

Introduction: world music's histories

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I give the strange and bitter and yet ennobling thanks for the monumental groaning and soldering of two great worlds, like the halves of a fruit seamed by its own bitter juice, that exiled from your own Edens you have placed me in the wonder of another, and that was my inheritance and your gift.

Derek Walcott, "The muse of history" (1990)

How little is really civilized in a civilized people? And how might we account for this condition? And to what degree does this provide a measure of happiness? That is to say, to the happiness of individual beings, for the abstraction that an entire people can be happy, when any part thereof suffers, is a paradox, or more to the point an illusion that reveals itself as such, even when we first observe it.

Johann Gottfried Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*

The paradox of history and world music

There are those who believe that world music does not and cannot have history. In the division of the world between the West and the rest, so these naysayers would have it, history is the domain of the West, and even when history is extended to the rest, it is a history that is not their own. Similarly, the music of the West, at least as it is imagined, performed, ordered, taught, and inherited by the generations, is a music that is inherently historical, if not for the very fact that it survives in notated and literate forms, however conventional or experimental (see, e.g., Taruskin 2005, which takes the commitment to literacy as its point of historical departure). The questions of inheritance and survival are different, so the belief in an alterity that parses the world between the West and the rest has it, when they pertain to world music. The oral is coupled with the traditional, not least in the commitment to oral tradition, and context is valued even more than text. World music may also possess its own forms of temporality, but they do not cohere around the canons of historiography that privilege both the West and the modernity it has claimed as its own since the rise of printing in the fifteenth century.

The paradox attending the assertions and anxieties that world music does not have history is the purview of neither the West nor the rest, but rather of the common ground of history they share and the connections between them that, in the twenty-first century, but surely long before, have ceased being a matter of reasonable debate (Nettl and Bohlman 1991). History is a matter to be “celebrated” and “proclaimed,” if we take seriously the etymology of the Greek root in the name for the muse of history, Clio (κλείω). By extension, we might observe that historians of Western music are primarily interested in celebrating selfness – their music history, the world wherein they live – and the historians who engage with world music, barely removed from their more accustomed designations as ethnographers (and ethnomusicologists), are primarily interested in proclaiming otherness – recognizing the integrity of the music in worlds inhabited by others.

The paradox is evident the moment a historical project shifts beyond the celebration of selfness, as the *Cambridge History of World Music* does. There is no grand narrative that accelerates as individual chapters move from our past to our present. There is no body of repertory or canon of theoretical treatises that the contributors to this volume share or, for that matter, that provides any measure of underlying unity to what world music at a given historical moment meant to any given self or other. The paradox of a history of world music also mutes the celebration that might accompany this volume as the considerable undertaking that it is. Cautionary tales fill every chapter; self makes an appearance only to be subject to criticism. Rather than Clio singing celebratory praises, the muses whose voices resonate in the following pages come from times and places in which the historical narratives were unsettled and multivalent.

The muses who proclaim world-music history may possess the attributes of sacred avatars, who move between cosmological and lived-in worlds in South Asia or between the earth and the dreamworlds of indigenous peoples. The muses of world-music history must also bear witness to the West, proclaiming the injustices of the past but seeking a narrative of reconciliation borne by remembering the violence of racism and colonialism. In Derek Walcott’s figuration in the opening epigraph, Clio gives way to the new muse of history, who seeks a language that liberates the past from enslavement (Walcott 1995). In modern Jewish historiography, drawing upon biblical allegory, it is the “angel of history” who enters as the promise of modernity disintegrates into racism and oppression in the twentieth century. For a twentieth-century critic like Walter Benjamin (1892–1940), confronting history during the rise of fascism, it is not so much a speech-act that reroutes the relation of Jewish to European modernism, but rather the struggle necessitated by wrestling with

the angel, not unlike the prophet Elijah with the Angel of Death (Benjamin 2010; see also Mosès 2009). The allegorical muses who enunciate world history, thus, embrace the paradox whereof they are born, searching narrative for action and investing historiography with the power to suture parts to a greater whole.

