

Orientalism and Musical Mission

Orientalism and Musical Mission presents a new way of understanding music's connections with imperialism by drawing on new archive sources and interviews and using the lens of 'mission'. Rachel Beckles Willson demonstrates how institutions such as churches, schools, radio stations and governments, sent from Europe and North America since the mid nineteenth century, have consistently claimed that music provides a way of understanding and reforming Arab civilians in Palestine. Beckles Willson discusses the phenomenon not only in religious and developmental aid circles, where it has had strong currency, but also in broader political contexts. Plotting a historical trajectory from the late Ottoman and British Mandate eras to the present time, the book sheds new light on relations between Europe, the USA and the Palestinians, and creates space for a neglected Palestinian music history.

RACHEL BECKLES WILLSON is Professor of Music at Royal Holloway, University of London. She has published numerous articles and two monographs on music politics, giving special attention to the former Eastern bloc and Israel/Palestine. Her most recent book was *Ligeti, Kurtág, and Hungarian Music during the Cold War* (2007). Beckles Willson originally trained as a pianist at the Royal Academy of Music in London and the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, before reading for a PhD at King's College, London. She has taught a wide range of courses, including Music and Orientalism; Communism and Music; and Intercultural Performance. Between 2008 and 2010 she was based at the Humboldt University in Berlin, supported by a Fellowship for Experienced Researchers from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Alongside her scholarly pursuits, Beckles Willson is an active musician, performing as a pianist, saxophonist and 'ūd player.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Orientalism and Musical Mission
Palestine and the West

RACHEL BECKLES WILLSON



Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107036567

© Rachel Beckles Willson 2013

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and
to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2013

Printed and bound in the United Kingdom by the MPG Books Group

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Willson, Rachel Beckles.
Orientalism and musical mission : Palestine and the West / Rachel Beckles Willson.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-107-03656-7 (Hardback)
1. Music--Social aspects--Palestine--History. 2. Orientalism--Palestine. I. Title.
ML3917.P35W55 2013
306.4'842095694--dc23

2012038177

ISBN 978-1-107-03656-7 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to
in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such
websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

*This book is for the wonderful friends who were there,
2007–10.*

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

أيها الواقفون على العتبات ادخلوا،
واشربوا معنا القهوة العربية
[قد تشعرون بأنكم بشرٌ مثلنا]
أيها الواقفون على عتبات البيوت،
اخرجوا من صباحاتنا،
نطمئن إلى أننا
بشرٌ مثلكم!

*You standing at the doorsteps, enter
and drink Arabic coffee with us
(you might sense you're human like us)
you standing at the doorsteps of houses
get out of our mornings,
we need reassurance that we
are human like you!*

MAHMOUD DARWISH

Contents

List of figures [page ix]
Acknowledgements [x]
A note on terminology and transliteration [xiii]
List of abbreviations [xiv]

Introduction [1]
Orientalism [4]
Mission and the instrumentalisation of culture [10]
Shifting perspectives on Palestine [15]
Methods [23]

PART I HOLY LAND, 1840–1948 [35]

1 Revelation [37]
 Recovering German Orientalism [39]
 Anglican and American imposition [62]

2 Distinction [76]
 Stage 1: Informal encounter. Mary Eliza Rogers and Titus Tobler [78]
 Stage 2: British strategy. The Palestine Exploration Fund,
 1865–1918 [87]
 Stage 3: Negotiations with Jews [98]

3 Education [116]
 Territories for music [118]
 Peopling the land [137]

4 Separation [159]
 The tripartition of air [162]
 Europe, Jews (and Arabs) [166]
 Arabs, British [169]
 Another mission, another separation [178]

5 Provincialising mission [181]
 Moving out of the waiting room [183]
 Another route forward [192]
 Beyond religion [197]

Contact zones	[201]
A gestural postlude	[208]
PART II STATE(S), 1987 ONWARDS [213]	
6 Culture	[215]
Beyond the waiting room	[220]
Contact zones and occupation	[239]
7 Dialogue	[259]
Concerts as simulacra	[262]
Reading simulacra	[270]
On the borders of performance	[279]
8 Musical missionaries	[292]
Europe’s demise and Palestine’s potential	[293]
Cultural heritage and the construction of civilians	[299]
Music against violence	[304]
9 Conclusion	[310]
Glossary [318]	
Interview database [319]	
Archival sources [322]	
Bibliography [325]	
Index [352]	

