematics test qualifying score eliminates approximately 4%.” Memory, et. al, 224–225.

29. Elpus, 332.

30. Eesha Pendharkar, “4 Changes Schools Can Make to Recruit Teachers of Color And Keep Them Around,” *Education Week*, 8 December 2021.

31. For one example, see Shawn Abbott, “My College Stopped Relying Heavily on the SAT. Enrollment of Students of Color Climbed,” *Washington Post*, January 24, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/01/24/temple-university-sat-experiment-student-of-color-enrollment-climbing/>.

32. “Toward a More Equitable Future for Postsecondary Access,” Commission on Redesigning College Admission and Financial Aid Through a Racial Equity Lens (National Association for College Admissions Counseling, January 2022), 36.

should be. But if we retreat from these conversations, it is our shared students who experience the consequences of our inflexibility. None of us can fully track the developments in other fields, but we can be responsible for updating our colleagues' understanding of our own fields. Doing so allows for a collaborative approach to the challenges that emerge as our interlocking disciplines grow and change. If our music education colleagues bring a knowledge of musicology's concerns to their own discipline's conferences and committees, we have increased the likelihood that the testing decision makers will hear our critiques.

### Confronting Our Disciplinary History

In order to productively collaborate with music educators, however, musicologists need to be cognizant of the historical intellectual disdain that our field has had towards music education and public school music teachers. This condescension has deep roots: it shaped the founding of American musicology in the early twentieth century and created an early fissure between music historians and music teachers. Attempts by musicologists to bridge that disciplinary divide in the mid-twentieth century were not successful, in part because musicologists still did not trust the expertise of educators. In the twenty-first century, the gap between musicology and music education remains entrenched. To build bridges, we need to confront our field's history and avoid our predecessors' mistakes.

The early history of musicology in the United States was defined by its intentional severing of professional ties with music teachers. Before the professionalization of American musicology in the 1930s, intellectuals interested in music history formed a U.S. section of the Internationale Musikgesellschaft (IMG) and met regularly with the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), a well-established organization that had an impressive history of supporting musical scholarship.<sup>33</sup> The yearbooks of papers and proceedings that MTNA published beginning in 1906 addressed historical, theoretical, pedagogical, and aesthetic issues, ignoring the disciplinary boundaries that structure so much of music research in the twenty-first century. Of all the topics featured in MTNA yearbooks from 1906 to 1930, music history received more dedicated articles and more pages than any other topic.<sup>34</sup>

33. For a detailed history of this time period, see Tamera Levitz, “The Musicological Elite,” *Current Musicology* 102 (Spring 2018): 12–27.

34. Shelly Cooper and Robert Bayless, “Examining the Music Teachers National Association Papers and Proceedings, 1906 to 1930,” *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 29, no. 2 (April 2008): 137. Cooper and Bayless categorize articles as “music history” if they address “patriotism, biographies, military music, folk songs and multicultural music, and general histories of individual cities and countries.” The focus on music history in the MTNA publications may be in part due to the early editorship of Waldo S. Pratt, whose studies at Williams College



Despite the MTNA's clear interest in music history, musicologists nonetheless sought to separate themselves from the association beginning with the formation of the Organizing Committee of the American Musicological Society (AMS) in 1934. "In the early years," Tamara Levitz writes, "AMS members seemed to view the MTNA in general as their more recognized and organized but intellectually impoverished cousin."<sup>35</sup> The AMS nonetheless held annual joint meetings with MTNA, primarily to attract new members from the music teachers' more robust society. At these joint meetings, musicologists presented their work in close proximity to music teachers, articulating and defining their discipline more precisely.<sup>36</sup> Joint conferences continued throughout the Second World War, even as the disciplines grew more distant. With its first stand-alone conference in 1948, AMS finally usurped control of historical research from music teachers—or at least the historical research focused on Western art music traditions. Scholarship on the history of music education stayed with music educators, where it more or less remains today.<sup>37</sup>

In her history of the AMS, Levitz describes the separation from MTNA as "harrowing": musicologists neglected "the intrinsic connection between their enterprise and music pedagogy" and weakened their field's "material and practical foundation."<sup>38</sup> She is not the first musicologist to observe musicology's elitist isolation, however. In the 1960s, Claude Palisca likewise noted music history's distance from music education and described the founding of the AMS as "in part a declaration of independence from the Music Teachers National

and John Hopkins University provided him with a background if not professional training in historical research. See Cooper and Bayless, 133, and Otto Kinkeldey, "Waldo Selden Pratt: November 10, 1857–July 29, 1939," *Musical Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (April 1940): 162–174.

35. Levitz, "The Musicological Elite," 25. It is worth noting that the field of music education also became more specialized and distanced from MTNA. In 1934, the Music Supervisors National Conference (MSNC) became the Music Educators National Conference, which would ultimately become the dominant conference for music education.

36. Levitz, 26.

37. For a helpful if dated overview of music education historiography and its relationship to musicology, see George Heller, "Music Education History and American Musical Scholarship Problems and Promises," *Bulletin of Historical Research in Music Education* 11, no. 2 (July 1990): 63–75.

38. Levitz, "The Musicological Elite," 27. Levitz also claims that AMS ignored potential collaborations with "a wide range of music teachers—many of them women—across the country." The reality in terms of gender is likely more complicated, however, given that MTNA and other music education associations sidelined women from leadership positions in the early twentieth century. See Sondra Wieland Howe's articles "Reconstructing the History of Music Education from a Feminist Perspective," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 96–106; and "Women's Participation in the NEA Department of Music Education, 1884–1925," *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 26, no. 2 (April 2005): 130–143. Additionally, women were far less likely to publish articles in the MTNA yearbooks in the first decades of the twentieth century. Only 13% of MTNA articles published between 1906 and 1930 were authored by women. See Cooper and Bayless, 134.

Association."<sup>39</sup> He too saw this separation as a mistake and forcefully argued that musicologists should care about music education; that music history had a place in a public school setting; and that in order to effect change, music historians should collaborate with music educators.<sup>40</sup>

In the summer of 1963, Palisca led a symposium hosted by Yale that was designed to give musicologists and other scholars a voice in music education. The Yale Seminar in Music Education had roots in the post-Sputnik context, in which there was a concern that the United States was failing in the education of its citizens. To improve public education, the Kennedy administration encouraged scholars to participate in content development for school subjects and offered funding for them to do so. The Yale Seminar is but one example of this broader federal effort. It was sponsored by the Office of Education of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and operated under the assumption that university music professors could offer new ideas for music educators.<sup>41</sup> The Seminar's new ideas included diminishing the focus on marching band; creating better musical training for teachers; increasing rigor in terms of performance; bringing professional musicians and composers into the schools; and offering more high school courses in music literature and theory, including courses suitable for "those sufficiently advanced musically." The recommendation most relevant to music historians related to musical content: seminar participants advocated that repertory "should be more representative than it is, not only of our Western musical heritage at its best, but also of jazz and folk music, and of non-Western culture."<sup>42</sup>

The ideas that Palisca developed in his music education efforts fed into the publication of the *Norton Anthology of Western Music* in 1980. This anthology represented Palisca's understanding of "Western musical heritage at its best," and as Jelena Simonović Schiff and Jere Humphreys make clear, even in its early editions, it was out of touch with public musical taste by several decades.<sup>43</sup> Though the Yale Seminar overall was not particularly effective in changing music education, the persistence of the *Norton Anthology* and other likeminded text-

39. Palisca, "The Challenge of Educational Reform," *Current Musicology* 4 (1966): 145.

40. Palisca, 145, 150.

41. Jelena Simonović Schiff and Jere Humphreys, "Claude V. Palisca as Music Educator: The Yale Seminar on Music Education and the *Norton Anthology of Western Music*," *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 41, no. 2 (2020): 183–185. Specifically, the seminar participants included "eleven music theorists and composers, five public and private school music teachers, four conductors, three musicologists, three university music education administrators, two performers, one public school administrator, one 'educationist,' and one music critic—a total of thirty-one participants, plus an additional thirteen observers. The geographical representation was highly skewed toward the Northeast region." Simonović Schiff and Humphreys, 184.

42. Quoted in Simonović Schiff and Humphreys, 184–185.

43. Simonović Schiff and Humphreys, 193.

books in undergraduate music history courses has ensured Palisca's influence in the field.<sup>44</sup> As noted above, musicology courses required in B.M.E. curricula frequently rely on such textbooks, and their content is assessed in the music history component of teaching certification exams like the Praxis II. Textbooks, it turns out, matter quite a bit.<sup>45</sup>

Palisca's efforts offer another important historical lesson for any musicological attempt to re-engage with music education. The Yale Seminar recommendations insulted many music educators, who felt excluded from the Seminar itself and who had not experienced the alleged institutional failing in their field. In 1979, music education scholar Bennett Reimer argued that it was the Seminar that had failed, in part because it approached "curriculum concerns as separate from educational-social concerns."<sup>46</sup> Musicologists should be careful not to repeat this mistake. We need to listen to and respect music educators and address the realities they face in the public schools. Otherwise, our own curricular changes will remain idealist, divorced from the music education that reaches far more students than our colleges and universities do.

With this disciplinary history in mind, field-level action may be the most effective if also slowest route toward systemic change in barrier testing regarding music history knowledge. As a start, regular cross-disciplinary panels with organizations such as NAFME and MTNA would help establish a more vital connection between disciplinary understandings of music history. Musicologists could apply to present at regional and national music education conferences, sharing curricular and pedagogical developments. On a practical level, musicologists would benefit from field-wide tracking of the ways that students might encounter music history assessment. As the national organization for the field, the American Musicological Society is in a good position to house this tracking, especially if it reinstated its Committee on Music in Secondary Education, which had been active in the 1960s with Palisca at the helm.<sup>47</sup> This committee could work with AMS membership to develop statements about

44. For an overview of different editions of the *Norton Anthology*, see Paul Gabriel Luongo, "Constructing a Canon: Studying Forty Years of the *Norton Anthology of Western Music*," this *Journal* 12, no. 1 (2022): 1–36.

45. For more on music history textbooks, especially Donald Grout's *A History of Western Music*, see S. Andrew Granade, "Undergraduate Development of Coursework in Musicology," *Oxford Handbooks Online: Music: Scholarly Research Reviews* (October 2014), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935321.013.12>.

46. Reimer, "The Yale Conference: a Critical Review," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 60 (Fall 1979): 6. For an excellent summary of the 1979 retrospective on the Yale Seminar, see Simonović Schiff and Humphreys, 187–191.

47. Palisca references and cites this committee's reports in his discussion of the Yale Seminar. See Palisca, "The Challenge of Educational Reform," 149–150. Committee materials are archived in the American Musicological Society Records, University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections.

best practices of music history assessment, serve as a contact point with testing companies and other music studies organizations, and advocate for valuing music education research and service in professional evaluations related to hiring, promotion, and tenure.

Musicologists might also carefully consider the role of music history textbooks. Some writers have suggested that re-imagined music history coursework should not be standardized from program to program but rather shaped by the individual professors who teach it.<sup>48</sup> This dispersed approach works well at universities and colleges with musicologists who are eager to create such curricula. But many schools and departments of music do not have full time musicologists on staff at all, nor do they necessarily hire contingent faculty with a terminal degree in musicology or ethnomusicology to teach academic classes. Instead, it is the applied faculty who teach music history in many collegiate music programs, and to do so, they understandably turn to existing textbooks to guide their course plans. Textbooks thus remain an important tool for large-scale curricular change in our field. The revisions and updates that J. Peter Burkholder has made to Palisca and Donald J. Grout's *A History of Western Music* and the associated *Norton Anthology* are admirable, as are sample course plans that demonstrate how to supplement these texts with other materials.<sup>49</sup> In planning for future textbooks, musicologists might follow the approaches modeled by Esther Morgan-Ellis in her development of the open-access textbook *Resonances*, designed for general education music courses; by Danielle Fosler-Lussier in her book *Music on the Move*, which organizes content around themes of migration and mediation; and by the founders of *Open Access Musicology*, who seek to reconcile "recent academic developments in music scholarship with ongoing nationwide changes to the undergraduate music pedagogy and curricula."<sup>50</sup> Perhaps a multi-authored, open-access textbook for music majors,

48. Lucie Vágnerová and Andrés García Molina suggest, for example, that musicologists should "proceed to teaching curricula that are, perhaps, less packaged, more multivocal, full of situated perspectives and points of audition, more attentive to a broader range of musical practices, and more different from institution to institution than they currently are." Vágnerová and Molina, "Academic Labor and Music Curricula," 101. To challenge conservative curricula, they suggest including contingent faculty members into curricular discussions. Vágnerová and Molina, 106–107.

49. For an example of a unit plan that addresses white supremacy in eighteenth-century music, see Travis Stimeling and Kayla Tokar, "Narratives of Musical Resilience and the Perpetuation of Whiteness in the Music History Classroom," this *Journal* 10, no. 1 (2020): 30–34.

50. "OAM Mission," *Open Access Musicology*, accessed August 30, 2022, <https://open-accessmusicology.wordpress.com/>. *Resonances* developed from a learning community that Morgan-Ellis organized with contingent faculty at the University of North Georgia. See Morgan-Ellis, "A Faculty Learning Community for Contingent Music Appreciation Instructors: Purpose, Structure, Outcomes," this *Journal* 9, no. 2 (2019): 173–193. The textbook is available as a free download. See *Resonances: Engaging Music in Its Cultural Context*, <https://ung>.



one shaped by current curricular discussions, could find a home in music departments and ultimately guide assessments like the Praxis II.

Finally, real field-level change in our relationship with music education will require a reckoning of how our discipline's elitism-driven retraction from music education has shaped the training of musicologists. Although complete data about job placement is difficult to obtain, it is likely that many newly employed musicologists earned their degrees from institutions without any music education programs. Graduates from nine institutions filled 63% of the tenure-track jobs listed between 2016 and 2020. Only three of those nine institutions offer undergraduate music education degrees and only two offer graduate degrees in music education.<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, recent graduates from musicology programs who secure full-time employment are likely to do so in departments that offer music education degrees. Between 2016 and 2020, 373 full-time jobs in music departments in the United States were listed on the musicology job wiki.<sup>52</sup> Of these, 218 (58%) were in departments that offered music education degrees.

It is no accident that the most prominent and well-respected United States graduate programs in musicology exist in isolation from music education. In 1938, the ACLS Committee on Musicology initiated a bulletin of musicological research and requested information from institutions where committee member D. H. Daugherty believed a person with sufficient musicological expertise worked. In the 250-person pool of teachers, independent scholars, and librarians, Daugherty deliberately excluded people who taught music education and music theory, because the ACLS Committee considered those fields "vocational rather than scientific."<sup>53</sup> Daugherty's approach, Levitz notes, "created a hierarchy of institutions of musicological higher learning that would be hard to

[edu/university-press/books/resonances-engaging-music.php](http://www.umich.edu/university-press/books/resonances-engaging-music.php). Fosler-Lussier's *Music on the Move* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2020) is also available as a free download at the University of Michigan Press eBook Collection, <https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/m613n040s>.

51. These nine institutions are: UCLA, Harvard, University of Chicago, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Eastman, Cornell, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Virginia. Eastman and Columbia offer graduate degrees in music education; however, Columbia's music education program is housed in the Teacher's College.

52. "Musicology/Ethnomusicology 2016–17," Academic Jobs Wiki, accessed August 15, 2022, [https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology\\_2016-17](https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology_2016-17); "Musicology/Ethnomusicology 2017–18," Academic Jobs Wiki, accessed August 15, 2022, [https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology\\_2017-18](https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology_2017-18); "Musicology/Ethnomusicology 2018–19," Academic Jobs Wiki, accessed August 15, 2022, [https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology\\_2018-19](https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology_2018-19); "Musicology/Ethnomusicology 2019–20," Academic Jobs Wiki, accessed August 15, 2022, [https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology\\_2019-20](https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology_2019-20); "Musicology/Ethnomusicology 2020–21," Academic Jobs Wiki, accessed August 15, 2022, [https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology\\_2020-21](https://academicjobs.fandom.com/wiki/Musicology/Ethnomusicology_2020-21).

53. Quoted in Levitz, 32.

dismantle."<sup>54</sup> Many of the institutions contacted by Daugherty had or would develop music education programs, but the most elite, private music departments that replied to his inquiry would go on to create graduate degrees in musicology, but not undergraduate music education degrees. Our survey of current doctoral programs in musicology suggests that this historical separation is still in effect.<sup>55</sup> Graduate programs in musicology should consider if their own curricula provide a basic conversancy with music education, and if not, why not.

## Conclusion

The future public school teachers in our music history classrooms offer musicologists a vital connection with the broader public. If we do our jobs well, lessons learned in music history courses will make their way into K–12 lesson plans, and in time the perspectives offered by our curricular revisions will ripple far beyond the reach of our own classrooms. But as we have learned more about the Praxis II exam, it seems that curricular changes in music history coursework may create consequences that work against our best intentions when completed in isolation from the realities of music education in the United States. After all, we would like to ensure that students educated in a music history curriculum that is increasingly inclusive and equitable actually do make it into the classroom as teachers. Reform itself cannot be the end goal; as Tamara Levitz asserts, in many cases curricular reform in the name of decolonization or antiracism "allows tenure-track professors to maintain the illusion that they are doing something to promote equality when in fact they may not be."<sup>56</sup> If we ground our revisions in the practical needs of our students, we have a better chance at realizing the ideals of our field.

More broadly, the Praxis II exam raises uncomfortable questions about the intersection between music education and musicology. Clearly, our coursework is shaped by musicology's retreat from music education. We are left wondering what musicological coursework would look like if we actively considered the needs of music teachers. Traditional music education topics, like the history of pedagogy and American band and choir traditions, are still marginalized in

54. Levitz, 32.

55. Approximately 62% of institutions that placed at least one graduate in a tenure track position between 2016 and 2020 were contacted by the ACLS Committee in 1938. Of the remaining doctoral-granting institutions, only about 35% were contacted. The ACLS's initial group of select musicology programs largely remain the musicological elite today and include Brown University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Harvard University, New York University, Stanford University, University of Chicago, Yale University, and yes, our own fondly remembered graduate alma mater, the University of Virginia.

56. Levitz, 45.

the music history classroom. Should they be included? Asking music educators what topics are of value to them in their daily work might begin to answer that question. Of course, music education students are not the only music majors in our classrooms, but just as we believe that future music teachers benefit from a curriculum that expands beyond the boundaries of the canon, we also believe that all music majors would be well served by considering how music is passed on and taught in the American school system. Moving forward, we advocate for conversations and collaborations between musicologists and music educators so that we may address common goals regarding our shared students.

# Introduction by the Guest Editors: Global Music History in the Classroom: Reflections on Concepts and Practice

HYUN KYONG HANNAH CHANG, DANIEL F. CASTRO PANTOJA, AND HEDY LAW

In the last decade, more scholars across music studies have drawn attention to the separation of the disciplinary terrain into musicology and ethnomusicology and its implications. They have pointed out that neither the insular framework of Western-centered musicology nor the framework of world music or area-based studies associated with ethnomusicology is a suitable basis for generating meaningful or democratic narratives about music in the past and the present.<sup>1</sup> Scholarly networks coalescing under the banner of global music history have constituted one (inter)disciplinary space actively nurturing and addressing this criticism. While global music history cannot be reduced to a single genealogy, objective, or motivation, it seems fair to note some shared visions among scholars identifying with the new field. These visions include: examining musical connections of the distant and recent past at different geographic scales that have been obscured or made invisible; developing new comparative approaches; and conducting historical analyses of musics that were traditionally not treated as objects of historical inquiry. This is not to say that scholarship committed to such objectives did not exist before the emergence of global music history as a field. Global music history certainly intersects and resonates with prior scholarships (and by extension, pedagogies) across musicology and ethnomusicology that have adopted or experimented with approaches that chafe at inherited disciplinary frameworks, including

1. See, for example, Olivia A. Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1–32; Timothy D. Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 1–14; Jesús A. Ramos-Kittrell, “Teaching Music and Difference: Music, Culture, and Difference in Globalization,” *AMS Musicology Now*, July 10, 2018; Gavin S. K. Lee, “At Home at Disciplinary Margins: Reflections of an Ethno/Musicologist from Elsewhere,” *Sounding Board, Ethnomusicology Review*, March 4, 2018.

nationalist historiography, ethnography-centered presentism, or ideas about cross-cultural comparativism.

Even if there is no broad consensus on what global music history comprises, what it should be, and where its boundaries lie, the recognition of global music history as an emerging field (or subfield) within Anglophone music studies (and beyond) is attested by recent conferences, society study groups, and research projects.<sup>2</sup> The American Musicological Society (AMS) Global Music History Study Group was founded in 2019. In the same year, the Global History of Music Study Group of the International Musicological Society (IMS) met for the first time in Paris. Global music history has also garnered attention in some quarters of ethnomusicology. Some of the most active participants and interlocutors in global music history have indeed been ethnomusicologists. Although not known primarily as a field for historical inquiry, ethnomusicology has had a longstanding commitment to a global scope in its outlook and organization, and historical studies have been an enduring subfield within it, as demonstrated by, for example, the Society for Ethnomusicology's (SEM) Historical Ethnomusicology Section.<sup>3</sup> Music theorists have also organized workshops, conference panels, and roundtables exploring comparative approaches in recent years, often under the rubric of the global.

The increasing interest in “global” research—in terms of object or perspective, or both—raises new questions about what we teach in different music and music studies courses. It is unlikely that we will create a more-or-less uniform pedagogical canon for global music history, and it is a wrongheaded idea to attempt such a thing. Yet, considering the growing recognition of global music history as a field, we, as co-chairs of the AMS Global Music History Study Group, felt that the time was ripe to take stock of how global perspectives are influencing teaching and were inspired to solicit pedagogues at the forefront of this emerging field to contribute to this special issue, “Teaching Global Music History: Practices and Challenges.” We hoped to trace what scholars thinking about this emergent field do in their classrooms, how they operate as teachers by applying specific themes to their teaching practices, what challenges they have encountered, and what provisional solutions they have provided. The articles collected in this special issue shed light on their experiences and perspectives on teaching in this developing area, whether they teach a course that is explicitly called “global music history” or is a close variation of it, or one that

2. See Makoto Takao, “Global Music History,” *Oxford Bibliographies in Music*, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199757824/obo-9780199757824-0317.xml>.

3. Consider, for example, the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM)'s mission statement: “Founded in 1955, the Society for Ethnomusicology is a global, interdisciplinary network of individuals and institutions engaged in the study of music across all cultural contexts and historical periods,” <https://www.ethnomusicology.org/>, accessed July 16, 2022.

integrates elements related to the global. They discuss not only design, methods, and contents, but also—and crucially—candid reflections upon challenges and failures and, in several cases, reservations about using the framework of “global music history” or the word “global.”

We recognize that our understanding of what is global is contingent on one's lived experiences as a person and scholar: it is conditioned by where we come from, the social experiences and encounters resulting from our backgrounds, the kinds of training we have received, and where we teach. Critical contextual factors that shape the teaching of global music history include forms of globality that characterize our universities, especially student demographics; the limitations and opportunities of the degree programs in which we teach and sometimes have a hand in shaping; mandates from the federal government or official accreditation agencies; and the specific nature of the institutional commitment to globalization. Since context-driven factors inform teaching, we have asked all the contributors to address their positionality and institutional context explicitly, rather than assuming unrealistically that these have little bearing on their teaching.

We also asked each contributor to share a pedagogical tool—a course syllabus, a primary source, a reading, an assignment, a field trip activity, a link to a performance or a recording, or an image of an object, if available—with the hope that this issue would serve as a pragmatic guide or offer valuable examples for those trying to design a teaching module or an activity on global music history. We anticipate that this practical approach might be of use to advanced graduate students, those on the job market who may need to design a new course on global music history for job applications, faculty members curious about creating a new class in this area, or members of curriculum committees at the departmental or university level wishing to have documented models or references on global music history for various curriculum renewal initiatives.

Yet, this special issue offers much more than a collection of teaching tools, vital as they are for instructors or administrators who may have limited open-access teaching resources in a fledgling subfield in one location. Readers will also find the contributors grappling with critical theoretical and conceptual issues surrounding the field of global music history. The contributors ask questions such as: What does it mean to teach global music history in the 2020s? What conceptual and practical factors should we consider if we want to bring global music history into the classroom? How do we teach a topic in this rapidly expanding area so that our students can see its relevance to their lives? How do we understand the “global” relative to the existing music curriculum in our respective departments and our institutions' strategic plans? How do the complicated disciplinary histories of music studies fields (including musicology, ethnomusicology, and music theory) shape our understandings of the “global?”

The essays in this special issue contemplate these questions and, in the process, clarify concepts and issues related to this emerging field.

Inspired by Chantal Mouffe's critique of cosmopolitanism, we hope that this special issue works toward establishing a multipolar global music history pedagogy in which no single perspective can instantiate the meaning of "the global" or "the world."<sup>4</sup> This is a task done by embracing an agonistic model that welcomes pedagogical practices that do not shy away from conflict and contestation when it comes to thinking democratically about global spaces, and which considers multiple agonistic regional poles (as opposed to one center) and the agency of a plurality of actors, institutions, and events in the making of a global consciousness.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, those interested in teaching global music history should expect to engage with a plurality of meanings that scholars and historical actors have attached to the term "global," and which might be at odds with each other. The contributors indeed model the plurality that is necessarily a component of global music history. They make explicit how they conceptualize and mold global music history for the classroom, and how their teaching is shaped by the institutional and political contexts they inhabit, as well as their personal and professional experiences.

There are, nonetheless, connecting threads found across articles, which is why we have organized these articles into four parts, even if the arguments presented within each part sometimes clash. The first part, "Putting Together Global Music History Courses," consists of two articles that reflect on music history courses that explicitly address globality as their main subject. In her article Danielle Fosler-Lussier discusses how she has used threshold concepts (or, in her words, "interpretive approaches that define a discipline") to structure her course "Music on the Move in a Globalized World" around key concerns associated with global music history. She shows how her open-access, classroom-friendly book *Music on the Move* deploys these concepts to teach a systematic and empathetic perspective on music, which ultimately encourages students to understand diverse people and processes they encounter in their lives. Roe-Min Kok's article focuses on her interdisciplinary course "Music and Colonialism in Global History," offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and directed at both music and arts students. In addition to describing how this course uses a global framework to explore the impact of Western art music on former colonies, Kok's article revolves around her students' experiences and observations of the course, its effectiveness, and areas for improvement.

4. Chantal Mouffe, "Which World Order: Cosmopolitan or Multipolar?" *Ethical Perspectives* 15, no. 4 (December 2008): 453–67. See also Tamara Caraus, "Towards an Agonistic Cosmopolitanism: Exploring the Cosmopolitan Potential of Chantal Mouffe's Agonism," *Critical Horizons* 17, no. 1 (January 2, 2016): 94–109.

5. See Roland Robertson, "Global Connectivity and Global Consciousness," *American Behavioral Scientist* 55, no. 10 (2011): 1336–45.

The second part, "Experimenting with Global Music History in Pedagogy," consists of three articles that are focused on concrete pedagogical approaches or methods. They allow the readers to imagine what a global music history pedagogy might look like in the classroom. Reflecting on her "Cantonese Music" course at the University of British Columbia in Canada, Hedy Law describes how teaching Cantonese music to an Asian-dominated student body in Vancouver decenters Eurocentric epistemologies entrenched in Western art music. Her experience invites us to consider the wider global Sinophone sphere and the distinct geopolitics that have traversed different periods, including those that pertain to the Hong Kong diaspora in recent years. In her article Alecia Barbour discusses how she incorporates concepts from the developing scholarship of global music history into the general education music course that she teaches as the only full-time music faculty at an institute of technology, and as a scholar identifying with historical ethnomusicology. She describes how embracing Michael Dylan Foster's concept of defamiliarization has helped to broaden the non-major students' perspectives on seemingly local music cultures and the notion of music itself. This part of the issue concludes with Nancy Rao's article on the importance of developing archival approaches and perspectives that could have democratizing implications for the research and teaching of global music history. Rao's work suggests that the politics of the traditional music archive necessitate broader considerations of what might serve as evidence when conducting global music research. Rao's reflections are based on a workshop on archival objects related to Chinese theaters and the life of Chinese Americans in early twentieth-century America that she conducted at the University of British Columbia and her research for the book *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America*. Her article suggests how bringing students to the archives, showing them objects directly related to narratives that shape our understanding of the globality of the past, and asking them to examine the materiality of these objects can help them understand historically peripheralized communities that should nevertheless be included in the scope of global music history today.

The third part, "Words of Caution," warns against facile or celebratory applications of global music history in teaching. In her article Tamara Levitz critiques the treatment of global music history as a "heuristic, concept, method, or pedagogical approach," positioning it instead as "a decentering perspective." Her argument cites the difficulty of having a shared concept of the world within musicology and unpacks this limitation through a genealogical comparison of comparative literature and musicology. She then uses Shu-mei Shih's idea of relational comparison to outline pedagogical ideas that could be applied to music or music history courses, in place of using "global music history" as a framework.



The final part of this special issue includes two conversations on the practices, challenges, failures, and potential perils of teaching from the perspectives of global music history, bringing together themes that have appeared in all of the articles above. The first conversation is between Samuel Ajose, who teaches at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, and Michael Birenbaum Quintero, who teaches at Boston University, United States. Readers will appreciate how “global” and “global music history” are parsed by the interlocutors, who inhabit different institutional and regional contexts as ethnomusicologists and teachers. Ajose and Birenbaum Quintero discuss how they apply global and historical dimensions to teaching in their respective positions and how they have come to include community music-making outside the university to fulfil their pedagogical commitment. The issue concludes with a conversation between Olivia Bloechl and Bonnie Gordon. Bloechl addresses her “Introduction to Global Music History” undergraduate course, while Gordon speaks of global moments and frameworks that inform how she teaches the early music courses that she offers at her institution. They discuss the usefulness of a global frame in challenging assumptions of local or national history and the Eurocentric narratives that have long shaped music history survey courses while noting that the term “global” itself might be intimidating for some students. They also offer pragmatic advice on selecting the teaching documents and delimiting the scope of the course based on their experience of what has and what has not worked in the past.

In conclusion, we as editors notice a pattern across this special issue: the instructors’ embrace of (and reservations about) global music history as a method, orientation, or idea often stems from an ethical intention. The authors’ goal is to make their classes and course materials more inclusive and to increase their students’ critical awareness of their place in an interconnected world. This goal is usually aligned with some stated institutionalized commitments typical of many universities in the Global North. (We note, however, that the instructors’ ethically informed course objectives may clash with institutional strategies around student recruitment—a point raised by Levitz, Birenbaum Quintero, and Gordon). Courses committed to the ethical inclusivity of diverse musical practices and histories may call attention to previously invisibilized musical interconnections and exchanges across national and cultural divides. They may also examine music in the context of regional or interregional conflicts and conquests, which may help students understand how musical and sonic cultures were influenced by colonialism and its legacy in different locations.

However, as much as we recognize or celebrate the ethical objective that grounds these courses, we also caution that the conception of “globality” is always contingent, contextual, plural, and contested. This provisional understanding of the “global” is attested by a broad spectrum of pedagogical approaches for

the music history classroom, including the pointed critiques of what constitutes the “global” in global music history, for whom, and to what ends. Critiques are, of course, predictable in scholarly discourse. Less predictable from our view as editors is the contributors’ repeated emphasis on the student demographics that shape the global music history classroom, existing institutional or curricular structures, and the history of the place where the university is embedded. In other words, the effectiveness of global music history pedagogy is more context-driven than we thought. The external, environmental factors—as opposed to internal ones such as readings, assignments, or course materials—often emerge as conclusive criteria for successful global music history pedagogy. The practices and challenges discussed in these essays thus illuminate one point: contrary to most Western art music courses that might work across various teaching settings, global music history courses paradoxically demand instructors to localize them. These courses tend to work better when instructors are attuned to the opportunities and gaps that arise from the various student communities and institutional initiatives that shape a university.

The essays in this special issue demonstrate a diversity of current pedagogical perspectives on and around the emerging field of global music history. We hope that the various experiences and tools presented here will serve as resources for readers who wish to construct new courses or revise existing ones specific to their teaching context. We hope that this collection of articles stimulates constructive conversations on what the pedagogy of global music history might entail and why some of us want to teach it, especially when we want to explore alongside our students and colleagues what it means to study music in a global world, then and now, here or elsewhere.

## Threshold Concepts for Music Studies from Global Music Histories

DANIELLE FOSLER-LUSSIER

In a time of urgent racial reckonings, it is apparent to many that we must innovate to build a more equitable and inclusive field of music studies. Faculty members have wondered how to revise the content we offer our students in collegiate instruction—and as we are not starting from a blank slate, change often means cutting content we or others consider important. Questions about the metacognitive skills we teach have also come to the fore: in an era of disinformation, it seems important to develop students' critical thinking and intellectual independence. The growing scholarship on global music histories offers knowledge, attitudes, and skills that differ substantially from the surveys many institutions offer to undergraduate music majors, and this literature has helped my colleagues and me develop courses that encourage students to grow as flexible musicians and as engaged citizens. In this essay, I will identify some of the ways in which approaches from global music histories have changed my teaching and describe how my recent book, *Music on the Move*, translates them into an accessible resource.

I have developed these strategies as a way of amending my own education. As a white child in suburban Maryland, I learned the music taught to me in school orchestra and band programs—principally European-style classical music and British and US symphonic and marching band music, with the extra-curricular addition of big band jazz and American musical theater. Teachers dismissed popular music as unworthy of attention, and the repertoire of school ensembles was circumscribed by canonic knowledge and a seemingly limited interest in alternatives. (I will not forget the time I asked about jazz played on the violin and was scoffed at by a summer jazz band director; I eventually found Stuff Smith and Stéphane Grappelli on my own at the public library.)

These limitations were foremost a matter of social priorities. In the postcolonial United States, school music was institutionalized largely by white women who worked to secure a place for European-style music in their communities

as a marker of “civility and polish.”<sup>1</sup> The adoption of this music was part of a global ambition: early in the twentieth century, the National Federation of Music Clubs, numbering more than 100,000 members, aimed “To make America the Music Center of the World.”<sup>2</sup> In a 1923 report on the activities of the Federation's Public School Music Department, Ruth Haller Ottaway outlined a systematic program by which club members could press their communities to start orchestras in the schools for the propagation of “good music and high culture.”<sup>3</sup> They would circulate petitions to institute Supervisors of Music at the state and regional levels of the educational system; demand that local school boards hire music teachers; equip schools with phonographs; and hold music memory contests to reward familiarity with great works. Ottaway asked each participating music club to adopt the goal of “*One Hundred Towns in our State with Class Instructors in Violin in the Schools.*”<sup>4</sup> When I arrived at public school 50-odd years later, school districts routinely employed music teachers, and my education reflected the priorities that the Federation had pushed to institute.

Not much has changed. Most of the music majors I teach in a NASM-accredited School of Music at a Big Ten university in the US Midwest arrive with a musical background similar to my early training. Some cultivate a double life and perform popular music “on the side,” which they have learned independently of their music instructors or through student organizations. Many have learned a commitment to a European classical canon.<sup>5</sup> Most of these music majors will go on to be employed as teachers in K–12 schools like the ones they and I studied in: the program is oriented toward reproducing a European-derived repertoire and a set of performance practices suited to it. Sometimes the program now includes works in the Euro-American tradition that were composed by people of color; but it is still rare that school music programs abandon the band/orchestra/choir model to train students to play in Afro-diasporic or other popular musical styles. This stasis seems ever more out-of-step with the aims of racial justice that circulate in our public sphere,

1. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 17. In 1957, Charles Seeger described the “traumatic character” of US cultural life: see “Music and Class Structure in the United States,” *American Quarterly* 9, no. 3 (Autumn, 1957): 282.