And so, too, the *Cambridge History of World Music* was born of the paradox that there are still those who want world music to have no history. The history constituted by the chapters that follow may contain different narratives about different musics and music cultures, but it is not difference that provides the overarching method of the volume. Taking the chapters together, the volume gathers narratives from which history emerges – as action, as historiography. Accordingly, we bear witness to a shift in narrative strategy that connects the disciplines dedicated to the study of world music: in order to rescue world music from alterity, we shift our efforts from history to historiography. The contributors insist that the paradox of world-music history can be productive because it opens possibilities for a music historiography that reaches far beyond simple celebration and proclamation. As a whole, this volume represents the common ground, liberated from the schism between the West and the rest, yet contested by the histories lived by the many rather than the few.

Moments of world-music history

History does not become world history by chance, but rather there are moments in which the subject formations of history acquire global dimensions. In the history of world music, the early twenty-first century has been one of those moments. The chapters of this volume reflect what I should like to call history's global moment. Contact and encounter are particularly critical for the emergence of global moments. The circulation of culture between the Mughal expansion into South Asia, for example, formed moments of exchange, which, in turn, led to the historical conditions necessary for Indian classical music, not least the canonization of a music theory based on mode, or *rāga*, and the musician lineages, *gharānās*, that provided the foundations for the transmission of classical music knowledge and practice, thereby investing it with history (see chapter by Wade in this volume). The encounter between Africa and the Western Hemispheres, too, calibrated history and music history in different ways, mapping it onto the historical contact zones of the Black Atlantic and Golden Atlantic (see Rommen and Reily). Moments of encounter were disruptive, but they also led to new forms of connection, with history flowing in several directions across these. The spread of music theory in the medieval Islamic world (see Blum) and sacred musical practices in Islam until

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the present (see Qureshi) were historiographically significant for the new types of narratives they made possible.

Global moments of music history also arose during the displacement that results from power imbalance, the attempts of one culture, nation, or empire to remake the world in its image (see chapters by Beckerman, Castelo-Branco, and Kartomi in this volume). The spread of empire created many of the global moments that we attribute to the making of the West. Critically, however, the spread of music and music history often accompanied the spread of empire (see Cook, Cooley, Jones, and Zon). With attributes of both exchange-value and use-value in Marxian terms, African, Indian, and African American musics flowed as commodities along the borders of empires, reinscribing them for the history of world music (see Manuel, Mason, and Marshall and Radano). The contact zones exposed by colonial expansion also provided possibilities for the rise of indigenous narratives of music history, which might lead to revitalization, revival, and resistance (see Diamond, Illari, Barz, Fox, and Middleton).

The power of national narratives of music is by no means a privilege of the West, for their contribution to world history may be to serve as the models for national music histories outside the West, as in the cases of Korea and China (see the chapters by Howard and Stock in this volume; cf. also Sheppard). Historiography, too, has had global dimensions, in the twenty-first century no less than at earlier global moments. Music entered Arabic writing on music in various forms, as theoretical structure and narrative discourse (see Blum), but also in sweeping attempts to write universal histories; for example, that of the fourteenth-century polymath and Muslim intellectual Ibn Khaldūn (1332–1406), whose *Muqaddimah* (prolegomenon), or introduction to universal history, contains some of the most incisive observations about the musics of different African peoples in comparison with the music of Islam prior to the rise of the West (Ibn Khaldun 1958). For Ibn Khaldūn the historical task coalesced around the philological and the ethnographic – in other words, the impulse to collect music in many forms and fragments:

At the beginning of Islam, singing belonged to this discipline . . . Abū l-Faraj al-Isfahānī wrote a book on songs, the *Kitāb al-Aghānī*. In it, he dealt with the whole of the history, poetry, genealogy, battle days, and ruling dynasties of the Arabs. (Ibn Khaldun 1958)

As Stephen Blum richly illustrates in his chapter in the present volume, the history of Muslim peoples and places has never been without music history. Global moments, such as the 1932 Cairo Congress on Arab Music, are not merely the products of colonial encounter, but rather the moments

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at which Muslim musicians and intellectuals turn their historical gaze on the West (see Congress of Cairo 1934; see also Koch on Hornbostel in this volume).

A historiography of world music necessarily embraces the universal histories written from the perspectives of other worlds, even universes. The great Bengali writer, musical scholar, and intellectual Sourindro Mohun Tagore (1840–1914) wrote extensively about all aspects of South Asian music, especially in books on *rāga* and organology, but he devoted himself also to an understanding of world music; for example, in his own sweeping *Universal History of Music* (Tagore 1963), which includes a history of European music that is no less detailed than it is seemingly idiosyncratic for the Western reader. In a historiography of world music, nonetheless, the views on universal history that we gather from Ibn Khaldūn and S. M. Tagore are just as critical to a historical discourse as any others (see Nettl in this volume).

Global moments bear witness to the force of materiality and commodity exchange, conditions particularly evident in the history of world music. The world musics that reached Europe during the Age of Discovery, for example, did so not in small measure because of the rise of print technology and the subsequent revolution in the representation of music (see, e.g., Fig. 0.1). The history of recording technology unfolds in relatively strict counterpoint with the history of world music itself, anchoring it in the materiality of wax cylinders, long-playing records, magnetic tape, audio and video cassettes, and the digital media of CDs and MP3s (see Manuel and Taylor, this volume). The foundation of sound archives not only followed the transformation of recording materials, but also stimulated innovation and experimentation (see Koch), which in turn led to the new materials that revolutionized the dissemination of world music (see Jackson).

The *Cambridge History of World Music* bears witness to the global moment of music history that we encounter and shape as our own. The globalization of world music has not effected the end of history (see, e.g., Bohlman 2002), but rather it has made it possible to muster new historical discourses and turn them toward different historiographic ends. The conflict at postcolonial contact zones, the unequal distribution of power, the atavism of racism, and the worldwide exchange of musical materials, all these remain conditions in a world history of the present. If the history of world music that follows succeeds in focusing criticism on the contact zones that converge as the global moment of our own era, and if its authors point toward the ways in which action can be meaningful, we shall have made considerable progress toward a historiography that takes all the musics of the world as its subject matter.

Technologies of subject formation

Technology – old, new, aging, changing, alienating, mediating – provides one of the most persistent accompaniments to the production of world-music history. Every chapter in this volume bears witness to technology as a critical mode of historical change. In some chapters, technology functions indirectly to transform the object “music” to the subject “music history”; for example, when recordings are gathered in archives or produced for distribution as global commodities. In other chapters, the technologies of reproduction and dissemination are implicit in the definition of new musical objects; for example, as a three-minute piece on a wax cylinder but explicit in the formation of new musical subjects, the religious rites or dances of the colonized organized as discrete cultures. In still other chapters, technology has a presence so direct that the historical narrative follows technological change in the first order, musical change in the second. The diverse forms and conditions of technology that connect these chapters notwithstanding, all are linked because technology makes music historical by locating it in time and place. If, indeed, we speak of multiple technologies and multiple musics, their multitude nonetheless suggests the very possibility of a common ground afforded by history in the contexts of the global.

From a historiographic perspective, technology acquires historical potential because of the ways it combines the objective and subjective qualities of music, and it is because of this potential and the attempts to realize it that we can speak about the narrative influence of technology across the *longue durée* of world-music history. In the broadest sense, the most fundamental transformation wrought by technologies is that from oral to written tradition (and in this transformation, too, ethnomusicologists would insist on the multiple forms of orality and literacy). Acts of writing, transcribing, printing, sound recording, and reproducing all result from the ways in which technology is permitted to intervene (see Brady 1999). By transforming the oral to the written, those employing technology recalibrate the relation of music to time, making it possible to represent and describe music in new ways, with speech or images about music, which combine to create discourse about music.

Technology repositions music, not only from the moment of performance to the symbols on paper that are meant to approximate it, but also from one place in the world to another. Already in the intervention of technology at this fundamental stage of historical discourse, the acts that render the oral as literate reveal the persistent belief that technology can and should advance and improve. It changes because of a belief that it mediates in order to close the gap between the oral and the written, the distant and the intimate, the musics

of the other and those we claim for the self. These acts on music become the stuff of world-music history.

