1 Introduction: rethinking difference

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> When the artist abandons the region of his forefathers in order to conquer a new territory, then the historian of art does not allow the old to become deserted and desolate, but at the same time takes upon himself the dual task of assisting, with his army of helpers, the artist in the occupation by lending a hand in making the newly acquired soil arable, and setting up the equipment needed to construct a new work.
>
> Guido Adler

> The ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world's colonized peoples. It is a history that still offends the deepest sense of our humanity.
>
> Linda Tuhiwai Smith (Ngati Awa and Ngati Porou)

Few music scholars today would wish to think of themselves in Adler's terms, as auxiliaries in the service of empire. And indeed, neither Western music nor its means of self-renewal are as they were in 1885, when Adler published his celebrated manifesto for the new science of musicology.[1] The music disciplines too have developed in ways that Adler could never have imagined, although he was prescient in many respects. Yet Linda Tuhiwai Smith's critique of the human sciences as "inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism" resonates uncomfortably with Adler's sanguine appeal to occupation as a metaphor for musical and musicological progress.[2] The history of domination, appropriation, and misrecognition that Smith recalls, though specific in many respects to Maori and other indigenous peoples, speaks as well to injustices suffered by other oppressed groups in the modern/colonial world.[3] One of these – misrecognition – has

[1] Erica Mugglestone and Guido Adler, "Guido Adler's 'The Scope, Method, and Aim of Musicology (1885): An English Translation with an Historico-Analytical Commentary," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 13 (1981): 16–17.

[2] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London, New York, and Dunedin, NZ: Zed Books, 1999), 1.

[3] The "modern/colonial" world refers to Aníbal Quijano, "Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America," *Nepantla: Views From South* 1:3 (2000): 533–81; and Walter D. Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*

been the topic of considerable debate in musicology, in the form of critical scholarship on identity and difference.[4]

In the 1990s and 2000s, an extensive literature on difference and music appeared in North American musicology and ethnomusicology, building on earlier critical turns in both disciplines. In musicology, a turn toward situated criticism, critique, and cultural history in the 1980s opened the way for research on aspects of difference.[5] *Musicology and Difference* (1993), edited by Ruth Solie, was the first collection expressly dedicated to the topic of difference, asking us to consider "whether and in what circumstances the differences between and among people are worth taking seriously" in music scholarship.[6] Its erudite introduction and many of its essays had a profound influence on the field, and related collections soon followed on gender, sexual difference, exoticism, postcolonialism, and race.[7] These and other such topics have since emerged as recognizable specialty areas, with dedicated conferences, journals, and professional society committees and study groups. At present, scholarship on aspects of difference has achieved the status of a flourishing minority area of research.

(Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3–45. Simply put, this framework recognizes that changes experienced in some places as modernity were experienced elsewhere as coloniality, and that the latter was an enabling condition of the former. See also Bloechl's essay in this volume, "Race, Empire, and Early Music," n. 73.

[4] Our discussion will focus on the discipline of historical musicology, partly because of the editors' and contributors' predominant affiliation, but also because difference has had a distinctive history and a more prominent role there than in the other music disciplines. While we recognize the significance of work on difference in ethnomusicology and music theory, their respective literatures are beyond the scope of this introduction.

[5] For example, Leo Treitler, "History, Criticism, and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony," *19th-Century Music* 3 (1980): 193–210; Gary Tomlinson, "The Web of Culture: A Context for Musicology," *19th-Century Music* 7:3 (1984): 350–62; Joseph Kerman, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985); Lawrence Kramer, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800–1900* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990); Rose Rosengard Subotnik, *Developing Variations: Style and Ideology in Western Music* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); and Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

[6] Ruth Solie, ed., *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 1.