2. “Federation Aims,” *Official Bulletin* of the National Federation of Music Clubs, Special Festival Issue, Thirteenth Biennial Convention, Asheville, N.C. (June 1923): 4.

3. Ruth Haller Ottaway, “Public School Music,” *Official Bulletin* of the National Federation of Music Clubs 3, no. 3 (November 1923): 6.

4. Ottaway, “Public School Music,” 6. Emphasis original.

5. See Loren Kajikawa, “The Possessive Investment in Classical Music,” in *Seeing Race Again: Countering Colorblindness Across the Disciplines*, ed. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, Luke Charles Harris, Daniel Martinez HoSang, and George Lipsitz (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), especially 155–59, 162–65, 169–171.

aims that are also increasingly enshrined in our universities' strategic plans and diversity action plans. By maintaining a program of study in Schools of Music that resolutely look to Europe first, we educate our students in a manner more reflective of 1923 than of 2023, one that mirrors colonial values, and one that excludes most of the music people love from the system of value they are taught.

Our musicology course sequence for music majors at Ohio State includes expected learning outcomes about musical repertoires and skills. But in recent years my primary goal for these students has been that they be able to function as musical citizens wherever they find themselves, now and in the future.<sup>6</sup> At this moment, this learning outcome seems most important:

Students will “read the room,” correctly interpreting musical and social situations they encounter in the present day and responding thoughtfully and appropriately.

This outcome implies several constituent objectives, these two among them:

- a) Students can explain multiple musical value systems and priorities, including those that differ from their own. (This objective is about perspective-taking and empathy as well as content knowledge.)
- b) Students should understand that a theory can be applied to different cases as a thinking tool and be able to apply a theory to a new case. (This objective is about analytical or “system” thinking, and it is a skill that many of our entering graduate students across the music disciplines don't yet have).<sup>7</sup>

I want our graduates to be able to size up a situation where racism, colonialism, or other forms of inequity are at work, ask smart questions, gather and assess new information, and make ethical choices.<sup>8</sup>

For example, I want the performer to have enough knowledge and empathy to decide whether to frame the performance of a piece that includes troubling

6. I owe this formulation to my colleague Ryan Skinner, whose Musical Citizenship course is the centerpiece of our newly adopted musicology curriculum for music majors at Ohio State University.

7. My thinking about what our students need to learn owes a great deal to Samuel Dorf, Louis K. Epstein, and our interlocutors at the event “But will they pass the exam?”—A Conversation about Graduate Entrance and Placement Exams in Musicology” (held via Zoom, December 2020).

8. A useful set of concepts for assessing the quality of information can be found in the Association of College & Research Libraries *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* (Chicago: The Association of College & Research Libraries, 2016), <https://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>.

racial content with contextual information, or refrain from performing it. I want our graduates to assess how institutional power and political pressures are working and decide how to act in a principled way amid those systems. I want the schoolteacher or the administrator at a nonprofit arts organization to think creatively about repertoire for concert programming and consider its appeal to various audiences—both the audiences who are historically loyal to the organization, and the audiences who have not really been invited in. And I want them to explain the value of more inclusive choices to the school board or to the board of directors who are worried about fundraising. I want our graduates to call to mind historical precedents that shaped the present situation, or are analogues to it, and use those precedents and analogues to evaluate new circumstances they encounter. I want them to notice aspects of a present-day situation that are rooted in colonial practice or racist exclusion and use what they know to formulate strategies for making music and relating to people that do the least harm and build the most good. The world we are living in demands that we cultivate knowledge and skills of this kind. The musical training I received did not do that job, and neither did the musical training I was taught to deliver.

### Threshold concepts for global music histories

To be able to do these things, our students need experience with a variety of musical repertoires and practices from the past and present; and they also need an array of disciplinary thinking skills, some of them quite abstract. In deciding what and how to teach, I have used *threshold concepts*—because this approach is closely allied to my learning objectives. Threshold concepts are a set of interpretive approaches that define a discipline: according to Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle, they are concepts for “thinking through and with.”<sup>9</sup> Often threshold concepts present a specific disciplinary understanding of a phenomenon that contradicts learners' common-sense understandings. One example is that in Economics, the idea of “opportunity cost” does not correspond to our everyday usage of the word “cost”—it's a more technical understanding that points to a whole social situation and relationships between competing priorities, and the concept of “opportunity cost” has implications for how problems are approached and solved in that field.<sup>10</sup> Likewise, in Women's Studies, “patriarchy” is a theoretical tool that helps us identify the working and outcomes of

9. Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle, eds., Preface to *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies* (Boulder: Utah State University Press, 2016), x.

10. Ray Land, Glynis Cousin, Jan H. F. Meyer, and Peter Davies, “Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Implications for Course Design and Evaluation,” in Chris Rust, ed., *Improving Student Learning: Diversity and Inclusivity* (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development, 2005), 55; see also Martin Shanahan, “Threshold Concepts in Economics,” *Education and Training* 58, no. 5 (2006): 510–520.

a social system.<sup>11</sup> These are “threshold” concepts because each is a gateway to a discipline: once a person grasps the concept and knows how to apply it, the person has access to an analytical approach that is foundational in that discipline.

These concepts don’t come naturally: they take practice. Once a person has acquired facility with a threshold concept, though, the lights come on: they have a new lens through which they can start to see how different ideas fit together.<sup>12</sup> Jan Meyer and Ray Land explain that threshold concepts are “probably irreversible.”<sup>13</sup> Their formulation corresponds to what the feminist writer Jane O’Reilly called the “click! of recognition”<sup>14</sup>—when one’s view of the world is permanently changed by a particular experience, such that it is impossible to see things the old way ever again. As O’Reilly put it: when we undergo a change of this kind, “we have suddenly and shockingly perceived the basic disorder in what has been believed to be the natural order of things.”<sup>15</sup> This kind of understanding isn’t just understanding the idea once: it’s having the idea become a permanent part of the analytical toolkit for making sense of the world. Ideally, focusing on these concepts should help our students think like participants in the discipline—giving them access to how academic knowledge and debates are structured, and allowing them to try out roles they could play in these debates.<sup>16</sup> If we equip students with concepts of this kind, it gets them closer to being able to “read the room.”

Scholarship that engages global music histories offers us a useful array of threshold concepts for music studies. Following Olivia Bloechl, we might think of this wide-ranging body of scholarship as “entangled” or “connected” history.<sup>17</sup> The perspective cultivated in this work is useful for my purposes because it describes musical traditions not as separate developments that progress on their own terms, but as part of processes of conflict, exchange, and interconnection.

11. Holly Hassel, Amy Reddinger, and Jessica van Slooten, “Surfacing the Structures of Patriarchy: Teaching and Learning Threshold Concepts in Women’s Studies,” *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 5, no. 2, Article 18 (2011), <https://doi.org/10.20429/ijstl.2011.050218>.

12. Land, Cousin, Meyer, and Davies, “Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Implications for Course Design and Evaluation,” 53–55.

13. Jan Meyer and Ray Land, “Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practicing Within the Disciplines,” Occasional Report 4, Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses Project, University of Edinburgh (May 2003), 4. <http://www.etl.tla.ed.ac.uk/docs/ETLreport4.pdf>.

14. Jane O’Reilly, “The Housewife’s Moment of Truth,” Ms., Spring, 1972. <https://msmagazine.com/2021/03/04/from-the-vault-click-the-housewives-moment-of-truth-ms-magazine-spring-1972/>.

15. O’Reilly, “The Housewife’s Moment of Truth.”

16. Meyer and Land, “Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practising within the Disciplines,” 4; Adler-Kassner and Wardle, Preface to *Naming What We Know*, xi, xiv.

17. Olivia Bloechl, Editorial, *Eighteenth-Century Music* 17, no. 2 (2020): 173–76.

Histories of colonialism, empire, and tourism allow us to witness processes of appropriation, imposition, assimilation, and mixing: these processes are key features of our musical world in the present day. Telling history in this way affords opportunities for assessing the roles of social systems and of individuals, and seeing how large-scale phenomena play out in individuals’ creative lives, or vice versa.<sup>18</sup> These histories have also focused on material affordances and constraints that shape music-making: this focus can denaturalize our practices and help us think in new ways about what we do with music, and why.<sup>19</sup> Last, a history that shows the entanglement of groups of people with differing values affords opportunities for critical study of canon formation in different times and places: noticing how others change or defend their values assists us in interrogating our own.

Beginning in the mid-2000s, I developed a general education course, “Music on the Move in a Globalized World,” focusing on key concerns in global music studies.<sup>20</sup> My recent book, *Music on the Move*, works through a collection of threshold concepts from that course: colonialism, migration, diaspora, mediation, propaganda, copyright, heritage, and mixing. Each of these concepts describes a complex social dynamic: conveying each one requires multiple examples for comparison so that the student can develop a sense of the social relationships and patterns the concept names, as well as a sense of how those relationships and patterns relate to musical practices of the past or present.<sup>21</sup>

I chose these concepts because, first, they are analytical tools that enable an understanding of our interconnected world in the present. For example, if learners understand the idea of mediation, they are equipped to think about how music’s meaning is changed when its form is altered, or when it’s handed

18. Bloechl, Editorial; Gabriel Solis, “Transpacific Excursions,” in *This Thing Called Music: Essays in Honor of Bruno Nettl*, ed. Victoria Lindsay Levine and Philip V. Bohlman (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 354–65.

19. For example, Glenda Goodman, “‘But they differ from us in sound’: Indian Psalmody and the Soundscape of Colonialism, 1651–75,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (Oct. 2012): 793–822; Sergio Ospina Romero, “Recording Studios on Tour: The Expeditions of the Victor Talking Machine Company Through Latin America, 1903–1926” (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 2019); and Rachel Wheeler and Sarah Eyerly, “Singing Box 331: Re-sounding Eighteenth-Century Mohican Hymns from the Moravian Archives,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 76, no. 4 (Oct. 2019): 649–96, and companion website, <https://oieahc.wm.edu/digital-projects/oi-reader/singing-box-331-rachel-wheeler-sarah-eyerly/hearing-new-histories/>.

20. Threshold concepts are particular to disciplines and defined within communities of practice: it is unlikely that people across the several music studies fields would all agree on which concepts are crucial. As students need both historical and ethnographic approaches to knowledge, my selection and treatment of these concepts has drawn extensively on both musicology and ethnomusicology—as does the global music histories literature.

21. *Music on the Move* is a work of synthesis, and its intellectual debts are too numerous to name here: I encourage the reader to refer to its bibliography and notes. It is available open access at <https://www.fulcrum.org/concern/monographs/m613n040s>.



to a new user. If they have encountered compelling music about experiences of migration, that will help them understand people and processes they will encounter in other areas of their lives. Second, these concepts connect inquiry about the past with students' present concerns, and they can therefore be integrated into the kind of undergraduate music studies course that is common in our universities. Last, these concepts help us educate students not only as musicians but as citizens, providing them with strategies for thinking about equity, access, and justice. *Music on the Move* begins by inviting the reader to examine their own musical world(s), and what kinds of interpersonal or long-distance connections are relevant for them. The chapters that follow take up the threshold concepts, which overlap and build upon one another as the volume proceeds.

The first part of the book, entitled "Migration," describes music that moves with its makers through processes of diaspora and migration. These three chapters are delimited geographically: they take up colonialism in Indonesia; the Romani diaspora in Europe; and the African diaspora in the United States. Focusing each of these chapters on a specific interaction between peoples allowed me to introduce information about the historical reasons for the movement of people and some terms describing the blending, clashing, or appropriation of musics, while still offering enough different examples and stories to show multiple perspectives. The chapter on colonialism examines social violence and musical assimilation in Indonesia, as well as the alteration of traditions through state-sanctioned tourism and the appropriation of Indonesian musical styles by people elsewhere. Throughout these chapters, I tried to be clear about the formative power relationships engendered by occupation, the capture and enslavement of peoples, and state and corporate seizure of resources: I particularly wanted readers to cultivate empathy with peoples who have experienced duress. At the same time, I wanted them to recognize the many kinds of ingenuity with which musicians have adapted to face challenging circumstances.

The next section, entitled "Mediation," offers eclectic examples chosen to highlight specific uses of music, with the aim of helping readers see clearly the human purposes and strategies that underlie musical decision-making. These chapters address situations in which sound recording and/or political aspirations have moved music from one place to another—sometimes through educational or diplomatic travel, but often through printed, recorded, or broadcast media. The early history of recording affords a discussion of motivations for sound archiving and folk-song collection. The sound recording chapter also discusses a variety of new sound-worlds created by manipulating recorded audio, including *musique concrète*; electronic dance music; and the improbable stylistic mixes that filled the profitable market niche of "world music." Considering the role of nation-states in chapter 5 allows a re-examination of

nationalism, which had already come up in earlier chapters; this chapter also highlights the global power asymmetries that inspired processes of modernization and Europeanization in Japan and Turkey. The power of the state to constrain or support musicians (Paul Robeson, Cui Jian) or promote particular styles (mass song, heritage displays, music diplomacy) is an important theme here.

People today live in a wash of mediated and mixed music; they do not always consider where it comes from, what it represents, who put it there, or for what purpose. This middle section is meant to help the reader see the purposes and interests that underlie music's mediation and identify how and why people make different musical choices in different situations. (This idea corresponds to my learning objective "a" described above: explaining multiple musical value systems and priorities.) This section of the book also encourages readers to practice discerning how musical purposes and interests operate at various scales, from individual musicians' or communities' aspirations to the political agendas of states or empires. Being able to describe how musical processes connect with large-scale social forces is a kind of pattern recognition: it requires abstracting elements from one case and applying them to a new case. (This idea corresponds to my learning objective "b" described above: analytical or "system" thinking.) This kind of thinking is a strength of the scholarship on global music histories.<sup>22</sup>

The third section of the book, "Mashup," addresses in more detail how individual musicians' creative choices interact with global forces like migration, mediation, and neoliberalism. Chapter 6 examines several individual musicians' contrasting strategies of appropriation, with an eye toward the different meanings appropriation can produce depending on who's doing it and what they're mixing together. Chapter 7 presents concepts of copyright and ownership and shows how artists and communities in the global south have challenged international copyright enforcement regimes to create their own economic niches. Chapter 8 examines situations in which a music from one place has become localized in another place, with particular attention to several kinds of Korean American music; and to hip hop musicians in South Africa, Morocco, and Egypt. This section of the book calls attention to individuals' creative agency, which interacts with larger dynamics such as state support or constraint, the desire to connect with a distant home, and the assertion of ownership over a musical style from elsewhere. These cases, too, reflect learning objectives "a"

22. See, for example, Bloechl, "Editorial"; Solis, "Transpacific Excursions"; Hyun Kyong Hannah Chang, "Colonial Circulations: Japan's Classroom Songbooks in Korea, 1910–1945," *Ethnomusicology Forum* 27, no. 2 (2018): 157–183; and Erika Supria Honisch, Ferran Escrivà-Llorca, and Tess Knighton, "On the Trail of a Knight of Santiago: Collecting Music and Mapping Knowledge in Renaissance Europe," *Music and Letters* 101, no. 3 (August 2020): 397–453.

and “b”: by presenting related and comparable but distinct cases, I hope that readers will practice using the concepts; recognize common patterns among the situations; and get a feel for what factors are important in shaping different outcomes in different cases.

Because *Music on the Move* is not limited to one genre or style of music, but organized by threshold concepts, it invites the text’s users to bring in their own examples. It does not reflect a closed canon of valued works, but introduces ideas that readers can apply to music they care about—whether that music is covered in the book or not. For teachers, the threshold concept structure affords the opportunity to build a course that connects to repertoires not covered in the book, each of which might offer a different opportunity to apply the ideas. In some ways, this strategy resembles a “case studies” approach; here, the threshold concepts from global music history have guided the choice and ordering of cases, with the aim of creating a set of tools that equips the reader to approach music’s entangled history.<sup>23</sup>

Repetition of terms and concepts both within a chapter and throughout the volume—always in new configurations—was an essential strategy. Ideally, by the end the reader has met enough cases to have developed a sense of how certain kinds of situations generally tend to work. Michael Figueroa has rightly warned that we should take care not to make generalizations that “obscure the distinctiveness of local histories and sounds.”<sup>24</sup> At the same time, the intellectual work of becoming familiar with multiple instances of a similar dynamic seems essential for cultivating the ability to “read the room.” Encountering several related cases helps the vocabulary stick, but also helps the social relationships and human problems described in the cases start to seem familiar—and that is what makes the threshold concept useful when readers encounter it in a new situation.

### Global Music Histories and the Music Major

I developed *Music on the Move* through teaching a general education course, but I have also begun integrating these concepts into music majors’ coursework, where the balance of topics has traditionally tipped more strongly toward Europe. In teaching a survey of music before 1750, I included a substantial multi-week unit on colonialism, relying on a broad array of recent scholarship

23. On using case studies to teach music history, see Sara Haefeli, *Teaching Music History With Cases: A Teacher’s Guide* (New York: Routledge, 2022), 18–25; and Sara Haefeli and Andrew dell’Antonio, interview with Will Robin, “Sound Expertise” (podcast), <https://soundexpertise.org/teaching-music-history-with-sara-haefeli-and-andrew-dellantonio/>.

24. Michael A. Figueroa, “Decolonizing ‘Intro to World Music?’” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 10, no. 1 (2020): 45. <https://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/article/view/308>.

that interrogates global power relationships and their effects on music-making. This unit could not have been put together without Erika Supria Honisch and Giovanni Zanovello’s “Inclusive Early Music” database.<sup>25</sup> The unit was designed so that students would see several different instances of colonialism and start to understand how the big geopolitical picture affects details of music-making. Most importantly, as we examined each new case, I gradually asked them to contribute more and more of their own interpretation.

This conversation was prefigured by coverage of Iberian music earlier in the course, focusing on the multi-ethnic history of the region, long-distance connections, and music on seafaring topics. The colonialism unit introduced several different scenes of conflict. We started by contrasting musics of Spanish occupiers and indigenous Mexica and Inca peoples.<sup>26</sup> Drawing on scholarship of Bloechl, Glenda Goodman, and Katie Graber, we talked about conflict between French and English settlers and Native Americans in New England and what is now Canada, focusing on music’s role as a form of resistance and situations where Native people adopted or adapted Christian musical practices. Bloechl’s work provided a model of “counter-storytelling”; by reading the Jesuit *Relations* against the grain, she brings forward specific and vivid stories of Native peoples’ resistance to French Jesuit colonizers that show how performance was part of the conflict.<sup>27</sup> A section of Chapter 1 of *Music on the Move*, on colonialism in Indonesia, served as fodder for a comparative discussion section.

Drawing on work of Maria Ryan, Eileen Southern, Rhiannon Giddens, the McIntosh County Shouters, and the Musical Passage project, we spent two class sessions on early African American music. This lecture and discussion brought in questions of method in colonial situations: how we study this music, what the sources are like, and how we interpret those sources. My partner teacher in Spring 2021, Phoebe Hughes, relied on the work of Portia Maultsby, Travis Stimeling, and Kayla Tokar in her lecture about Black music in the colonies that would become the United States, including the suppression of drums after

25. Erika Supria Honisch and Giovanni Zanovello, “Inclusive Early Music,” <https://inclusiveearlymusic.org>. I also owe several of my choices to a repertoire list from Reba Wissner.

26. Lorenzo Candelaria, “Bernardino de Sahagún’s *Psalmodia Christiana*: A Catholic Songbook from Sixteenth-Century New Spain,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 67, no. 3 (2014): 619–684; Beatriz Aguilar, Darhyl Ramsey, and Barry Lumsden, “The Aztec Empire and the Spanish Missions: Early Music Education in North America,” *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 24, no. 1 (Oct. 2002): 62–82.

27. Olivia Bloechl, “Listening as a Contact Zone in the Jesuit *Relations*: A Global History Approach,” Lecture given at The Ohio State University, September 2019; Bloechl, “Wendat Song and Carnival Noise in the Jesuit *Relations*,” *Native Acts: Indian Performance, 1603–1832* (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 117–144; Goodman, “‘But they differ from us in sound’”; Katie Graber and Geraldine Baltzer, “‘Twas in the moon of wintertime’ not included in new Mennonite hymnal,” *Canadian Mennonite* (16 December 2019), <https://canadianmennonite.org/stories/huron-carol-new-hymnal>.

the Stono Rebellion of 1739 and the African American tradition of celebrating Pinkster Day.<sup>28</sup> These two class meetings, more than any others, helped my first-year students understand musicologists' methods in reconstructing histories from a variety of source materials.

Overall, this unit was still set up like a "survey" in that participants listened to a lot of pieces and learned some historical context that relates to those pieces. But the skill I was targeting was being able to apply the idea of colonialism in interpreting a situation. By the time we got to the African American material, students had seen several cases, and they were readily using ideas and terms from the conversations we had had before. As the unit progressed I could elicit more and more independent interpretive work from them during class discussions. I was routinely asking them to contribute their "read" on situations, and their observations were becoming more accurate and insightful. By the end of the unit they were able to draw parallels between situations we had studied and cases from their own experience that we hadn't talked about at all—this gave me some confidence that the concept of colonialism and the strategy of reading situations had stuck with them.

As an organizing principle, the threshold concept helped me to choose and organize the pieces we would study. We have moved away from using textbooks in our musicology courses for the music majors, but that decision has meant choosing new materials and crafting narratives from scratch. The utility of threshold concepts is that they give me a sense of purpose that underlies the selection of topics and materials. Here I was choosing repertory not only for its own sake, but also as music that shed light on entangled histories, with the aim of cultivating interpretive skills for reading musical style and style's social meanings. As we continue to adjust the balance between European genres and all the other music we want to cover in our music major courses, threshold concepts seem a useful way to name our guiding purposes and hold ourselves to them.

28. Laurent Dubois, David K. Garner, and Mary Caton Lingold, "Musical Passage" (2016), <http://www.musicalpassage.org/#explore>; Portia K. Maultsby, "The Translated African Cultural and Musical Past," in Mellonee V. Burnim and Portia K. Maultsby, eds., *African American Music: An Introduction*, 2nd edn. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 3–22; McIntosh County Shouters, "Gullah-Geechee Ring Shout from Georgia," performance at the Library of Congress (2011), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxPU5517u8c>; Maria Ryan, "Hearing Power, Sounding Freedom: Black Practices of Listening, Ear-Training, and Music-Making in the British Colonial Caribbean" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2021); Eileen Southern, ed., *Readings in Black American Music* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972); Travis D. Stimeling and Kayla Tokar, "Narratives of Musical Resilience and the Perpetuation of Whiteness in the Music History Classroom," *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 10, no. 1 (2020): 20–38; John Jeremiah Sullivan, "Rhiannon Giddens and What Folk Music Means," *The New Yorker*, 20 May 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/05/20/rhiannon-giddens-and-what-folk-music-means>.

The students in our survey courses typically demonstrate varied levels of investment. So far, designing curriculum so that threshold concepts are highlighted and unavoidable seems to have positive effects. For less engaged students, the unit on colonialism caught their attention because the ideas we were considering were sometimes shocking, delivering immediacy and relevance they did not expect. For students who were already motivated to learn but who had been trained to see classical music as "apolitical," this unit asked them to apply prior knowledge about social conflict to music they thought was separate from it. For some, this request chipped at their silos, helping them think more clearly about what music is and does. Several students told me they had never learned that colonization was harmful, or that it mattered for music; some reflected on the role of powerful institutions and connected course material to social justice concerns in the present; and a few mentioned wanting to hold onto the style of thinking practiced in this course.

Our current generation of undergraduates seems hungry for this kind of learning—course content that helps them think about their musical and social worlds and expands their analytical toolkit. The newly adopted curriculum at Ohio State includes a course entitled Global Music Histories, as well as one on Musical Citizenship. As we continue to discern what is essential to cover, scholarship that explores global music histories has been an essential resource and a stimulus pushing us in new directions.

## Teaching Music Colonialism in Global History: Pedagogical Pathways and Student Responses

ROE-MIN KOK

European powers colonized about 84% of the globe between 1492 and 1914.<sup>1</sup> Today, the consequences of centuries of domination linger in many former colonies, especially those in the Global South. In addition to devastating long-term effects on slaves and Indigenous people, colonial rule left behind unequal distribution of wealth, social inequalities, poverty, slow economic growth, and low rates of mass education.<sup>2</sup> As Aníbal Quijano has pointed out, European governance also gave birth to a widespread mindset, “coloniality,” in which “European or Western culture imposed its paradigmatic image and its principle cognitive elements as the norm of orientation on all cultural development, particularly the intellectual and the artistic.” Former colonies, according to Quijano, were “pushed into Europeanisation of everything or in part.” Even though “colonialism as an explicit political order was destroyed,” Quijano asserts that it “is still the most general form of domination in the world today.”<sup>3</sup>

How did the music and musical practices brought by colonizers affect those in the colonies, and vice versa? What European cultural value systems travelled global routes via music? And how did local communities receive, negotiate, and re-invent them? The course “Music Colonialism in Global History” (MCGH) seeks to answer these and related questions by probing global musics vis-à-vis coloniality and its inherent power structures.<sup>4</sup> Overall learning objectives include increasing basic understanding of the relationship between music,

1. Philip Hoffman, *Why Did Europe Conquer the World?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 2, see also 3, n5

2. Hoffman, *Why Did Europe*, 208.

3. Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality,” *Cultural Studies* 21 nos. 2–3 (2007): 170.

4. I originally coined the term “music colonialism” for the *Oxford Handbook of Music Colonialism* when the *Handbook* was contracted several years ago. Co-edited by Erin Johnson-Williams, Yvonne Liao and me, the volume is forthcoming in 2024. This article marks the first appearance of the term in print.

geography, and colonial history; developing critical reading and listening skills; understanding the diversity of musical practices in different locations in the world; and appreciating music as a site of social issues in the past and/or present. Among the learning outcomes are topic-specific information and terminology, and familiarity with critical issues about Western music in colonial and post-colonial cultures on a global scale. In-class activities include discussing the complex artistic legacies of colonialism, cultivating inclusive dialogues about the cultures and histories of diverse communities around the world, and engaging in self-reflexive critiques to destabilize and counter deeply entrenched assumptions. The course prepares students to make informed decisions about engaging with postcolonial musics, including leading or participating in initiatives to decolonize the arts.<sup>5</sup>

The content of MCGH differs from traditional music history courses, which typically cover European music in Western settings, and from ethnomusicology courses, which typically emphasize traditional and local musics worldwide. Parallel to ethnomusicology, MCGH features global locations; however, we study the receptions and practices of Western (art) music in former colonies and our approach is heavily informed by critical theories from the field of Postcolonial Studies. Having designed the course in 2015 with the support of a fellowship from McGill University’s then-Institute for the Public Life of Arts and Ideas, I first offered MCGH to graduate students in Fall 2016. A year later, I adapted the course for undergraduates. Since its inception, I have taught the class four times at the undergraduate level and six times as a graduate seminar. Although both levels make use of the same core materials, the formats, reading loads, assignments, and expectations are tailored to the respective educational stages.

In this article I explain how I teach MCGH at the undergraduate level (including methods and materials), and reflect upon the effectiveness of my pedagogical approach by analyzing what students took away in relation to the class’s learning objectives and learning outcomes. For the latter exercise, I solicited student responses to a questionnaire with broadly-couched queries. This article is divided into three sections. After describing the course’s practical aspects (format, setup, examples of readings), I present and summarize the students’ commentaries. They were invited to articulate what they had gained from the course, evaluate the materials and pedagogical tools used, and suggest adjustments to the course content and approach. In the third and last section, I

5. Numerous scholars and policy makers have highlighted education’s crucial role in decolonizing initiatives. For instance, a report forged by Canadian Indigenous communities and the Canadian government, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015), calls for “Developing culturally appropriate curricula,” 10.iii, 2; and “Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect,” 63.iii, 7. <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.801236/publication.html> (accessed June 12, 2022).



summarize what MCGH and its pedagogies achieve, and offer thoughts on the course's significance and goals for the longer term.

### I. Practical Aspects

For music majors at my university, MCGH represents an elective that fulfills one of two required upper-level music history courses. Given the interdisciplinary nature and breadth of the topic, however, I decided from the beginning to cross-list the course so that non-music majors may also enroll (class size is capped at 20). The pre-requisites for music majors include first- and second-year music history courses; for non-music students there are none. By welcoming intellectually curious participants from across campus, I simulate a liberal arts classroom setting (within a large music conservatory) that brings the field of music into interdisciplinary conversation with the hydra-headed phenomenon of colonialism/ coloniality. This arrangement is also intended to fuel peer education between music and non-music undergraduates. The class meets once a week for three hours to discuss reading and listening assignments. Each week, we focus on particular themes or aspects of colonialism/coloniality, which are illustrated through readings that present thought-provoking, debate-worthy issues along with case studies from different parts of the world. Weekly themes include "Zones of Contact,"<sup>6</sup> "Diversity, Difference, Hybridity," and "Politics of Resistance and Race" (see Appendix One).

Aligning with the course content's ideals of global, inclusive dialogue and cultural equality, the class format cultivates a non-hierarchical, shared, and engaged classroom. For example, I allow students to select readings rather than assigning them directly. Here's how it works. At the end of class, I project a list of possible readings and explain how each relates to the following week's theme. Students then come to a consensus about the reading(s) we should cover. They are required to post weekly "Reflective Questions" about the selected publication(s) in the course's Learning Management System. Occasionally, a particular student is attracted to readings beyond those selected collectively. I list such extra readings as "optional" and invite the interested student to summarize and present them (or one of them) to the entire class. In addition to weekly "Reflective Questions," I assign a midterm and a final project. For the midterm, a take-home task, students read and review an article or book chapter which they individually select from a list of items not previously addressed in class.

6. Inspired by Mary Louise Pratt's notion of "contact zones" which are "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today." *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 4.

They have two weeks in which to write a "Summary, Evaluation, and Critique" of the publication. For the final project, I ask students to give an in-class oral presentation accompanied by a detailed handout. They select one of two possible pathways: either they examine a former colony and its musical traditions in light of its colonial history, or they write an autoethnographic, self-reflexive account of their experiences learning and playing Western art music, using critical concepts from postcolonial, cultural, race, and gender theories.

### II. Student Responses

What are students learning from the course and its global components? In April 2022 I contacted seven (out of seventeen) students who had taken MCGH in Fall 2021 and invited them to submit written responses of 1000–2000 words to three questions. Five accepted.<sup>7</sup> I selected students who had been particularly engaged in the course, as I believed they would provide thoughtful comments. I designed open-ended questions that encompassed the impact of the course, the effectiveness of the course materials, and possible revisions to the course design. I present a sampling of the students' responses below.<sup>8</sup> Overall, respondents had enjoyed the course, citing its content and approach as perspective-changing in the context of their experience. Previously unaware of connections between music and colonialism/coloniality (particularly in terms of political and other power relations), they had found the readings and cultural theories enlightening and useful tools for thinking about global social justice.

*Question 1: How has MCGH contributed to your understanding of our ever-globalizing world, and the place of "Western art music" within it?*

Students reported that the course had enlarged their intellectual and geopolitical horizons and enhanced their awareness of the power structures underlying the music industry worldwide. NYH wrote:

MCGH established music and art as inherently political acts that cannot be separated from the social context of power. The discussions and materials taught me that music has historically been used by institutions of power as tools of oppression, and to a certain extent these hierarchical constructions are embedded in the essence of the art form itself; but more importantly, that

7. I thank the respondents for their thoughtful, lively remarks. I am also grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for funding the survey. Each student received CAD 500. Since they had already received their grades, I anticipated neither risks nor conflict-of-interest issues. They chose a preferred mode of identification from a given list and gave me permission to publish their answers. Unless volunteered by individuals, information about gender, ethnicity, citizenship, major, and year in the student's program is not included.

8. Responses have been edited for clarity and concision.

music can be a useful tool toward liberation and empowering self-determination for marginalized peoples in the contemporary culture industry. It was fascinating to explore the two aspects with nuanced class discussion, learning from different global perspectives to gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies of music as a political tool. The discussion of music in “post-colonial” countries such as Singapore in particular was very illuminating and helped me learn more about the ways in which music remains a symbol for prestige and acceptance in the globalizing world.

Milton Rosenbaum found the class eye-opening when compared to his previous experiences with “Music History.” He likened his shift in perspective to his experience of reading Helen Gordon’s *Notes from Deep Time*, a book detailing the geological development of our planet.<sup>9</sup>

The class was key to shaping the way I look at music as a whole. Music has become less of a static collection of songs and composers and more of a long-form, single story. I can now appreciate songs as single points in a larger narrative of cultural exchange and domination. Before entering the class, statements like “Beethoven is the greatest composer of all time” were axiomatic, but the class allowed me to question and identify similar thoughts. Gordon’s conception of the world as almost a liquid substance, flowing under complex interacting forces, closely mirrors how classes like this can help you see the social world. Countries and cultural concepts stop being fixed and instead become contingent on the social forces that shape them. MCGH helped me apply that understanding in a deep and nuanced way to music. I was already aware, for instance, of lingering neocolonial and cultural colonialism in East Asia. However, I was surprised to learn that many of these countries still “authentically” venerate Western styles of music. MCGH equipped me with a theoretical framework to understand this domination-by consent.<sup>10</sup>

Excited that the course was available at all, Yuval Tessman-Bar-On found that:

MCGH profoundly influenced my interests in feminism, transnational feminism, and global music traditions. It allowed me to discover the complex ways in which music fits into narratives of colonialism, displacement, immigration, diaspora, global issues of social justice, and how the musical and cultural lives of post-colonial nations are impacted by histories of colonialism.

9. Helen Gordon, *Notes from Deep Time: A Journey through our Past and Future Worlds* (London: Profile Books, 2021).

10. The phrase “domination by consent” comes from “Education,” in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 371. For the origins of this idea, see Antonio Gramsci’s “On Education,” in *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, translated and edited by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 2003), 24–43.

To Alan Vlaykov, the course was intriguing but also puzzling. He had had little background in music and sensed that musicians share a subculture in which he perceived certain unexamined beliefs. Between the readings and his interactions with classmates, Vlaykov realized that the attitudes appear to stem from the traditional pedagogical model used in applied music lessons, a model that has disseminated worldwide through colonialism.

I came into this class not knowing almost anything about Western art music. After all, I am an economics major and music had no role in my previous thought about globalization which had always been a social and economic phenomenon for me. The course changed my view on the world. It has added a completely new layer of understanding. I realized that the way music is taught fundamentally contributes to its practitioners’ ideas of the world. Not only through the readings done for the course but through conversation with my classmates. Many preconceptions and ideas that were presented by my peers did not make sense to me. Some things were taken as given and not questioned.<sup>11</sup> I could not comprehend why but these made more sense after I understood the way music is taught. Overall, my understanding of the world has been expanded.

On her part, WJ was aware of debates about Western art music in the Global North, but the music’s continued influence in the Global South astonished her. She was especially struck by how Western music education had been adopted far from its place of origin, and critically contemplated her own learning experiences—which she elegantly termed “musical interpellation” (after Louis Althusser).<sup>12</sup>

It had been brought to my attention in music history classes that Western classical music continues to promote outdated colonial ideals through the traditional works that modern establishments choose to perform. However, it was only in taking MCGH that I truly understood how intrinsically connected colonialism is to Western classical music, not only in terms of content but additionally through music education in former colonies. I had not realized the extent to which our supposedly modern musical institutions continued to uphold outdated and problematic power structures through their steadfast adherence to traditional teaching practices. This course helped me

11. Entrenched practices can remain unquestioned for a long time. After a class discussion about hiring practices in orchestras, a Business Management major who took MCGH several years ago expressed shock that music has only recently begun to address workplace inequities. She explained that the topic is well developed in her own field, and at least thirty years old.

12. I had introduced the concept via “Notes on Interpellation,” an open-access handout by Chris McGee based on Louis Althusser’s “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes towards an Investigation,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 85–126.

McGee’s handout can be found at “Notes on Interpellation,” <https://www.longwood.edu/staff/mcgeecw/notesoninterpellation.htm> (accessed March 17, 2020).

examine the musical interpellation I inherited from my teachers, peers, and from Western society in general. It helped me re-contextualize my own experiences as a pupil struggling to learn in colonial master-pupil dichotomies.

These responses confirmed that MCGH had successfully achieved (and in some ways, exceeded) its learning objectives: increasing basic understanding of the relationship of music, geography, and colonial history; developing critical reading and listening skills; understanding the diversity of musical practices in different locations in the world; and appreciating music as a site of social issues in the past and/or present.

*Question 2: The pedagogical tools used in the course included readings and assigned written responses, in-class dialogue and discussions, a review essay, and a final project.*

*Question 2a: Which do you think was/were most effective in delivering the course content? Elaborate on your responses, including reasons for the points you make.*

Student respondents had enjoyed the course materials and pedagogical methods. Praising the readings' rich content, high quality, and accessibility, they highlighted the stimulating class discussions and appreciated the opportunity to share and discuss Reflective Questions. Many discovered exciting new points of connection with the materials while working on their midterm essays and final projects. Several expressed gratitude for the flexible approach I took toward the selection of readings.

(NYH) The readings were very effective in delivering the course content, especially as the instructor allowed students the freedom to choose the specific readings for each prescribed weekly topic. Readings were usually challenging in an intellectually stimulating way, but were not inaccessible. Giving students a choice also made the course content easier to engage with and benefitted in-class discussions, since it made the topics a bit more personal and approachable to students. The midterm essay was also very enjoyable and helpful in my learning process. Again, I appreciate the instructor's flexibility in allowing students to complete the assignment on their article of choice from the list of options, and I was able to write on one that was particularly fascinating to me.

(Rosenbaum) I loved the in-class discussions. Each student brought their perspectives and understanding for each paper. Even though none of us individually were able to glean every useful bit from each paper, with the instructor's help, we were usually able to come to a deep understanding of each paper. I enjoyed the midterm essay and final project. The opportunity

for each person in the class to pick their region and paper allowed each student far more self-expression than is usually present in these courses.

(Vlaykov) The most effective pedagogical tool in the course were the in-class dialogues and discussions. The class was centered around creating an environment that encouraged presenting new ideas and challenging the readings and our peers which encouraged us to comprehensively read and really think about the deeper meaning, to formulate questions for in-class discussions. It allowed for new ideas that I may have missed to be discussed by my peers and opened up my eyes to so many new concepts that I would have never discovered before. I was able to grasp these concepts in a much deeper way than I could've through a lecture. Personally, being from an economics background I was intrigued by the opinions of my fellow classmates from music. It was evident that their way of critiquing and understanding critical concepts was different from my own. I was also encouraged to share my opinions which also would not have been possible in a lecture. Through sharing I hopefully gave a new perspective to my peers about the way they have learnt about the world through their musical education.

NYH noticed the emphasis I placed on critical thinking:

Similarly, the assigned written responses and reflective questions were a good way to [ensure engagement and] encourage critical thinking ... through the act of formulating a question, to be discussed in class. I enjoyed the way class discussions were organized because of this, because there was a personal touch to the structured discussions in a way that would be absent if it was entirely facilitated and decided by the instructor. From this, we were also able to bring in our own insights from outside of the assigned reading materials and enrich the discussion, which really helped my understanding of the material. Including instances where my classmates brought in their own life experiences or contemporary examples of the readings' claims in today's culture industry, I thought it was very useful toward establishing an enriching discussion of the course material in a sensitive and refreshing way.

Students lauded the intermingling of music and non-music majors, which produced fruitful exchanges:

(Tessman-Bar-On) Another strength of this class was that it naturally encouraged interdisciplinary thought and discussion. The course included both music students (which include performance students, musicology students, and others) and arts students (including students in cultural studies and sociology, among other fields). The instructor's enthusiasm for this interdisciplinarity encouraged students to allow our varying expertise to intersect and inform our discussions.

Exploring the presence of Western art music around the globe, many students were attracted to specific case studies that sparked searching reflections on

their part. For some, the midterm review essay became a powerful vehicle for intellectual discoveries.

(NYH) My midterm essay focused on an article about the Singapore Chinese Orchestra, which discussed issues of cultural hybridity in post-colonial societies. The article was particularly illuminating in its exposition of the Orchestra's programming to frame the institution's cultural identity as fluid and contingent on the specific context and site of articulation.<sup>13</sup> I was able to critically engage with it in a way I don't get to very often in other courses, and it's one of the articles that have stuck with me the most from the course, even after the end of the semester.

(WJ) The midterm review essay was very effective in delivering the course content, as it provided students with the time and space required to examine the inner logical machinations of a specific article and explore its findings with a critical lens. The assignment encouraged re-reading, reflecting, making connections and broadening students' understanding of the text and its positioning within the framework of post-colonial studies. Students could examine the relationship between the author's identity and the subject matter of their article, a crucial step in the identification of any hidden biases or weaknesses in argument due to cultural inexperience or colonial interpellation. An author's lived experience is the invisible player in post-colonial research. A close reader must keep the author's relationship to the content of their research in mind while reading. Just as an article approached from an etic perspective will likely present differing conclusions to one written from an emic viewpoint, an ancestor of a colonizer and a member of a former colonial region are likely to have differing perspectives, resources and motivations when writing about an identical topic.

In a few cases, the intellectual journey took a deeply personal turn. Tessman-Bar-On researched her family background for her oral presentation. She shared:

The final project was particularly effective, I think, because it was flexible. The project gave students the opportunity to choose one of two directions. The first was to present about a country with a history of colonialism and chart the development of musical traditions in that country, with particular attention to how colonialism interacted with this musical development. The second option was to present a personal experience of colonialism and discuss how it impacted one's own musical development and life. Many students (not only those who chose the second option) talked about subjects and countries to which they had a personal or familial connection. I presented on the Cyprus Detention camps, where my family was held as they immigrated, in the years before 1948, to what would become Israel; this involved researching family history and documents in addition to doing research on Cyprus, the British

13. Shzr Ee Tan, "A Chinese Take(Away) of Brahms: How the Singapore Chinese Orchestra Courted Europe," *Wacana seni/Journal of Arts Discourse* 11 (2012): 127–148. Respondents also found memorable the writings of Kofi Agawu, Homi Bhabha, Anna Bull, Stuart Hall, Susan Neylan and Melissa Meyer, Edward Said, Amanda Weidman, and Mari Yoshihara.

Mandate of Palestine, and the music involved in these contexts. Because of my in-depth interaction with music of the Cyprus Detention camps in this project, I developed an interest in further pursuing the study of music of the wider Arab-Israeli conflict, which I could see growing into a significant part of my future scholarship.

In a wholly unexpected way, WJ's final project fundamentally changed her personal outlook. The newfound knowledge enabled her to recontextualize her experiences with her mixed-race family and parents.

The final presentation also effectively reinforced the course content. The nature of the assignment allowed for rigorous research into a former colony which could also include a personal touch. Depending on how closely the student's selection was linked to their family history, the impact of their research could have a much broader effect beyond their project. I chose to research Mauritius, a tiny African island off the coast of Madagascar and home to most of my father's immediate family. I have only visited the island twice, and have limited contact with family there. Through my final project, I was able to construct a more detailed picture of the colonial history of my father's country of origin and share my findings with the class. However, my research also enabled me to examine my paternal family's sociopolitical position on the island as members of the dominant Indo-Mauritian group in a manner that would have otherwise been almost impossible. I was able to observe and interpret my father's marriage to my mother, an English-speaking Canadian with Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian ancestry, through a heightened and more focused colonial lens. I now have a breadth of colonial and cultural context to colour and contextualize my personal struggles with my colonial identity, as well as the intergenerational trauma and colonial interpellation experienced by my father, his siblings, and their ancestors at the hands of the ancestors of my mother. The tools and terminology I acquired through taking this course are now integral to my understanding of my family's history in a way I could never have anticipated.

Several other students (not polled) also explored their personal backgrounds in relation to their music studies. Tessman-Bar-On attributed the interest in such projects to my essay that we had studied in class.

A pedagogy that the instructor employed was centering her personal experiences of learning music in Malaysia, in a music education system influenced by the legacy of British colonial rule and entrenched ideas of the superiority of Western art music.<sup>14</sup> This not only demonstrated the significance of the work we were doing in the course, but it also modeled to students how to

14. Roe-Min Kok, "Music for a Postcolonial Child: Theorizing Malaysian Memories," in *Musical Childhoods and the Cultures of Youth*, ed. Susan Boynton and Roe-Min Kok (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2006), 89–104; reprinted in *Learning, Teaching, and Musical Identity: Voices across Cultures*, ed. Lucy Green (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 73–90.



reflect on one's own personal experience in a scholarly way, as the final project allowed us to do.

*Question 2b: Which was/were less effective in delivering the course content? Elaborate on your responses, including reasons for the points you make.*

Respondents shared constructive and useful criticism on the pedagogical approach in MCGH. Some found that the sheer breadth of materials led to difficulty in narrowing the topic of final projects. Listening to her classmates' oral presentations, NYH thought that "the scope for the first [topic] was a bit too wide for the students; too broad for comprehensive analysis in many cases," and suggested:

Encourage students to focus on a specific aspect of the former colony's relationship with music, such as their contemporary classical music scene, the conservatories and music education program, popular music within the country today, prominent uses of music in key political moments, etc., so that there is more room for comprehensive analysis within the presentation, rather than simply an exposition on the country's history with colonialism and music.<sup>15</sup>

Although Rosenbaum had enjoyed both the midterm and final projects, he wished for an oral exchange in the former: "the final project was far more useful. Focusing on a specific country forced us to apply the concepts we had learned in class on particular manifestations and was excellent practice for research in the real world. The midterm left no opportunity to hear other students' thoughts." He was seconded by Vlaykov.

I believe that the midterm paper was the least effective part of delivering the course content. For me, discussing ideas and having meaningful conversations about key topics in the class were pivotal for the course. Even with the final project we were encouraged to present research questions and answer questions from our classmates to expand on the topics being spoken about. The midterm paper stood out because of how closed off it was from the regular contributive nature of the class.<sup>16</sup>

WJ was bothered by some of her peers' limited approach to the weekly postings and in-class discussions.

15. I have since adopted NYH's suggestion.

16. In the next iteration of the course I floated the option of a post midterm discussion, but it failed to gain any support from students. Group dynamics can differ greatly from class to class and are especially pronounced in courses that depend heavily on student engagement and discussions.

Students would often use their weekly reflective question assignments to summarize the articles, instead of stimulating thought-provoking discussion. This issue was addressed mid-way through the term, with noticeable improvement.<sup>17</sup> However, the structuring of class discussions around students' reflective questions posed another challenge. Since the onus was placed on students to volunteer their reflective questions for discussion, the topics tended to originate from a small number of students who were comfortable reading their questions aloud to the class. This led to less diversity in terms of responders and, consequently, perspectives.<sup>18</sup>

To encourage more profound engagement among her classmates, Tessman-Bar-On suggested expanding the weekly assignments:

I think many of the students would have been willing to engage the material in a way similar to that of a graduate seminar. The discussion questions were useful because they set a starting point for class discussion but could have sparked deeper discussion if students had been offered the opportunity to write more each week written and posted summaries and engagements with the readings, for instance.

The responses to Questions 2a and 2b reinforced my learning objectives for MCGH, but also extended them in unexpected ways. Through first-hand engagement in readings and class discussions, the midterm review and the final project, students learned to probe music's position within global colonial histories through a critical lens. They relished the regular opportunities for in-depth, interdisciplinary debates. They became savvy readers of scholarly arguments and incorporated theoretical concepts such as "domination by consent" and "interpellation" into their vocabularies (thereby attaining "topic-specific information and terminology," among of the course's learning outcomes). More unexpectedly, a few respondents in the group, which included a range of backgrounds and ethnicities, discovered new ways to understand and connect with their familial histories as they realized, for the first time, the impact of coloniality on their own past and present. I found the students' suggestions for adjusting the pedagogical approach helpful and have since either implemented them (see footnotes 15 and 17), and/or brought them up in subsequent iterations of the course (footnotes 16 and 18).

17. WJ contacted me about this issue, which I managed to rectify to an extent

18. For another course in the following term, I divided students into groups of 4–5 by last name. Each group was assigned to post and lead discussions on specific days, an arrangement that resulted in much more evenly distributed postings and participation.

*Question 3: What do you think should be added to and/or subtracted from the course? Examples might include assignment prompts, research paper designs, classroom activities, assessment modalities, and/or other relevant course materials.*

This question drew a rich panoply of ideas and propositions (I moved some comments from 2b to this section). Several respondents offered their thoughts on further diversifying course content. NYH wrote:

Dedicate a specific week to spotlight marginalized or little-known local musicians, or to encourage initiatives toward music education as a decolonial practice. This would add an important real-world element to round off the important theoretical offerings. With the course evenly split between Arts and Music students, each with their own unique perspectives, I believe opportunities like this would help apply what we have learned in a real-world context, hopefully beneficial to students from all Faculties.

(Tessman-Bar-On) Include the music of refugees, which I think is implied by the course title and could have been extremely interesting and relevant in this historical moment.

(Vlaykov) Allow us to research and find a publication (related to the course content) on our own and discuss it with the class. This would promote more research about topics that individual students find interesting. It would also expand the scope of the course.

Many expressed concerns about the theoretical and conceptual difficulty of certain readings and requested more structured guidance through the materials. Rosenbaum noted the “speed of the course” in relation to the complex ideas presented:

We covered a new reading each week, and while that is not by itself overly demanding, several times we were reading a single piece that could by itself fill up an entire course. I remember the week on Homi Bhabha being particularly hamstrung. Most people in the room (including myself) struggled with his concept of a “third space.” Even had there been a lecture on it beforehand, I doubt we could have said anything worthwhile having only learned the term a few days prior.<sup>19</sup>

(Tessman-Bar-On) In class discussions, students were not being well prepared to think through connections to critical concepts or to other texts. Perhaps writing a full discussion post (especially if this were set up by the introduction and clear definition of relevant critical concepts in class—such as interpellation, indigeneity, hybridity, appropriation, strategic essentialism,

19. Rosenbaum is referring to Homi Bhabha, “Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences,” in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (London: Routledge, 1994), 206–09.

etc.) would help prepare students to engage this terminology in well-informed ways. This would also help to formalize class discussion, which would allow students to come away with a sense of how to talk about issues of colonialism in a scholarly way.

(Vlaykov) Add a brief introduction about the broad topics discussed in the readings before the class goes into discussion. A short set of slides would have helped me engage in discussions better. Occasionally I found it hard to talk about certain topics due to a lack of knowledge even if I wanted to contribute.

(WJ) Provide students with prompts before they read each article to sharpen their focus on certain attributes or concepts and assist them with formulating questions. Post-colonial studies borrows concepts, theories and content from a wide variety of disciplines, and the students have varied backgrounds so some scaffolding for assigned readings would be helpful such as reading prompts or full-scale structural aides. Prompts could be created by the professor or taken from the reflective questions of past students.

(WJ again) Preparing article summaries would emphasize important terms and concepts, encourage notetaking and the use of proper terminology during in-class discussions.

Seeking deeper engagement were Tessman-Bar-On, who favored assigning a fully fledged final paper because so many students decided on research topics that were personally meaningful; and Vlaykov, who requested oral discussions of the midterm essays. A thornier issue centered on writing skills appropriate to the coursework. Vlaykov believed that music majors were at a disadvantage when it came to written work:

Finally, I believe the format of the midterm examination could have given a major advantage to the students outside of the music school (this includes myself). This is because writing papers in strictly academic majors is more common than in majors which focus on the performing arts. I could see it being significantly easier for those who have more practice writing university papers compared to those who don’t do it as often.

Rosenbaum went further, opining that high standards for writing in English are inappropriate in a class about colonialism. However, he also realized that lowering expectations may be inappropriate and/or counterproductive and suggested assigning practice essays.

I found the focus on precise academic grammar in the grading of the essay a bit strange. I know several music students who had not practiced writing academically and/or spoke English as a second language. They were blindsided by the way their papers were graded. It also felt somewhat ironic that a class

about the arbitrary standards of Western art music being applied to unfairly denigrate other cultures would so strictly cling to its own set of Western, academic standards. The rest of the course had not emphasized academic writing, so this issue could even have been fixed by requiring several, smaller essays, allowing students rusty in their writing to catch up.<sup>20</sup>

Students had found the dense theories and conceptual terminology of Postcolonial Studies illuminating but complex. They agreed on the need for more careful, step-by-step guidance through these terms in the publications we had read and discussed together. Judging by the respondents' earlier answers to Questions 2a and 2b, however, they appear to have grasped the theoretical frameworks well, probably as a result of the effective case studies in each reading. To further reinforce student comprehension, I decided to add a concept-focused guide as a general resource, and I refer to it whenever we come across a new concept.<sup>21</sup> I also explain special terms during class discussions, halting the conversation temporarily as needed. The contentious issue of academic writing has led me to take concrete steps (see footnote 20). As for enriching the syllabus, I continue to add fresh themes as well as suitable readings to the course, as each iteration of the class brings a different set of interests into play.<sup>22</sup>

### III. Conclusion and Thoughts

Students had begun the term with little or no knowledge of music's connections with global colonialism/coloniality. Their lack of awareness is unsurprising, as colonialism and its aftermath in music remain relatively distanced (geographically, historically, and culturally) from contemporary North

20. Vlaykov and Rosenbaum were probably thinking about a classmate who had been unhappy about their midterm grade. I had specified that points would be deducted for writing mistakes and the Department Chair did not accept the student's charge of unfair grading. I decided that in the future, I would communicate expectations more clearly, give concrete examples of poor grammar and weak sentence constructions, and refer students to the university's Writing Center early in the term. On language barriers experienced by international students, see Leon Moosavi, "The Myth of Academic Tolerance: The Stigmatisation of East Asian Students in Western Higher Education," *Asian Ethnicity* 23 no. 3 (2022): 484–503 DOI: 10.1080/14631369.2021.1882289, and his "Can East Asian Students Think? Orientalism, Critical Thinking, and the Decolonial Project," *Education Sciences* 10, no. 10 (2020): DOI:10.3390/educsci10100286. For resources on antiracist writing pedagogies, see Asao B. Inoue, *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future* (Fort Collins: WAC Clearinghouse, 2015) and Amherst College's recommendations at "Antiracist Writing Pedagogy," accessed March 18, 2023, <https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/support/writingcenter/faculty/pedagogy/antiracist-writing-pedagogy>.

21. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (3rd edition), (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2013).

22. For instance, many students in the course this term (Winter 2023) are from STEM disciplines, which are examining their own discipline-specific legacies of colonialism.

America and its musical concerns. Few university music programs currently offer courses about colonialism/coloniality, although many in higher education agree that these notions are important and timely. Imperialistic ambitions (evident in Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine), and power imbalances in overt and subtle forms (such as issues faced by Indigenous communities and other marginalized groups) are just two present-day examples of widespread inequitable behaviors that have been stoked and facilitated by the world's colonial past. Similarly problematic attitudes arguably underlie the practice of Western music around the world, and MCGH's global content and postcolonial approach enabled my student respondents to acquire new, complex, and nuanced views. They came to understand that the creation, performance, and practice of music in different global settings may be framed by colonial history and coloniality, and were sensitized to the corresponding power dynamics and social-cultural inequities. These perspectives align with the course's immediate learning outcomes: topic-specific information and familiarity with critical issues about Western music in colonial and post-colonial cultures on a global scale. Looking to the future and over the longer term, MCGH hopes to advance a strong sense of global citizenship in future generations by cultivating the key attributes of "intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect."<sup>23</sup>

### APPENDIX One

Weekly Schedule (course outline with thematic modules and sample readings)

#### Music and Colonialism in Global History

##### *Week 1: Introduction to the Interdisciplinary Field of Postcolonial Studies*

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin, "Introduction," in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1–13.

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin, "General Introduction," and "Introduction to the Second Edition," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (New York: Routledge, 2006), 1–4, 5–8.

23. *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action* (2015): 63.iii, 7, <https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.801236/publication.html>.

Ziauddin Sardar and Borin van Loon, *Introducing Cultural Studies. A Graphic Guide* (London: Icon, 2010), 3–55, 70–72, 78–80.

*Week 2: Zones of Contact*

Mari Yoshihara, “Chapter 1: Early Lessons in Globalization,” in *Musicians from a Different Shore: Asians and Asian Americans in Classical Music* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007), 11–48.

David R. M. Irving, “Lully in Siam: Music and Diplomacy in French-Siamese Cultural Exchanges, 1680–1690,” *Early Music* XL, no. 3 (2012): 393–420.

Barbara Alge, “Transatlantic Musical Flows in the Lusophone World: An Introduction,” Special Issue “Transatlantic Musical Flows in the Lusophone World,” ed. Barbara Alge, *The World of Music* (New Series) 2, no. 2 (2013): 7–24.

*Weeks 3–4: First Nations/ Settler Colonialism*

David Gramit, “The Transnational History of Settler Colonialism and the Music of the Urban West: Resituating a Local Music History,” *American Music* 32, no. 3 (2014): 272–91.

Beverley Diamond, “Resisting Containment: The Long Reach of Song at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools,” in *Arts of Engagement: Taking Aesthetic Action in and beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, eds. Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2016), 239–65.

Dylan Robinson, “Chapter 1: Hungry Listening,” in *Hungry Listening: Resonant Theory for Indigenous Sound Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 37–76.

Susan Neylan and Melissa Meyer, “‘HERE COMES THE BAND!’ Cultural Collaboration, Connective Traditions, and Aboriginal Brass Bands on British Columbia’s North Coast, 1875–1964,” *BC Studies* no. 152 (2006): 35–66.

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin, “Indigeneity,” in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 163–64.

Margery Fee, “Who Can Write as Other?” in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 169–71.

Terry Goldie, “The Representation of the Indigene,” in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, 2nd ed., eds. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffith and Helen Tiffin (Oxford: Routledge, 2006), 172–75.

*Week 5: Vocal Cultures and Identities*

Nina Eidsheim, “Formal and Informal Pedagogies: Believing in Race, Teaching Race, Hearing Race,” in *The Race of Sound: Listening, Timbre, and Vocality in African American Music* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019), 39–60.

Grant Olwage, “The Class and Colour of Tone: An Essay on the Social History of Vocal Timbre,” *Ethnomusicology Forum* 13, no. 2 (2004): 203–26.

Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier, “On Howls and Pitches,” in *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 31–75.

*Week 6: midterm Assessment (take-home)*

*Week 7: Diversity, Difference, Hybridity*

Robert Young, “Hybridity and Diaspora,” in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 2–26.

Homi Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse,” *The Location of Culture*, 2nd ed. (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2004), 121–31.

Amanda Weidman, “Echo and Anthem: Representing Sound, Music, and Difference in Two Colonial Modern Novels,” in *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*, eds. Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 314–33.

*Week 8: Politics of Resistance and Race*

Tina Ramnarine, “Orchestral Connections in the Cultures of Decolonization: Reflections on British, Caribbean and Indian contexts,” in *Global Perspectives on Orchestras: Collective Creativity and Social Agency*, ed. Tina Ramnarine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 324–350.

Mina Yang, “East Meets West in the Concert Hall: Asians and Classical Music in the Century of Imperialism, Post-colonialism, and Multiculturalism,” *Asian Music* 38, no. 1 (2007): 1–30.

Mhoze Chikowero, “Cultures of Resistance,” in *African Music, Power, and Being in Colonial Zimbabwe* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2015), 239–273.

*Weeks 9–10: Education—A Living Force*

Alan J. Bishop, “Western Mathematics: The Secret Weapon of Cultural Imperialism,” *Race and Class* 32, No. 2 (1990): 51–65.



Ubiratan D'Ambrosio, "In My Opinion: What is Ethnomathematics, and How Can It Help Children in Schools?" *Teaching Children Mathematics* 7, no. 6 (2001): 308–310.

Anna Bull, "El Sistema as a Bourgeois Social Project: Class, Gender, and Victorian Values," *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15, no. 1 (2016): 120–153.

Roe-Min Kok, "Music for a Postcolonial Child: Theorizing Malaysian Memories," in *Musical Childhoods and the Cultures of Youth*, eds. Susan Boynton and Roe-Min Kok (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2006), 89–104.

Christopher N. Poulos, "Conceptual Foundations of Autoethnography," in *Essentials of Autoethnography* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2021), 3–9.

*Week 11: Social Inequalities in the Culture Industry*

Christina Scharff, "The Silence that is Not a Rest: Negotiating Hierarchies of Class, Race, and Gender," in *Gender, Subjectivity, and Cultural Work: The Classical Music Profession* (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2018), 85–112.

Anna Bull, "'Getting It Right' as an Affect of Self-Improvement," in *Class, Control and Classical Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 70–92.

Anna Bull, "Uncertain Capital: Class, Gender, and the 'Imagined Futures' of Young Classical Musicians," in *The Classical Music Industry*, eds. Chris Dromey and Julia Haferkorn (New York: Routledge, 2017), 79–95.

Catherine Lu, "Responsibility, Structural Injustice, and Structural Transformation," *Ethics & Global Politics* 11, no. 1 (2018): 42–57.

*Weeks 12–13: Final presentations*

# Teaching Cantonese Music in a Canadian University

HEDY LAW

Scholarship by ethnomusicologists on Cantonese Music (that is, any genre of vocal music with Cantonese or *Yue*-Chinese lyrics) often constitutes one module for an undergraduate course on “world music” in North America. But the curriculum I experienced as a student in British Hong Kong adopted a different model. I read the publications on Cantonese music published in the 1980s and 1990s when I took courses on transcribing Cantonese popular music, Chinese music, and Cantonese opera in the 1990s for my undergraduate music piano performance degree at a university in Hong Kong. These classes fulfilled the “Chinese music” degree requirements. Yet, at that time, I was completely unaware of the homogeneity of the student population in that university. Contrary to Daniel K.L. Chua, who calls himself a “living embodiment of globalization,” I did not know much about the world as an undergraduate student, not to mention any idea of globality.<sup>1</sup> Growing up in a middle-class Chinese family, I did not have the resources to travel beyond Southeast Asia until I pursued my postgraduate studies in the United Kingdom and, later, in the United States. Most of the literature I studied as a student follows a clear intellectual lineage based heavily on the work of Bell Yung and his students. Most of these scholars were from Hong Kong or had familial roots there, and most research focuses on the city of Hong Kong. While Siu-Wah Yu and Bell Yung have since explored Cantonese music beyond Hong Kong by tracing performances in Macau, Guangzhou, and the United States, scholars before the 2010s often positioned Hong Kong as the center of Cantonese music.<sup>2</sup>

1. Daniel K.L. Chua, “Global Musicology: A Keynote without a Key,” *Acta musicologica* 94, no. 1 (2022): 121.

2. On an overview of genres of narrative song, see Bell Yung, “Narrative Song: Southern Traditions—Cantonese Narrative Song,” in *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, 10 vols., volume 7: East Asia: China, Japan, and Korea, eds. Robert C. Provine, Yosihiko Tokumaru, and J. Lawrence Witzleben (New York: Garland, 2001), 267–273; on the transmission of the narrative song from Guangzhou to Hong Kong, see Yung, “Voices of Hong Kong: The Reconstruction of a Performance in a Teahouse,” *Critical Zone* 3 (2009): 37–56; on the narrative song in Macau, see Siu-Wah Yu, “Ng Wing Mui (Mui Yee) and the Revival of Sineung (Blind Female) Singing Style in Cantonese Naamyam (Southern Tone),” *Chinoperl: Journal of Chinese Oral and*

When I started to teach the course Cantonese Music at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 2020 and 2022, I felt the need to situate Hong Kong within a wider context of the global Sinophone sphere. UBC is North America's most international university since 2020<sup>3</sup> and the Asian-dominated demographic of my class helped me realize that the Hong Kong-centric scholarship that I had read in the past had little relevance to my students who know little about Hong Kong. So I prioritized their interests and lived experiences, and explored ways to make elements of Cantonese music relatable. With an emphasis on music with Cantonese lyrics within the global Sinophone sphere, my course invited students to explore Cantonese music not only in the local and regional contexts of Hong Kong and Guangdong, but more broadly in Asian, Southeast Asian, Canadian, and American contexts.<sup>4</sup> In other words, my course had become a "global Cantonese music" one because, to borrow Chua's formulation, "globalization happens to people."<sup>5</sup>

This pedagogical reorientation from a "world music" class focused on Hong Kong to a "global music history" class that addressed a Cantonese diasporic practice aligned with UBC's global strategy. This shift allowed me to emphasize Nancy Rao's 2017 book *Chinese Theatre in North America* and her 2020 article on Cantonese opera in Shanghai and San Francisco, as these readings, unlike the Hong Kong-centric studies of Cantonese music, situate Cantonese music in the transpacific circulatory network.<sup>6</sup> Rao's research raises new questions on global port history, transpacific music history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and the racist impact of the Canadian "Chinese Immigration Act" of 1923 on Canadian Chinese communities. As she argues in her article in this special issue, the material objects preserved in archives in multiple nations allow researchers to piece together an imaginary mega-archive from numerous sources scattered around physical archives, museums, and private collections. Her reimagining of a multi-locational archive for global music history

*Performing Literature* 33, no. 2 (2014): 121–134; on a kind of narrative song called Muk'yu sung in Toishanese dialect of Cantonese, see Bell Yung and Eleanor S. Yung, eds., *Uncle Ng Comes to America: Chinese Narrative Songs of Immigration and Love* (Hong Kong: MCCM Creations, 2014).

3. "Times Higher Education (THE) Student: Most International Universities in the World," last modified January 19, 2022, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/best-universities/most-international-universities-world>.

4. On Sinophone studies, see Shu-Mei Shih, "The Concept of the Sinophone," *PMLA* 126, no. 3 (May 2022): 709–718; Shih, "Against Diaspora: The Sinophone as Places of Cultural Production," in *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader*, eds. Shu-mei Shih, Chien-Hsin Tsai, and Brian Bernard (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013): 25–42.

5. Chua, "Global Musicology," 121.

6. Nancy Yunhwa Rao, *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2017); Rao, "Li Xuefang Meets Mei Lanfang: Cantonese Opera's Significant Rise in 1920s Shanghai and Beyond," *Chinoperl: Journal of Chinese Oral and Performance Literature* 39, no. 2 (2020): 151–181.

research allowed her to think beyond musical orientalism in North America in order to reconstruct a history of Cantonese opera in Chinese-American history in the early twentieth century that has remained largely invisible.<sup>7</sup> Inspired by her research, I realized that the purpose of teaching Cantonese music in a global context should not be about celebrating globalization in the ways sociologists and global studies scholars did in the 1990s and 2000s; rather, the goal is to ask new questions about mobility and connectivity while reconstructing histories that have been absent in the epistemology of musical knowledge.

At the same time, scholars on global music history (under various rubrics including "the global history of music" and "global musicology") began to understand music and language in broad, comparative terms. In this context, the topic of Cantonese music is no longer a token in a World Music survey course, but an example of a type of music generated by a language system called "tone language" (also known in some literature as "tonal language"). While "tone language" is a topic in linguistics—a discipline customarily kept separate from music in undergraduate music history curriculum—a global historical approach emphasizing connections across cultures and naturally brings together the domains of language and music. This emphasis is evidenced by a chapter by a linguist on the relationship between tone and melody in tone languages, which was included in a 2021 collection of essays on global music history, edited by musicologist Reinhard Strohm.<sup>8</sup> Music theorists are devising analytical techniques that explain melodic properties in musical genres sung in tone languages.<sup>9</sup> To be sure, these new studies are in the nascent stage, but I propose in this article that the linguistic tones of Cantonese language are a foundation for generating melody. This understanding of melody as a derivative of a series of vocal inflections conditioned by a linguistic property integral to the language of Cantonese song enables a comparison in contrast to European art music traditions in non-tone languages such as Italian, French, German, Spanish, and English.

In this article I first discuss one concept developed in globalization study—called "disembodied globalization"—by reflecting upon the creation of the

7. On musical orientalism in studies of American music, see Charles Hiroshi Garrett, "Chinatown, Whose Chinatown? Defining America's Borders with Musical Orientalism," in *Struggling to Define a Nation: American Music and the Twentieth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 121–164; W. Anthony Sheppard, *Extreme Exoticism: Japan in the American Musical Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), especially chapter 4, "Two Paradigmatic Tales, between Genres and Genders," 150–196.

8. See James Kirby, "Towards a Comparative History of Tonal Text-Setting Practices in South East Asia," in *Transcultural Music History: Global Participation and Regional Diversity in the Modern Age*, ed. Reinhard Strohm (Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 2021), 291–313.

9. See, for example, Anna Yu Wang, "Intuitions and Musicalities: Theory, Analysis, and Ethnography across Two Sinitic Opera Traditions," (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2023).

Cantopop song “相擁風雨中” (“Rain Before Sunshine”) with lyrics produced by a student as a pedagogical exercise. I argue that the production of this song in May–July 2020 in Canada exemplifies the globalization of Cantonese music. However, I also explain why the global (read: transnational, transregional, and trans-continental) release of the song on Apple Music and Spotify for North American listeners, YouTube for those who have access to Google, and the SONY-affiliated apps MOOV, KKBOX, and JOOX for Asian and South-East Asian subscribers prompted the re-localizing and re-nationalizing of its content.<sup>10</sup>

### Teaching Cantonese Linguistic Tones

The course “Cantonese Music” takes a language-oriented approach that places a strong emphasis on the linguistic tones of the Cantonese language. This approach places the course within the broader discipline of Sinophone studies while cutting across traditional sub-disciplinary boundaries that separate ethnomusicology, musicology, and music theory.<sup>11</sup> With the focus on language, I assign readings on Cantonese opera, traditional narrative songs, and Cantopop while charting a conceptual domain broad enough to include all musical genres with Cantonese lyrics, including rap, Cantonese choral art music, Cantonese jazz choral music, and Cantonese musicals. Based on research on the Cantonese language by linguists and the ecology of language by sociolinguists, the course uses Cantonese as a linguistic affordance for rethinking the roles of music in the formation of a global Cantophone community.<sup>12</sup> Thus, the course design differs in aims and purposes from genre- or place-specific courses such as “Chinese Music,” or “Cantonese Opera,” “Music in Hong Kong,” or “Music in China” that are offered in some universities to fulfill “world music” requirements in undergraduate curricula.

10. “相擁風雨中 (Rain Before Sunshine),” Cantonese UBC, released July 22, 2020, video, 4:04, accessed July 17, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R9qPLOMBhhU>. Note that the word “region” has a meaning specific to Apple Music. This song was released in the North American “region” of Apple Music, which is region-locked.

11. Cantonese is the language of 85.6 million people worldwide in 2022, with more than 73.3 million users in China in 2019. The figures are published in “Chinese, Yue,” in David M. Eberhard, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig, eds., *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 25th ed. (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2022), online version accessed July 18, 2022, <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

12. On an authoritative study of the Cantonese language, see Stephen Matthews and Virginia Yip, *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon, Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2011); on the evolution of Cantonese, see Umberto Ansaldò, *Contact Languages: Ecology and Evolution in Asia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); on the Cantophone as a designation of Cantonese users, see Klavier J. Wang, *Hong Kong Popular Music: Worlding Film, Television, and Pop Music* (Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 155.