That the acts on music technology makes possible are both local and global, individual and collective, personal and political, is critical to the ways in which the contributors to this volume examine the impact of technology on world music. In North American ethnomusicology, the possibilities opened by wax-cylinder recording equipment launches history by recording the acts of early collector-scholars – Alice Fletcher and Frances Densmore best known among them – responding to the initial endeavors of Walter Fewkes, recording Passamaquoddy music in 1889, and Benjamin Ives Gilman, recording Javanese, Turkish, Kwakiutl, and South Sea Islander music at the World's Columbian Exposition of Chicago in 1893 (see Nettl 2010, 3–21). During the four years between these first acts of recording, the move from the metaphysics of technology that gathered individual songs to those capable of contextualizing music as a global narrative could not be more direct.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the technologies of wax-cylinder recording created both past and future for the musics of the world (see Klotz 1998). For the collector and the archivist – for example, Carl Stumpf and Erich Moritz von Hornbostel, founders of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv in 1900 (see Koch and Jackson in this volume) – it was this metahistorical potential that transformed new uses of technology into new discourses of world music. For Carl Stumpf, educated as a psychologist, the technologies of the archive led to a type of experimentation, a reconfiguration of parts and wholes from throughout the world as local recording endeavors near Berlin were archived together with the recordings from colonial and other expeditions. For Hornbostel, the transferral from wax cylinders to the copper galvanos on which field recordings were stored – and thereafter the destruction of the wax cylinders in order to negate the seemingly reverse historical direction produced by disintegrating surfaces – suggested new possibilities for making world music available for future generations (see Ziegler 2006). From 1900 to 1913, Hornbostel reproduced recordings from the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv and packaged them for distribution as the *Demonstration Collection*, above all sustaining their function for scientific comparison and study, complete with fieldnotes, commentary, and transcriptions (see Hornbostel 1963). Drawing upon the same archival materials a generation later, Hornbostel compiled the set of recordings known as *Music of the Orient*, which were disseminated commercially in 1934 on 78 rpm discs on the Odeon label, intended for more general consumption (see Hornbostel 1979). Both sets were later re-recorded on LP technology by the Ethnic Folkways label, extending their historical scope in the second

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half of the twentieth century to a growing public interested in the folk-music revival, but especially the expanding discipline of ethnomusicology.

If Hornbostel's Berlin recording projects became a history of world music in and of themselves, with technology providing the historical discourse in which they lived and changed, the work of early Jewish-music scholars turned to technology to provide the musical data that would speak for themselves in oral and written forms. The recording projects of Abraham Zvi Idelsohn and Robert Lachmann provide the historical contexts in Ruth Davis's chapter in this volume, both foundational for the understanding of the past and present histories of the Jewish people, for millennia in diaspora, but in the twentieth century gathering in Israel. Both Idelsohn and Lachmann depended on the technological discourses emerging in Berlin – Idelsohn more indirectly, but Lachmann in close association. From 1911 to 1913, Idelsohn conducted field-work in Jerusalem, largely within Jewish communities from across the North African, Middle Eastern, and Central Asian diasporas, which he systematically transcribed, with the aid of early tone measurement technologies, mapping the two-millennia diaspora in the printed volumes of the *Thesaurus of Hebrew Oriental Melodies* (Idelsohn 1914–32). From the perspective of the reception history that followed, it might be possible to say that Idelsohn “invented modern Jewish music” from the recordings of the past, for this is how his recordings (e.g., in archival and library collections in Israel) were often used; in the twenty-first century, CD technology, once again, makes it possible to analyze and study the Idelsohn recordings, and to place them in a new history of world music (Lechleitner 2005).

In her chapter, Ruth Davis shows how technology enabled Robert Lachmann to create a different historical discourse, in which Jewish musicians (and communities) interacted with neighboring musical practices not only in the diaspora but also in the historical and modern lands of Israel in the Levant (Lachmann 1940; cf. Davis 2013, and Davis in this volume). Recording technology served Idelsohn and Lachmann, working with related materials at the same moment in history, in very different ways, generating historical discourses about Jewish music, ancient and modern, that provide very different contexts for Middle Eastern history, even in the twenty-first century.

Technology played a particularly important role in the mid-twentieth century, when the disciplinary heterogeneity of comparative musicology (*vergleichende Musikwissenschaft*) underwent the transition to the relative disciplinary unity that would be called ethnomusicology in the early 1950s, soon thereafter becoming the name for the field devoted primarily to world music. This foundational moment followed the global devastation of World War II and the rapid path into the postcolonial era, but the paradigm shift that accompanied the rise of

ethnomusicology was also closely allied to the technological revolution made possible by long-playing records and magnetic tape recording in the 1940s. These two technological innovations together made it possible 1) to do fieldwork in vastly more intensive and extensive ways and 2) to disseminate the results of ethnographic work in recorded anthologies that could be analyzed scientifically, stored in archives throughout the world, and experienced by listeners with very different interests and needs. Just as printed collections of folk song proliferated after Herder's late eighteenth-century anthology (see the chapter by Bohlman in this volume), so too did recorded collections of world music proliferate rapidly as the postcolonial era was ushered in.