Figures

- Figure 1 Gustaf Dalman’s *Palästinischer Diwan* (1901), p. 354. [44]
- Figure 2 Dwight Elmendorf, ‘Shepherd’s Pipe, Sling and Scrip’ (Plate XX) from *A Camera Crusade through the Holy Land* (1913). [68]
- Figure 3 From the programme booklet for The Second Annual Palestine Children’s Music Festival. 2 May 1942. Housed in the archive of the Friends Boys School, Ramallah. Reproduced by permission. [135]
- Figure 4 School Song Book [literally: The Collection of School Songs], Jerusalem, 1921. Housed in the archive of the Friends Boys School, Ramallah. Reproduced by permission. [188]
- Figure 5 ‘The Song of the Institute for Teacher Training’ from the School Song Book [literally: The Collection of School Songs], Jerusalem, 1921. Housed in the archive of the Friends Boys School, Ramallah. Reproduced by permission. [190]

Acknowledgements

My first expression of gratitude is to the sponsors of my research. The Arts and Humanities Research Council provided a Small Grant in support of preliminary work in 2006, and its Research Leave scheme enabled me to complete an initial draft of the manuscript in 2010. In between, a Small Grant from the British Academy funded my fieldwork and research assistance from 2006 to 2008, and a Fellowship for Experienced Researchers from the Humboldt Foundation allowed me both to focus my time on research while living in Berlin from 2008 to 2010 and to undertake further fieldwork in 2009. In Berlin, the Humboldt University provided my institutional base, where Professor Hermann Danuser was my welcoming host. The Music Department at Royal Holloway, University of London, also covered some of my expenses, and allowed me time to carry out the research. Without such support the book would not, of course, have been thinkable.

I also extend thanks to everyone who has provided me with time and information. This includes staff at the British Library, the BBC Written Archives Centre, the British National Archive, the Central Zionist Archive (Lee Rotbart in particular), the Friends Girls School in Ramallah (Diana Abdel Noor in particular), the Israel State Archive, the Jewish National Library, the Library of the Diaconate of the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Middle East Centre Archive at St Antony's College Oxford, and the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. It also includes all the interviewees listed at the back whose testimonies enrich the book so profoundly, as well as those who helped but preferred to be anonymous. Additionally, I would like to mention colleagues with whom I collaborated to organise a conference entitled 'Negotiating "the West" Music(ologic)ally', namely Harm Langenkamp and Barbara Titus. Along with all the other scholars who contributed to that event at the University of Utrecht in April 2011, they enriched my thinking substantially.

Over the years I made a number of friends in Palestine and Israel who provided not only information, but also fantastic conversation, entertainment and hospitality. I thank in particular Noam Ben Ze'ev, Michal Grover-Friedlander, Khaled Jubran, Nizar Rohana and Abigail Wood.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West

Rachel Beckles Willson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgements*

xi

Back in the UK, I benefited similarly from the friendship of Gwyn Daniel, Nada Elzeer and Avi Shlaim, and I am deeply grateful to you all for sharing your expertise and helping me through some of the vicissitudes of this project. I also thank Nada Elzeer for her multiple translations and transliterations of Arabic sources, and Musab Hayatli for his added help with transliteration. My thanks also go to Annika Forkert and Doris Lanz for their corrections to my German translations. I was wonderfully supported by other friends and family throughout research and writing in both Berlin and London. Your interest and tolerance, as well as your capacity to make me laugh, were priceless. Particular thanks to Hilary Behrens, Tony Conway, Lena Dickson, Misha Donat, Dan Leech-Wilkinson, András Schiff, Jim Samson, Julia and Peter Sherwood and Adrian Thomas. Never forgetting Christopher Raeburn, who sadly is no longer here to thank.

When I made a final research trip to Jerusalem in the spring of 2010 I bought myself an *‘ūd*, an instrument that has been a rather special companion to me while working on manuscript revisions. In short, it provided me with a sense of a life beyond the book, and a refreshingly joyful activity alongside gruelling work at the end. The friends that helped me play it, compose for it, or who played Arab and Turkish musics with me, were hugely important: my thanks go to Khyam Allami, Neçati Çelik, Ross Daly, Anna Karayianni, Michel Moushabeck, Elizabeth Nott, Nizar Rohana and Burkard Wehner.