My language-centered music course has three objectives. The primary objective is to teach students the basic linguistic properties of Cantonese, notably the linguistic tones and semantic permutations they facilitate. The second objective is to introduce students to the major music genres with Cantonese lyrics, including recent and little-studied genres such as Cantonese choral music and Cantonese musicals. The third objective is to introduce students to the most recent research on Cantonese music, including Cantonese opera between World War I and World War II in the transpacific network.<sup>13</sup> To achieve the first objective, I explain how modern tone languages such as Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Thai, and Zulu are linguistically different from non-tone languages in the Indo-European language family, including English, French, German, Italian, Latin, and Spanish, which are the primary languages represented in the tenth edition of *A History of Western Music*.<sup>14</sup>

My Cantonese Music class in 2020 included international students from Hong Kong and China, but also a Korean-Canadian, an Indian-Canadian, and an Iranian-Canadian, immigrants from East and Southeast Asia, plus zero-, first-, and second-generation Chinese heritage speakers who barely understand any Chinese languages or dialects, but feel obligated to understand their ethnicity and the ongoing and omnipresent anti-Asian racism in their daily lives.<sup>15</sup> The student demographic in the course shaped the pedagogical approach to the course, which means that I had to create an inclusive pedagogical environment that enabled a heterogeneous student group to understand the course materials, most of which have been written for a homogeneous audience already proficient in Cantonese. The most challenging aspect is to teach the fundamentals of tone language, which is difficult for most students. The Cantonese-speaking students—from Hong Kong, Guangzhou, Macau, heritage Canadian-Chinese who speak Cantonese at home—had not learned the theory of linguistic tones. Some knew how to speak the language but did not know how to theorize the sound of Cantonese, not to mention how to understand the correlation between the tonal contour formed by linguistic tones of the lyrics and the

13. Nancy Yunhwa Rao, “Cantonese Opera in Turn-of-the-Century-Canada: Local History and Transnational Circulation,” *19th Century Music Review* 11, no. 2 (2014): 291–310. See also Yvonne Liao’s thought-provoking review of Rao’s *Chinatown Opera Theatre in North America*, “Review Article: ‘Chinatown’ and Global Operatic Knowledge,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 31, nos. 2–3 (2019): 280–290.

14. On select tone languages and their respective correlations with melody, see Murray Schellenberg, “Does Language Determine Music in Tone Languages?” *Ethnomusicology* 56, no. 2 (2012): 266–278.

15. The twenty-five students who took my course in 2022 formed an even more diverse group, with Caucasian students from Europe and the United States, students from different regions of China, East and Southeast Asia, and Hong Kong who majored in science, engineering, psychology, architecture, statistics, management, and global supply chain and logistics in addition to music and Asian Studies.



melody.<sup>16</sup> Students who did not understand the basics of tone language had to learn the fundamentals of the tone language system, in contradistinction to the non-tone language system that forms the staple of the art music curriculum in universities and conservatories. What kinds of pedagogical methods could help both Cantonese-speaking and non-Cantonese-speaking students understand the relationship between a tone language and music?

Research on Cantonese opera provides a critical resource for explaining the tonal property of Cantonese and its correlation with music. Bell Yung's three articles on Cantonese opera, published in three consecutive issues in the journal *Ethnomusicology* in 1983 provide the foundation for theorizing the correlation between Cantonese linguistic tones and melody. His 1989 book on Cantonese opera, which is still the definitive study of Cantonese opera, elaborates his observations by conceptualizing the correlation between speech and melody in terms of a continuum, and not a binary opposition.<sup>17</sup> This body of work has been furthered by later publications, such as Sau-Yan Chan's book on improvisation and the performance of Cantonese opera and Siu-Wah Yu's transcription of naamyam (a genre of narrative song sung in Cantonese). Linguist Murray Schellenberg's work contributes to this discourse by comparing and contrasting Cantonese with other tone languages. His 2012 article, also published in *Ethnomusicology*, places the tone language of Cantonese within a broader intellectual inquiry of all the major tone languages. Edwin Li's 2021 article, published in *Music Theory Online*, takes the studies of Cantonese linguistic tones to the perceptual level.<sup>18</sup> These publications are crucial to understand the linguistic tones of Cantonese as the basis for all genres of music with Cantonese lyrics.

Recent linguistic research on Cantonese makes it possible for students to learn the Cantonese tones within a theoretically coherent and rigorous framework. The Linguistic Society of Hong Kong standardized a romanization

16. For a recent discussion of this topic, see Lian-Hee Wee, *Phonological Tone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 249–264; William Choi, “The Selectivity of Musical Advantage: Musicians Exhibit Perceptual Advantage for Some but Not All Cantonese Tones,” *Music Perception* 37, no. 5 (2020): 423–434; Edwin K.C. Li, “Cantopop and Speech-Melody Complex,” *Music Theory Online* 27, no. 1 (March 2021), <https://mtosmt.org/issues/mto.21.27.1/mto.21.27.1.li.html#FNOREF>.

17. See Bell Yung, “Creative Process in Cantonese Opera I: The Role of Linguistic Tones,” *Ethnomusicology* 27, no. 1 (1983): 29–47; Yung, “Creative Process in Cantonese Opera II: The Process of T'ien Tz'u (Text-Setting),” *Ethnomusicology* 27, no. 2 (1983): 297–318; Yung, “Creative Process in Cantonese Opera III: The Role of Padding Syllables,” *Ethnomusicology* 27, no. 3 (1983): 439–456; Yung, *Cantonese Opera: Performance as Creative Process* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989). For the continuum, see Figure 13.2 published in Yung, *Cantonese Opera*, 151.

18. See Sau-Yan Chan, *Improvisation in a Ritual Context: The Music of Cantonese Opera* (Hong Kong: Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 1991); for Yu's transcription, see, n.2; for Schellenberg's article, see, n.11; for Li's article, see, n.13.

scheme of Cantonese called “Jyutping” in 1993, with the latest revision in 2022. This scheme has made it possible for students to understand the linguistic tones systematically even though they do not speak Cantonese, although some students can read Chinese characters. Each character includes sonic components (“onset,” “nuclei,” and “coda,”) and “syllabic nasal” sounds. But the most critical part of this system is that it facilitates a study of the six theoretical tones for each syllable. A numerical “tone mark,” ranging from 1 to 6, indicates the lexical tone of each romanization. As seen in Table 1, Tone 1 is the highest tone while tone 4 is the lowest one. Tone 3 is the second highest tone and Tone 6 comes between Tone 3 and Tone 4. Tones 2 and 5 belong to the category of “rising tones,” which means the “coda” of Tone 2 rises from the middle register to the tonal plane as high as Tone 1, while that of Tone 5 rises from the low register to the middle register. In this scheme, all six tones are distinct. Each syllable has six theoretically viable tones, although not all of these theoretical permutations correlate to real characters.<sup>19</sup>

	Matthews and Yip (2011)	Yung (1983)	Jyutping (1993, 2018)
High level	55	Upper even 53 or 55	1
High rising	25	Upper rising 35	2
	high level ending with an unreleased sound	Upper entering 5 [or 50]	high level tone ends with -p, -k, or -t
Mid level	33	Upper going 33	3
	mid level ending with an unreleased sound	Middle entering 3 [or 30]	mid level tone ends with -p, -k, -t
Low falling	21 or 11	Lower even 21	4
Low rising	23	Lower rising 23	5
Low level	22	Lower going 22	6
	low level ending with an unreleased sound	Lower entering 2 [or 20]	low level tone ends with -p, -k, -t

**Table 1:** Comparison of three romanization schemes of the Cantonese language<sup>20</sup>

The standardization of the Jyutping romanization system enables teaching and research on a systematic level, especially for undergraduate students who

19. Jyutping Cantonese Romanization Scheme,” The Linguistic Society of Hong Kong, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://lshk.org/jyutping-scheme/>.

20. I show in Table 1 three schemes of Cantonese tones. They come from three sources, each is authoritative for its audience. The column marked “Matthew and Yip (2011)” offers a summary of their discussion of the Cantonese “basic tones” for linguistics. See Stephen Matthews

have little or no Chinese proficiency. This system makes it possible for all students to transliterate a Chinese character into numbers that enable empirical analyses. Free online converters such as “Cantonese Tools” provide fast and sufficiently accurate references. For students who read Chinese, the Chinese-English bilingual “Multi-function Chinese Character Database” offers a helpful search engine to date for thorough research of each character, including homonyms, etymology, multiple pronunciations of the same character, and cross-references to the Mandarin Pinyin system.<sup>21</sup> Robert S. Bauer’s *ABC Cantonese-English Comprehensive Dictionary* offers the most authoritative bilingual lexical reference.<sup>22</sup> Students obtain the romanization of each character by cutting and pasting each Chinese character from a text to an online converter.

These online resources are especially useful for teaching Cantonese music because Cantonese songs such as Cantopop are in song form. Words or verses are often repeated to give a sense of structure and coherence. Each song of about four-and-a-half minutes typically consists of about two hundred characters. This scope makes a song a manageable unit of study for students who do not know any Chinese.

Some scholars, such as Bell Yung and Edwin Li take into account a category of characters with the finals of “-p,” “-t,” and “-k” in their romanization presentations. These finals make an effect of a sound that stops abruptly. They impose a *staccato* articulation on the pronunciation of these characters. These finals belong to the category called “entering tone” (*Rusheng* or “入聲”). Yet, since these syllables distinguish themselves by the stopped sound of their finals—as if an otherwise sustained sound were cut short abruptly—rather than tones other than the six described above, the concept of “entering tone” is a misnomer because these three finals do not present three tones in terms of pitch level or contour additional to the six-tone range. The “entering tone” generates an articulation-based rather than pitch- or contour- based phonic difference.<sup>23</sup>

and Virginia Yip, *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 28–29. The column, “Yung (1983),” summarizes the theory of Cantonese linguistic tones that Yung wrote for the field of Ethnomusicology. See Yung, “Creative Process in Cantonese Opera I,” 30. Contents presented in the column “Juypting (1993, 2018)” for the general public are compiled from Section 3 “Coda 韻尾” and Section 5 “Tone 字調” of The Linguistic Society of Hong Kong Cantonese Romanization Scheme, last modified March 5, 2023, accessed March 19, 2023, <https://lshk.org/jyutping-scheme/>.

21. “Multi-function Chinese Character Database,” Research Centre for Humanities Computing, CUHK, accessed July 18, 2022, <https://humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/lexi-mf/>. This is a free, scholarly, online tool and it was last updated in 2018 by the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

22. Robert S. Bauer, *ABC Cantonese-English Comprehensive Dictionary* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2021).

23. On *rusheng*, see Marjorie K.M. Chan and Jocelyn Chey, “‘Love You to the Bone’ and Other Songs: Humor and *Rusheng* Rhymes in Early Cantopop,” in *Humor in Chinese Life and*

Researchers in the 1980s–2000s often describe Cantonese as a language with nine tones while linguists in the 2010s and 2020s concur on the six-tone theory (for comparison of three schemes from 1980s through 2010s, see Table 1). At present, most linguists use the six-tone system, but music scholars such as Li still prefer the nine-tone system in their research.

### Cantonese Lyrics Competition as a Pedagogical Tool

To further help students understand the relationship between the Cantonese language and music, I helped organize the Cantonese lyrics competition in 2020 and garnered support from various UBC units, namely the School of Music, the Hong Kong Studies Initiative, the Cantonese Language Program, and the Department of Asian Studies. The idea of a Cantonese Lyrics Competition came from the changing COVID-19 policies that mandated compliance with changing physical distancing protocols in early 2020, about halfway through the course. In late March 2020, Raymond Pai, Lecturer and Coordinator of the Cantonese Language Program at the University of British Columbia introduced me to Chris Ho, a professional musician who had worked in the Cantopop music business in Hong Kong in various capacities (as arranger, producer, composer, artists’ manager, etc.). In mid-March 2020, as the pandemic unfolded in Canada, Ho proposed a Cantonese Lyrics Competition that did not require much physical contact. Thus, the idea of this competition was conceived to be “disembodied” from the outset.

As the disembodied nature of the competition was the practical and necessary feature, Ho’s idea was to allow students to write original lyrics for a Cantopop melody from an original “demo”—an unpolished MIDI file of a song that consists of the melody, the form, and basic accompaniment outlining harmonies—that Ho had already composed and to ask students to write lyrics for it. The winner’s song would be sung, recorded, produced by industry professionals, and released on the commercial platforms mentioned above. This method, called “from melody to lyrics” (“先曲後詞”) is the standard method for producing a Cantopop song. (The alternative, “from lyrics to melody” (“先詞後曲”) is uncommon for Cantopop although it was used occasionally by experienced composers and lyricists for special effects). To make the competition relevant to students’ life, our organizing team decided to call this competition “Combating COVID-19” and asked students to come up with lyrics relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic that was unfolding across the world.<sup>24</sup>

*Culture: Resistance and Control in Modern Times*, eds. Jessica Milner Davis and Jocelyn Chey (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2013), 103–130.

24. The global pandemic lockdown was an important factor that defined the content of the songs, the creative process, the production process, and the release and promotion of the

The preliminary plan was to have students submit their lyrics by April 30, 2020. Pai asked three of the top industry professionals—Yihing Ong, Mini Choi, and Chris Shum—to serve as adjudicators. Ong and Choi were in Vancouver, and Shum was in Hong Kong, but the geographically separated team did not pose any problem since their judgment of the lyrics and the demo did not require in-person contact. About 360 UBC students who were taking courses relevant to Cantonese language were notified, and the students who took my Cantonese Music course could use their lyrics to earn extra credits for the course. Twenty students entered the competition and five became finalists. Remarkably, all applicants struggled with fitting the right characters to the right melody. The winner was Emily Liang, a Canadian-Chinese third-year UBC Bachelor of Arts music student whose mother tongue is Cantonese. With the lyrics “Rain Before Shine” Liang made the fewest mistakes in correlating linguistic tones and the demo tune. Her lyrics—about a frontline nurse saying goodbye to her lover the day before she volunteers to care for COVID-19 patients—suited the theme of the competition. Although students learn the basics of linguistic tones in their classes, most of them realized the difficulty of fitting Cantonese lyrics to a pre-existing melody. It was the sounds of the Cantonese linguistic tones that posed the greatest challenge for the competitors.

After the winner was announced May 17, 2020, the song entered the production phase. Chris Ho—composer of the tune and producer of the song—first worked with Liang in finalizing the lyrics, making sure that the resulting lyrics met the Cantopop industry standard: characters whose linguistic tones did not match the melody of the demo were modified; un-idiomatic vocabularies were replaced; lines were revised for flow. After this stage, Ho asked one of the singers in his agency, nicknamed “Ashia,” to record this song. Ashia was an appropriate choice because she was a licensed and practicing professional clinical psychologist in Hong Kong who sang in her spare time. The rendition of this song by a practicing health-care professional reinforces the song’s gratitude to front-line healthcare professionals. The recording session took place in Hong Kong, which was the only step in the entire creation-production-release process that involved some degree of in-person contact.

The global release of the song on July 22, 2020, drew the attention of a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) producer who had already been

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Cantonese Lyrics Competition. In late March of 2020, COVID-19 cases were surging in Canada and we knew that the pandemic would not subside by the time the song came out, in the summer of 2020. What we did not know, however, was the scale of the pandemic, and how protracted it would turn out to be. As of July 12, 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, with more than 557 million cases worldwide. The figure of 557,267,528 total cases worldwide is obtained from the “COVID-19 Dashboard” maintained by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University, accessed on July 12, 2022, <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>.

collecting information about this competition from April 2020. Consequently, Emily and I were interviewed by journalist Gloria Macarenko on CBC Radio on July 24, 2020, and a summary of the interview was published on the CBC website the day after.<sup>25</sup> Crucially this interview relocalized the song for the Canadian audience, stressing the pedagogical value of teaching Cantonese music in Canada. Our interview emphasized the purpose of the Cantonese Lyrics Competition, namely, to create a Cantonese popular song in Canada without much physical contact during the pandemic lockdown and to recognize the efforts of front-line health-care workers. For CBC Radio, the cross-national globality of the song was consistent with Canadian multiculturalism.

### Toward Global Cantonese Music

Given the cross-continental production process of this song, it is appropriate to frame the making of “Rain Before Sunshine” within the concept of “disembodied globalization,” a term coined by sociologist Manfred Steger and social theorist Paul James in 2019 in light of the McKinsey report published in March 2016 on cross-border global flows and digital globalization.<sup>26</sup> The concept of “disembodied globalization” stems from “embodied globalization,” which means the “movement of peoples across the world.” “Disembodied globalization,” by contrast, means “the extension of social relations through the movement of immaterial things and processes, including words, images, electronic texts, and encoded capital such as cryptocurrencies.”<sup>27</sup> The case study of “Rain Before Sunshine” illustrates “disembodied globalization” by showing how the song was assembled primarily digitally through multiple stages of production in Hong Kong, the United States, and Canada. Spearheaded by immigrants—myself, Chris Ho, and Raymond Pai, and Liang (a Chinese-Canadian speaker born in Canada who has no connection to Hong Kong but studied for a few years in Guangzhou), the globalized production team de-territorialized Cantopop, making Hong Kong one of its production sites rather than its center or its sole destination.

25. For an article on this CBC interview, see Roshini Nair, “Cantopop Ballad with COVID-19 Twist Co-written by UBC Contest Winner,” *British Columbia, CBC News*, July 25, 2020, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/cantopop-ubc-covid-19-1.5662917>.

26. McKinsey Global Institute, *Digital Globalization: The New Era of Global Flows* (n.p.: McKinsey & Company, 2016), esp. chs.1 and 4.

27. Manfred B. Steger and Paul James, *Globalization Matters: Engaging the Global in Unsettled Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 122.



### Comparing Cantonese Music with Recitative

My experience of teaching Cantonese music in a School of Music environment helps me to reflect upon more broadly the relationship between “world music” and the traditional music history curriculum. In my teaching of Cantonese music, I frequently used recitative in the Western art music tradition as a reference, as it serves as the closest musical common denominator that brings together language and music for upper-level music undergraduate majors—regardless of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds. But I also realized that the characteristics of Cantonese music can help explain certain aspects of Western art music.

In my history survey course on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century music, students learn some speech-like musical components in vocal music genres: recitative in Italian and French opera, spoken dialogue in English ballad opera, *Singspiel*, and *opéra comique*. These components are explained in *A History of Western Music (HWM)* as fundamentals of vocal music in these two centuries.<sup>28</sup> Recitative, in particular, is defined in the Glossary of *HWM* as “as passage or section in an opera, oratorio, cantata, or other vocal work in recitative style.” Recitative style (or *stile recitativo* in Italian) means “a type of vocal singing that approaches speech and follows the natural rhythms of the text.”<sup>29</sup> It is the opposite of “aria” and “arioso,” both of which are lyrical although the form of “arioso” is freer than aria.<sup>30</sup> Thus, *HWM* presents the antithesis between recitative and aria in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century vocal genres, including in the solo madrigal (e.g., *NAWM* 72, Giulio Caccini’s “Vedrò ‘l mio solo” [ca. 1590]), opera (and opera-like genres such as ballet) (e.g., *NAWM* 73, Jacopo Peri, *Le musiche sopra l’Euridice* [1600]), cantata (e.g., *NAWM* 77, Barbara Strozzi’s “Lagrime mie” [1650]), and oratorio (*NAWM* 80, Giacomo Carissimi, *Historia di Jephthè: Conclusion* [ca. 1648]). This speech-versus-aria notion of lyricism also carries implications for vocally conceived instrumental genres such as Biagio Marini’s *Sonata IV per il violini per sonar con due corde* (ca.1655) (*NAWM* 84), Prelude No. 8 in E-flat Minor of Book I of J.S. Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* (*NAWM* 104), C.P.E. Bach’s *Empfindsamer Stil* in the second movement of his *Sonata in A major*, H. 186, Wq. 55/4 (1765) (*NAWM* 117), and the first movement of Mozart’s *Piano Sonata in F Major*, K. 332 (1781–1783) (*NAWM* 124), to name a few. Yet, unfortunately, there are few published studies on the

teaching of recitative or other speech-based musical components in music history pedagogy.<sup>31</sup>

Using Cantonese music as a reference point in a music history survey would require the instructor to point out tone language and non-tone language as two language systems. The instructor does not need to speak any tone language, but they would need to acknowledge that all vocal pieces in *HWM* use non-tone languages. This basic level of acknowledgement delimits vocal music composed in the Western traditions while inviting students interested in language and music to investigate multilingual compositions such as Tan Dun’s opera *First Emperor* (2006, with lyrics by Ha Jin and Tan Dun). Beyond this basic level, the instructor may explain that a tone language *generates* a melody based on its linguistic tonal contour. Hence, speech in tone language is not the *opposite* of lyricism, as presented in *HWM*, but rather the *ground* of lyricism. By contrast, a non-tone language does not generate any melody because its linguistic property makes no demand on vocal inflections. On this level of comparison, Monteverdi’s use of repeated notes in his “excited” vocal delivery style (*stile concitato*) would serve as an excellent example for comparison.<sup>32</sup> In a tone language, such use of repeated notes for a melody would require deliberate compositional effort, as the lyrics would have to be chosen specially to create an unusually flat linguistic tonal surface for a musical effect. For example, in the first movement “Farewell” in the Cantonese choral suite *Requiem HK* (2017), the Hong Kong composer Yin Ng composed a flat melody line on the basis of the repeated notes of two characters “再見,” both of the same tone (Tone 3). The flat melodic line in Monteverdi’s *stile concitato* and Ng’s “Farewell” shares the same musical property but they represent speech-like vocal components in two different language systems.

### Conclusion

What I have learned from teaching Cantonese music at UBC can be understood as lessons in music history pedagogy beyond simple tokenism.<sup>33</sup> The diversity of the student body may enable students to reframe the course materials in positional terms relative to the global, hyperconnected environment they

31. No article published in the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* to date addresses the topic of teaching recitative. Nor is this topic mentioned in C. Matthew Balensuela, ed., *The Norton Guide to Teaching Music History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019). There is, however, published scholarship on recitative in vocal pedagogy. For example, Pamela H. Pilch and Christopher Arneson, “Using Recitative to Teach Expressive Singing: An Old Idea Made New,” *Journal of Singing* 75, no. 1 (September/October 2018): 25–31.

32. Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 307–308.

33. See Alejandro L. Madrid, “Diversity, Tokenism, Non-Canonical Musics, and the Crisis of the Humanities in U.S. Academia,” *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 7, no. 2 (2017): 124–130.

28. Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, esp. 302–305.

29. Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, A15.

30. Burkholder, Grout, and Palisca, A1.



understand. A major learning outcome specific to the Cantonese music course is that students used Cantonese music as a topic at the margins of the music curriculum to understand the foundation of vocal music in non-tone languages in Western art music. Other learning outcomes include developing comparative skillsets to understand musical traditions in tone and non-tone languages; the problems of essentializing Western and non-Western music epistemologies and cultures; the mistake of pigeonholing all genres of Cantonese music as “non-Western.” The language-based design of this Cantonese music course enables students to rethink the rudiment of “melody” more critically, providing them with a case study for understanding the Western art music terminologies from a cross-cultural perspective.

Importantly, most students do not have the epistemological frameworks to understand the categories of “Western” and “non-Western” music, not to mention the colonial burdens these categories have long imposed upon our music curriculum. The Cantonese lyrics do not typically sound like a cultural difference to most non-Cantonese speakers, as long as harmony, melody, rhythm, texture, and form in the song follow the compositional rules of Western art music. Yet, as Strohm remarks, this appearance of non-difference in fact comes from the effort of modern composers of tone languages, who “have long learned to accommodate themselves to a sound system established in the language itself.”<sup>34</sup> Sidestepping the labels of “Western” and “non-Western” that may encourage a binary type of thinking, I emphasize instead the impact of tone and non-tone languages on melody in Western and Cantonese music traditions. Consequently, I adopt a comparative approach for all the students who took my course.

There are two broader kinds of outcomes in my language-based approach. The course outcome is to teach students the content that specialists consider central to Cantonese music. Another outcome derived from the course outcome is relational, for it allows Chinese Canadian students to relate more deeply to their parents and grandparents who came to Canada as immigrants and Chinese diaspora communities.<sup>35</sup> This relational outcome also enables all course participants to position ourselves as globalized agents in today’s musical world, who participate in the relocalization—and, in some cases, even renationalization—of teaching materials that have already been circulating globally.

34. Reinhard Strohm, “Media and Transcultural Music History,” in *Transcultural Music History: Global Participation and Regional Diversity in the Modern Age*, ed. Reinhard Strohm (Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 2021), 289.

35. On the teaching of multiple epistemologies, see Dylan Robinson, “To All Who Should Be Concerned,” *Intersections* 39, no. 1 (2019): 137–144, at 139–140.

# Global Music History as Teaching Framework: Perspectives of a Generalist

ALECIA D. BARBOUR

At the time of this writing, I am presently the sole Music faculty member at an Institute of Technology that might also be understood as a four-year regional campus for a multi-campus public institution. In this capacity, I exclusively offer courses in music for non-majors in alignment with specified undergraduate general education curricular designators from within a multidisciplinary department.<sup>1</sup> Even before formally thinking about implementing pedagogies informed by a global music history framework, I was instinctively questioning how I might formulate coursework and approaches to music and sound that align with broad institutional curricular structures, serve our specific campus student population, and interface with other departmental and college disciplines while contributing and maintaining broad perspectives that emphasize the meanings and roles of sonic practice and listening in relation to the engagements of people, processes of movement, and expression. I learned a great deal by “doing,” and not without a fair degree of trial and error. Here, in part, I offer some of my experiences and perspectives of teaching music within a general education context from outside of the setting of an established Department or School of Music—a teaching situation that I do not believe is terribly exceptional though it is not widely depicted in the pedagogical literature.<sup>2</sup>

I wish to express my appreciation to the editors of this special issue (Daniel Castro Pantoja, Hannah Chang, and Hedy Law) for their invitation to contribute and to Hedy Law for thoughtful comments on early drafts and revisions. I am also grateful to Sara Haefeli for her helpful comments and insights.

1. The designators are in “The Arts and Creativity” and “Global Studies and Diversity.” “General Education Foundations,” Office of the University Registrar, West Virginia University, accessed June 27, 2022, <https://registrar.wvu.edu/curriculum-catalog/general-education-foundations-gef>.

2. For an example of a pedagogical article that does specifically tend to general educational music appreciation instruction (though not explicitly from outside of a music department), see Steven Cornelius and Mary Natvig, “Teaching Music Appreciation: a Cultural Approach,” this *Journal* 4 no. 1 (2013): 139–150. For an example in which many of the approaches to

I am privileged with and challenged by the positioning of *music* in my campus teaching context and by both the pedagogical practicalities and implications of how that music—and its transmissions, migrations, soundings, meanings, values, exchanges, boundaries—is encountered, studied, learned, and ultimately valued. My approach, as much as anything, is due to my broad disciplinary training and my perspective is largely experiential.<sup>3</sup> While any successes I can mark are only the result of collective and collaborative efforts, in addition to these successes there have nonetheless been innumerable challenges. In response to a call to share experiences in teaching related to global music history, I find it helpful to address, first, how I have come to understand *music* in my particular context. I then reflect on some of the resonance I have ultimately found in a teaching approach informed by a global music history framework and processes of defamiliarization, as well as on how and why I have adopted such an approach.

### What is “Music” in My Context?

I am currently located in southern West Virginia at the West Virginia University Institute of Technology, “WVU Tech.” Prior to completing the Ph.D. with a concentration in Ethnomusicology, my graduate studies included a masters-level concentration in Music History and Theory (historical musicology). This background—combined with experiences in international education, K-8 education, and historical interpretation and museum services—has informed my attempts to fulfill my obligation to offer a range of coursework. Presently, my classes include international students recently graduated from high school (many of whom are student athletes), though the vast majority of my students are hyperlocal to this region (whether recent high school graduates or individuals of various ages and life stages). Most students in any given term are likely to identify as both “white” and “male.”<sup>4</sup> In terms of previous musical experience

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methodologies, curricular design, and assessment (for undergraduate music majors) can arguably be broadly applied to other contexts, see Matthew Baumer, “A Snapshot of Music History Teaching to Undergraduate Music Majors, 2011–2012; Curricula, Methods, Assessment, and Objectives,” this *Journal* 5, no. 2 (2015): 23–47. For a more “toolkit” approach that also has broad relevance, see Erin Bauer, Alexandra Monchick, Esther Morgan-Ellis, Mary Natvig, Kristen Strandberg, and Reba Wissner, “Roundtable: Pandemic Lessons,” this *Journal* 11, no. 1 (2021): 46–56.

3. I was fortunate to be able to participate in some general educational theory coursework at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, in applied music pedagogy coursework at the undergraduate level, and in practicums and supervised teaching of general education music courses at the graduate level. These experiences were invaluable and provided me a basis on which to build.

4. Within a 2017 data report (the most recently available of such items), 77% of students enrolled in Fall 2016 are indicated as “white,” 7% as “nonresident alien,” and 44% as “women.”

and knowledge, my classes comprise students (primarily, but not exclusively, from Latin America) who have played in concert orchestra, students (including hyperlocal students) with experience in musical theater and/or marching band, and students who create, perform, and record their own music (whether through acoustic or technological means, or both). Even so, for a not insignificant number of my students, any strong recollections or current experiences of live music tend to be associated nearly exclusively with their presence in a church or in a restaurant.

The question of “what is music” is one I have previously posed as an instructor to professional graduate students and undergraduates in other settings.<sup>5</sup> This has often occurred in the context of some kind of “world” music class and very typically has yielded stimulating and interesting results as it requires an unpacking of assumptions and analytical engagement with one’s background, preferences, and even biases. Given my work with this question as a pedagogical tool and my training, I thought I had some basis from which to formulate a response or at least a series of relevant questions. Yet, as it turns out, in my present context within a multidisciplinary department that offers majors and minors alongside a significant number of courses in service of institutional general-education undergraduate requirements, engaging with this question in fact demanded that I unpack and articulate my own assumptions in order to move towards a shared understanding and facilitate a sense of dialogue, cohesion, and collective investment with not only my students but more broadly with my campus.

While music programming and degrees were offered previously, my position is the campus’s first full-time faculty post of its type in decades. For holders of community and institutional memory, the presence of a full-time music faculty member may seem to signal a return to aspects of the past and, as such, raises questions such as: Where is the marching band? What about the choir? When will the performances begin? Where are the instruments? What happened to

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*IPEDS* [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System] Feedback Report 2017, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Beckley, WV, accessed June 29, 2022, <https://institutionalresearch.wvu.edu/files/d/9b26e7bf-092e-4c5f-a34e-6a97a5935e42/ipeds-data-feedback-rpt-2017-wvuit.pdf>. Data in another file indicates that from the time campus operations began at our present location (2016), first-time freshman have overwhelmingly been residents of the same county as the current campus (Raleigh): “First-time Freshmen by West Virginia County, 2005–2018,” *West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Headcount Enrollment, First-time Freshmen Comprehensive Report, 2005–2018*, accessed June 29, 2022 under “First-time Students,” <https://institutionalresearch.wvu.edu/institutional-research/statistical-information/wvu-institute-of-technology>. I wish to thank Rachel Bragg for her assistance in helping me to locate these reports.

5. In addition to my present position in southern West Virginia, I have taught for Stony Brook (as a graduate student) at campuses on both Long Island and in Manhattan as well as for Kapiolani Community College on O’ahu, Hawai’i.

the music books? These questions indicate certain assumptions, expectations, and values centered on a specific definition of “music,” one that assumes that music is broadly understood as something (1) acoustically sounded within a live, performed, and rehearsed context; (2) something presumably creative and expressive; (3) something that fulfills a civic function amongst the campus population and within the broader community; (4) something that utilizes specific and concrete objects and resources (such as band instruments and music books); and (5) is part of a compositional practice, notated, and likely canonic, or at least part of a common corpus.<sup>6</sup>

Along with questions that may indicate some shared understandings of what music is thought to be, there have been concerns shared regarding immediate impacts of the *teaching and learning* of music in a multi-use space. These concerns encompass things such the impacts on shared learning spaces – including the need for or added value of specialized technology and musical instruments in classrooms, and presumed detrimental effects from sound bleeding into other spaces. Though anecdotal, my experiences with the expectations and assumptions of non-Music faculty may suggest that disciplinary pedagogical concerns (such as those related to questions of the canon) reach well beyond the music department or major, and may arguably indicate that general education courses on music merit attention in relation to efforts to critically rethink instructional frames.<sup>7</sup> The legacies of teaching, studying, and performing music on my campus, in conjunction with my background and the characteristics and interests of my students, have ultimately led me to consistently attempt to situate the study of music within a global music history framework that is both shaped by and reaching towards processes of defamiliarization.

### Why attempt a Global Music History Framework in My General Education Undergraduate Context?

Global music history, as both a developing genre of musical scholarship *and* as one that may be situated somewhat distinctively across time and

6. Some of my conceptualization of these questions as that underscore an [implicit] assumption of “what counts as music to be studied” are informed in part by Georgina Born, “For a Relational Musicology: Music and Interdisciplinarity, Beyond the Practice Turn,” *Journal of the Royal Music Association* 135, no. 2 (2010), 208–209.

7. Here, I am thinking, for example, of approaches such as those discussed by Alice V. Clark in “Uncovering a Diverse Early Music,” this *Journal* 11, no. 1 (2021): 1–21; and by Kristen L. Speyer Carithers in “Music History as Labor History: Rethinking ‘Work’ in Musicology,” this *Journal* 12, no. 1 (2022): 68–90. And though focused on music history instruction, I also find the discussions in this article to be broadly applicable in a general educational context: Travis D. Stimeling and Kayla Tokar, “Narratives of Musical Resilience and the Perpetuation of Whiteness in the Music History Classroom,” this *Journal* 10, no. 1 (2020): 20–38.

subdisciplines, appeals to me in both its framing and its implications for methodology. I perhaps most closely professionally identify as something of a “historical ethnomusicologist.” Loose conceptualizations of something akin to global music history have been informative throughout my professional development, though my use of the phrase is comparatively new.<sup>8</sup> In the general education coursework for undergraduates that I currently instruct (including but not limited to “music appreciation,” “popular music,” “history of jazz,” and “world musics”), I find that the perspective of a “global music history” framework is as much or more an indication of an approach to macro-processes and perspectives as it is to demographics, geographical locations, or even influences of power or political dominance. It is an attempt to emphasize transcultural interaction and exchange rather than an attempt to “cover everything.”

In my present context of teaching a variety of general education music courses to students majoring in something other than music, I endeavor to center and trace histories and contemporary practices of musical expressions and performances through networks, migrations, exchanges, or “fluid geographical transfers”; to move beyond an “us/them” dialogic or comparative framework when students perceive such frameworks through a lens of difference; and to encourage empathetic and responsive listening with a broad reach while positioning music as an interface of interpersonal connectivity.<sup>9</sup> Through our

8. In this sense I feel affinity with some of the assertions made by Martin Stokes regarding the longstanding contributions of “history-saturated ethnographic methodologies.” Martin Stokes, “Notes and Queries on ‘Global Music History,’” in *Studies on a Global History of Music: A Balzan Musicology Project*, ed. Reinhard Strohm, SOAS Musicology Series (New York: Routledge, 2008), 8–9. As a graduate student, I also had numerous encounters with Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman, eds, *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History* (Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1991). In a review of this aforementioned text, Veit Erlmann asserts that it “seeks to disrupt the hegemony of Western attempts at world music history and to conceive of a world of decentered, plural histories” in which music “is seen by the authors as a quintessential means of expressing difference.” Veit Erlmann, review of *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 24 (1992), 156.

9. I take “fluid geographical transfers” from Federico Celestini and Philip V. Bohlman “Editorial: Musicology and the Discourses of Global Exchange,” *Acta Musicologica* 86, no. 1 (2014), 1.

For a broad encapsulation of the developments in the study of difference in musicology, see Olivia Bloechl with Melanie Lowe, “Introduction: Rethinking Difference,” in *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, eds. Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2015): 1–52. For a rumination on evolutions of framings of difference in ethnomusicology (from the 1990s), see Deborah Wong, “Ethnomusicology and Difference,” *Ethnomusicology* 50, no. 2 (2006): 259–279. As to how some of this may manifest in the classroom and curriculum, Jesús A. Ramos-Kittrell cautions against dichotomies perpetuating “commodified stereotypes” of “differentiation” in a “world music” context, specifically. He is cautioning about the “racialized differentiation” in this context, but I think the caution regarding the risks of the hardening of comparative frameworks applies more broadly. Ramos-Kittrell, “Teaching Music and Difference: Music, Culture, and Difference in Globalization,” *Musicology Now*, July 10, 2018, <https://musicologynow.org/>



multiplicity of positionings in the present, we attempt to reach out to a “multi-voiced past” as a way of negotiating “globally situated histories,” even when students may initially assume their own individual and collective experiences and perspectives to be representative of some sort of larger or even universal absolute.<sup>10</sup> In an aim to globally situate our study of musics and histories and to frame our study as broadly culturally and socially relevant, these general undergraduate courses deliberately lean on the breadth of experiences of the participants but ultimately seek to extend beyond representation or reflection of any presumed singular shared experience.<sup>11</sup>

### Processes of Defamiliarization

In service of a pedagogy informed by a global music history framework, I increasingly embrace processes and even an (unofficial) overarching common course outcome of defamiliarization, which Michael Dylan Foster has defined as “the effect of considering one’s own tradition through the eyes of another.”<sup>12</sup> I have noted it is very helpful for my students to engage a variety of approaches to facilitate a defamiliarization of even the most familiar musics, and that these approaches also remain relevant and clarifying when considering musics and

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[org/teaching-music-and-difference-music-culture-and-difference-in-globalization/](https://doi.org/10.2298/MUZ1927015S). For an additionally instructive approach to a “world music” course, see also “Michael A. Figueroa, “Decolonizing ‘Intro to World Music?’” this *Journal* 10, no.1 (2020): 39–57. For both music and musicology as “interface,” see, for instance, Lukas Christensen and Daniel K. L. Chua, “Editorial: Different Points of View,” *Musicological Brainfood* 6, no. 2 (2022), 3. For more on the role and function of interconnectivity, see, for example, Chua, “Global Musicology: A Keynote without a Key,” *Acta Musicologica* 94, no. 1 (2022): 109–126. Also broadly relevant, particularly in consideration of the role of the “far-near experience,” is Sonia Tamar Seeman, “Embodied Pedagogy: Techniques for Exploring Why and How Music Matters,” in *College Music Curricula for a New Century*, ed. Robin D. Moore (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2017), 191–204.

10. The phrase “multi-voiced past” in this context is drawn from Reinhard Strohm, “The Balzan Musicology Project Towards a Global History of Music, the Study of Global Modernisation, and Open Questions for the Future,” *Muzikologija* 27 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.2298/MUZ1927015S>, 17; while “globally situated histories” is from Walker, “Towards a Decolonized Music History Curriculum,” this *Journal* 10, no.1 (2020), 15.

11. I find Melanie Lowe’s argument for cultural relevance in music history pedagogy to be instructive in this regard. Lowe, “Teaching Music History Today: Making Tangible Connections to Here and Now,” this *Journal* 1, no. 1 (2010), 46–47. Also of note is Louis Kaiser Epstein, Taylor Okonek, and Anna Perkins, “Mind the Gap: Inclusive Pedagogies for Diverse Classrooms,” this *Journal* 9, no. 2, (2019): 119–172. I do want to be very careful not to treat my approach to global music history as somehow interchangeable with decolonization efforts or even with attempts to reach towards equitable pedagogical practices that center inclusion, though there are certainly synchronicities across these domains. See Margaret E. Walker, “Towards a Decolonized Music History Curriculum,” 1–19.

12. Foster, “The UNESCO Effect: Confidence, Defamiliarization, and a New Element in the Discourse on a Japanese Island,” *Journal of Folklore Research* 48, no. 1 (2011), 93.

contexts that are unfamiliar. Over several classes and even across the term, such approaches might include interrogating overlapping and intertwined processes that may serve to address the following implicit or explicit questions:

- What distinctions and overlaps between and amongst processes contribute to music as something that *is* (as idea, as construction, as embodied process, as expression, as sonic phenomena, as site of negotiation and exchange)?
- What constitutes music as the *focus* (as performance, as transportive and evocative, as resonant and relevant, as artistry, but also as commodity)?
- What *technologies* serve to facilitate but also capture and re-sound that music of focus (the instruments and voices involved, the spaces in which it is practiced and encountered and recorded, the mechanical methods and media involved in recording and playback and broadcast)?
- And how do various *social and cultural values and exchanges* expressively and interpretively inform and connect these various layers of being and meaning and engagement?<sup>13</sup>

One specific tactic is to defamiliarize something regionally or otherwise presumably familiar by situating it within broader histories and settings. An example relevant to my present geographic location is the banjo and string band music. The banjo, in many instances, is read as a cultural signifier of a historic Americana that is nearly always presumed to be white and rural.<sup>14</sup> I approach this material on two levels: the first is to defamiliarize something likely perceived to be somewhat familiar in order to foster deeper inquiry; the second is to more broadly do so in a way that, to quote Scott V. Linford, “contradicts the narrative of Western scholarly omniscience.”<sup>15</sup> Specifically, a study of the banjo, with its complex transnational legacy, fosters engagement with topics such as hybridity and innovation as well as cultural appropriation and erasure. Such a study may ultimately counter and complexify some of the pervasive negative Appalachian stereotypes with which the banjo is often associated.<sup>16</sup>

13. Such an approach owes a tremendous debt to Popular Music Studies. For a summary of some of this trajectory, see David K. Blake, “Introduction: Towards a Critical Pedagogy for Undergraduate Popular Music History Courses in the Twenty-First Century,” this *Journal* 5, no. 1 (2014): 99–102.

14. A number of examples and resources related to the banjo and string band are included in Heeseung Lee, “Retracing the Roots of Bluegrass Music through an Affrilachian Aesthetic,” this *Journal* 9, no. 2 (2019): 215–233.

15. Scott V. Linford, “Historical Narratives of the Akonting and Banjo” *Ethnomusicology Review* (July 27, 2014), <https://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/akonting-history>.

16. For a discussion of some of these stereotypes and their permutations, see Emelie K. Peine and Kai A. Schafft, review of *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, by

I have found that embracing a teaching approach informed by processes of defamiliarization in service of a global music history framework has also expanded options for topical and geographical focus. It has, for instance, meant that I can meaningfully incorporate just about any available live music regardless of what may be on the course calendar – an asset in a department without a music performance wing in an area with minimal public transportation. Even beyond the added experiential and learning value brought by “live” performance, embracing defamiliarization in my teaching has led me to confront some of my own siloed perceptions of musical traditions and ultimately enhanced my pedagogy. For example, for a(n at the time) fairly “traditional” music appreciation course during a week we were initially scheduled to consider chamber music in the nineteenth century, we had the opportunity to host a local bluegrass band in class. This live session led to discussions on processes of composition, rehearsal, improvisation, and performance, and to considerations of geographically and colonially affiliated legacies and traditions; it provided a launchpad for considerations of “folk” and “concert” music and performers (including visual representation, marketing methods, performance settings, and patronage) for a variety of ensembles and their instruments — most notably constellations of the string band and the string quartet.<sup>17</sup> In this instance, I noted that processes of music consumption and media interaction, for example (topics on which my students generally feel initially very confident), became defamiliarized as the class reached beyond their previous knowledge in ways that challenged their initial expectations. While I doubt that I would have come to such an integrative approach that embraces processes of defamiliarization in a setting with more opportunities for live music, I do believe that I would now endeavor to apply some similar structure even in contexts in which an abundance of types of performances are available, as it opens a number of pathways for centerings and decenterings and related alterations in perspectives.

My aim for my teaching to take a global turn is admittedly aspirational, punctuated by challenges, and an ongoing quest. While my approach to implementing a kind of a global music history framework through processes of defamiliarization often embraces the local even as it seeks to emphasize connections across places and times, it seems to perhaps be somewhat related to that depicted in Annie Yen-Ling Liu’s and Blake Stevens’ opening of “Teaching Global Music History: Comparative Approaches in Chinese Historiography.” As they explain, such an approach would:

J. D. Vance, *What You Are Getting Wrong about Appalachia*, by Elizabeth Catte, *Ramp Hollow: The Ordeal of Appalachia*, by Steven Stoll, *Rural Sociology* 83, no. 3 (2018): 707–714.

17. The work of the Danish String Quartet within both “folk” and “concert” domains, for example, helps to exemplify a number of these points. Danish String Quartet, accessed August 31, 2023, <https://danishquartet.com>.

[I]nterrogate assumptions of Western superiority and other forms of Eurocentric thought in dialogue with sociopolitical and historical accounts of globalization and postcolonialism. It would give new significance to musics considered to be peripheral by removing the ‘center’ that once organized a canon of musical works. . . It would seek to . . . demonstrat[e] networks of exchange and influence.<sup>18</sup>

My goal is to continue to work toward a pedagogy that is inclusive, open, and beyond “tokenism” with a constellation of examples and case studies to foster encounters ultimately constituting a “history of many different voices” in moments and places both recognized and unrecognized, familiar and unfamiliar; where sonorous encounters foster considerations of social function, meaning, value, and purpose.<sup>19</sup>

#### APPENDIX Select Banjo and String Band Teaching Resources

Scott V. Linford, “Historical Narratives of the Akonting and Banjo” *Ethnomusicology Review* (July 27, 2014), <https://ethnomusicologyreview.ucla.edu/content/akonting-history>.

Features visual depictions of the *akonting* next to a historical painting of a gourd banjo along with performances on the *akonting* and descriptions of instruments’ construction and playing style. The article can additionally be drawn on to frame discussions of scholarly and historical narratives and claims (and feelings) of ownership of musical styles and instruments.

“The Roots and Branches of Virginia Music,” *Smithsonian Folkways*, Smithsonian Institution, accessed July 11, 2022, <https://folkways.si.edu/roots-branches-virginia-past-present/bluegrass/music/article/smithsonian>.

Encapsulates a relatively broad range of geographical and cultural influences and incorporates video performances ranging from the Blues to Bluegrass. The various related materials available through *Folkways* can additionally be utilized as resources for independent or small group research projects, if desired.

“Rhiannon Giddens interviewed by David Holt,” *David Holt’s State of Music*, April 9, 2015, 11:13, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7Dtlh8akk>.

18. Liu and Stevens, “Teaching Global Music History: Comparative Approaches in Chinese Historiography,” in *Listening Across Borders: Musicology in the Global Classroom*, eds. James A. Davis and Christopher Lynch (New York, Routledge, 2022), 53.

19. Madrid, “Diversity, Tokenism, Non-Canonical Musics, and the Crisis of the Humanities in U.S. Academia,” this *Journal* 7, no. 2 (2017): 124-130; Strohm, “The Balzan Musicology Project Towards a Global History of Music,” 16.

“Jim Hartel Minstrel Banjo & Rhiannon Giddens, MUSIC Episode,” *Craft in America*, December 9, 2015, 6:50, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7SWUCpHme8>.

“Rhiannon Giddens: On the Lost History of the Black Banjo,” *A Great American Tapestry – The Many Strands of Mountain Music*, Center for Cultural Preservation, June 20, 2017, 6:28, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkGSns7-e0>.

Collectively represents attention to historical instrument (re)construction, to the formation of historical (and musical and affiliate organological) narratives, and to aspects of the production and legacies of the banjo and minstrelsy on the national and international stage.

Sheryl Kaskowitz, “Before It Goes Away: Performance and Reclamation of Songs from Blackface Minstrelsy,” *The Avid Listener* (July 28, 2020), accessed July 11, 2022, <https://theavidlistenerblogcom.wordpress.com/2020/07/28/before-it-goes-away-performance-and-reclamation-of-songs-from-black-face-minstrelsy/>.

Features video performances of a few musical styles (including jazz) as well as commentary from contemporary performers (Rhiannon Giddens and Cécile McLorin Salvant) with links to additional resources (including reproduced primary source materials).

# Archives, Objects, and the Global History of Music

NANCY YUNHWA RAO

*“The transformation of ‘archivistic’ activity is the point of departure and the condition for a new history.”*

— Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*<sup>1</sup>

Archival studies have been crucial to the production of knowledge in musicology that focuses on European tradition. Objects are typically used as evidence to support specific historical narratives, in particular objects such as documents and musical instruments. In classrooms, instructors encourage students to connect to music history by thinking through primary sources such as manuscripts, compositional sketches, personal correspondences, programs, and diaries, as well as musical instruments relevant to the music they study. Research questions may include: How do compositional sketches shed light on musical works? How do historical editions reveal their performing history? How do correspondences reflect relationships, musical ideas, influences, and inspiration? What do documents about singers and patrons say about canon building? Music history pedagogues have also incorporated organology in classrooms, as significant instrumental collections on many university campuses and museums offer stupendous opportunities for students to explore the practice of music-making from different historical periods, as well as a wide range of geographical locations and cultural traditions. Both the increased attention given to archival documents and the hands-on pedagogy in musicology have broadened the scope of learning and deepened the understanding of music history.

Writing about her experience in such pedagogy, Kristen Strandberg notes, “Introducing students to tangible historical objects and physical spaces helps to build an even more direct connection with the past. When students interact with pieces of history in the form of documents, objects, or historical buildings, they make a connection to the past that is far more direct than those generated

1. Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, trans. Tom Cloney (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 75.



by classroom discussion alone.”<sup>2</sup> Indeed, such studies help students engage at a personal level and understand better the role of music-making in relation to the historical context, such as the Civil War period.

For global music history pedagogy, the issue of the archive is ever more important. The archival activities that form the basis of knowledge production in musicology—which has focused on Anglo-European music traditions—need to be broadened and re-conceptualized. As the Mission Statement of the IMS Study Group “Global History of Music” notes, we have the aim of “examining the global musical repercussions of transcontinental exchanges, movement, and mixing of peoples, practices, ideas, and objects.”<sup>3</sup> As researchers of global musics, we must contend with this uneven playing field, and one way to contend is to make the problematics of archival work more apparent and palpable. English scholar Matt Cohen asserts that archives are not only “places where knowledge is produced,” but where that knowledge gains stature. Paraphrasing the anthropologist Ann Stoler, he claims that “what gets kept and how it gets marked as evidence gives form to power, shaping the imagination of those who use an archive.”<sup>4</sup> The archive, in other words, is not an impartial place. More often than not researchers are faced with the challenge of a lack of tangible connections to, and distorted accounts of, marginalized communities in music archives in the West.

Documentary heritage, as it turns out, is a privilege that belongs to dominating groups. Rather than being naturally generated as a depository of historical materials, archives exert oppressive power to make certain communities stay in the periphery. For example, the language barrier when working with global archival materials is an inevitable hinderance: most music history librarians in North America cannot read non-European languages to facilitate archival research beyond Anglo-European research topics. Yet the diversity of our student population and the increasing diversification of the subjects of our study require that we acknowledge the existing archival hierarchy and move toward redressing it. With increasing efforts in digitization of archival materials we may be in a good position to be engaged in primary materials that link to

2. Kristen Strandberg, “Music History Beyond the Classroom: Active Learning Through Local History,” this *Journal* 7, no. 2 (2017): 32. The use of museum objects, in particular the instrument connection, in music education is discussed in Elizabeth A. Clendinning and Andrew W. Gurstelle, “Object Lessons: Teaching Musicology through Museum Collections,” this *Journal* 11, no. 1 (2021): 22–45.

3. “Mission Statement,” IMS Study Group “Global History of Music,” International Musicological Society, accessed July 3, 2022, <https://www.musicology.org/networks/sg/global-history-of-music>.

4. Matt Cohen, “Design and Politics in Electronic American Literary Archives,” in *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, eds. Amy E. Earhart and Andrew Jewell (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2011): 231.

musical practices outside of the received canons and that are not yet collected by music archives.

In addition to the list of questions I mention above, one might also ask: What constitutes the objects of study? Where do we find the archive of objects that speak to our inquiry? How do we disentangle the impact of archival hierarchy and the ways that the denigration and, at times, criminalization of the peripheral in archival accounts of the past continue to shape our imagination today? In this essay, we will begin by considering the knowledge hierarchy and silence in archives. I will then discuss my experience teaching a workshop with the Chung Collection at the University of British Columbia, where I focused on three key pedagogical points to inspire critical thinking about the objects in the archive. In the conclusion, I reflect on the emplacement of the archive in Vancouver and its significance for both the transpacific history of American music and the participants of the workshop.

### Archival Hierarchy and Silence

Let us first examine the notion of the archive. Archives contain historical records or primary source documents that have been accumulated and are kept to show the activities, functions, or achievements, of persons or organizations. Collections in the archives are selected (appraised) and organized (catalogued) for preservation, based on their enduring cultural, historical or evidentiary values. Archives are a form of repository of knowledge, and the cataloguing process, as archivist Hannah Grout notes astutely, “creates the narrative and navigability of the collection.”<sup>5</sup> However, as sites of knowledge production, inherent biases and silences are built into archives. Every archive is embedded in systems of power that determine what counts as knowledge; documents and objects were collected accordingly. In all likelihood, documents and artifacts from and about peripheral groups have been traditionally deemed unworthy of collection and few documents would be collected and preserved from the perspective of historically marginalized groups. Even when they are collected, bias in cataloging could misrepresent them or render them neglectable or inconsequential to the dominating historical narrative or knowledge hierarchy. With the goal of teaching global history of music, it is important to help students understand the archival hierarchy, to help them navigate their way through existing archives, and to help them consider the construction of their own archives that can express the cultural frameworks relevant to their research topics.

An opportunity to explore these issues presented itself recently. In Spring 2022, I was invited to give an archival workshop on music history of early

5. Hannah Grout, “Archiving Critically: Exploring the Communication of Cultural Biases,” *Spark: UAL Creative Teaching and Learning Journal* 4, no. 1 (2019): 73.

Chinese Americans at the University of British Columbia based on my research for the book *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America*.<sup>6</sup> The pedagogical situation prompted me to thematize several ideas about archival approaches. I began with my own story about archives. Growing up in Taiwan, I was trained in Western art music and pursued postgraduate degrees in music theory in North America, with a focus on twentieth-century American music. I used archival research in my works on ultra-modern composers, such as Ruth Crawford, Henry Cowell, and Elliott Carter. When I first became curious about the topic of Chinese American music history twenty-five years ago, I used similar research skills: I consulted music bibliography and reference books and visited music archives in major libraries around North America, looking through card catalogs and finding aids for names of composers, compositions, musicians, and performing groups. Yet, it was a futile attempt and the project stalled. The music archives I was accustomed to using did not have the materials I needed. The implication of a vacuum of archival evidence is that the history simply does not exist.

However, by broadening my idea of the music archive and with the use of my Chinese-reading language skills, I was able to redress the knowledge hierarchy in music archival collections. First, following my interest in Chinese American history, I was led to a treasure trove of materials in the Chinese Exclusion File at the U.S. National Archives in Washington DC. Due to the Chinese Exclusion laws of 1882 that restricted the entry of people from China, and the resulting need for immigration control, the U.S. government has complete records of all the Chinatown theaters and the entry and departure of every opera performer, playwright, musician, and other multi-faceted opera personnel. They were responsible for creating and maintaining vibrant opera performances across America in the 1920s. In other words, performing arts libraries and archives that gathered the documents of composers, concert houses, musical institutions, ensembles, and organizations did not deem the music of Chinese immigrants worthy of collection. Yet, since they were unwelcome immigrants, their records were meticulously kept by the U.S. Department of Labor for government surveillance.

Second, I began looking for archives with Chinese language materials, such as historical Chinese-language newspapers published in the United States. I found them housed in several university and public libraries, such as

6. I am grateful to Hedy Sin Yan Law for the invitation and for organizing the three-event keynote series, sponsored by the Interdisciplinary Histories Research Cluster at the University of British Columbia, March 17–19, 2022. The first two events both focused on archives: keynote lecture, “Archive of the Invisible in American Music: Tracing Transpacific Crossing of Chinese Opera”; workshop, “Reading Archive—Against the Grain.” The keynotes series was an extension to my book. See Nancy Yunhwa Rao, *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 2017).

several libraries at the University of California, Berkeley, and the New York Public Library. Studying these local Chinese-language newspapers from the 1910s to 1930s allowed me a window into the community and an opportunity to engage with voices and perspectives from within the Chinese community that had never been published in scholarly research on music. I also extended my Chinese-language archival search to materials outside of North America, to places such as Shanghai, Beijing, and Hong Kong. There I was able to gain access to recordings, visual materials, and other documents that were relevant to my inquiry. In other words, I had to reimagine a mega-archive out of many libraries, museums, private collections, and archives for my research.

I began this workshop by sharing the personal story that demonstrates the archival hierarchy in music studies in North America, and to provide a framework in the hope of, to quote anthropologist Ann Stoler, cutting “across the strictures of archival production” and refiguring “what makes up the archival terrain.”<sup>7</sup> My goal was to open workshop participants up to a broad array of genres of historical documents and artifacts, to allow them to make connections to musical practices outside of the received canons, and to expand their imaginations to recall memories and images that have not been considered historical evidence.

### The Chung Collection

The workshop was held at the Wallace B. Chung and Madeline H. Chung Collection at the University of British Columbia Library, merely a five-minute walk from its School of Music. As noted on the university website for the Chung collection, it is a 25,000+ piece collection of documents, books, maps, posters, paintings, photographs, tableware, and other artifacts related to three broad themes: British Columbia history, immigration and settlement, and the Canadian Pacific Railway company (CPR). It has a significant amount of materials related to the immigration and settlement of Chinese people in North America. Growing up as a tailor’s son in Victoria, B.C., Wallace Chung began collecting when he was seven. As a highly respected surgeon, Wallace Chung was just as assiduous as an expert collector. He was joined in Victoria by his wife Madeline, an obstetrician who emigrated from Hong Kong in the 1940s.<sup>8</sup>

Importantly, the Chung Collection acquired the family and business papers of Yip Sang (1845–1927), a prominent Canadian pioneer. His company Wing Sang not only owned fishing boats, fish salteries, and canning plants;

7. Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 34.

8. “The Chung Collection,” Rare Books and Special Collections, University of British Columbia, accessed March 18, 2023, <https://chung.library.ubc.ca/>.

established import/export trade; and served as the Chinese Immigration agent in Vancouver, but was also the shipping agent for the CPR and partnered with Chinatown businesses from tailors to restaurants. The total impact of Yip's life on the social, cultural, economic, and political fabric of Canada and China is immeasurable, as his great granddaughter Linda Yip notes.<sup>9</sup> Little do people know, however, that the Yip family ran Chinese opera theater business over a long period of time.<sup>10</sup> In this massive collection of rare, unique archival materials of early B.C. history—which was by no means limited to Chinese Canadian history—one can find Chinese playbills, photographs of actors, stage productions, correspondence related to theater management, and numerous other items.

Having worked with the collection for my book, I know the sheer number of materials in, and the complexity of, the Chung Collection, which could be quite overwhelming. Working with the archivist, I selected both Chinese and English items in advance from both the business and family parts of the collection.<sup>11</sup> They were laid out on four large tables in the reading room, with easy access to an object for everyone when they sat around the table. The objects included maps, a community donation book (listing individual donations to benefit a school in southern China), theater playbills, theater company business records and correspondences, logs of passenger lists from a steamship company, personal correspondences, studio portraits of actors in costume, stage photos, telegrams, and more. Twenty students and faculty registered for the workshop. As we waited for people to arrive, they moved around the tables, reviewing the documents and artifacts.

### Three Pedagogical Points

One of the goals of the workshop was to introduce to the participants to the richness of materials related to music making of Chinese immigrants in the Chung Collection. But even more importantly, it focused on several key

9. Linda Yip, "Yip Sang, the Patriarch—Reflections on a True Canadian Pioneer," blog entry, June 26, 2020, <https://blogs.ancestry.ca/ancestry/2020/06/26/yip-sang-the-patriarch-reflections-on-a-true-canadian-pioneer/>.

10. Nancy Yunhwa Rao, "Cantonese Opera in Turn-of-the-Century Canada: Local History and Transnational Circulation," *19th Century Music Review* 11, no. 2 (2014): 291–310.

11. Special thanks to Chelsea Shriver and Weiyan V. Yan at UBC's Rare Books and Special Collections for their expert and prompt help. The Chung Collection includes both Chinese and English materials. I discussed extensively the Yip Sang family materials in the Chung Collection. A significant amount of the Yip Sang materials is digitized, and even translated. "The Yip Sang Correspondence Project," Sue Bigelow, The City of Vancouver Archives Blog, April 17, 2014, <https://www.vancouverarchives.ca/2014/04/17/the-yip-sang-correspondence-project/>, and the "Yip Sang Collection," The University of British Columbia, Open Collections, accessed July 3, 2022, <https://open.library.ubc.ca/collections/yipsang>.

pedagogical points to inspire critical thinking about the objects, as well as encourage creative, resourceful, and imaginative consideration of the objects.

#### (1) *Make connections among seemingly unrelated materials*

The textual documents bear witness to the history of Chinatown theaters in the early twentieth century by providing the names of theater professionals, the titles of operas, and the travels of troupes. For example, theater playbills contain information about the cast, the repertoire performed, the date of the performance, a synopsis, and sometimes advertisements for local businesses or medicines. From a close study of them we learn the actors' names, roles, popular topics, performance practices, and many other aspects of the theater world. However, as promotion materials, the playbills' content cannot be taken at face value; we must read them within a broader context.<sup>12</sup> Performers' names in the theater company correspondence can provide details about their expertise and characteristics. This correspondence also gives insight into the logistics of theater management and the perspectives of the managerial team. From the community donation book for schools in China, we can find traces of the social standing and influence of theater sponsors and personnel. This information further helps us understand the roles of theaters in the community. By piecing together fragmented information from a variety of sources and connecting seemingly disparate dots, a rough sketch of the web of connections and daily life surrounding these theaters can emerge. This is by no means a small feat. Yu Ying-shih, the eminent historian of Chinese intellectual history, noted in his memoir that pondering the connections between seemingly unrelated materials constitutes one of the most important tasks for historians.<sup>13</sup>

After the brief introduction of the artifacts and possibilities of connections, workshop participants examined more closely the artifacts and documents displayed. When they flipped through the pages of the donation book, they could see the wide range of donation amounts (from CAD\$1 to 1,000) and how theater personnel and sponsors were placed within the economic and social strata of the Chinese community. When they looked through the long lists of passenger names meticulously written out in both Chinese and English in the log of records of steamship ticket sales, they could probably imagine Chinese opera performers among them. When they examined a playbill (Figure 1 and Figure

12. In my book, I discuss the interpretation of Chinese theater playbills from the early twentieth century. While it may be tempting to view the playbills as concrete evidence of the performance, I suggest that a more fruitful approach is to consider them as footprints of the theaters. During this time period, performance practices were often fluid and improvisational, making it difficult to view the playbills as a blueprint for the actual performance. See Rao, *Chinatown Opera Theater*, 103.

13. Yu Ying-shih, *Yu Yingshi hui yi lu* 余英時回憶錄 (Taipei Shi: Yun chen wen hua shi ye gu fen you xian gong si, 2018).



2), they could see the repertoire, cast list, and ticket prices, as well as highlights of the main attraction, praise of the lead performers, and highlights of the plot to pique the audiences' curiosity. These documents offer a vivid sense of busy transpacific movement in the early twentieth century that supported the transpacific music network of North America, which included Vancouver. In a vast archive such as the Chung Collection, a plenitude of connections could be made to inform the history of their vibrant musical life.



**Fig. 1.** A workshop participant consulting a playbill at the UBC Rare Books and Special Collections. (Photograph by Sonia Kung.)



**Fig. 2.** The playbill consulted by the workshop participant in Fig.1. Reproduced by permission from the UBC Wallace B. Chung and Madeline H. Chung Collection, cc-tx-123-5-國豐年班十月三十號.

### (2) Examine the materiality of the object

It was important for the workshop participants to experience first-hand the materiality of the objects (e.g., the size of the playbills, the colorations of the photographs, and the different techniques the photograph studios employed to mount photos onto paper). These might seem to be minute details, but they could be significant and telling. To this end, I urged the participants to consider the content of the archival document and its materiality separately. Such separation, I suggested, could lead to information about the object easily overlooked when we are engrossed by text and content. For example, all of the playbills were printed on newsprint paper, because, owing to the large number of characters needed to print Chinese and the complexity of typesetting, only theaters in cities with an adequate printing facility—typically a newspaper—could have their daily playbills professionally printed. Playbill printing was thus an extension of the Chinese newspaper business. Therefore, as objects, playbills helped us to make a connection between the history of Chinatown theater, print culture, and the social history of Chinatown journalism.

The photograph is another example. The durability of the cardboard papers that the portraits of actors were mounted to not only ensured the longevity of the photograph but also indicated the popularity of photography in the Chinese community and the success of Chinese professional photography studios. Indeed, the popularity of photographs of theater performers can be shown in the elaborate ways that they were encased or mounted by the photography studios.

### (3) Consider the Usage of the Object

Most importantly, however, I want the participants to consider how the objects were utilized by ordinary people of their time. What kind of “usage” might these artifacts have for people in the community? How, for example, might the playbill be used by opera fans? I received quite a number of answers. At first, most answers referenced information conveyed by the text on the playbills. Then a few volunteered answers about other possible uses of playbills that led to the key issue: their role in material consumption and exchange.

These archived objects were not simply historical props and paraphernalia, but how they were exchanged and used was extremely revealing. As Arjun Appadurai notes, “it is the things-in-motion that illuminate their human and social context... for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories.”<sup>14</sup> Indeed, objects are essential to disclosing how theatrical culture was created, shaped, and disseminated. In other words, the relationship

14. Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 5.



between opera theaters and people was formed and mediated by these objects in the most fundamental ways. In the hands of fans, objects such as playbills could be artifacts stashed away in private treasure troves. Fans cropped out pictures of actresses from the playbills and pasted them into scrapbooks, and these visual images of their idols influenced their own identity formation. Considering the materiality of these objects is necessary to unseal the specific meanings embedded within them. Not only were significant meanings inscribed in their usage, but these meanings came to shape the community's everyday life. Exploring these objects as material culture and considering their usage leads us to a wide range of questions concerning social networks, human transactions, economic conditions, and human agencies.

Our exploration into their materiality can also contextualize these objects more fully as well. The social fabrics of Chinese community existed in the form of material culture through these objects. Exploring the material dimensions of historical artifacts can therefore transform our understanding of them and inspire a rethinking or reconceptualization of conventional knowledge about Chinatown theaters in North America.

Displayed on the tables, the objects and documents at first seemed cordoned off in their own objecthood. Yet with further discussion of how there existed an active and mutual contact between these things and people, we came to see them differently. When participants again milled around the room and asked questions, they began to think about the ways these objects might have been used during their life history. Questions about the materiality of the objects uncovered more layers of meaning regarding the ways that people inscribed meaning onto them and embedded them with significance that circulated and interacted with larger cultural and social concerns.

### Conclusion

To be sure, archives, and the objects collected within them, shape our imagination of musical history. For a pedagogy of global music history, then, this is an important conversation to have. As Michel de Certeau notes poignantly, "The transformation of 'archivistic' activity is the point of departure and *the condition for a new history*."<sup>15</sup> One of the most important tasks might be to reconfigure what constitutes archivistic activities and to reimagine and recreate new ones. To this end, understanding the problem of archival hierarchy, considering issues of archive, and learning different modes of reading its objects can be vital lessons for students of global music history.

Separating the content of an archival document from its materiality and the usage of the object is a key archival skill that would benefit students of global music history. This skill is crucial to the development of the frameworks and narratives of networks of cross-cultural relationships, addressing how musics have moved across different continents, intersected cross-culturally, and become entangled with each other. These archival skills are also crucial for the imagination of an archive that does not, and cannot, exist in one location.

The musical past unveiled by these archival objects in the Chung Collection is part of the Pacific-crossing story of Vancouver. These documents preserved in the Chung Collection offered the participants a vivid sense of busy transpacific movements in the early twentieth century that supported the transpacific music network of North America. In a profound way, these transpacific movements came to be essential constituents of the musical past of a significant group of people in Vancouver that the workshop participants were either a part of, interacted with on a daily basis, or newly joined. Indeed, many participants partook in the transpacific movement themselves. According to the 2016 census, about 20% of Vancouver's population now identifies as ethnic Chinese, and 42% as ethnic Asian.<sup>16</sup> This makes the archive workshop at the Chung Collection all the more meaningful. I can imagine workshops like this one could benefit not only music students but students in other disciplines, such as global history, migration studies, urban history, Asian studies, ethnic studies, as well as to those interested in public musicology.

In my own work, as a former student of American ultra-modernism, I found that it was apparent that the traditional music archive did not suffice when I embarked on the search for Chinese American music. In the end, I created a different kind of archive of my own that helped lead me to uncover the transpacific circulation of Cantonese opera in the 1920s. One of the aims for this workshop was to share the knowledge I had acquired and to help the participants realize the different ways they can create their own archive for the study of a global history of music.

15. de Certeau, *The Writing of History*, 75. [Emphasis mine.]

16. "Data Products, 2016 Census," Statistics Canada, updated February 8, 2021, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>.

## Why I Don't Teach Global Music History

TAMARA LEVITZ

### Position Statement<sup>1</sup>

I am a 61-year-old, privileged, white Jewish woman who has been teaching as a musicologist for 30 years, finding a home in the past five years as a full professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at UCLA. I am from Tiohtià:ke/Montréal on the unceded territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka/Mohawk nation, today in Québec, Canada. My family on my mother's side were descended from Irish, English, and Scottish Catholic, Protestant, and Methodist settlers and planters on the island of Ktaqmkuk (Newfoundland) as the unceded, traditional territory of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq. The British established the Dominion of Newfoundland in 1907 but the island gave up self-governance and put itself under a Commission of Government from 1934 to 1949, when it joined Canada as a province. My mother was raised Catholic in the fishing output of Red Head Cove, Newfoundland during these years. Her father was a fisherman from a long line of skilled fishermen in the Baccalieu strait who experienced the decline of the fishing industry during his lifetime. My father's family were orthodox Jews who came to St. John's Newfoundland to escape the pogroms in Krivici and Smorgon (Smarhon) in the pale settlement (today Belarus) in the early 1920s; my grandfather was a peddler who later set up a clothing store in St. John's. My Jewish family has been the subject of

1. I provide this statement because the editors of this issue, Hedy Law, Daniel Castro Pantoja, and Hannah HK Chang requested it. I am grateful to them for this suggestion, through which I learned a tremendous amount, also about how the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors might situate themselves in the world. At the same time, I am acutely aware of the limits, problems, and challenges of such introductions. I have found much food for thought in this regard in Jessica Bissett Perea's "Introducing [Our] Peoples, Places, and Projects: Indigological Ways of Doing Global Music History Homework," in "Forum: Centering Discomfort in Global Music History," *The Journal of Musicology* 40, no. 3 (Summer 2023): 255-267.

ethnographic research.<sup>2</sup> My mother converted to Orthodox Judaism when she met my father and we were raised Jewish, with no knowledge of Catholicism and little of our Catholic, Irish, English, and Scottish heritage. My parents moved to Montréal, Québec in the late 1950s: I was educated in French immersion schools with humanities classes in French and sciences in English. Growing up, I was accustomed to hearing that I was "not really Jewish" because my mother had converted; today the Montréal Jewish community's rigidity around enforcing rules of Jewish descent through the matrilineal line appears to have softened. As a native English speaker I was acutely aware of being neither Québécois nor belonging in the province of Québec during these years of hyper French nationalism although I was born there. On the other hand, my Québec roots lead me to relate only vaguely to the idea of being a Canadian although I identify as such when outside Canada. At school, we were educated to admire emphatically everything French. I did not grow up with classical music and have no allegiance to it or any other musical genre.

My father was a doctor and my mother a nurse. My siblings and I were raised at first by a black nanny from the Bahamas, Daphne Yarward, who came to Canada as part of the West Indian Domestic Scheme; I struggle as an adult to reconcile the feeling of love I have for her with feelings of shame at my implication in the unjust and inequitable system that brought her into my life. My family was middle class aspiring to be upper middle class with an inherited memory of hardship. Perhaps I could say we had the material advantages and privilege of the middle class accompanied with the fear of losing them, especially when my father died in 1977.

I moved to West Berlin on a DAAD scholarship in 1984 at age 22 to study Musicology—a very rare choice for a Jewish Montréaler at that time in light of the unhealed wounds of the Holocaust, which was still in recent memory. There I experienced the worst anti-Semitism I had known up to that point in my life. Before I left, my mother told me for the first time that I was named after my great aunt Tamara Muzykant, who was murdered in the Holocaust, possibly in a mass grave in Rostov-on-Don, but I have never found her. I went to Germany with the hope of finding out why the Nazis had killed her and my grandmother's family. I discovered that in spite of the zeal with which I pursued such questions, I could not answer them, because the Nazis' motivations had been fundamentally irrational, grounded in destructive hate, and thus beyond my reasoning. At the same time, however, I could not identify with the way Jewish Montréalers at home tended to demonize Germans or boycott Germany. In Berlin I developed a conviction to seek the truth, dialogue, and commit to

2. See, for example, Alison Kahn, *Listen While I Tell You. A Story of the Jews of St-John's, Newfoundland* (St-Jean, TN: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1987).

social and restorative justice, even if I was for so many years very naïve about how to go about doing so. One consequence of these ruminations is that I have remained profoundly tied to Berlin and the German language for forty years; I am married to somebody from East Germany (the DDR) and my family and grand-children are German.

This history explains why I do not have a strong sense of one homeland or a single form of belonging although I understand the immense advantages of my citizenship, settler family history, and generational wealth. It also explains why I am deeply committed to taking responsibility for my overwhelming white privilege, while also not always identifying with how white racial identity is formed in the United States.

In the following essay I question global music history as a historiographic method, without, however, wanting to critique the excellent scholarship produced by its widely diverse individual practitioners. Global music history as a *decentering perspective* has brought together many scholars, inspired dialogue, improved morale, allowed Musicology to become more inclusive, and led to many fascinating articles, conversations, panels, and conferences. This is no easy feat. In spite of this, I myself cannot teach global music history because I don't find it sound as a *heuristic, concept, method, or pedagogical approach*. In order to demonstrate what I find problematic about it I first ask what the term itself means. I start with Pheng Cheah's critique of world literature, which I think reveals much about what is at stake in thinking about the global. I then compare how musicologists and literary comparatists have historically theorized the world in their respective disciplines—highlighting which methods each discipline embraced, and which adjustments they had to make in how they defined their objects of study to allow them to circulate in the world. Finally, I hone in on ideological features of the current global music history debate that I find disconcerting. I conclude with ideas about what I see as alternative pedagogical approaches to that of “global music history” and how I have and might implement them in my recent classes.

In writing this essay, I am aware of offering precisely the kind of anxious criticism that Daniel K.L. Chua argues we no longer need.<sup>3</sup> I hope, nevertheless, that the counterpoint between my voice from the past and Chua's voice from the future is helpful to others seeking ways to break down traditional national or “area studies” frameworks in teaching music.

3. See Danial KL Chua, “A Keynote without a Key,” *Acta Musicologica* 94, no. 1 (2022): 110. Chua gives a fascinating list of his work in this area under the asterisk comment on the first page of this article (p. 109). See also his “Global Musicology,” *New Sound International Journal of Music* 50, no. 2 (2017): 12–16.

## Conceiving the World

Musicology lacks a robust debate on the meaning of terms such as “global” and “world.” This is rather remarkable and unfortunate, given the rich, long-standing critical engagements with these terms in other fields.<sup>4</sup> Comparatists in literature have been theorizing literature's place in the world ever since Johann Wolfgang von Goethe first used the term “world literature” (*Weltliteratur*) in conversations with his unpaid secretary Johann Peter Eckermann in the years before his death in 1832. When Goethe told Eckermann in 1827 that he had read the Cantonese narrative poem *Huajian ji* (*The Flowery Scroll*) from the Ming dynasty, translated in 1824 by Peter Perring Thoms as *Chinese Courtship*, Eckermann remarked that it must “look very strange,” to which Goethe responded, “Not as much as one would think. People think, act and feel almost exactly like we do and one quickly feels like one of them.”<sup>5</sup> Such apocryphal stories laid the foundation for almost two centuries of debate about literary world markets, the geopolitics of world literary relations, cultural empathy, literary comparison, the politics and practices of translation, and universal ideals of humanity manifested through literature.

Recently, Pheng Cheah offered an illuminating analysis of Goethean world literature and how it differs from what he calls “global literature.” In his view, the normative [Goethean] conception of world literature subscribes to a spiritual idea of universal humanity and treats literature as a privileged form for expressing the human spirit. It posits world literature as the “concrete, objective” field for actualizing humanity because it elaborates on the human ideal through exchange that crosses national boundaries, and it defines world literature as a form of cosmopolitanism because it undermines parochialism at the subjective level of consciousness. Finally, it is founded on the idea that the project of world literature and its end of revealing humanity can be achieved only through historical process. Cheah concludes that, “the normative conception of world literature thus posits a relationship between world, literature, and humanity in which global literary exchange discloses a higher spiritual world wherein humanity's timeless ideals are expressed in sensuous form.” That conception “defines worldliness as spiritual human intercourse and regards

4. Makoto Takao does a phenomenal job of situating global music history within current debates on global history, and demonstrating their relative lack of theorization in “Global Music History,” Oxford Bibliographies Online, Music, last modified August 23, 2022, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199757824/obo-9780199757824-0317.xml>.

5. Johann Peter Eckermann, *Gespräche mit Goethe in den letzten Jahren seines Lebens*, eds. Christoph Michel and Hans Grütters (Berlin: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 2011), January 31, 1827. See Leslie O'Bell, “Chinese Novels, Scholarly Errors and Goethe's Concept of World Literature,” *Publications of the English Goethe Society* 87, no. 2 (2018): 64–80.

commercial exchange as the paradigm of human relations." Cheah will use this analysis as the point of departure for an approach to Comparative Literature based on a temporal rather than spatial concept of the world, and with the goal of transforming the world made by the globalization of capital.<sup>6</sup>

Cheah critiques recent theories of world literature (including those of David Damrosch, Franco Moretti, and Pascale Casanova) for detaching the concept from its original normative context and reducing it to the idea of "the global circulation and production of literary works."<sup>7</sup> In what he calls a "banalization" of world literature, the concept of the world is left unexamined and world literature is treated as if it has come into being. He laments how theorists presuppose a late eighteenth-century/early nineteenth-century world "emptied of normative significance." As a consequence, they are left "tinkering" with the canon, and seeking maximum inclusiveness in a world reduced to "the largest possible spatial whole." The "world-making power that normative theories attribute to world literature as a means for actualizing humanity and humanizing the existing world is lost." "In short," he concludes, "recent theories of world literature have emptied Goethe's and Marx's thought of their normative dimension and reduced the world to the globe, an object made by globalization. Hence they are concerned not with world literature but with global literature."<sup>8</sup>

Cheah's critique holds, in my view, for global music history, whose practitioners tend to adopt what he speaks of as "an unexamined concept of the world as a container to be populated by, or filled with, literary [and musical] works."<sup>9</sup> Lacking a concept of the world, they appeal to models that suggest one but without connecting the dots, like putting together puzzle pieces that belong to different puzzles. In the introduction to a foundational collection of essays on global music history produced as part of the Bolzano project, Martin Stokes runs through a list of somewhat unrelated theoretical frameworks that imply a notion of the world—postcolonialism, globalization, world music of the 1980s,

6. Pheng Cheah, "Global Literature, World Literature and Worlding Literature: Some Conceptual Differences," in *Handbook of Anglophone World Literatures*, eds. Stefan Helgesson, Birgit Neumann, Gabriele Rippl (Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2020), 86–87. See also Pheng Cheah, *What Is a World?: On Postcolonial Literature as World Literature* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

7. David Damrosch has published a very wide array of books and articles on world literature, and is the director of the Institute for World Literature at Harvard. From his vast oeuvre, see, for example, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003) and *Comparing the Literatures: Literary Studies in a Global Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2020). See also Francis Moretti's "Conjectures on World Literature," *New Left Review* 1 (January 1, 2000): 54–68; and his *Distant Reading* (New York: Verso, 2013); and Pascale Casanova, *La République mondiale des lettres* (Paris: Seuil, 1999), translated by M.B. DeBevoise as *The World Republic of Letters* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

8. Cheah, "Global Literature, World Literature and Worlding Literature: Some Conceptual Differences," 89.

9. Cheah, 85.

and sound studies.<sup>10</sup> Rather than strive for conceptual coherence, editors of collections on global music history likewise tend to fall back on "case studies" that address national or ethnic music in an inchoate global space, producing fragmented atlases of compelling research. Frequently, what global music historians call "global" more resembles the antiquated idea of the international, or reduces to "connections."<sup>11</sup> Two truly outstanding thinkers—Olivia Bloechl and Daniel K.L. Chua—end their essays on global music history with appeals to institutional reorganization or affective solidarity: Bloechl expresses excitement about interdisciplinary literature, learning languages, collaborations, and "interconnection across borders."<sup>12</sup> Chua imagines a "platform" or "society" for studying music that encompasses the entire globe—an International Musicological Society (of which he was President) on steroids. In his utopian, somewhat ecstatic, yet also appealing vision—which echoes affectively the future-oriented dreams of the Jugendstil or succession movements around 1900—musicologists will be generous to each other, guided by love in uncritical relation globally.<sup>13</sup>

All of this is very optimistic. But it leaves global music history without a viable theoretical framework or concept of the world.<sup>14</sup>

### Finding Methods and Objects of Study

Without a concept of the world, it is a challenge for global music historians to formulate methods and define their object of study, both of which depend on having such a concept. Centuries of disciplinary and methodological sectarianism have left music studies ill-equipped to rise to this task. Musicologists are also at a disadvantage for having no historical foundation for developing a comparative method—a requirement, I think, for engaging with music in the

10. Martin Stokes, "Notes and Queries on 'Global Music History,'" in *Studies on a Global History of Music: A Balzan Musicology Project*, ed. Reinhold Strohm (London: Routledge, 2018), 3–17.

11. Stephen Scheuzger offers an excellent critique of these approaches in "Global History as Polycentric History," *Comparativ: Zeitschrift für Globalgeschichte und vergleichende Gesellschaftsforschung* 29 (2019), 122–52.

12. See Olivia Bloechl, "Editorial," *Eighteenth-Century Music* 17, no. 2 (2020): 176.

13. See Daniel K.L. Chua, "A Keynote without a Key," 111; 122–23.

14. In this regard, Makoto Takao wisely describes global music history as not being a clear signifier and having a "polysemous identity." See Makoto Takao, "Global Music History." A concept of the world, or material foundation for examining the global, is also missing in the recent forum on discomfort in global music history in the *Journal of Musicology*, which focuses on affective responses to moments of "interconnection across boundaries," or "entanglement," in Olivia Bloechl's terms. See, for example, Olivia Bloechl, "Introduction: The Discomforts of Entanglement in Global Music History," in "Forum: Centering Discomfort in Global Music History," 251–55.



world. Finally, whereas comparativists in literature long ago reached consensus on their object of study—literature—musicologists still don't agree on theirs. By briefly comparing how comparativists in literature and musicologists developed their methodologies and came to define their objects of study historically, I hope to give insight into why musicologists cannot jump so easily onto the world stage.

Comparative Literature as a Westernized discipline is grounded in comparative methodologies and in what has become in the present day a remarkably solid object of study: literature. This stability can be maintained only because of the hermetic elitism of Comparative Literature's worldwide readership, which the discipline achieved historically in a long intricate process and in part by making a clean break with comparative philology and folklore studies. Although contributors to the first journal of Comparative Literature—the polyglot *Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum*—engaged in the comparative study of and translation of folk poetry, by the time the first German journal in the discipline appeared in 1897, its editor, Max Koch, had started to see such studies as a premise for something bigger, Herder's work having led him to the idea of shared humanity as the basis for world literature.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, Koch separated out the science of folklore in his mapping of the discipline.<sup>16</sup> In his programmatic introduction to the journal *La Littérature comparée* a couple of decades later, Fernand Baldensperger critiqued both the scholarly tradition of seeking the origin of genres or literary themes in the folk—a method he called “literary Darwinism”—and the practice of comparing national literatures. Although these branches had formed a “brotherly alliance” at the Congrès d'histoire comparée des littératures held at the Universal Exposition in Paris in 1900, Baldensperger had come to doubt them, the turn towards individual expression having convinced him that a Bergsonian exploration of the dynamism of literary ideas as they develop, become, and move around the globe would set a better foundation for the “new humanism” of the modern age.<sup>17</sup>

The fate of folklore and nineteenth-century philology within the discipline of Comparative Literature was sealed in the United States with the rise of New Criticism in the 1950s. In a canonic article on “The Crisis of Comparative Literature” that shook the discipline, René Wellek convincingly rejected the French school and Baldensperger, whose proposed method he reduced to a search for “minor authors and bygone fashions of literary taste.” Wellek

15. Összehasonlító Irodalomtörténelmi Lapok/Acta Comparationis Litterarum Universarum, eds. Sámuel Brassai and Hugo von Meltzl (Kolozsvár/Klausenburg/Cluj, 1877–88), accessed September 25, 2023, <http://dspace.bcucluj.ro/handle/123456789/11579>.

16. Max Koch, “Zur Einführung,” *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte* 1 (1897): 11–12.

17. Fernand Baldensperger, “Littérature comparée: Le mot et la chose,” *Revue de littérature comparée* 1 (1921): 5–29.

mentioned Baldensperger's critique of “tracing the history of literary themes” but curiously omitted the source to which they are traced: the folk. That erasure allowed him to make a fresh start, setting up his own holistic approach to theory, criticism, and the judgement of value of literature as an aesthetic object against Baldensperger's and other predecessors' allegedly nationalistic, positivist search for sources and influences.<sup>18</sup> In a standard text co-written with Austin Warren, Wellek had earlier tried to define literature as a specific kind of aesthetic object requiring unique types of knowledge.<sup>19</sup> In this way he had successively separated literature, and Comparative Literature from the folk (and the plurality of temporalities that Cheah sees as crucial to fighting the globalization of capital). The ensuing dispute between French and US comparativists over “imagologie” and the historic study of transnational influences in literature further diverted the discipline from folk study, in my view.<sup>20</sup> Contemporary comparativists avoid all this messy history by skipping over it, convincing themselves their discipline originated with Goethe's *Weltliteratur* but then leapt somewhat miraculously from Goethe to Auerbach's exile in Turkey, Edward Said, and the invention of a postwar discipline that tolerates folklore studies as an unobtrusive cousin and distant memory, and reinvents philology as a concept within worldly criticism.<sup>21</sup> By containing their domain and object of study, they have been able to avoid thinking about their settler colonial history, and to keep their distance from decolonization efforts, some of them believing that their discipline achieved plurality and inclusion long before anyone else did.<sup>22</sup>

18. René Wellek, “The Crisis of Comparative Literature,” in *Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Comparative Literature*, ed. Werner P. Friederich (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina University Press, 1959), 148–59; reprinted in *The Princeton Sourcebook in Comparative Literature: From the Global Enlightenment to the Present*, eds. David Damrosch, Natalie Melas, and Mbongiseni Buthelezi (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 161–72). See p. 165 for his discussion of Baldensperger.

19. René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* [1942], 3rd edition (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1956). René Wellek wrote the first two chapters, on the nature of literature (pp. 15–28). Although it is not popular to read Wellek today, it is remarkably refreshing to do so.

20. See Sarah Lawall, “René Wellek and Modern Literary Criticism,” *Comparative Literature* 40, no. 1 (Winter 1988), 3–24; and Antoni Martí Monterde, “Jean-Marie Carré et les origines historiques et politiques de l'imagologie comparatiste,” *Revue de littérature comparée* 379, no. 3 (2021): 297–312.

21. This happened famously with Edward Said's worldliness as developed from Erich Auerbach's “Philology and *Weltliteratur*,” translated by Maire and Edward Said, *The Centennial Review* 13, no. 1 (Winter 1969): 1–17.

22. That said, I was very taken by the many papers on decolonization at the 2022 annual conference of the American Comparative Literature Association. See, for example, Shu-mei Shih, “Decolonizing US Comparative Literature: The 2022 ACLA Presidential Address,” *Comparative Literature* 75, no. 3 (1 September 2023): 237–265; and, in the same volume, Alice Te Punga Somerville, “‘Enter Ghost of Goethe’: Comparison and Indigenous Literary Studies in the Pacific,” 266–282.

Musicology's attempts at erasing folklore from its past and subsuming its shared humanity into a worldly project of comparative music criticism have not been remotely as successful. This is in part because of the ontological differences between literature and music: as a non-representational art that cannot be so neatly divided into oral and written traditions, the latter can be neither translated nor compared in terms of content as, let's say, novels can be, and thus lends itself poorly to the task of revealing humanity in all its difference in the world. Whereas some experience music as notated or recorded, sound or work, others do not, the range of possible experiences preventing musicologists on the whole from developing one object of study for their discipline. In contrast to literary comparativists, musicologists also cannot depend on an enduring creation myth as generative as that of Eckermann's fortuitous capturing of Goethe's genial insight on *Weltliteratur*.

The greatest obstacle to Westernized musicologists being able to theorize music in the world and define their objects of study, however, is the burden they carry of the legacy of their own discipline. When Guido Adler first mapped the new discipline of the "science of music" (*Musikwissenschaft*) in 1885, as is well known, he distinguished between its historical and systematic branches, with Western music as the subject matter of history, and non-Western music relegated to the bottom of the list of subcategories of Systematic Musicology as "Comparative Musicology" or Ethnography. Adler's dichotomic model has proven a curse to all those who inherited it. He not only robbed non-Western music of historical method, but also Western music of a comparative method—a bifurcation of musical thought that has ripped apart the Westernized music disciplines.<sup>23</sup>

When Adler's friend Erich von Hornbostel, a trained chemist, more explicitly defined the field of Comparative Musicology in 1905, he focused on collecting and comparing as many recordings of the world's peoples that he could find with the goal of determining "the origins and development of music and the essence of the musically beautiful."<sup>24</sup> The problematic search for origins that literary comparativists saw as part of their discipline and then quietly let disappear, became the *raison d'être* of this new discipline. Further, whereas the literary comparativists' Goethean norm of world literature posited a *shared* humanity, musicologists assigned that humanity to people in only one part of the globe, the West, depriving the rest of it. As is well known, they deemed non-Europeans "primitive," or as at an earlier stage of human development

23. Guido Adler, "Umfang, Methode und Ziel der Musikwissenschaft," *Vierteljahrsschrift für Musikwissenschaft* 1 (1885), 5–20.

24. Erich M. von Hornbostel, "Die Probleme der vergleichenden Musikwissenschaft: Vortrags, gehalten an der Ortsgruppe Wien der IMG. am 24. März 1905," *Zeitschrift der internationalen Musikgesellschaft* 7, no. 3 (1905): 85. Hornbostel is referring to Hanslick's *Musikalisch-Schönen* (musically beautiful) here.

than they were—Darwin's work having cast long dark shadows on their perspectives and having fueled the evolutionary theories that became their bread and butter. Working in a discipline born at the height of empire, comparative musicologists replaced comparative literature's Goethean idealism of another age with a positivist project of imperial data collecting: they made charts, collected instruments, established recording archives, and worked assiduously to expand the knowledge base of music in the Westernized academy.

The methods comparative musicologists developed in the early twentieth century seem to cause the most anguish for global music historians trying to regroup and redefine their discipline today. Hornbostel and his colleagues relied on Comparative Linguistics in developing "scientific methods" of empirically comparing music on the basis of what they saw as objective data such as recordings and music instruments. They used precise instruments for measuring pitch and intervals (following the standard set by Alexander J. Ellis), and drew on the tools of music theory to compare consonances, dissonances, rhythmic language, harmony (largely absent in non-European music, in their view), and motives, completing exhaustive reports that few people then or now have cared to read. Although it may be tempting to see music theory and acoustics as an "equivalent" of sorts to philology in literature, they were not: it is noteworthy in this regard that the comparative musicologists chose comparative linguistics and not comparative literature as their model. The act of gathering data and establishing archives appears sometimes more important to comparative musicologists than the research outcomes—a hollowness of purpose characteristic of academic disciplines grounded in empire. Comparative musicologists also performed psychological experiments, conducted ethnographic research, took anthropometric measurements of musicians' skulls, and launched sociological investigations—the focus on quantitative data limiting the critical potential of these investigations. Such experiments continue today, yet continue to make people nervous because of the universal qualities or values they presume and/or the difference they potentially mask or erase.

The science of Comparative Musicology came to North America when Hornbostel's assistant in the Phonogramm-Archiv—Hungarian-Jewish former pianist Györgi Herczog or George Herzog—moved to New York City to study with anthropologist Franz Boas at Columbia University in 1925. As one of the only practitioners of Comparative Musicology to obtain an academic job in the United States before the second world war, Herzog's story is emblematic of what the field became there. Herzog brought with him the bibliographic and data-collecting methods he had learned while working as a cataloguer in Hornbostel's archive, which he eventually replicated in the United States by creating the Archives for Traditional Music at Indiana University. Herzog had not studied with Hornbostel, but rather perhaps audited some courses, lived with him, and

worked for him as an unpaid assistant; the model Hornbostel gave him of free labor in the service of colonial bureaucracy shaped his life.<sup>25</sup> In Berlin, Herzog had also audited Diedrich Westermann's courses at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität (today Humboldt University).<sup>26</sup> Westermann was a specialist on African languages who had exploited prisoners-of-war for his phonetic research during World War I, was heavily implicated in German colonialism in Africa, and led the deeply compromised *Deutsches Auslandswissenschaftliches Institut* during the Nazi period. Herzog took courses with Westermann in Ewe, Hausa, transcribing unwritten languages with phonetic exercises, and the people and languages of Africa. He inherited from his teacher a linguistic orientation towards music and sound—a direction he strengthened in the United States under the guidance of Edward Sapir. He also inherited condescending attitudes towards the colonized.<sup>27</sup> This experience formed the basis for Herzog's later close collaboration and friendship with Melville J. Herskovits, with whom he also felt a connection because of their common Jewish heritage, and who was instrumental in founding African Studies as a discipline in the United States.

Comparative Musicology became a settler colonial science when Boas enlisted Herzog to contribute to his comprehensive project of gathering vast amounts of detailed information on North American Native Peoples with the goal of determining geographical distribution of their characteristic musical styles. Herzog had been accepted into the Ph.D. program at Columbia on the basis of a bluff—his claim that he had completed studies in Budapest, Vienna, and Berlin when he had not.<sup>28</sup> In spite of this, his musical training and ear greatly impressed Boas, who came to rely on him as a go-to person for all questions about music—a privilege Boas never granted to other students who worked for him, including Zora Neale Hurston and Helen Heffron Roberts. Boas also relied on Herzog to transcribe recorded music and develop new recording technology to facilitate fieldwork—relegating him in this way to the intellectual position

25. Herzog studied Piano with Kurt Börner and Music Theory, Music History, and Orchestration at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin from April 1921 to July 31, 1922. I am grateful to archivist Antje Kalcher at the Universität der Künste Berlin for helping me to determine this information.

26. Herzog registered as an auditor in 1922/23 to take courses in "Ethnology" (*Ethnologie*) and Musicology (*Musikwissenschaft*), and in 1924/25 to take courses in Musicology and then Philosophy. See HU UA, Rektor und Senat, Listen der männlichen Gasthörer, 1922–23, entry no. 851, Humboldt Universität, and HU UA, Rektor und Senat, Listen der männlichen Gasthörer, 1924–25, entries no. 1263 and 1273. I am very grateful to Heather Foster, the archivist at the Universitätsarchiv der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin for providing this information for me.

27. For Westermann's courses during Herzog's time as an auditor, see the *Vorlesungsverzeichnisse* of the Friedrich-Wilhelm Universität from these years.

28. I explore this history in more detail in an upcoming series of articles on *Settler Colonial Humanists and the Racial Foundations of Comparison*, in which I also compare Herzog's experience to that of Zora Neale Hurston, whose transcript, in contrast, was scrupulously examined for any missing requirements when she applied to study English at Barnard College in 1925.

of a musical stenographer. As a consequence, Herzog unknowingly became the perfect, polyglot, erudite, fastidious bureaucrat for the already established settler colonial music system in the US university. Two years before graduating in 1938, Herzog launched his first class on "Primitive Music" at Columbia University, basing it almost entirely on Hornbostel's methodological foundations.<sup>29</sup> He offered variations of this class at Columbia until 1947 and then at Indiana University into the 1960s, mentoring Bruno Nettl, David McAllester, and other founding fathers of the later discipline of Ethnomusicology.

In the United States, Comparative Musicology and Comparative Literature developed differently as settler colonial sciences. Some comparativists in music collaborated in establishing the archives that robbed Native Peoples of their power and voice; comparativists in literature supported that settler colonial system from a distance by maintaining a sharp division between their worldliness and indigeneity. When Louise Rosenblatt—Margaret Mead's roommate and a student in Franz Boas's classes—was deciding whether to study Anthropology or Comparative Literature in 1925, for example, her Jewish parents intervened to say they did not want her travelling around the world as an anthropologist. Perhaps they were aware of the dangers women faced in the field in the United States—an expression of the reproduced violence of settlement.<sup>30</sup> In any case, they preferred Louise stick to Paris, where she was allegedly out of harm's way, and where she could study Comparative Literature with Baldensperger, which she did. During his visiting professor appointments at Columbia University (1917–1919), Harvard (1935–1940), and the University of California-Los Angeles (1940–1945), Baldensperger had managed to maintain the inviolable Eurocentric frame of Comparative Literature intact even when transplanting it into new contexts.<sup>31</sup> It had become a "safe" white comparative discipline, as Comparative Musicology and Anthropology were not, in the US context.

The settler colonial history of Comparative Musicology in the United States had consequences for how music scholars later defined their methods and objects of study. The "folk" became for them a thorny subject. Herzog tellingly titled the course he taught for decades "Primitive" rather than "Folk" music, for example, distinguishing between Hornbostel's colonial methods and Folklore Studies as practiced in the United States, with which he was also

29. Herzog's notes for some of these classes are kept in his uncatalogued archive in the Archives for Traditional Music at Indiana University. I am deeply grateful to Alison McClanahan for allowing me access to these materials.

30. Megan Steffen, "A Mystery in the Archives: The Historiography of Denial, Henrietta Schmerler's Rape and Murder and Anthropology's Project of Prevention," *American Anthropologist* 123, no. 4 (December 2021): 1–13.

31. See Louise Rosenblatt, interviewed by Ed Edwin, 1982, available as transcript and recording, catalogued as "Reminiscences of Louise Michelle Rosenblatt, 1982," Columbia University Libraries, <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/4072942>.

deeply involved. But Herzog also had a strong understanding of folk music within modernism, having studied with Zoltán Kodály at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. He was instrumental in bringing Béla Bartók to the United States in the 1940s as well, and assimilated Bartók's methods by working closely with him on the publication of *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs*.<sup>32</sup> Finally, Herzog grappled with the rise in his time of “popular music”—a category that blurred multiple boundaries and has remained highly problematic.<sup>33</sup> The discomfort music scholars feel in defining the folk and popular continues to the present day. Whereas comparativists in literature have seemingly solved the problem of the folk and thus today can gallantly refer back to formalist traditions of literary analysis based on them (Vladimir Propp, etc.) when they wish, music scholars are still mired in epistemic confusion about the musical work as it relates to written and oral traditions, and only slowly recovering from the trauma of past analytical violations in the name of formalism, which are so profound the slightest memory of them is still triggering. Johann Kroier succinctly and somewhat disturbingly describes this disciplinary path as, “that bumpy road from a science with ambitions for exactness through a collecting discipline under the influence of transitory anthropological macro-theories up to a branch of the humanities that has to represent the clear consciousness of the cultural sciences.”<sup>34</sup>

Locked in this icy history from which it has spectacularly failed to break until recently, Musicology has become a broken discipline as Chua daringly proclaims.<sup>35</sup> I agree with his assessment.

### Global Music History's Ideological Dilemmas

It is a lot to ask of global music history to fix this mess, and to develop the methods and objects to create worlds, given this disastrous history. And yet the practitioners of this subdiscipline seem to suggest it can. Calls for papers and mission statements burst with excited claims about decolonization, progress, renewal, and growth. There is a lot of hype as the global becomes the academy's latest brand. The Working Group of the Future Histories of Music Theory of the International Musicological Society opens its statement of purpose, for example,

32. Béla Bartók and Albert B. Lord, *Serbo-Croatian Folk Songs: Texts and Transcriptions of Seventy-Five Folk Songs from the Milman Parry Collection and a Morphology of Serbo-Croatian Folk Melodies*, with a forward by George Herzog (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).

33. Herzog's struggle with this terminology is strikingly evident in his “Research in Primitive and Folk Music in the United States,” *American Council of Learned Societies Bulletin* 24 (April 1936): 1–97.

34. Johann Kroier, “Music, Global History, and Postcoloniality,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 43, no. 1 (June 2012): 159.

35. Chua, “Global Musicology: A Keynote without a Key,” 117–19.

with the phrase, “‘Global’ is hot.”<sup>36</sup> Without doubt, they are right; the “global turn” has become the latest new fad across the humanities. But such trends come and go, and none of them have ever been able to provide Musicology with the elixir of youth it seeks to reverse its aging as a compromised Western discipline.

Many global music historians get around their lack of a concept of the world by claiming they embrace the global as a way of “decolonizing” the West—a goal that reifies Adler's original dichotomic model. Structural white ignorance may be operating in our collective denial of how the globalization of capital is extended through the spatial project of global music history, and how little this has to do with decolonization.<sup>37</sup> This may perhaps be the reason musicologists turn to Comparative Musicology as their foil, without engaging with its history, scholarship, or methods. They condemn it on moral and intellectual grounds, without discussing it in any detail. Stokes describes Comparative Musicology as “complicit in the racial crimes of the 20th Century” in one breath, for example, while reducing it to a few texts in German that nobody reads anyway in the next.<sup>38</sup> Bloechl similarly speaks of Comparative Musicology as a “failed modern experiment,” the tenets of which were later “weaponized in European and settler projects of colonial and racial domination.”<sup>39</sup> Are they implying Hornbostel and Herzog are guilty of such crimes, even as their lives as well were shattered by Nazi persecution? Or Zora Neale Hurston? It seems the story needs to be told with much more nuance. And why do global music historians mention Comparative Musicology at all? Perhaps they need Comparative Musicology as their moral shadow—the Hyde to their Jekyll—the easy target that justifies their new politics without grounding them, or that allows them to be in the world again without rethinking the world.

Global music history may in fact actively divert from settler colonialism. At a recent meeting of the Alliance for Multi-campus Inclusive Graduate Admissions (AMIGA) project at UC Davis, I learned that departments frequently recruit international students to meet demands for diversity, misunderstanding how this practice causes them to neglect the specific need for proactive admission policies to ensure inclusion of historically underrepresented, first generation, and underserved college students from *within* the United States.<sup>40</sup> Could global music history similarly be functioning to distract from local issues in music

36. See “Going Global, in Theory,” *IMS Musicological Brainfood* 3, no. 1 (2019): 3–5.

37. I use the term “white ignorance” in Charles Mills's sense. See, for example, “White Ignorance,” in *Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism* (Oxford, 2017): 49–71.

38. Stokes, “Notes and Queries on ‘Global Music History,’” 3–4.

39. Bloechl, “Editorial,” 174.

40. “The Amiga Project,” AMIGA, accessed September 25, 2023, <https://www.projecta-miga.org/>.



studies far more difficult to resolve? Does it in any way replicate progressive educators' problematic goal of establishing "cosmopolitan internationalism" as a path to securing a liberal democracy in the United States in the 1930s, which masked and denied racial inequality and injustice? Or could it be distracting from the globalization of capital by claiming resistance to it as it extends its domain? Given how settler colonial systems often perpetuate themselves through white ignorance and acquisition of lands and goods, I worry about music scholars leaping joyfully into the world while leaving local history unexamined at home (although doing one doesn't exclude doing the other and very many global music historians do both).<sup>41</sup> One need only consider how music theorists are currently distracting themselves by fixating on the racism of one Austrian theorist whom only a tiny elite knows, while the long, harrowing history of music theory's complicity in missionary settlers' conquest of the west—with Bible and music theory textbook in hand—hides in plain sight.

If global music history is not conceiving the world, developing historiographic methods, or decolonizing the West, then what is it doing? It seems primarily to be creating a space for an imagined scholarly community that seeks to move beyond the national. In this community everyone is included and no one is left out. It is made up primarily of scholars who are Westernized, and who have a place in the Westernized academy. They are mobile and can cross borders. One could call them a cosmopolitan elite (keeping in mind both the positive and negative interpretations of that term). In contrast to Stefano Harney's and Fred Moten's undercommons, or the lumbung of ruangrupa, who curated the documenta 15, global music history as a collective is not critical of or resisting Westernized institutions.<sup>42</sup> Although its practitioners want to transcend national boundaries, they usually end up reinforcing them. This is because the global forces them to talk about music in relation to geopolitical identity, or to become cultural ambassadors or diplomats of their own countries—roles that may prove limiting to some in the long run. At times, they speak of packing this whole small world into the Westernized university's standard music history curriculum, adding to it in a way that mimics their institutions' diversity politics in its focus on representation.

41. Jessica Perea Bissett beautifully addresses this point in "Introducing [Our] Peoples, Places, and Projects: Indigological Ways of Doing Global Music History Homework."

42. See, for example, Stefano Harney and Fred Moten, *Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (New York: Minor Compositions, 2013), <https://www.minorcompositions.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/undercommons-web.pdf>. See also *Lumbung Erzählen*, ed. Harriet C. Brown (Berlin: Hatje Cantz/documenta, 2022); *The Collective Eye im Gespräch mit ruangrupa: Überlegungen zur kollektiven Praxis* (Berlin: Distanz, 2022); *Documenta 15* (Kassel: Museum Fridericianum gGmbH, 2022), art exhibition, accessed September 25, 2023, <https://documenta-fifteen.de/en/lumbung/>; "Lumbung," Friends of the Lumbung Worldwide, accessed September 25, 2023, <https://lumbung.space/>.