[7] Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood, and Gary C. Thomas, eds., *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology* (New York and London: Routledge, 1994); Jonathan Bellman, ed., *The Exotic in Western Music* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1998); Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, eds., *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000); Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman, eds., *Music and the Racial Imagination* (University of Chicago Press, 2000); and Julie Brown, ed., *Western Music and Race* (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

The editors of this volume felt that the time was ripe to take a fresh look at how difference figures in music and musicological thought, two decades after the appearance of Solie's landmark collection. In addition to paying tribute to this collection and its editor, we felt that a new volume was called for because of several developments since its publication. First, social, cultural, political, and legal configurations of difference have changed considerably since the 1990s, and this affects how music is practiced and understood now – both globally and in the US, where the editors and contributors are mainly located. New ways of theorizing difference have also emerged and are changing how the increasingly pluralist discipline of American musicology engages with music. Second, with disciplinary recognition has come a vigorous reaction from conservative colleagues who object to critical scholarship on difference for intellectual reasons, political reasons, or both. Recognition has also brought with it the backlash of appropriation and depoliticization. Finally, significant criticism has emerged from liberal and leftist thinkers across the humanities, questioning the wisdom and legitimacy of a strategic focus on difference in progressive scholarship. Particularly important are questions regarding the ethics and politics of such critique. It is fair – and, we think, necessary – to reflect on the extent to which the critical study of difference equips the discipline to address injustices in its own and other domains under present conditions.

These developments pose real and vital challenges for the field, particularly for new scholarship engaged with difference, yet no recent theoretical overview exists that could serve as a resource. This introduction is an attempt to address that need, together with the essays that follow. Readers familiar with *Musicology and Difference* and similar collections from the 1990s will note some continuity with these earlier models, as well as some divergence. As in earlier collections, the essays gathered here focus mainly on music and social difference, including gender and sexuality, which were predominant concerns of 1990s critique. (This introduction too is strongly influenced by feminist theory, especially in its political theoretical framework.) Interestingly, in a number of the essays, gender, in particular, is an integrated element of other topical discussions rather than an independent focus, in contrast with earlier collections.[8] Moreover, race and

[8] This may reflect the fuller disciplinary absorption of gender-based critique, or possibly the stigma that has attached to feminism in recent years, which makes it more acceptable, and perhaps more effective, to critique gender "under cover," as it were. Alternately (and more optimistically), it may reflect the positive influence of feminist and race critical intersectionality, which we discuss below.

coloniality receive much more attention, reflecting broad changes in the discipline and beyond over the past two decades. Other essays reach past these familiar social dimensions, addressing difference in such wide-ranging contexts as democratic deliberation, hominin evolution, and cyborg embodiment. Finally, in what is perhaps the most striking departure, several essays take difference-based epistemologies of music to task for neglecting sameness and even universality as significant aspects of musical life.

No consensus about the form or value of differential knowledge emerges from this conversation across the essays, nor have we sought to impose one in the introduction. Instead, we take a step back from American musicology of the past few decades – the most proximate disciplinary context of most of the essays – to reframe difference as one important *aspect* of the political as it touches musical life and musicological knowledge. Specifically, we introduce a recognition framework for difference-based critique and, with input from recent ethical and political theory, explore alternatives to recognition, such as redistribution, representation, and freedom.

Our aim is to reexamine and, wherever possible, clarify some key premises of differential thought in musicology, while offering new perspectives that may help to revitalize what remains a very important, yet in some ways stalled critical debate. We begin by examining the legacy of thinking about difference in musicologies past and present, and then survey newer critical paradigms that are emerging or gaining prominence in the field. In the concluding sections, we address some of the more powerful recent objections to a critical focus on difference, before indicating what we see as its limits and suggesting possibilities for musicology going forward.[9]

Conceptual foundations

Difference is a broadly relevant concept, so what do we mean when we invoke it in thinking about music? In the humanities and social sciences, the most common critical usage refers to differences among and within groups, and the cultural meanings and values that attach to these differences. A basic musicological proposition is that differentiation

[9] Summaries of the volume's essays are inserted at topically relevant points in the discussion, rather than addressed collectively in a separate section.

affects musical dispositions and capacities as well as choices and actions, such as creation, listening, or judgment. This understanding of difference is influenced by debates in linguistics, literature, anthropology, sociology, political theory, and law. Philosophical reflection on difference and its correlate, identity, also deeply informs musicological discourse (often in unacknowledged ways), as does the long tradition of Western reflection on the same. Indeed, a need to formulate alternatives to philosophies of identity as sameness – in Paul Ricoeur's terms, *idem*-identity – has driven much academic theorizing of difference over the past century.[10] The impetus for such theorizing has been at times epistemological and at times political, but the most prominent work on difference in the past fifty years has proceeded from a politicized awareness of injustice carried out in the name of sameness and universalism. This broad critical project – grounded in experiences of injustice and unfreedom, and historically allied with emancipatory struggles – remains a foundation for musicological scholarship on difference and connects it with likeminded research in other fields.

Viewing identity via a critical concept of difference involves conceiving it temporally and contingently, as a particular understanding of a self, another person, or a group that is formulated relative to others. This bare definition needs development in order to be meaningful, but we are already far from theories of identity as stable essences (although we are not yet speaking of them as constructs). The contingency of identity may be linguistic (designation as "this, not that"), psychological (emotional identification with or against others), social (identification as like or unlike others), or historical (identification with or against a particular past or ancestry). These and other domains have been important sites for humanistic and social scientific reflection on identity, but most contemporary discussion has focused on social identification on the basis of religion, gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and so forth, as well as on the cultures particular to some identity groups. Philosopher Kwame Anthony Appiah analyzes social identities as having a three-part structure, in which "a classification of people as Ls is associated with a *social conception* of Ls, some people *identify* as Ls, and people are sometimes *treated* as Ls." This nominalist account nicely encompasses elements of social identity and identification that are often treated in isolation: their discursive or other cultural mediation, including through

[10] Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another* (University of Chicago Press, 1992), 1–3.

stereotypes or other labels; their narrative elaboration through available stories; their internalization by some labeled individuals, in ways that may shape self-characterization, feeling, and action; and patterns of behavior toward those labeled.[11]

Many scholars have criticized the identity-based analysis and activism of the past few decades as essentialist, or as concealing heterogeneity within a group. While liberal-minded thinkers have long been suspicious of group identification as constraining individual freedom and autonomy, poststructuralists have also challenged substantive conceptions of identity, arguing that they are discursively constructed, fragmented, and inseparable from power structures; Marxists, on the other hand, have critiqued them as reifying social relations. The predominant alternative has been identity constructivism of various sorts. At base, this family of theories posits a social and relational construction of identity and, thus, difference, with no a priori determination. In addition to epistemological concerns, constructivists often worry that ascribing a substantial essence to identities risks reinforcing structures of oppression and domination historically based on identity realism. In response, some scholars in ethnic and postcolonial studies have defended a "strategic essentialism" aimed at mobilizing activism or analysis in certain delimited situations. This concedes the non-realist nature of identities, but claims them as fictive realities for oppositional purposes.[12] Others adopt a post-positivist realism that acknowledges some insights of constructivism, while insisting on identity as a "social fact that is causally relevant" for experience.[13] Finally, some have questioned the analytical utility of identity concepts all told, proposing a range of concepts in their place.[14] As these debates have been amply explored elsewhere, we will not continue them here, but simply address particular positions as they emerge in the discussion.[15]

One predominant strand of American critical musicology has posited a close relationship between identity and musicality and has advocated

[11] Kwame Anthony Appiah, *The Ethics of Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), 65–71.

[12] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 3.

[13] Satya P. Mohanty, "The Epistemic Status of Cultural Identity: On 'Beloved' and the Postcolonial Condition," *Cultural Critique* 24 (1993): 70.

[14] Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper offer an insightful, if somewhat iconoclastic critique in "Beyond 'Identity'," *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 1–47.

[15] Ruth Solie, "Introduction," in Solie, ed., *Musicology and Difference*, 3–8.

sympathetic, authentic understanding of plural musicalities – and, thus, of difference – as an ethical good. Witness Philip Brett's cautious recommendation in 1994 that musicologists cultivate a queer "sense of difference" as "valuing, exploring, and trying to understand different things, people, and ideas, in terms that are closer to the way in which they perceive themselves."[16] This pluralist musicological ethics is typically joined to a political claim – sometimes explicit, more often not – that institutionalized exclusion, devaluation, and neglect of certain differentiated musical subjects or objects are forms of injustice. Suzanne G. Cusick makes just such a claim in a 1999 essay on "Gender, Musicology, and Feminism," where she argues that

> the marginalizing of gender (and the resulting marginalizing of women, women's music-making, "women's work," and the musically "feminine") within the intellectual microcosm that is musicology helps to sustain the gender system itself, with its intentional devaluing of practices that might be mistaken for "women's work."

This devaluation, she implies, harms women within and beyond the academy, and feminist musicological efforts offer a partial remedy: "to the extent that 'woman's work' and the culturally 'feminine' are revalued in. . .music, our status as 'women' in real life is likely to be subtly improved."[17]

While political theorists parse justice claims differently, one prominent model distinguishes this politics of *recognition* (claims for subjective acknowledgment, valuation, and accommodation) from politics of *redistribution* (claims for fair distribution of resources) and of *representation* (claims for inclusion in framing and decision-making).[18] Recognition is a theory of subject formation with a long history, stemming especially from Georg W. F. Hegel's account of the master/slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), but with significant development and expansion from the 1930s onward.[19] For present purposes, we will define

[16] Philip Brett, "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet," in Brett, Wood, and Thomas, eds., *Queering the Pitch*, 10.

[17] Suzanne G. Cusick, "Gender, Musicology, and Feminism," in *Rethinking Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist (Oxford University Press, 1999), 475, 497.

[18] This model is developed in Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the "Postsocialist" Condition* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 11–40; and significantly revised in Nancy Fraser, *Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 100–15.

[19] See Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel: Lectures on the* Phenomenology of Spirit, assembled by Raymond Queneau, ed. Allan Bloom, trans. James H. Nichols, Jr. (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1980); Patchen Markell, "Recognition and Redistribution," in John S. Dryzek, Bonnie Honig, and Anne Phillips, eds., *The Oxford*

it as a reciprocal, contested process of regarding and evaluating others under a pragmatically significant description: that is, "a description that makes a difference in the way its bearer is treated, perhaps even shaping the terms in which she understands herself, and which thereby helps to configure her powers and possibilities."[20] Likewise, we will use "misrecognition" to mean harms resulting from a failure or denial of reciprocal recognition.

Generally speaking, difference-focused musicological critique has been driven by efforts to remedy misrecognition in music history, historiography, and to a lesser extent professional life, although it has also sometimes addressed maldistribution or malrepresentation.[21] One example of misrecognition, familiar in the wake of US multiculturalism, is the tacit expectation by many scholars that musicologists who are visible racial minorities will study "their own" musics (e.g., musics racialized as brown, black, Native, or just non-white) rather than musics attributed to white European and Euro-settler groups. As has often been pointed out, this expectation is non-reciprocal: scholars who are visible majorities are generally licensed to study whatever musics they like and face little sanction for crossing racialized genre boundaries. Misrecognition, in this case, involves a racialized "description," based partly on a perception of physicality that "makes a difference in the way its bearer is treated": specifically, that denies respect for intellectual autonomy, typically lowers status (especially if "white" genres carry greater prestige), restricts disciplinary participation, and thus limits agency and freedom.[22]

Likewise, we might think of the difficulties encountered by biographers of musically creative women whose lives, as Solie memorably noted, do not conform to the stories told about the lives of musically creative men, especially canonic Western classical composers.[23] Because these stories – of "great men," "visionary geniuses," or "heroic individuals" – turn out to be gender- and culture-specific, skilled female musical creators often fail to register as "composers," as "women," or both. Since the bearers of

Handbook of Political Theory (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 450–69; and Simon Thompson, *The Political Theory of Recognition: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).

[20] This definition is adapted from Markell, "Recognition and Redistribution," 450.

[21] Maldistribution can be defined as unfair or unequal distribution of resources, and malrepresentation as inappropriate exclusion from framing and decision-making.

[22] Markell, "Recognition and Redistribution," 450.

[23] Ruth A. Solie, "Changing the Subject," *Current Musicology* 53 (1993), 55–65.

these descriptions are generally historical figures, harms may include a posthumous denial of respect or esteem, of canonic status, or of the aesthetic or commercial value of a legacy. But this kind of misrecognition also potentially harms the living, as posthumous struggles over artists' archives and reputations can attest: it matters if a valued composer is found, say, to have been gay or queer, in as much as his or her valuation rests on a description as straight in a heterosexist society. Below we will take up some recent challenges to this and other politics of recognition, but for now, it will help to keep this orientation of the field in mind.

Critical analysis of identity and difference may have emerged only recently in the music disciplines (with the turn toward recognition paradigms in the 1990s), but difference has a much longer history as a category of musical thought in the West. This history has been documented in many separate studies, but it is worth revisiting some of its more significant moments in order to contextualize recent difference-based musicological critique. Broadly speaking, difference has figured in modern music scholarship in two ways: as a relational matrix for musical knowledge and as a discursive topic. As we will see, while critical knowledge of difference in musical life is a distinctly late-modern development, its antecedents go back very far indeed.

Genealogies of musical difference

Differentiation – in its many forms – is a broadly shared process, and it arguably affects musical creation and reflection in every society. However, not all societies take difference and identity as significant sources of musical knowledge. We may regard this as a distinctive (though not exclusive) trait of modern, especially Western discourses of music. Like other aspects of modernity, differential epistemologies of music did not appear ex nihilo, but emerged with the colonial/modern world system in the sixteenth century.[24] As Janet Abu-Lughod has demonstrated, regional world systems – and thus long-distance sociocultural exchange – long predated Europeans' development of global commercial circuits around

[24] Gary Tomlinson, "Musicology, Anthropology, History," in *The Cultural Study of Music*, ed. Martin Clayton (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 31–44; Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World* (Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Olivia A. Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1–32.

1500, but the latter facilitated worldwide contact and exchange as never before.[25] With global European expansion and trade came unprecedented human migration – voluntary, coerced, and captive – and with migrants came foreign musical materials, practices, and ideas.[26] Zones of transient musical encounter and exchange developed along trade corridors, and more permanent mixed musical communities emerged in conjunction with music institutions established in settlements and missions.[27]

With travel reports flowing back to Europe in ever greater numbers, continental writers in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were increasingly aware that global musical practices varied widely. Nevertheless, they initially found much in common between their own and other people's musical practices.[28] Comparative rhetoric was the norm, as writers sought correspondences among the musics of geographically dispersed groups. For instance, it was commonplace to compare festive song in indigenous American societies to that of European peasants, or to equate entranced vocalization in Asia, Africa, Europe, or the Americas.[29] Such comparisons identified similarities – some real, many specious – among global musical practices, but they also universalized late-medieval hierarchies of rank and gender and a Christian pneumatology and morality, as well as the value systems they encoded. Thus, in nearly every society they encountered, early modern writers tended to value the literate, institutionally organized musical traditions of privileged groups more highly, while

[25] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (Oxford University Press, 1989).

[26] Robert Stevenson, *Spanish Music in the Age of Columbus* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960); Robert Stevenson, *Renaissance and Baroque Musical Sources in the Americas* (Washington, DC: Organization of American States, 1970); Ian Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995); María Gembero Ustárroz, "Circulación de libros de música entre España y América (1492–1650): notas para su estudio," in *Early Music Printing and Publishing in the Iberian World*, ed. Iain Fenlon and Tess Knighton (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2006), 147–80; and David R. M. Irving, "The Dissemination and Use of European Music Books in Early Modern Asia," *Early Music History* 28 (2009): 39–59.

[27] Geoffrey Baker, *Imposing Harmony: Music and Society in Colonial Cuzco* (Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2008); Bloechl, *Native American Song*; David R. M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Kristin Dutcher Mann, *The Power of Song and Dance in the Mission Communities of Northern New Spain* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press; Berkeley, CA: The Academy of American Franciscan History, 2010); and Geoffrey Baker and Tess Knighton, eds. *Music and Urban Society in Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[28] Tomlinson, "Musicology, Anthropology, History," 32–34.

[29] Bloechl, *Native American Song*, 35–106; and Olivia Bloechl, "Wendat Song and Carnival Noise in the Jesuit *Relations*," *Native Acts*, ed. Joshua David Bellin and Laura L. Mielke (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 117–43.