The discourses of object and subject – what ethnomusicologists study and how they go about studying – follow surprisingly disjunct paths in the foundational years of ethnomusicology. Disciplinary discourse takes shape cautiously in the *Ethno-Musicology Newsletter* (Vol. 1, December 1953), the publication that documented and consolidated the membership of what would become the Society for Ethnomusicology in 1955, but as a historical text it provides an interesting focus of the debates about gathering world music and distilling a common historiography from its many forms. The discussions that fill the pages of the Society of Ethnomusicology's earliest publication most commonly concern themselves with institution-building. That the early discourse of the SEM was about the “who” rather than the “what” of ethnomusicology, marking a shift from object to subject, is increasingly apparent in each consecutive mimeographed *Newsletter*. The number of individuals receiving the *Newsletter* increases issue by issue, expanding to 472 in the fourth number (April 1955). Alan P. Merriam, the editor, endeavors to be as inclusive as possible, with reports, comments, and letters in French and German as well as English. Bibliographies, field reports, and descriptions of technical problems appear together, providing discursive witness to the eclectic scholars allying themselves with the call for an in-gathering that appears on almost every page. Not surprisingly, it is in the final issue of the mimeographed *Newsletter* in 1955 that the call for the foundational meeting of the SEM appears. It was telling that, instead of a keynote address, there would be an ethnographic film to symbolize and formalize the foundational moment itself:

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING. There will be an organizational meeting for the purpose of forming an ethno-musicological society, at the 54th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, November 17–19, at the Sheraton Plaza Hotel, Boston.

The meeting will be held in the evening, Friday, November 18, in Parlor 133 at the hotel, following the American Anthropological Association banquet and the showing of an ethnographic film.

As the Newsletter has depended on its readers' contributions of news, ideas and bibliography, so any organization will depend on their presence and help in selecting officers and an editorial board to continue ETHNO-MUSICOLOGY and to implement any other enterprises the society may undertake.
(Ethno-Musicology Newsletter [1955], 1)

Object and subject continue to occupy different levels of discussion in the early years of the Society for Ethnomusicology, even with the establishment of the society itself and the transformation of the *Newsletter* as a medium of communication into a forum for the publication of research. In *Ethnomusicology Newsletter* 7, Willard Rhodes writes "On the Subject of Ethno-Musicology" (Rhodes 1956). It might have seemed as if Rhodes should refer to object rather than subject, thus taking a step toward clarifying what the members of the new society would study, hence, what kind of world music. Rhodes does, however, mean "subject," and after a historical summary of fundamental queries of comparative study, he explicitly stakes out a subjective position that many maintain until the present – ethnomusicology is what ethnomusicologists do, and what they do worldwide:

What of the future of ethno-musicology? The answer lies with every worker in the discipline. We can make it what we will. The world is our laboratory and the achievement of the past, though notable, is small in relation to that which remains to be accomplished. The vastness of our subject matter with its worldwide distribution offers unlimited opportunities for the specialist. *(Ibid., 7)*

In a survey and census of the central disciplinary writings in the *Newsletter* and the journal during the foundational years of the Society for Ethnomusicology, we rarely encounter discourse that limits and focuses the object of study. There are articles that on their surfaces would seem to call for more focused approaches to well-defined objects (e.g., Mieczysław Kolinski's "Ethnomusicology, Its Problems and Methods"; Kolinski 1957), but these reveal themselves to be open calls for more breadth rather than increased specification. This was true also of the frequent discussions of technology that provided the base for much discussion in the *Newsletter*, for it was the kind of recording machine the ethnographer brought to the field, and the technical guidelines in which recordings were made, that in turn led to the translation tools that turned object to subject.

Whether or not the discussions of object and subject, technology and transmission, really constituted a discourse of world history is difficult to say. The contributors to the early newsletters and journals were deliberately cautious about building their field around a discourse that was too narrow. Their caution may have grown from their experiences in other scholarly