This global space is less unified than hoped, as evinced by the fact that scholars in the different music subdisciplines conceive of it so differently and apply to it such different methods. The only thing they all seem to share is their cartographic images of the world and disgust with Comparative Musicology. Music theorists, for example, sometimes seem to imagine the global as a space in which to create a mythical library of Alexandria containing every music theory text ever written. Tellingly, they focus primarily on the history of music theory over phenomenological analytical method.<sup>43</sup> This allows them to compare texts and concepts, without necessarily worrying about the world. In a very compelling article on tuning, Alex Rehding takes as his model for comparative music theory G.E.R. Lloyd's "comparison of cultures," comparative organology, *Begriffsgeschichte*, and the structural comparison of myths as exemplified in Lisa Raphals's *Knowing Words*, for example. These methods are useful to the task at hand, but perhaps not for worlding music or music theory because they are focused largely on conceptual history, classifying, and language. Musicologists, unable to escape questions of aesthetics so easily, tend to focus more on networks, encounter, exchange, and reception.<sup>44</sup> Ethnomusicologists, in contrast, feel they have already been all along "a global, interdisciplinary network of individuals and institutions engaged in the study of music across all cultural contexts and historical periods."<sup>45</sup> The ICTM study group on global history speaks of increasing "global interaction of regional cultures," and of creating "a global network of cross-cultural relationships largely neglected by conventional musical historiography."<sup>46</sup>

As this brief analysis shows, the global serves for music scholars primarily as a container in Cheah's sense—a space they can fill up with a wide array of methods, objects, and relations, and in which they can reflect on how to free themselves from the concept and reality of Western music, which seems to be their greatest goal. The discussions these music scholars are having could not be further removed from those in Comparative Literature, which, since Spivak and with Cheah and others, is moving away from spatial and towards temporal concepts of the world. In this regard, I would conclude as I began with the idea that global music history is not a heuristic, concept, pedagogy, or method, but

43. See Alexander Rehding, "Fine-Tuning a Global History of Music Theory: Divergences, Zhu Zaiyu, and Music-Theoretical Instruments," *Music Theory Spectrum* 44, no. 2 (June 17, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/mts/mtac004>.

44. See David Irving, "IMS Study Group 'Global Music History': Mission Statement," International Musicological Society, accessed September 25, 2023, <https://www.musicology.org/networks/sg/global-history-of-music>.

45. See "The Society for Ethnomusicology," SEM, accessed September 25, 2023, <https://www.ethnomusicology.org>.

46. "ICTM Study Group on Global Music History: Mission Statement," International Council for Traditional Music, accessed September 25, 2023, <http://ictmusic.org/group/global-history-music>.

rather a *decentering perspective*. In spite of all my criticisms, I think it has been immensely generative for scholarship. I don't think it will fix, redeem, decolonize, or cure Musicology, because it does not address its institutional conditions. Maybe it was unrealistic to expect such a quiet revolution from within.

### Teaching Comparison as Relation

At the moment I respond to the worries I have voiced above by seeking pedagogical tools outside of global music history. I consider teaching a work in progress, however, and thus anything I say here captures only the moment of my current understanding and not a fixed program. I also think teaching takes place experientially between teachers and students and develops over time in a course and thus cannot be summarized with prescriptive pronouncements. In my view, it is important to teach students method, and I find comparative methods in literature immensely productive. I like the path Cheah suggested in the article I cited at the opening of this essay, for example. The solution to world literature's banalization, he argues, is not to return to the Eurocentric and spiritualist Goethean norms, but rather to "reattach literature to the unequal world of contemporary capitalist globalization and rethink its capacity for world-making from the ground up." He understands this world-making in terms of Martin Heidegger's notion of "worlding," and expands out from it to speak of modeling an alternative temporality and world to that created by global capitalism. By building bridges to other people, through "intercourse," he argues, people learn how to exist in other *modes of human life*, telling stories to each other, translating languages, engaging in cosmopolitan literary intercourse—is prior to the emergence of the rational subject and thus "the ontological condition of the possibility of world literature."<sup>47</sup>

Rather than turn to Heidegger, I embrace Shu-Mei Shih's idea of relational comparison, which resembles Cheah's call for relation and connectivity. In a series of articles published in the last decade, Shih urges comparativists to think more about the ground of their comparisons, and about the integrated world systems, rather than national contexts, in which they take place. Comparison as relation, she writes, means "setting into motion historical relationalities between entities brought together for comparison, and bringing into relation terms that have traditionally been pushed apart from each other due to certain interests, such as the European exceptionalism that undergirds Eurocentrism." Shih considers comparative relation an ethical practice where "the workings of

47. Cheah, "Global Literature, World Literature and Worlding Literature: Some Conceptual Differences," 96–97. I see here echoes of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's notion of the planetary, and found it worthwhile in this context to reread *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia, 2005).

power are not concealed but necessarily revealed." Committed to close readings, she imagines scaling back and forth between "the world" and "the text," revealing relations in the form and content of the literature itself.<sup>48</sup> I often like students to read Shih's work in the first week of class, and/or other essays from the collection in which it is published.

I also like to choose a very clear geopolitical frame for a course—one always smaller than the world. In a recent assigned general education class for 120 students on "Literature from the Enlightenment to the Twentieth Century," I began by giving the course title the subtitle "Imperial, National, and Global Encounters," augmenting the temporal frame with a sense of geopolitical relation. Even though that may sound like I am doing something like global music history, my methods, goals, projected outcomes, concepts of the world, and notion of worlding distinguish what I do from that subdiscipline. I ground the course in the material reality of the plantation economy that fueled the rise of capitalism and the European powers. Thus I begin with the Haitian rather than French revolution. We read a selection of writings on race in the Enlightenment, Hume, and Kant, before analyzing Olaudah Equiano's narrative and Diderot's anti-colonial writings. I then pursue the theme of changing French and German relations with the Caribbean throughout the course, moving from reading Baron de Vastey, Heinrich von Kleist's *Die Verlobung in Santa Domingo* through Zora Neale Hurston's ethnographic work on Jamaica and Haiti and Aimé Césaire's *Cahiers de retour au pays natal*. I introduce nineteenth century Orientalism to pursue a second thread on the relationships between Germany, France and Persia/Iran. Here we read Goethe's *West-östlicher Divan*, Sadegh Hedayat's short stories, the poetry of Forough Farrokhzad, and Golnoosh Nour's short stories. I frame modernism as queer modernism with Oscar Wilde and Nella Larsen, in this way centering LGBTQIA+ creative expression in literary history. At the end of the course I sometimes invite contemporary writers to class and assign students the task of comparing texts between the present and the past and across geopolitical space. Because I focus on literary techniques we can do very close readings; this is where the work of worlding takes place. Last fall we compared Kafka's *In der Strafkolonie* and Zora Neale Hurston's *Tell My Horse*, for example, with the goal of understanding how each represents ethnography in a colonial context, and also of exploring how literature can resist capitalism and create a world, as Cheah argues.

48. See Shu-mei Shih, "Comparison as Relation," in *Comparison: Theories, Approaches, Uses*, ed. Rita Felski and Susan Stanford Friedman (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 79–97. See also Shu-mei Shih, "Comparative Racialization: An Introduction," *PMLA* 123, no. 5, Special Topic: Comparative Racialization (October 2008): 1347–62; and "World Studies and Relational Comparison," *PMLA* 130, no. 2 (2015): 430–438.

If I were to teach the same course in music, I would adapt it dramatically to allow for music's ontological difference while seeking to maintain Shih's method of relational comparison. I would not choose the global as the course's unifying concept, because it is too vague. Which course concept I chose would depend entirely on the outcomes I seek. If the course catalogue required me to teach European music history I would still start with the Haitian revolution, but probably not attempt to show how European composers reacted to their knowledge of it, or music from there (as I did in the literature course with Kleist, for example), because I would not want to force music into the straightjacket of becoming a solely representative art gutted of its aesthetic content. I would also have to decide whether we would study sound, acoustics, circulation, musical scores, aesthetics, etc., or any other angle on music, or a combination of these. In other words, I would choose what kind of musical object or action to present. I would also take into consideration that music did not circulate as translated texts could in the time period in question, and thus was not received and cannot be compared in the same way as literature.

In the past few months, I have been thinking about a course based on Olúfemi O. Táíwò's constructive view of reparations, which he describes as "a historically informed view of distributive justice, serving a larger and broader worldmaking project."<sup>49</sup> Táíwò explains his concept of the world in very clear terms. He analyses what he calls the "Global Racial Empire," a "social system of distribution built by the converging processes of trans-Atlantic slavery and colonialism" that unequally distributed advantages and disadvantages, wealth, rights, and burdens over time.<sup>50</sup> "Global racial empire, and its history of slavery and colonial domination," he writes, "will be fully conquered only when their effects on the accumulations of advantages and disadvantages are also conquered."<sup>51</sup> I appreciate in particular Táíwò's care in urging attention to the geography and history of the world system, rather than being content to take mere "snapshots" of certain parts of it, as I believe global music historians do today. In fighting for global reparations and social justice, he argues for the need to create "specific global superstructures—institutions, associations, chains of production, and norms—to ground a distributive justice analysis for specific historical reasons."<sup>52</sup> And he powerfully asserts that climate justice and reparations are the same project and arise from the same political history, and thus remaking the world requires commitment to both.

I would like to teach a course that considers the dual projects of climate justice and constructive reparations through music, literature, and sound with the aim of achieving global social justice. I want to center this course on the Caribbean. I would again start with the Haitian revolution, and I would frame this class within the history of the global racial empire, rather than in terms of global music history. It would take considerable conceptual work to understand the role music played and plays in distribution, and this would be the task I would set for myself in preparing this course. I would focus on how this history plays out in specific communities in Los Angeles, with the goal of active engagement towards global social justice.

Up to this time, however, I have not yet assigned any published work on global music history in the classes I do currently teach. In the Proseminar in Comparative Literature I have been teaching recently, we discuss historical debates on world literature over ten weeks. I do not assign any texts on global music history because I find they are not related. From my perspective, debates on the global in music have so far appeared very "in house"—concerned more with the history of the Westernized music disciplines than with worlding music. In my music classes I do hope in the future to assign the articles by Stokes, Chua, and Bloechl that I have critiqued in this essay, because I believe in modeling difference of opinion honestly as a crucial pedagogical strategy, and I would want the students to decide what they think for themselves. In case it was not obvious, these articles inspired me, even as I argued against them. It is for this reason that I look forward to further engagement with global music history. While hoping for more robust concepts, methods, and theorization for the subdiscipline, I wait with bated breath to see what its practitioners will do next.

49. Olúfemi O. Táíwò, *Reconsidering Reparations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 74.

50. Táíwò, *Reconsidering Reparations*, 10.

51. Táíwò, 87.

52. Táíwò, 84.

## “African Music *is* Global Music”: On Teaching Global Music in Nigeria and Making Historical Global Music in Boston

MICHAEL BIRENBAUM QUINTERO AND SAMUEL AJOSE

### Part One: On Positionality

Hedy Law: Sam, can you tell us about yourself and your positionality?

Samuel Ajose: I completed my doctoral studies at the University of Ibadan and currently serve as its Acting Head of the Department of Music. I also coordinate a departmental-based research project: “Ibadan Sustainable Music.” This project aimed at archiving endangered kinds of music in Ibadan—one of Africa’s largest cities. I teach the undergraduate courses Basic Music Appreciation, History of Western Music, Music Education, Music Theatre, and Music in Religion. I also teach the graduate course Transcription and Analysis of African Music. As an ethnomusicologist, I am interested in music in African Christianity or Pentecostalism, community music, and music education. My students are primarily from middle-class families across various ethnic sections in Nigeria, with minimal background in Western classical music. As an African scholar, I employ African music, mainly Nigerian/Yoruba music, to teach global music using narratives from African/Yoruba diaspora experiences. I introduce my students to music from global contexts through musical performances in formal and informal settings.

HL: Can you tell us something about your university?

SA: I teach at the University of Ibadan, the premier university in Nigeria. It was established in 1948 as an institution affiliated with the University College of London and became an independent University in 1962. This history has made musicians essential to the university. I did my doctoral studies at the Institute

of African Studies because there was no music department then. However, the Institute of African Studies was beginning to push for the “African story,” which encourages the discussion of African stories by Africans in the decolonial context. The Department of Music was founded in 2012, but there had been musical activities such as Music Circle and University Choir at the university. The University Choir started in 1973. It offers performances at the university convocation ceremonies with participants from the U.S. and the U.K.<sup>1</sup>

The university became very serious about the value of the music department in a premier university. Since 2012, the department has made clear that the purpose was to produce musicians for Nigeria. However, in line with the vision of the university to be a “world-class institution gearing towards societal needs,” the curriculum we use is based on the curriculum set by the National Universities Commission, a Nigerian governmental body. This Commission designs a highly Europeanized music curriculum and sets the “benchmark” for all universities in Nigeria. Very little in the curriculum—only one or two semesters—is focused on Nigerian or African music. The emphasis is more on Western classical music than African music. This emphasis is beyond our control because the Commission determines the benchmark, which influences our course design. By comparison, instructors in the global north have a lot of flexibility in teaching. An instructor can pick a course, design it, and decide how to teach it.

In my university, we have courses such as the History of Western Art Music (from the Renaissance to the twentieth century), Tonal Harmony, Theory of Music, Analysis of Western Music, Counterpoint, Music Appreciation, Music Education, World Cultures, Musical Theatre, as well as African Music and Nigerian Music. This list shows that our curriculum is highly Westernized. We must help students understand that music does not just consist of Western European music. Students need to know European music and music of world cultures. That is why students need to interact with music beyond their immediate environment.

HL: How do you engage with the idea of globality and global music history in your teaching?

SA: The idea of globality refers to anything non-Western. Recent conversations around decoloniality and decolonizing music education, even when they could only take place informally, have informed us that the music of our people is a kind of global music. African music *is* global music. I should emphasize that African music is a massive field. The same is true for Nigerian music, as there



are over 400 ethnic groups in Nigeria, and each group has its music. I only teach Nigerian music that focuses on the Southwestern part of Nigeria.

We need to talk about traveling musicians in our African communities. These topics shape our students' idea of music beyond the Western model. We have music in Ghana; we have music in South Africa; we have music in Colombia. We invite performers to conduct workshops on folk tunes and indigenous music workshops to introduce our students to different perspectives. Because the curriculum is handicapped by the University Commission that determines the benchmark, which decides the content that instructors need to teach in the classroom and the review process, we bring up—in an informal way—the kinds of music of other communities so that they play the same role as Western classical music. I teach students a global concept using local knowledge, which is not in the curriculum. To introduce this material is to incur extra work for the instructors. In my teaching, the music of other cultures is synonymous with global music history. To my mind, this is the only way to understand the notion of "global music history" in the curriculum of Nigeria.

HL: Thanks, Sam. Michael, how about your positionality?

Michael Birenbaum Quintero: I work at a private research university but in a school of music. Students here experience a conservatory environment within a larger research university. I approach global music history as an ethnomusicologist, that is, by applying historical inquiry to ethnomusicology rather than by extending historical musicology to include the world beyond the North Atlantic. I am also Chair of the Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology, so I am responsible for curricular issues in both historical musicology and ethnomusicology. I try to work through the curriculum for a doctoral program and a master's program in musicology but also in ways that serve the broader School of Music. We make decisions keeping in mind the different student constituencies—performers, music educators, theorists, and composers.

I should also say that, as far as my research and my outlook are concerned, questioning the reification and taking for granted of ethnic and national categories—which is so fundamental to ethnomusicology and which, in my view, the discipline continues to rely on in rather conservative unhelpful ways—is an essential part of what I do, at the same time as I have both political and analytical commitments to understanding how those categories function within what Cedric Robinson called racial capitalism. In my book on Black music on the Pacific coast of Colombia and the category of Black music, I had to do a historical unearthing of both the construction of Blackness and the construction of music in the context of Blackness. Historical materialism is a crucial part of my method. It's also been critical to my thinking also to apply the historicization of

epistemes in Foucault's *The Order of Things* and the Nietzschean model of the genealogy to Omi and Winant's idea of racial formations and racial projects.

## Part Two: On Syllabus

HL: What kinds of activities have you designed for your teaching that include a global component, and how do you teach global music history in your institutional setting?

MBQ: To address this, let me first talk about our Music Cultures of the World class, one of the classes that undergraduate music majors have to take as part of the music history sequence (See Appendix 1). According to the United States' NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) accreditation system, students have to learn about diverse musical cultures to graduate, and this class is one way to fulfill this requirement. Despite NASM, this requirement was only in place in my institution since 2020, when a student petition started the move toward anti-racist and decolonized programming and education. This class is usually fully enrolled, with about twenty-five students, including some instrumentalists and composers and usually a lot of music education majors.

The course is not designed to cover all parts of the world. Instead, it focuses on particular topics and themes, and I use different specific musical settings as case studies. We begin by discussing ethnomusicology and imagining an ethnomusicology of Western popular music. I use Thomas Turino's *Music as Social Experience* to address this area. In terms of topics, we begin with the idea of organizing sound and the aesthetics of performance in West Africa using Ruth Stone's book, *Music in West Africa*. Then we'll switch to another area, say, Indian music, to describe another system for organizing sound (usually rhythmic cycles, specifically). Then we'll switch to another theme, say, music and sociality, using examples from South India, the Andes, Bali, and Korea. Along the way, of course, I have to make sure students understand that these musical systems are not fungible and that disarticulating, say, scale construction from a larger whole is a totally artificial exercise. And at the same time, as I try to present music and culture as a kind of whole, we also have to problematize non-historical, synchronic analysis of isolated field settings, that privilege an anthropological idea of culture but collapse history. So we do a discussion of a modern political movement's use of music in West Africa to follow up Stone's book.

We go through different themes organizing sound, organizing time, sound structure and social structure, and so on, and the global historical component comes toward the end of the class. It is set up in this way because I feel that students need to have all these issues under their belt to recognize how

contemporary music making can show the thumbprints of history. One of the first case studies comes from Robin Moore's *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*. We listen very closely, for example, to the early Spanish and African influences on Caribbean music. Then we discuss creolization processes, transnational Caribbean music, different contradance forms, and mixed creole forms. Finally, we study the contemporary Hispanophone Caribbean in terms of music from the slave trade, etc., and more recent engagements by Black musicians in the Hispanophone Caribbean with global Black musics. The last time I taught this course, we were able to invite an exciting Cuban musician called Yosvany Terry, a jazz musician initiated into a neo-African religious and musical sodality in Cuba. He incorporates elements of this music and cosmology into his work.

The second example of the historical component is designed around Bulgarian musics, using the content and structure of Tim Rice's *Music in Bulgaria*. Again, the struggle for me as an ethnomusicologist is not to globalize music history but rather to historicize global music, which is so frequently discussed in ahistorical terms.

SA: In our case, instructors must follow a Europeanized pre-designed curriculum that harkens more to Western music, as mandated by the National University Commission. However, Nigerian music scholars are now thinking about how best to let our students see that there are several kinds of music performed in the world, as we cannot just limit ourselves to Western classical music. As far as curriculum is concerned, it has not been easy to make changes. Many of our colleagues still stick to Europeanized pedagogy. Not only until very recently have we started advocating for the inclusion of African art music composers in our curriculum. Except for individual interventions, how do we call our attention and students' attention to this conversation in informal and formal ways?

MBQ: You said, Sam, that this curricular change can happen informally. In countries like Nigeria or Colombia, the informal sphere is sometimes more impactful than the formal. If you think about formal economy versus informal economy, maybe the formal economy moves more capital, but most people act within an informal space. What opportunities does the informal register offer?

SA: Well, my position does not represent a general position. Yes, I feel that, along with colleagues who have been actively participating in this global conversation of decolonizing music education, we are trying to revise the curriculum and bring it up to speed. If we do not have power over curriculum, which requires us to teach within a particular structure, we will go a step further and teach the functional.

MBQ: What do you mean by the "functional"?

SA: When the curriculum reads "teach music education," we must teach the "structural"—meaning learning theories, teaching methods, and all of that. I try to move beyond the "structural" to the "functional" by asking questions: How is music education within traditional African contexts? How do they develop their curriculum? The Commission established the curriculum because the goal is to consolidate knowledge while considering that practitioners have different levels of learning, etc. But the result is that the curriculum tilts toward a Western epistemology. For me, we can still use the same knowledge to look at our contexts. What are the theories of learning implicated in Yoruba? When we ask these questions, we are not dismissing the "structural." Instead, we are still engaging our local knowledge using the framework set by the Commission. So that's what I mean by informality, i.e., functionality.

I relate a topic in the history of Western art music to our African context. I tell my students that *minstrels* were not unique to France. In the Yoruba tradition, we have the *Alarinjo* (traveling) musicians. My point is that the idea of traveling musicians is not unique to the Western domain.

Another example comes from my music appreciation courses, where I bring *fúji* music to my class, a topic much neglected in our curriculum. I bring *fúji* music to my class to teach music fundamentals. I do not have to use western religious compositions to teach the call-and-response structure and performance practice. The informal space I explore is all about survival, i.e., functionality. We decided to use *fúji* because it is vibrant in the sound space of Nigeria, especially in Southwest Nigeria. How do we begin to understand this music as part of global music? What are the ways this music shaped the idea of global music? How does global music shape local music genres? We bring *fúji* to class informally along with other genres such as traditional Nigerian music, Nigerian popular musics, and Nigerian art music.

In the past, our idea of "global music" was Nigerian art music, with compositions imitating Western art music models. Popular music, which is gaining widespread interest in the global space, has also been neglected in the classroom. Our current interest is to return popular music to the classroom by studying the interaction between *fúji* and global practices. For example, we now find hip-hop musicians in Nigeria incorporating *fúji* into their music, which they perform in the U.S., the U.K., Canada, and elsewhere. Some of our students play African instruments for other musicians worldwide using online recording systems. Technology facilitates us to see that our local indigenous and popular music are also part of a global sound. In this way, we allow our students to appreciate how Nigerian music has shaped globality.

In terms of history, *fúji* is a make-up of pre-colonial, colonial, and even post-colonial engagements, which we have begun to historicize, even though we rely on oral history that is not documented in writing, unlike Nigerian art music. It is a big challenge for historians of Nigerian music to research this area within a global music historical context. This challenge prompts us to organize a conference on “*fújicology*” in Ibadan as a way to historicize this music. Is it true that we had already had a model system in *fúji* before the advent of the tonal system in Western music? Along this line of inquiry, we can begin to study what it means that before *fúji*, there was *Jùjú* culture influenced heavily by the oil boom. The economic influence allowed musicians to buy Western musical instruments—the guitar, the bass, and all that. Why was the guitar used in *Jùjú* music? This kind of question raises the influence of colonialism on *fúji*.

MBQ: It seems to me that a place to teach global music history is to explore this relationship between so-called “traditional” and “popular music.” For example, you can talk about *dundun* or *batá* next to the *àpàlà* music that built on it, and you can talk about *àpàlà* next to the *fúji* that built on it, and so on.

SA: Yes, I agree with you. However, we don’t have the liberties to design the curriculum that people in the U.S. and other places have, as I explained a moment ago. If we had such freedom, I’m sure some of us would have introduced the development of Yoruba popular music to the curriculum. One can look at Nigerian music from 1920 to 1970. Yet the question is not just about teaching Nigerian music but also about determining which kinds of Nigerian music to teach. Igbo music from the east? Hausa music from the north? Niger Delta music from the middle belt? Somebody can spend all four years on Yoruba music. You cannot exhaust *Jùjú* music in just three or four classes. Instead, “global” music does not designate one kind of music. African music is part of global music, and you find it in different places.

I engage the idea of global music—that is, African music as a type of global music—by, for example, introducing the students in my music education classes to community music making and community music education. This approach came as a response to the whole idea of decolonization in music education. Because these students, the next generation, want music from their culture. To this end, I incorporate these informal elements in my course and reorganize the formal elements. Of the twelve weeks I would have to teach, I compress the “functional” into a six-week window, leaving the remaining six weeks to teach community music making and music education in our Yoruba communities. We also discuss what we have done in the community.

Since people make music beyond the compositions by Bach and Mozart in our communities, which are part of the global music circuits, we teach globality

to our students, for example, through fieldwork. We go to a particular community and ask our students to play music alongside the participants. We ask the community members how to produce the sounds. We then discovered that our students come back with this material and use it for all kinds of music making, including writing music for orchestra. For instance, one of our students wrote a Big Band composition based on a folk tune he had learned in our community engagement. This music is part of global music.

Similarly, just as they want to hear Handel’s *Messiah* here in Nigeria, somebody in the U.S. wants to listen to this folk tune. We are part of the global music culture. With the help of technology, we can also begin to engage with communities of musicians around the globe. I also started this exchange program to bring community musicians into the classroom so that our students can begin to see the issue of inclusiveness in global knowledge rather than situate it around a particular region.<sup>2</sup>

MBQ: Sam, your experience reminds me of something I have been doing outside the university. I live in a city with a sizable immigrant population. With other members of the community, we are organizing ways for musicians from these different ethnic communities to come in and speak to youth here in the community because they don’t have these programs in their schools.

I don’t consider myself an “activist,” but I do want to be engaged in the world and in what’s happening in my community. I have long been very interested in the possibilities of music and traditional musics as a way of helping people understand history and sociality. Our family histories can be understood through music-making and musical taste, especially, for instance, in the case of children of immigrants or the grandchildren of immigrants. This is a way not only to understand the history of the people who came before us, but also to fit our own family histories into the frame of broader historical movements. This kind of move between the intimate space of musical performance and the broader scale of society or capital-H History is what ethnomusicologists and musicologists do all the time. My hope is that people understanding their personal, intergenerational stories as part of history in a broader sense fosters a kind of political analysis of how we got to our current situation.

There is also an encoding of social models in the way that the music works. In many traditional musical forms in Latin America, the process of learning is built into the structure of the music, so that observation and deep participation of the person next to you playing a more complex part while you learn to play a basic one is as important as formal pedagogy or isolated individual study. This shows not only different kinds of music making but also the ideas of ethical personhood that different systems value. These are aspects of a musical system

that are hard to explore within the university because of the logic that governs the curriculum and the type of students we get, and their goals. But tenure is also part of the university system, and now that I have tenure, I can find ways to work outside the institution to the benefit of my community and the city I live in.

I received a grant (see Appendix 2) with Mijente, a nationwide Latinx activist organization. They have a Boston *asamblea* (chapter). The grant funds what I call traditional music *talleres* (workshops). The project is to work with local youth from an organization called “Prevent the Cycle,” which a friend of mine runs here in Lynn, Massachusetts. In this project, we bring in local musicians from different communities—Dominican, Guatemalan, and Cambodian—that live here. We are bringing in a West African drum master as well. What we will do is that the kids, who also come from these communities, will play the instruments and learn about their traditions.

Perhaps most importantly, we want the kids to have a working understanding of what needs these musics satisfied in the past and the present for their communities. This understanding comes from thinking about Afro-descendant religiosity in the Dominican Republic or thinking about the post-genocide landscape in Cambodia as a tool for the youth to understand what their political needs are in the present. These *talleres* help the youth understand their ancestors’ and neighbors’ political struggles, even if they are not of that particular ethnic group. They can use this understanding to reflect on their political necessities and social and economic conditions. The kids will also do songwriting, which is important as they can experiment with different musical idioms to reflect on their situation. They will learn to play a little bit and dance a little bit. Through these activities, they learn about the history of our community. Maybe they even learn to question some aspects, like perhaps gender dynamics. The project emphasizes the joy of creativity, cultivates the habit of political analysis, engages in intergenerational practices, and even critiques ancestral cultures when necessary.

### Part Three: On the Challenges to the Teaching of Global Music History

HL: What challenges have you encountered in teaching global music history?

MBQ: I teach in Boston, a city known for early music. Our university has a Historical Performance program. We have been trying to expand it by including global themes within it, say Latin American cathedral music, in the programming. I also see it as a value-added initiative within the musicology program. We are considering renaming the program Early Music Studies, to emphasize a focus on things like source studies and notation systems and housing it

within Musicology. I believe very strongly that we can look at European music influenced by global processes—mostly obviously colonialism but also other processes such as the Afro-Iberian string repertory—from its roots. These processes are crucial to the development of Western music after 1600.

The idea of inserting global themes and academic coursework into Historical Performance has been a tough sell because the business model for the School of Music is trying to bring in more students who pay full tuition for popular instruments. Instead of staffing a continuo professor or funding Master’s and DMA students partially to study Early Music, the College of Fine Arts is more interested in getting, say, more piano faculty to bring in more piano students, often international students, paying full tuition.

Another challenge, or so I hear from my colleagues in the performance areas, is that many international students, which are a large part of the student body, push back against the ideas of global music diversity, anti-racism, and so on that became a subject of discussion after the 2020 uprisings here in the U.S. These students argue that they came here to study music and that these topics are not what they come to the U.S. to learn. My argument, however, is if they choose to get a certificate in the U.S., they will necessarily be along for the ride for the particularities of this historical moment in the U.S. At this moment that includes a lot of self-questioning about issues of race and power and so on that might not be a part of what’s happening in music pedagogy elsewhere in the world. A related challenge involves things like student evaluations for faculty members’ tenure and promotion. This kind of pushback can become very dangerous for anyone, especially female professors and professors of color, but it also affects professors who are actively engaged in issues of, say, repertoire diversity, that the School says it supports but that students might not be prepared for. The university needs to put a structure in place to legitimate these topics and state its position explicitly so that faculty are not abandoned when they institute the changes that the institution claims to want.

SA: This issue shows two sides of the coin. Some are interested in opening up the curriculum, but some stay close to the benchmark.

Daniel Castro Pantoja: On this thread of challenges, I think Sam is alluding to a rejection of the global that comes with an institution’s “global strategy”—aiming to produce future “global citizens.” What do you think about the perils of institutionalizing mobility as an educational goal?

MBQ: I am glad that you bring up this topic; it is a wonderful way of framing the question. For me, the only thing that is maybe more dangerous than ignoring the global is banalizing it. It’s great if music education students, for



example, are excited to talk about non-Western music as they prepare to teach music in K-12 classrooms. The challenge is to help them avoid taking a tokenistic approach.

Another challenge is that there are groups of students who have different ways of engaging with issues of musical diversity. The first group is students excited about the quaintness of different musical practices—how interesting or colorful they are—but who don't understand the teeth behind the history that produced all these practices. The second group of students refrains from expressing their points of view because they are fearful of being accused of being insensitive. In a course I just taught on hip hop, some students were uncomfortable saying anything at all about hip hop because they did not feel authorized as white people. This discomfort may be a middle- or upper-class Massachusetts phenomenon. The third group, often international students, may not find these topics relevant. They feel this is not their fight, not their struggle. The pedagogical challenge is that these three groups of students are in the same classroom having the same discussions and listening to the same music. Ideally, we can all have at least some degree of a stake without necessarily having ownership over these issues, but it is challenging in practice.

I teach a course on Latino music in the U.S. It includes both U.S. popular music with Latino participation like punk, disco, hip hop, and jazz, as well as music like salsa, corridos, and reggaetón. I am careful in that class to include examples such as Jewish and Italian-American *mambo* dancers or Filipino and Mexican-American musical cross-fertilization. I try to help students understand that issues of race are everyone's issues and that all of these different musical formations come not only from a particular ethnic group but also from their interactions with the larger multiethnic society around them. The most critical challenge of all is not students' passivity but their fear. I think many students—white students in particular—are fearful about inadvertently saying something stupid or ignorant because they are in a place of exploration, or try to reproduce platitudes about diversity that they think the professor wants to hear without actually reflecting on them.

DCP: On the topic of challenges to teaching global music history, it seems to me that the idea of the "world" is essential to get across the concept of "globality." If we think of the world as something out there, beyond our local boundaries, this framing encourages the feeling of indifference (i.e., the issue is none of my business). But perhaps a way to deal with this challenge is to emphasize the opposite: Maybe the global is within the local and vice versa.

MBQ: This reframing makes a lot of sense. It makes me think about the demographic in a U.S. classroom. Very few of us in the classroom are indigenous

to the place we are teaching and learning. A history of globality is part of the formation of a classroom. However, in the context of Ibadan, a city with a long history of Yoruba ethnic group, most people are indigenous, at least to the area. In this context, the global and the local flip over in a very peculiar way, as Sam explains, in that the "local" is supposed to be Western art music—the Bach and Beethoven stuff—while the "global" music is "local" African or Nigerian music. This reversal is fascinating and ironic.

## APPENDIX 1

### Music Cultures of the World

Prof. Michael Birenbaum Quintero

*Music is more than an art and entertainment, [it] also is or may be an expression of culturally shared ideologies and worldviews, a social behavior that reinforces or challenges social structures and hierarchies, a political tool, a commodity with economic significance, a mode of healing and therapy, and many other things.*

-Timothy Rice, Professor of Music (UCLA)

### Description

If, for the myriad musical cultures around the world, music is not just art and entertainment, what else can it be? What do these musics sound like through other ears? Given the mind-boggling diversity of the musical forms of the world, this course offers a sample, introducing students to selected musical regions: West Africa, South India, the Andes, Bali, Native North America, Pacific Islands, the Hispanic Caribbean, and Bulgaria. Through these musical practices, we will investigate the many ways in which sound is organized musically, the way in which it promotes particular kinds of social organization, its relationship with the natural and spiritual worlds, and the ways in which, over the course of history, it has been subject to long-running intra/intercultural dialogues, struggles, and negotiation processes that continue to produce new hybrid forms. You will also be introduced to basic musical concepts and terminology, and acquire listening skills that will enable you to better encounter and understand music in this course and beyond.

## Objectives

By the end of the semester (assuming you fulfill the expectations below), you are expected to demonstrate the following learning objectives for each of the HUB required components:

### Aesthetic Explorations:

- Identify important musical styles in at least four selected regions of the world for this course (for example, West Africa, Brazil, Bulgaria, and Korea—this could vary from semester to semester)
- Understand a basic history of shifting cultural, economic, political, and social dynamics in these selected regions, and relate these changes to musical practices across the world.
- Develop a basic vocabulary and critical listening skills to describe and discuss these musical practices and their significant features.
- Analyze the effects of political, social, and economic currents on artistic production.
- Evaluate, describe, and contextualize a live performance of a musical culture that is not familiar to you in a concert report.
- Compare, and contrast similarities and differences among musical cultures across the world based on the particularities of the aesthetic, cultural, and historical aspects of each musical culture discussed in class.
- In so doing, distinguish between a variety of terms used to discuss race, culture, social, and artistic interactions.

### Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy:

- Based on the knowledge of the historical and cultural context as well as the culturally specific aesthetic norms, preferences, and platforms of the musical cultures across the world, interpret the aesthetic, political, and social meanings within specific geographical and historical contexts of each musical culture chosen from around the world.
- Participate in four workshops of each music and dance from around the world under discussion to gain experiential knowledge into the particular musical culture’s embodied, aesthetic, and cultural meanings.
- Through short-term ethnographic fieldwork in a cultural community in Boston, describe and analyze the role of musical practices within a different culture from your own in relation to the specific cultural,

historical, and political contexts within which these musical practices have emerged.

- Self-reflexively discuss students’ own musical backgrounds, experiences, and production as a manifestation of personal identity and socio-political influences.

## Requirements

Each class meeting will include a *reading and listening* assignment. These assignments should be completed BEFORE class and students should be prepared to discuss and answer questions about the reading. Listening is just as important as reading. The listening assignments will encourage us to approach a musical sound-object with creative, productive questions. If there are extenuating circumstances that keep you from completing them on time, again, let me know beforehand.

A word on *listening assignments*: listen with headphones, and without multi-tasking. *Listen* with attention—don’t just *hear*!

Each student is expected to actively *participate* in class. This includes speaking in class but also basic classroom etiquette: eating and drinking is fine, but being digitally or telephonically distracted or unconscious is not.

## Course Expectations

Each class meeting will include a reading and listening assignment. These assignments should be completed BEFORE class and students should be prepared to discuss and answer questions about the reading.

- Listening is just as important as reading. The listening assignments will encourage us to approach a musical sound-object with creative, productive questions.
- Each student is expected to actively participate in class.
- Each student is expected to come to office hours at least twice during the semester, once in the first two weeks of class. This will be part of your attendance grade.
- At the beginning of every class, each student will hand me a note card assignment.

### Final Paper

For the final paper, students will produce a substantial research paper from the following three options below. Students will submit a proposal in which they specify in as much detail as possible WHAT your subject will be, WHY this subject will be a productive topic for you to apply the knowledge you've gained in this course, and HOW you will go about it, including a bibliography that demonstrates students' ability to ethically and strategically select relevant bibliographic sources or ethnographic data. This proposal will then receive faculty feedback, and students will revise a research plan to ensure substantial, rigorous, and strategic choice of scholarly sources to address research questions. Before producing the final paper, students will develop the research question/hypothesis by submitting paper proposal. In consultation with faculty feedback, students will then produce paper outline/draft to demonstrate data-gathering skills. With the faculty feedback, students will then build an annotated bibliography to critically assess their sources. Finally, students will submit an outline or draft before their in-class presentations. In their in-class presentations, students will present their tentative argument and substantiating sources to receive critique and feedback. Based on these research processes, students will produce final paper in which students crystallize their analyses, interpretations, and investigation of the research question and clearly organize and communicate their argument in writing.

#### *Option #1: Mini-ethnography.*

Identify a musician, a musical group, a musical organization, or musical establishment in Boston where you could conduct fieldwork to write your own mini-ethnography. The musical practice needs to be from a non-Western area/tradition and something that is not familiar to you, so that you could apply the conceptual and technical knowledge you've learned in this course to analyze the musical sounds. You have to be able to spend at least 6 hours total conducting fieldwork (eg. interviews, attending concerts, etc.) Describe in detail what kind of resources you have access to, and what kind of fieldwork you'll conduct, and what particular aspect you're interested in. Your proposal should include preliminary bibliography of 3–5 items.

#### *Option #2: Research paper on a musical practice/tradition in a particular area that we have not studied in class.*

Identify a musical practice/tradition/area that you're not familiar with. Then, do some research to get a sense of what aspect of the musical culture interests you in particular, and decide what angle you want to present this musical culture

from (i.e., music and politics? Conception of musical time? Music and religion? Music and gender? etc.). Make sure you have enough resources to draw upon to write your paper; to do so, you must attach a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources at the time of proposal submission. 7 of them must be academic resources offline (not from the internet).

#### *Option #3: In-depth research paper on an aspect of one of the five music-areas we will have studied in this course.*

If you came across a topic or an aspect of music cultures in this class that you wanted to do further research, you can choose to focus on it to write a paper. Describe what specific aspect of the musical culture you will want to write about, what additional questions and information you'll pursue in this paper, and how you will support your analysis and argument. It is important that you present original ideas and information in this paper, going beyond what you've learned in this class. Make sure you have enough resources other than the textbook and lecture notes to draw upon to write your paper. To do so, you must attach a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources at the time of proposal submission. 7 of them must be academic resources offline (not from the internet).

### Evaluation

Final grades will be based on all of the above requirements, weighted as follows:

- Class participation: 11%
- Written assignments & quizzes: 30%
- Concert report: 5% (extra credit: 5%)
- Exam #1: 17%
- Exam #2: 17%
- Final Research Paper & presentation: 20%

### Materials

You will need access to Blackboard.

Students should also purchase the following texts and their accompanying CDs.

- Gold, Lisa. *Music in Bali*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Moore, Robin. *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Rice, Timothy. *Music in Bulgaria*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Stone, Ruth. *Music in West Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Sound and visual excerpts from the following texts will be available on Blackboard, although students are welcome to purchase them as well.

- Kwon, Donna Lee. *Music in Korea*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Turino, Thomas. *Music in the Andes*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Turino, Thomas. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. *Music in South India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

### Course Schedule

#### Day 1. Introduction

#### Day 2. An ethnomusicology of here?

Assignment: Sound Log

Reading:

- Read the syllabus.
- Turino, Thomas. "Why Music Matters." In *Music as Social Experience: The Politics of Participation*, 1–22. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Topics:

- Music in our society
- Terminology

#### Topic 1. Organizing sound. Case study 1. West Africa.

#### Day 3. West Africa—Background

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Traveling to West Africa." In *Music in West Africa*, 1–21. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Methods
- Focuses
- Musical functions and contexts
- History

#### Day 4. West Africa—The aesthetics of performance

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Performance Facets." In *Music in West Africa*, 22–46. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Contexts
- Aesthetics

#### Day 5. West Africa—Organizing sound, organizing time

Reading:

- Stone, Ruth. "Voices: Layered Tone Colors." In *Music in West Africa*, 47–63. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Stone, Ruth. "Time and Polyrhythm." In *Music in West Africa*, 79–94. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Instruments and timbres
- Rhythm concepts and vocabulary
- Interlocking time scales

#### Day 6. Sound structure and social relations

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Part-Counterpart: Call and Response." In *Music in West Africa*, 64–78. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics: Social life and musical performance

#### Day 7. West Africa— Cutting the Edge, and Praying the Devil Back to Hell

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Surveying the Trip: Cutting the Edge." In *Music in West Africa*, 95–98. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

In-class film: *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*

Writing: Do quick research on Charles Taylor and woman's movement in Liberia, write up a summary of what you have found out. Based on your research, assess Ruth Stone's textbook you have just read. How did your findings change the way you understand Liberian music and culture? What are perspectives and information that the author omitted in her writing?

#### Topic 1. Organizing sound. Case study 2. South India

#### Day 8. South India—Rhythmic organization

Reading:



- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. “Song in South India.” In *Music in South India*, 1–14. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. “Key Concepts in Karnatic Music.” In *Music in South India*, 34–41. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Topics:

- Rhythm
- Terminology

*Day 9. South India—Melodic organization*

Written Assignment:

- Review all the notes and listening material on West Africa and South India
- Make a list of keywords, concepts, instruments, names
- Make a list of questions or concepts/listening assignment for which you need clarifications

Reading:

- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. “Song in South India.” In *Music in South India*, 15–33. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. “Key Concepts in Karnatic Music.” In *Music in South India*, 24–55. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Topics:

- Scales
- Melody
- Terminology

### *Topic 2. Sociality. Introduction*

*Day 10. Presentational and participatory performance styles*

Written Assignment:

- Review all the notes and listening material on native North America and the Pacific islands
- Make a list of keywords, concepts, instruments, names
- Make a list of questions or concepts/listening assignment for which you need clarifications

Reading: Turino, Thomas. “Participatory and Presentational Performance.” In *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, 23–65. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Presentational and participatory styles
- Social organization
- Sound organization
- Virtuosity

*Day 11. Exam #1*

### *Topic 2. Sociality. Case Study 3. Andean Wind Music*

*Day 12. Andean Music—Indigenous Wind Ensembles*

Start thinking about your final research project & find a partner

Reading: Turino, Thomas. “Indigenous Wind Ensembles and Community.”

In *Music in the Andes*, 1–37. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Listening: Examples referred to in text (on Blackboard)

Topics:

- Introduction to the Andes
- Aymara society and social roles
- Aymara sound roles

### *Topic 2. Sociality and society. Case Study 4: Bali*

*Day 13. Bali—Sociality, ritual, and history*

Reading: Gold, Lisa. “The Balinese Ceremonial Soundscape: Simultaneity of Soundings.” In *Music in Bali*, 1–27. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Context
- Ritual

*Day 14. Bali—Organizing sound*

Concert Review Due

Reading:

- Gold, Lisa. “Instruments: Materials, Tuning, and Timbre.” In *Music in Bali*, 28–51. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014
- Gold, Lisa. “Interlocking and Layering: Musical Roles in the Ensemble.” In *Music in Bali*, 52–70. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Organology
- Timbre

*Day 15. Bali—Music, Theater, Dance, Storytelling*

Reading: Gold, Lisa. "The World of Stories: Integration of Music, Dance, and Drama in Traditional Balinese Theater." In *Music in Bali*, 71–92. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Theatrical and dance genres
- Temporal organization

*Day 16. Bali—Sociality, storytelling, and history in the aesthetics of Gong Kebyar*

Reading:

- Gold, Lisa. "Large Scale Form in Gong Kebyar and Its Antecedents." In *Music in Bali*, 126–150. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014
- Gold, Lisa. "Conclusion: Three Themes Revisited at a Cremation Ceremony." In *Music in Bali*, 151–155. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Topic 2. Sociality and society. Case Study 5: Korea**Day 17. Music in Korea*

Research Proposal / Abstract Due

Reading: Kwon, Donna Lee. "The Court as Cultural Conduit." In *Music in Korea*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011.

*Day 18. Music in Korea 2*

Reading:

- Kwon, Donna Lee. "Korea from Both Sides of the Border." In *Music in Korea*, 1–21. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011
- Kwon, Donna Lee. "Negotiating Transnational Flows of Culture." In *Music in Korea*, 149–172. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011

*Topic 3: Layered Histories. Case Study 6: The Hispanic Caribbean**Day 19. Hispanic Caribbean—Introduction*

Reading: Moore, Robin. "Introduction." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 1–29. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Race

- Colonialism
- Creolization

*Day 20. Hispanic Caribbean—Spanish Colonization*

Written Assignment:

- Review all the notes and listening material on native Andean, Bali, North America
- Make a list of keywords, concepts, instruments, names
- Make a list of questions or concepts/listening assignment for which you need clarifications

Reading: Moore, Robin. "Music and Spanish Colonization." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 30–51. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Day 21. Library Session*

Meet in the library

*Day 22. Hispanic Caribbean—Creolization and transnational musics*

Reading:

- Moore, Robin. "Creolized Dance Music." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 83–120. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Moore, Robin. "Transnational Caribbean Musics." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 121–146. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Day 23. The Hispanic Caribbean—Africa in the Americas and Racializing Music*

Annotated Bibliography Due

Reading:

Moore, Robin. "Cultural Legacies of the Slave Trade." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 52–82. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Moore, Robin. "Dialogues with Blackness." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 177–206. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Day 24. Guest Artist Yosvany Terry*

Read:

- Transnational Dynamics
- Yosvany Terry Materials

Listening: *New-Throned King*

*Topic 4: Layered Histories. Case Study 8: Bulgaria*

Day 25. Bulgaria—The musical traces of history

Assignment: Annotated bibliography – at least 5 sources, at least 4 of which should be from academic publishers or peer-reviewed journals

Reading: Rice, Timothy. “The Past in Present Day.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 18–27. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Music:

- Rice, Timothy. “A Musical Tour.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 28–45. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rice, Timothy. “Making Music Yesterday and Today.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 46–55. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Topic 5: Local and global, hybridization and preservation. Case Study 8: Bulgaria*

Day 26. Bulgaria—National music and world music

Reading:

- Rice, Timothy. “Music and Politics.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 56–74. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rice, Timothy. “Bulgarian Music as World Music.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 75–86. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rice, Timothy. “A New Music for a New Era.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 87–102. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Day 27. Class presentations and Exam

Final papers due

**APPENDIX 2****Sin El Estado Incubator Grant**

Traditional Music *Talleres*: Crafting a Shared Future from the Lessons of the Past

Michael Birenbaum Quintero (Boston Asamblea)

Lynn, MA

*The Context*

Lynn is a diverse, working-class, heavily immigrant city in the North Shore of Massachusetts outside Boston. According to the 2020 census, our city’s population of 101,000 is 43% Latinx, 36% White, 14% Black, and 8% Asian. 37% of us were born outside the US, especially in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, and Cambodia.<sup>3</sup> Slightly more than half of us speak a language besides English at home—the most popular of the 59 languages spoken in Lynn are Spanish, Khmer (Cambodian), Arabic, and Haitian Creole. 17% of us live below the poverty line. Although our city is majority BIPOC and working-class, we remain politically, economically, and socially marginalized. We are under threat from gentrifying housing developers, racism in our schools, and foot-dragging on promised police reforms. We failed in 2021 to make electoral gains against the vested interests of our local government.

*Our Response*

A strictly electoral response to the city’s challenges clearly is not enough. We have to articulate our own vision of the future and construct as much of it as we can ourselves. To do so, we have to have a sense of our own agency to transform our circumstances, a coherent political orientation that allows us to analyze and come up with solutions for those circumstances, a space to engage with other members of different parts of our community to engage in that analysis, and a sense of common cause—that is, a sense that we are a community in the first place. More than that, we have to reverse all of the historically accumulated structures—material, social, and ideological—that make us believe that we are not only incapable of creating a better world but also *undeserving* of one.

Traditional cultural practices like music respond to the conditions of a given society, such as the natural environment that’s used in the construction of instruments. Music also encodes historical experiences, tells stories, and provokes collective emotion. Often music teaches what it means to be an individual in a collective—the balance between individual improvisation and marking the beat that one’s fellow musicians depend on. Finally, music allows for people to take pride in the beauty that their community has created collectively and, therefore, in themselves.

I am proposing Traditional Music *Talleres* as a means of building a sense of identity, community, and power for a group of working-class BIPOC youth leaders from the local Prevent the Cycle organization. The *talleres* (workshops) will be held monthly and will bring musicians and culture bearers from the city’s ethnic communities to give the youth (who belong to many of those communities) an overview of their traditional music and the history and culture

3. U.S. Census Bureau, “Lynn city, Massachusetts,” (accessed August 31, 2023), <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/lynncitymassachusetts>.

that produced it, drawing parallels and contrast with the reality experienced by youth in Lynn. The artists will teach youth the basics of playing an instrument, singing, or dancing in these musical traditions. They will also lead songwriting workshops so that youth can express their own realities and concerns using the traditional idioms. The emphasis will be on joy, creativity, and cultivating the habit of political analysis—learning to appreciate the struggle of a particular society but also not shying away from the ways in which some aspects of traditional culture (gender dynamics, for example) do not measure up to what we see as our plan for liberation. After the first cycle, we hope to reapply next year for *talleres* emphasizing another aspect of culture (maybe cooking).

The workshops will be facilitated by me, a professional ethnomusicologist who has worked with traditional musicians and written on the politics of culture in the Afro-Colombian social movement for more than 20 years.

### *Timeline*

Once we receive the grant (*dedos cruzados*) we will begin to schedule the *talleres*. We anticipate holding them beginning in September—that is, when the youth will be in school. We hope to carry out ongoing assessments of how they feel things are going after the second *taller* and make any adjustments we need to. With this information we plan to seek funding for a second round, either a deep dive on a single tradition that will allow them to get more proficiency or maybe shifting to another cultural expression, maybe cooking, visual arts, or modern non-traditional dance forms like breakdance, salsa, or bachata.

### *Budget*

Culture-bearers:	***	Female-led Dominican traditional <i>palo</i> drummers	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Cambodian Traditional Musicians and Dancers	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Afro-Boricua drumming ( <i>bomba, plena</i> ) and dance group	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Colombian traditional <i>gaita</i> and <i>currulao</i> music	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Ghanaian master drummer and his group	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Brazilian samba master	\$***

We are requesting \$5,000 from Mijente to cover costs.



# **“Offer Less Variety and Teach Longer Focused Units”: Lessons Learned in Teaching Global Music History**

BONNIE GORDON AND OLIVIA BLOECHL

## **Part One: On Positioning Ourselves as Teachers of Global Music History**

Hedy Law: What is your positionality when teaching a global music history topic?

Olivia Bloechl: One way of answering the positionality question would be to talk about my subjective positioning, which is important, but perhaps the more practically important question is the group positioning with every iteration of the class, vis-à-vis each other and the subject matter. Group positioning depends of course on the students who take the class, and the student population is pretty stable because of the nature of our institutions.

In the case of the University of Pittsburgh, where I teach in the Department of Music, the students in my undergraduate “Global Music History” course, the three times I have taught it, have been general education students from across the university, at all levels and representing many majors. Most are from Pennsylvania or the mid-Atlantic. Of course, many come from other places in North America, and my impression is that international students have been enrolling in increasing numbers, perhaps because of the course topic. So the students are mainly white, native-born, and Anglo, but with a substantial presence of American students of color, mainly Asian American, Black, and Latinx, and international students. I come to the course as a native-born, white Anglo Midwesterner, which has shaped the material that I select and how I approach it.

This interview is based on a Zoom conversation between Hedy Law and Daniel Castro Pantoja and interviewees Olivia Bloechl and Bonnie Gordon that took place on June 29, 2022. The interview has been edited for clarity and concision.

Daniel Castro Pantoja: Are there any mandates at your institution to teach classes on “global” topics?

OB: In my institution, there is a “Global Awareness and Cultural Understanding” general education requirement, and the Global Music History course fulfills “Global Studies” and area studies (African Studies and Asian Studies) requirements under that broad heading. Ideologically, I’d say the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) imperative, in North American terms, is more prominent institutionally and has a greater influence on the actual content and pedagogy of courses. I’ve found the World History Center in the Department of History, the Center for African Studies, and the Global Study Center most supportive of my efforts to develop the global music history part of our curriculum, and I’ve especially appreciated the ongoing pedagogy series at the World History Center.

HL: Bonnie, can you say something about your course on global music history?

Bonnie Gordon: My class is called Early Modern Music. I teach this class in the music-major history sequence. It is a music-major class, but there are always a few non-music majors in a class of thirty. My university is a liberal arts school. We have some major requirements and almost no curricular mandates. 98% of students are double majors. This year, my class was surprisingly racially diverse. I have always been able to teach a version of what I want to teach, and this class aims to teach students how to think about the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Our music history sequence doesn’t have a history requirement or a sequence requirement. Currently, I am the only one teaching anything before 1890. So I teach students about a very long sixteenth century, from Columbus to 1900.

Our university—the University of Virginia—is a public institution steeped in state history. The 1619 Project is located here, and kids learn the state history in elementary school. In this context, my course starts with thinking about a transnational Atlantic and Caribbean Virginia narrative that began with Columbus, the sixteenth-century Spanish slave trade, and sound and moved forward from there.

HL: Do your students know they are learning “global music history”? Do you use the word “global”?

BG: The class is not called “global music history,” but I think they would assume that it is. Students use the word “global” a lot. I feel like the “global” was fashionable a few years ago. If you think about the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

and you are trying to find these sources (and there are not many), and if you teach a bit from North America, a bit of European influx of Arabic tradition, a bit of Europe, and a bit of seventeenth-century China, students think that the class is about the “globe.”

It is almost easier to teach this topic in the sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries than in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, as they know the European art music in the later periods. If I play a bunch of songs on the first day of class and ask students if they know any of them, there will probably be one or two students who love early music. So, the class is a kind of anthropological experience for students and a liberating experience for me.

OB: I should add that, at least in my view, Bonnie’s work on music cultures in coastal Virginia has been transatlantic (or maybe “hemispheric”) for quite a while, and I like that her work integrates an awareness of trans-border realities like chattel slavery that shaped Virginian settlers’ musicking and listening (as in her essay on “What Mr. Jefferson Didn’t Hear”).<sup>1</sup> This awareness challenges hegemonic historical narratives of Virginia and its music and culture, whether it is labeled “global” or not.

But building on her point, there is a way that attaching the label “global” to our curriculum or pedagogy can sometimes be a barrier. Especially if we’re teaching American students who haven’t spent much time away from home or developed other interests, it can be hard for them to recognize this way of approaching music history as relevant to them. The same may be true for teaching conservatory or western art music-focused performance students. So maybe you teach it in a way that gets at the concept sideways, and sometimes this approach can be more effective.

BG: I tend not to wear my pedagogy on my sleeve. With the undergraduates, I would not call my teaching “global.” I also don’t call my approach “feminist,” but as far as they are concerned, the seventeenth century was a hotbed of feminism.

One thing I struggle with is the feeling that my classes become much too local, but the truth is—as witnessed by Trump and the like, unfortunately—for us, everybody cares. When you talk about the founders, you are talking about Virginia. Our university still calls itself Thomas Jefferson University. The only class where I explain politics in a very clear way is Feminist Theory.

OB: The situation Bonnie describes is similar, although in western Pennsylvania the nationalist legacy differs from the one in Virginia. That founding project

1. Bonnie Gordon, “What Mr. Jefferson Didn’t Hear,” in *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, ed. Olivia Ashley Bloechl, Melanie Diane Lowe, Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 108–132.

didn't start in Pittsburgh, but we are also dealing with a nationalist—specifically, a white settler nationalist—public historiography as an assumed shared past that our students tend to bring to the classroom. Because this is a region with an eighteenth-century colonial history that's really prominent publicly (especially with the remnants of Fort Pitt downtown), this legacy weighs on the act of teaching this place's music history globally or, more to the point of this interview, teaching music history globally here. Speaking of positionality, I try to frame the narrative—the one I teach in the global music history course and in another course on local music history—as “global” to counter those nationalist takeovers of the history of sound and music and movement in this place.

DCP: If we think of pedagogy as not just about the undergraduate curriculum but about teaching-related activities outside the classroom, perhaps through community music making or graduate courses or other projects, would you modify your positionality in this broadened sense of teaching?

BG: For me, my graduate teaching is much more topical. Graduate teaching is very much an extension of my research. In the last graduate seminar I taught, I started with Toni Morrison looking at sound and literary observations of the Atlantic slave trade.

OB: Last fall (2022), I taught the third graduate seminar I've done on global music historiography or related topics, which has been an essential part of what I try to bring to this Ph.D. program and something I think has succeeded so far. We have a lot of international students in our program across four areas: musicology, ethnomusicology, composition, and jazz studies. I notice that the global music historiography work tends to appeal especially to the international students and/or students of color, which makes sense. It has been an enjoyable part of what I do and a way to serve and work with students across the program.

BG: The University of Virginia has just started this pre-modern graduate program, and I am on its steering committee. We designed that program primarily to be global. We have medieval studies here. We do not have Renaissance studies. So we started this program to push against the Eurocentric narratives—the Eurocentric Medieval, the Shakespeare-centric Renaissance, etc. Against these Western European/German narratives, a graduate course covers the fifth to the seventeenth century. At UVA, we are trying an approach that involves getting the people in the room who do interesting pre-modern topics. People will speak to each other; it is a very cool program. Of course, none of us can admit many graduate students. It would be great if some could join this program.

## Part Two: On the Teaching of Global Music History

HL: Which teaching activity/tool/assignment on global music history do you want to share with your readers? Is this teaching tool effective?

OB: To answer this question, I put together a document (see Appendix 1) entitled “Focus on Instruments: The Transatlantic Violin.” It presents the bare bones material for a unit assigned in my undergraduate global music history class. This course covers a wide chronological range, but in each of the period-based units I've included at least one class meeting focusing on particular instruments (e.g., the oud, the banjo, the industrialized piano) and individuals.

In this document, I've included primary sources illustrating the transatlantic travels of the violin and its adaptation and diffusion in eighteenth-century North America. However, instead of prescribing what to do with these sources, I decided to suggest some themes relevant to global music history, or teaching world history with a music focus, that instructors can explore with them. Some of these themes are:

- Interconnection through long-distance trade in sound instruments/music prints
- Gender and sexuality in colonial frontier societies
- Patronage and kin networks
- Indigenization of foreign artistic culture

I'll say a few things about these sources and how instructors can explore these themes through them.

We know that imported violins were part of the European-style music collection kept by William Johnson, an Anglo-Irish immigrant and the first British Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and his partner Mary “Molly” Brant, a Mohawk leader and diplomat. They had a large household on the Mohawk River (in what's now upstate New York), supervised by Molly and supported by a cadre of indentured and enslaved workers. From a British perspective, Molly was William's “housekeeper,” but they had many children together, and their relationship strengthened William's position with Molly's people (William was also adopted and given the Mohawk name Warraghiyagey). Molly's eldest son with William was Peter Warren Johnson, who thus had ties to both Mohawk and Anglo-Irish networks.

In the 1770s, William seems to have been grooming Peter for a role in the fur trade or in colonial administration. As part of his education, Peter was sent to Montréal to pick up French and take dancing lessons. And in the second source I've suggested here (see Peter Warren Johnson to William Johnson, Philadelphia, 18 November 1773, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, vol.

12:1042–1043), we learn that the teenaged Peter has just arrived in Philadelphia to start his apprenticeship with a dry goods importer.

This letter tells us that one of the first things he did was write to his father asking him to let Francis Wade—a Philadelphia merchant and a client of his father—buy him a “fiddle,” because he loved playing theirs at home. William probably got their home violin from London, and we know he and Molly owned some English music prints. For example, the first source listed in the document (*Amaryllis*) was a collection of songs for amateurs in a typically flexible European instrumentation, with upper parts for a recorder, flute, oboe, violin, and/or a singer and figured bass accompaniment. William had this collection imported in 1750, which tells us that Peter would have grown up with this music. This source is also widely available for teachers in a reprint from the 1960s or through archive.org and can be used as a musical example that could tie together multiple themes. I also included as a third source a reply from Francis Wade (13 December 1773, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, vol. 8:946–948), where he eases William’s anxieties about Peter potentially spending too much time playing music and not attending to his responsibilities.

This brings me to another aspect I would like to explore more with my students the next time I teach this class, which is the indigenization of European instruments in North America. There is ample and firm evidence to develop this theme. One could, for example, teach the rise of Eastern Woodlands fiddle traditions from the colonial era onward, or the Indigenous manufacture of these instruments from at least the early nineteenth century.

Finally, the fourth source is a portrait of Peter Warren Johnson in a British military uniform. Peter tragically died in the Revolutionary War fighting on the British side, though the precise date of his death is uncertain. Instructors can use this source to explore the Revolutionary War as a transnational event, as many Loyalists fled to Canada and Britain. Not only were Molly, William, and their children Loyalists, but many other Mohawks were too.

BG: I love this teaching document because it tells a story. The problem with teaching global music history, particularly when teaching events before 1900, is to have “the stuff.” As an instructor, you can have all these ideas you want to explore in class. Still, you also need to have something the students can read, something they can listen to, and preferably a modern edition. If the edition is not in English—which most of them are not—then you also need to provide an excellent translation. There is a gap between the fantasy of the class you want to teach and the class you end up teaching because you don’t always have all the material you need. So, I think Olivia’s document is an excellent pedagogical tool—not only a scholarly tool—because it is a story that contains a lot of stories within it.

The teaching tool/activities that I want to bring to the table and which deal with global music history in one way or another are two activities that have been very effective and which I enjoy teaching.

The first one is an activity with which I often start my course and uses Columbus’s third voyage as a departure point. During this voyage, he came upon indigenous communities. He decided to play for them, hoping they would receive him euphorically, and much to his chagrin, they shot arrows at him instead. I start with this because it is such a complete communication misfire combined with the hegemony of the explorer. My students are stunned every time. They were surprised by the famous Columbus letter circulated in various forms. Some beautiful library exhibits show all the forms, including the Italian song. An instructor can show the global traffic of a document, along with this precise moment of a figure such as Columbus, who, at least in Virginia, is very familiar to students.

This past year, I asked students to write emails to the Pope and the King and the Queen as if they were Columbus themselves. I assigned this because I wanted something more fun, inspired by the success of other teachers who have used early modern memes in their classes or prompted students to “tweet” in Latin.

The second activity with which I often start my class is Monteverdi’s *Zefiro torna* because, on the one hand, there are so many good recordings of it, and it is a text that everyone knows, and on the other, it relates to the *ciaccona*. This last one allows us to think about the prescriptions against Spanish music, which then became prescriptions against Moorish music. I pursue this route as I have been thinking of ways to teach my students how to hear this music in otherization practices. Most of my students had been exposed from an early age to a certain sound that signaled the ethnic other (e.g., syncopation, open 4ths, etc.). Of course, the *ciaccona* is not that, but the idea is that there was an idea of a specific sound that one can tell is supposedly “other” and which worried the colonial authorities. So I ask them: “Is this sound really what they worried would ‘make the dead nuns wake up?’”

### Part Three: On the Challenges to the Teaching of Global Music History

HL: What challenges have you encountered while teaching global music history?

OB: As long as I frame the class meeting and assignments narrowly enough and do not try to overdo them, classes can be successful. The most successful units I have done with undergraduates in this course have focused on particular material objects, especially musical instruments that have traveled. Individuals or groups whose lives cross significant borders can also neatly illustrate concepts I



try to teach, such as interconnection or networks. The undergraduate students seem to grasp those concepts most readily when we discuss them in relation to a discrete object or person. As an example, the most successful unit I teach every year has been the one on the historical transmission of the oud, because I tie it to interconnection. It is a clear example, and Rachel Beckles Willson’s “Oud Migrations” website is a terrific resource.<sup>2</sup> Students get it immediately. In short, being able to tie a relatively complex historical concept to a concrete example works.

But here are the challenges. If I try to teach a case, not a concept, that involves too many elements unfamiliar to students in that class, it is hard work for me as an instructor. Because it asks a lot of the students, who may not be willing or able to go there. It often does not work because it takes so long to get them conversant with the basic concepts, practices, processes, regions, languages, and music cultures. It is just too difficult. For me, building an adequate knowledge and skill base is one of the fundamental challenges of teaching. Teaching a global music history course means having these pragmatic limits, not just on accessible teachable materials, as Bonnie pointed out, but on the field of knowledge and experience that the students and I share.

BG: Yes. The challenge is just how much background you want to give them. That is why I always feel like the more pulling up resources to build a solid community, the better it will be. I would say that the things I talked about have worked pretty well. One of the things I have learned about teaching is that I cannot predict when something works and when it does not. Sometimes, I think an idea is clear and interesting, but I feel like I’m talking to a fish. But sometimes, the computer does not work, and I teach without it, and it turns out great.

I have two suggestions. First invite students to see the absurdity of the past; Columbus completely failing to understand his audience. It is an easy way to make students understand these complex concepts. Second, I would add that those who are incorporating things for the first time should cut themselves some slack. Sometimes, an activity does not work just because it does not work. It is not about the material; it is not about what you did not know; it is just a weird blip. Or, sometimes, there is a lack of preparation. The first few years I taught anything global, I did not realize what students did not know.

Some interesting recordings sound like some Spanish early music people playing with French jazz guys, which play up to the global music sound of it. It is the opposite of the example that we all use. I am taking these recordings that are out there. There are lots of good materials that are very easy to use in teaching.

2. Rachel Beckles Willson, “Oudmigrations,” accessed August 12, 2023, <https://oudmigrations.com/>.

OB: In response to Bonnie’s point about why things don’t work, I want to make a point about the pragmatics of teaching political struggles in global music history. One of the challenges that I’m facing, that I think a lot of us in the U.S. are facing right now, is how to teach sound sources related to historical conflicts, like the Crusades or the *Reconquista*. In the past, I’ve assigned Ibn Jubayr’s description of an Abbasid band escorting Crusaders to their execution in Alexandria, on the one hand, and *Reconquista*-themed songs in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, on the other, to try to contrast Muslim and Christian Andalusian perspectives. So, I am using these as different ways of telling the story of the Crusades and the waves of conquest in Andalusia. But my students have had a hard time engaging multiple perspectives on these events. They tend to see it as politically cut-and-dried.

When we’ve discussed *cantigas* on Alfonso X’s conquests, for instance, that hasn’t always gone well. Sometimes the feeling in the room is, why are we even talking about that perspective? The songs are just propaganda. At that point, there is nothing else to say. But they don’t really know what to do with the band in the Crusader execution story either, which is also triumphalist. The challenge I find is trying to get them to engage more with the contingencies and trickiness of these histories, and of these sources, in a way they may not be prepared to do.

BG: I think that’s right. I would say another challenge this year, and I suspect we will all be facing for the next few years in the post-pandemic stage, is that students come with a lot fewer chops in every way. I am used to assuming that first year students do not know how to do a library search. But in the last couple of years juniors and seniors do not know either. The business of what we do in the classroom, at least for the immediate future, is a bit different.

On the question about mandates, it is about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) mandates. They are usually about hiring, but there may be some mandates to rethink curriculums around diversity. The music department is often conditioned by the large ensembles—the orchestra, the choir, the marching band—as those ensembles encounter DEI mandates. They are changing the sounds that students experience. If students are coming in as performers, even if they are not music majors or serious performers, the DEI mandates are changing the music they make to a more global sound.

DCP: I have heard in another interview that there is also a pushback, not only from professors who teach instruments but also from instructors who are expected to teach the canon in certain classes.

BG: Some music schools feel that their mandate is to teach technique and traditional repertoire and that exploring new sounds will get in the way of that

mission. Yes, I think it is going to be a long battle. There is also a pipeline issue because it is a question of what students come in wanting to do and the kinds of students we attract to playing instruments.

I am all for certain kinds of canons; I play them; I love them. The critiques come from all sides. Some complain that you are changing too much of the canon; some ask why you kill the canon. I think it will take some time before this tension works itself out. Global music history is a tiny part of the ecology.

OB: One challenge for me in a liberal arts setting is that resistance or indifference can come from places you might not expect, for reasons that aren't necessarily about West-centrism (or even the actual work we're doing) but that can have more to do with disciplinary territorialism, institutional histories, paranoia, etc.

On the issue of students' post-pandemic readiness for intellectual engagement, an approach I might try next time, having heard you talk about this problem, is offering less variety in the global music history course and instead doing a set of longer focused units. That would reduce the amount of new material and topics and let students expand out a bit. I could try that and see if it works a bit better.

BG: I think that makes sense because students are overwhelmed. Repetition is useful.

#### APPENDIX 1:

##### Focus on Instruments: The Transatlantic Violin

###### Resources:

- *Amaryllis: Consisting of Such Songs as are Most Esteemed for Composition and Delicacy, and Sung at the Publick Theatres or Gardens*. London: T[homas] J[effreys], and sold by Mr. Cooper, J. Wood and I. Tyther [1747?]
- Owned by William Johnson and likely used by Peter Warren Johnson and siblings in performance. A later edition is widely available in reprint.
- Can select songs by Arne, contrafacts of Handel, etc.

- Also illustrates flexibility of amateur music prints in the 18th century, as it is written for German flute, violin, or hautboy on the upper part.
- Peter Warren Johnson (1759–1777?) to Sir William Johnson (1715–1774), Philadelphia, 18 November 1773, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, vol. 12:1042–1043
- Letter asking his father to allow his guardian Francis Wade to buy him violin for use during his apprenticeship to a Philadelphia import merchant.
- Francis Wade to Sir William Johnson, 13 December 1773, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson*, vol. 8:946–948
  - Confirms that he has purchased the violin and answers WJ's concerns about Peter spending too much time playing music.
- Portrait of Peter Warren Johnson (1759–1777?), copied in 1830 by James George Kingston for Robert J. Kerr, Baldwin Collection of Canadiana, Toronto Public Library, Ontario, Canada

###### Themes:

- Interconnection through economic/trade networks: Colonial British import of musical instruments, music prints from London, Dublin, and other Atlantic commercial ports
- Overland trade in colonial America (here, from Philadelphia to points west and north)
- Gender/sexual relations in colonial American life (e.g., Molly Brant and William Johnson, Peter Warren Johnson's parents)
- Patronage and kin networks: William Johnson as Anglo-Irish Anglican patron; Molly Brant as Mohawk diplomat
- Indigenization: Rise of Eastern Woodlands Indigenous violin and fiddle performance and manufacture in the 18th century