Finally, I have been fortunate to have had the entire manuscript read critically by several scholars. I thank in particular Yossi Bartal, Joseph Massad, Martin Stokes, and two anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press, each of whom allowed me to improve the text substantially. My gratitude also goes to Victoria Cooper at Cambridge University Press, whose interest and conviction in the project enabled me to bring it to completion. Any errors remaining are my own.

Parts of Chapter 1 were presented at the Royal Musical Association Dent Medal Study Day, Institute of Musical Research, London, October 2009 (paper title: ‘Revelation in the Holy Land’); and the American Musicological Society Annual Conference, Philadelphia, November 2009 (paper title ‘Revisiting 19th-century Colonialism: Western Musical Interventions in Ottoman Palestine’).

Parts of Chapter 3 were presented at Utrecht University, June 2008, in a paper entitled ‘Music – Palestine – Occidentalism’, and at the Humboldt Universität, Berlin, in January 2009 in a paper entitled ‘Music, Mediation, Mission’.

Parts of Chapter 5 were presented at a conference held at Merton College, Oxford (Music and Representation), March 2010 (paper title: 'Twisting the Representation of Western Music'). Parts of this chapter are published in *Representation and Western Music*, edited by Joshua Walden, Cambridge University Press 2013.

Other sections of Chapter 5 are published as 'Hearing Palestine' in *The Story of Jerusalem*, edited by Issam Nassar and Salim Tamari. Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press, an imprint of Interlink Publishing, 2013.

Parts of chapters 6 and 7 were presented at the Society for Ethnomusicology Annual Conference, Mexico City, November 2009 (paper title: 'Said in Ramallah') and at the Middle East and Central Asia Music Forum, Institute of Musical Research, London, November 2011 (paper title: 'Music's Necessary Complicity').

Parts of Chapter 8 were presented at the Royal Musical Association's Dent Medal Study Day, Institute of Musical Research, London, September 2011 (paper title: 'Music and Doing Good').

A version of Chapter 8 was published as 'Music Teachers as Missionaries: Understanding Europe's Recent Dispatches to Ramallah', *Ethnomusicology Forum* (November 2011). Reprinted by permission of the publisher (Taylor & Francis Ltd, www.tandf.co.uk/journals).

The extract of poetry at the front of this book is from Mahmoud Darwish's 'State of Siege' from *Butterfly's Burden*, translated by Khaled Mattawa. Copyright © 2007 by Mahmoud Darwish. Translation copyright © 2007 by Fady Joudah. Reprinted with the permission of The Permissions Company, Inc. on behalf of Copper Canyon Press, www.coppercanyonpress.org. I also acknowledge kind permissions from Actes Sud, and from Mr Riad N. El-Rayyes, for printing the Arabic original of this text.

Figures 3–5 are reproduced with kind permission from Jeries Abu El-Etham, Headmaster of the Friends Boys School, Ramallah.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

A note on terminology and transliteration

In Part I, which addresses the period between 1840 and 1948, I refer to the majority population of Palestine as ‘Arabs’. In Part II, which begins in 1987, I refer to the same group as ‘Palestinians’.

My transliterations of Arabic words conform to the practice of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*. I have reproduced several names in the form in which they are most commonly seen in English, however, and on occasion this is a variation on standard transliteration that reflects local pronunciation.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-03656-7 - Orientalism and Musical Mission: Palestine and the West
Rachel Beckles Willson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Abbreviations

APES	American Palestine Exploration Society
BNA	British National Archive
BSF	Barenboim-Said Foundation
CMS	Church Mission Society
CZA	Central Zionist Archive
EKD	Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland
FBS	Friends Boys School
IPO	Israel Philharmonic Orchestra
ISA	Israel State Archive
JEM	Jerusalem and the East Mission
JPOS	<i>Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society</i>
NLI	National Library of Israel
PA	Palestinian Authority
PACBI	Palestinian Campaign for the Academic & Cultural Boycott of Israel
PBS	Palestine Broadcasting Service
PEF	Palestine Exploration Fund
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency