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- 1) Chunnu Khan (d.1912) Rag Hamir, gat in madhya laya tintal Specific listing information on this recording is unavailable. Please refer to page 18 of this journal for more details. (3:52)
- 2) Ali Akbar Khan (b.1922) *Rag Chandranandan*, gat in vilambit tintal Compact Disc, Signature Series, volume 1, CD9001, issued by Alam Madina Music Production, San Anselmo, CA. Originally issued as 33 1/3 disc recording: Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Master Musician of India, CS462 issued by Connoisseur Society, New York. (3:02)
- 3) Agua Larga. From a tape in the private collection of Papa Roncón. Recorded in Borbón, Ecuador by the Afro-Ecuadorian marimba ensemble *La Catanga*, under the direction of Papa Roncón. Date unknown. (3:19)
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From the Editors

It is with great satisfaction that we offer the latest chapter in the history of the Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology. Started in 1984, this year marks our fifteenth year of publication, and following in the footsteps of past editorial boards, we hope to have contributed to a standard of excellence upon which the next fifteen years may build. During the time lapse between the last issue and this one, the journal endured a complete turnover of the editorial board, and the personnel in the Publication Office of the Department of Ethnomusicology. This, in many ways, threw us straight into the fire. During this time we encountered numerous obstacles which delayed operations and only served to compound the rigors of graduate study at UCLA. The editorial board would like to heartily thank all of those who helped us to overcome those difficult times and emerge back on track. We wish to thank Tim Rice, our faculty advisor Professor Ali Jihad Racy, Philip Brett and Jonathan Ritter, and all the contributors for their unfailing patience and understanding.

Continuing the innovation of last year's editorial board, this issue includes a CD of listening examples that compliment the readings. However, we have returned to the six-by-nine format of previous years and have given the cover a face-lift. The design represents very aptly the renewed spirit of the PRE as we prepare to face the challenges of the new millennium. Another change is the elimination of the "Features" section, which we felt applied hierarchical value to the various types of writing trends now in current use within our discipline. One thing that has remained unchanged, however, is our dedication to publishing high-quality scholarship with an emphasis on graduate student work. Each contribution to this issue came from within the University of California system, including four from UCLA.

With that being said, we proudly present you with the ninth volume of the Pacific Review of Ethnomusicology.

– The Editors

Researching the Evolution of a Musical Instrument in Modern India

David Trasoff

The names of many renowned artists and teachers of the Hindustani music tradition are mentioned in this article. It is considered both polite and customary to use a respectful form of address, Ustad for a Muslim musician and Pandit for a Hindu musician, when referring to such artists. As I am both a student of maestro Akbar Khan, participating as a member of this music tradition, and an ethnomusicologist writing for a scholarly audience, I have to address the question of using honorific titles in an article such as this. I have, for the sake of readability, chosen to use few or no such titles in the body of the paper. I wish to convey my highest regard for all the musicians, both of the past and the present, named here, and ask that I be excused any appearance of disrespect that might be construed from this exclusion.

Doing historical research in ethnomusicology entails gathering and interpreting data from a wide variety of disparate sources that may be both temporally and culturally removed from the researcher. In this paper, examples of different types of historical evidence and the problems of interpretation they pose will be presented and analyzed, using the author's research on the physical development of the *sarod*, one of the most important stringed instruments in modern North Indian classical instrumental music.¹ Examples will include illustrations and written descriptions by colonial authorities, instruments in museum collections in India and abroad, instruments in private hands, photographs of artists, and written and oral accounts by *sarod* performers and their descendants. The examples given demonstrate the wide variety of motivations behind these disparate sources, and illustrate the potential for misinterpretation as well as document a number of actual errors in interpretation that have resulted.

As researchers, we gather data from a variety of sources, which we then use as material for proposing our theories and supporting our conclusions. As ethnomusicologists, we often specialize in topics that are to a greater or lesser degree culturally removed from us. Doing historical research adds the additional complication of interpreting sources that are temporally removed from us as well. An understanding of the research process requires that we maintain as complete an

awareness as possible of the all the potential ramifications of our sources of data. Understanding the hidden cultural and historical currents that have motivated our sources, whether they are documents or living informants, is critical to gaining an understanding of the research itself. Such a perspective is essential if we are to draw conclusions that can in fact be supported by our research.

As the title of this paper suggests, the present discussion will focus more on a description of the research process than on establishing a set of conclusions or results. I will analyze some selected aspects of the development of the *sarod*, a stringed instrument used in the classical music of North India, based on information gathered in the course of several research trips to India.² In this presentation I will focus on the physical development of the instrument and I will use the material presented here as illustrative examples of some of the types of difficulties that occur when doing this type of research. It should be kept in mind, however, that these examples are being presented in an artificial isolation. The physical changes described here took place in conjunction with stylistic changes in the music, and indeed with changes in the circumstances of musician's lives and the general social milieu within which the music was presented and received.

The *sarod* itself emerged as a distinctly identifiable instrument in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, when the Afghan or Kabuli *rabab*, one of the types of short-necked lutes in use in North India at that time, underwent changes making it more suitable for the performance of North Indian classical music. The *sarod* and its predecessors feature a double-chested body, with the main acoustic chamber covered by a goatskin head that functions as the soundboard. The second chamber underlies the wide part of the neck where it meets the body. There is a distinct indentation between the head and body of the instrument. The defining element in the creation of early versions of the modern *sarod* was the use of a metal plate as a fingerboard, replacing the wooden fingerboard previously used. Following this initial stage of development the most significant changes that occurred in the transformation to the modern instrument can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The *taraf* strings, the sympathetic strings that come through the plate, are fitted into a double row vs. a single row of pegs.
- 2) Two *chikari* strings are fitted to the instrument rather than one. These are the short drone strings that are usually tuned to the tonic pitch in the high octave and used for rhythmic counterpoint.

- 3) On the early *sarod*, the metal plate is flat, and is attached directly to the top surface of the neck; on the modern instrument the plate has acquired a definite curvature, and it is now attached to the neck by means of an integral flange.

The following changes in design were made by Ustad Alauddin Khan in consultation with his brother, instrument builder Ayet Ali Khan, in the 1920s and 1930s. These changes brought the *sarod* to its present form.

- 4) There was a dramatic change in the shape of the body, with the shape of the main resonating chamber integrated into the overall shape of the instrument. The overall dimensions of the *sarod* became more or less standardized.
- 5) In the older instrument design, the sides of the body come down straight, in the modern design the body has been rounded.
- 6) Along with this change in the fundamental shape of the *sarod* several aspects of the resonating chamber have been significantly altered: the skin covered portion of the instrument has been made round, and the ratio or proportion of width to height has been increased.

Other changes in the number and tuning of main strings and sympathetic strings are related to actual stylistic differences between schools of *sarod* playing, and have been preserved in the modern instruments as markers of those stylistic histories.

My interest in exploring the history of the *sarod* and the course of development of performance practice on this instrument can best be illustrated by listening to two examples of recorded music. The first is an excerpt of a recording by Chunnu Khan (d. 1912), the first *sarod* performer to be recorded by the Gramophone Company of India, in 1906-07. The second example is a recording of *sarod* made by Ali Akbar Khan (b. 1922) in the 1960s. The degree to which these recordings are different in timbre and playing approach is remarkable, filtering out to as great an extent as possible the differences attributable to changes in recording technology. Plate #1 shows an instrument from the collection of the National Museum in New Delhi that is probably contemporary with Chunnu Khan. It demonstrates most of the features of the early *sarod* listed above. Plate #2 shows a *sarod* of the type played by Ali Akbar Khan, which incorporates all the advancements made in the design of this instrument. Keeping in mind that the *sarod* played by Ali

Akbar Khan, which is the prototype for almost all *sarods* in use today,³ was designed and built in approximately 1934, it seems evident that a great deal has happened to the design of this instrument in only a few decades.

What types of information are available to establish a historical basis for the evolution of this instrument? The available data can be roughly divided into that which exemplifies a Western view of historical reality and that which might seem to incorporate a more decidedly Indian view of events. It remains to be established whether such a line of division can be easily drawn or if, in fact, it may be completely illusory. Speaking here in broad generalities, the western point of view may perhaps be characterized as one of a predilection for "hard" evidence, evidence for which some kind of documentary proof is available. The Indian view is not necessarily any less historical in its intentions, especially considering the primary importance of tradition within all the Indian arts, but the methodologies are those that come out of their tradition of teaching, the *guru shishya parampara*,⁴ in which the historical information that has accumulated in a given teacher is frequently passed to the student in a narrative form.

Hard evidence of stages in the evolution of the *sarod* is available, but quite limited. Most of the extant early drawings and descriptions of the *sarod* were made by colonial administrators who acquired an interest in local culture. There are some photographs available from the early twentieth century; and there are some actual instruments, preserved in museum collections in India and elsewhere. The principal significance of these pieces of data to this type of research is that they usually have a date, offering at least the possibility of establishing some benchmarks.

The other kind of evidence consists of instruments in private hands and the stories that accompany them, as told to me by students and descendants of the players of these *sarods*. This evidence is often much richer in its level of detail and context, but brings to the front typical questions about the authenticity or verifiability of this contextualizing description. The instruments themselves are there; their reality, the details of their construction, makes it clear that there is a story to be told. The question is: to what extent can an unambiguous, linear narrative can be assembled from the available data?

I will now discuss some specific examples of the various types of evidence I have already mentioned and point out some of the difficulties in interpretation that have arisen from these examples. This will best illustrate the types of questions that have come up in trying

to use these research methodologies to establish a clear picture of the evolutionary process of the *sarod*.

Western Descriptions

Pictorial representations of Indian instruments and descriptions of musical life by Western observers date from as early as the late eighteenth century. The earliest known reference to the *sarod* is an engraving and description by James Prinsep (plate #3), a chemist and engineer, dating from 1830 (Prinsep 1830). Another early drawing of a *sarod* dates from 1872, from around the time that the *sarod* first acquired the metal plate (Baden-Powell 1872, 274). This drawing (plate #4) shows an instrument in which the drum, the skin-covered portion of the instrument, is not round, but semi-circular in shape. There is a single row of taraf string pegs. The drawing shows a number of frets at the base of the neck, similar to those used on the Afghan rabab, leading some researchers to assume that the characteristic metal plate had not been fitted to the *sarod* at this time. The questions that occur here are concerned with the cultural distance between the British observer who made this drawing and the music culture he is attempting to represent. To put it another way, what does he see, or not see; which details strike his eye and get included in the depiction or accompanying description and which do not? Plate #5 shows an approximately contemporary drawing⁵ made by an Indian *sarod* player, Niamatullah Khan, as part of a manuscript in which he describes how he put a metal plate on his instrument (Khan 1908, discussed in Miner 1993). This drawing looks very similar to that of the British artist, and does not specifically indicate, on the drawing, that the fingerboard is metal. In his accompanying text, this musician indicated that he continued to tie frets to the new metal fingerboard for a number of years, until he determined they did not work well. The evidence presented in this pair of drawings raises questions as to what features may or may not have been regarded as essential to the depiction of the instrument by these two artists from very different cultures. It raises the equally important question about what interpretation a modern researcher may be led to give to the drawing, and what conclusions are drawn from that interpretation.

Museum Pieces

Basing a historical description of changes to an instrument on details that can be observed on securely dated instruments housed in reputable museum collections would seem to be one of the most sure ways of tracing the evolution of that instrument. These instruments are certainly of immense value, but they can also raise serious questions of interpretation. The *sarod* in plate #6 is on display at the Indian Museum in Calcutta. It dates to approximately 1879. Virtually identical instruments can be seen in the musical instrument collections of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the Metropolitan Museum in New York, and several other world renowned institutions. While it might seem that inclusion of these instruments in these prestigious institutions provides sufficient bona fides for drawing conclusions about the evolution of the *sarod* at that point in time, such an assumption can not necessarily be presumed a safe one. This instrument, and the others on display elsewhere, were contributed to these various museums by one of the most interesting and controversial figures in modern Indian musicology, Sourindro Mohan Tagore (1840-1914), a relation of the poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) (see Capwell 1991).

Sourindro Mohan Tagore is a fascinating figure, who was fully intimate with both the Western and the Indian world views of his time. He was accepted as a scholar throughout Europe, contributing articles to the journals of numerous learned societies. He was also a prince in a very wealthy and influential Bengali family. This man had a vision of how he wished Indian culture to be viewed and indeed appreciated by the Western intellectual establishment and, as a result of his exposure to and knowledge of both worlds, he was in a position to further his agenda. To summarize his goal in one sentence, he wished to promote the view that India had once possessed a great and ancient knowledge in all areas of the arts and sciences, and that this art had been largely lost or corrupted through foreign influence, leading to India's then present position of colonial subjugation. He viewed his mission as one of resurrecting and reestablishing the ancient knowledge and, along with it, the world's respect for India's achievements. As part of his project, Tagore wrote a musicological text, the *Yantra Kosh*, (Tagore 1976) in which he wrote derivations for the origins of all the extant classical instruments based on Sanskrit etymologies. These derivations have no support in any existing Sanskrit text, and are now assumed by most writers on Indian music to be Tagore's own invention.

As a way to provide support for his theories, Tagore had several collections of musical instruments built to his specifications and documented according to his ideas. These were then sent to the principal museums of the Western world, where they remain. As Allyn Miner wrote in her book tracing the development of the sitar and *sarod* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "One wonders at his intentions in this endeavor" (Miner 1993). While the *sarod* is not a mythical instrument, we now must assume that the particular *sarod* exhibited here is not a "real" instrument, but some kind of a display piece, designed presumably with the intention of impressing nineteenth century European sensibilities as they were conceived of by a nineteenth century Bengali. The nature and extent of the decoration on the plate and sounding board would certainly make such an instrument difficult or impossible to play. So what can this *sarod* tell us? It may still have some valuable information to contribute, but perhaps not in the details of construction that relate to musical style as such. It can tell us things about overall shape, for example, simply on the assumption that the instrument maker used existing instruments as a model for this special commission.

The next plate (#7) shows a *sarod* from the instrument collection of the National Museum in New Delhi. These instruments are crafted much as modern instruments are, without excess decoration, and show evidence of use. We can be reasonably sure that we are looking at real, working instruments, rather than display pieces. There seems little doubt that these *sarods* are quite old. They have the shape of the old instruments, and such archaic features as a single row of taraf pegs and a flat plate bolted directly to the top of the neck. Here the problem of interpretation is rather different, though the ultimate source of the difficulty is the same. These instruments and the others in the collection were contributed to the museum about ten years ago by a well-known and very wealthy patron who is also a well-known *sarod* player. This musician also subscribes to the view that the modern Indian classical instruments are of unique and ancient Indian origin, without "foreign" influence. All information regarding the provenance of these instruments was contributed by the donor and accepted without further research by the museum. One of these instruments, for example, is labeled as having its origin in early nineteenth century Bengal. Unfortunately, there simply isn't any available evidence that the *sarod* existed in anything like the forseen here in the early nineteenth century at all, let alone in Bengal.⁶ Here, then, we have

examples of functional instruments, but no data at all to provide contextual information that would be of such value in tracing the development of the *sarod*.

The Sarod of the Colonel P.T. French Collection

The next case presents an unusual situation that highlights the types of difficulties that can arise from trying to put together a coherent interpretation from the available historical material. There is a very well known description of a *sarod* found in the catalog of a musical instrument collection presented by Colonel P.T. French to the Royal Irish Academy. The catalog, written by Captain Meadows Taylor, was first published in the Proceedings of the Academy in the mid-1860s (Taylor 1965) and reprinted by the Bengali musicologist Sourindro Mohan Tagore in 1882 as part of *Hindu Music from Various Authors*, a collection of writings about Indian music by European, mostly British, authorities (Tagore 1965). This description has figured prominently in most recent publications on the history and development of stringed instruments in the Hindustani tradition (Dick 1984, 1984a; Hamilton 1989; Miner 1993; Ruckert 1993). The description is excerpted as follows:

26. *Sarungi*. 27. *Sarrooda*.

These are the ordinary violins or fiddles of India, and are played in the same manner, though differing from them in some respects, as the instruments in use with us. Of the three, No. 26 is the most commonly employed. 87 [sic], *Sarrooda*, may be called the tenor or second fiddle, and accompanies 26 in chords, played by the bow, or by hand as a guitar...

From its size, the *sarrooda* is more powerful, but more difficult of execution; and it combines the effect of a guitar, as it is sometimes played in accompaniment, and the violin. (Taylor 1965, 257-58)

A note in Volume VIII of the Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy mentions that the instrument collection was accepted by the Academy on June 22nd, 1863. Taylor's brief introduction to his set of

descriptions makes it clear that the instruments were not in playable condition when received, and that he is drawing on his recollections and his experience:

I have to regret that I have not been able to tune any of them: had this been possible, their use; and effects would have been much more readily understood than they can be by mere description; but the greater number of these instruments require steel wire strings of a quality...which is not obtainable in this city. I have therefore to depend upon descriptive detail alone, with notices of the uses to which they are put by native musicians of India, according to my own experience. (Taylor 1965, 243)

The actual instruments collected by Colonel French have recently been located. They were turned over to the National Museum of Ireland by the Royal Irish Academy in the 1890s after the museum was founded, and have been in storage in the museum since that time. The *sarod* described by Taylor can now be seen and examined (plate # 8), providing a unique opportunity to see how the published description of the instrument matches its actual characteristics. The conclusions drawn by researchers who depended on that description may need to be re-examined now that its actual characteristics are available for study.

Previous work on the early evolution of *sarod* design, for example, has included speculation that the early *sarod* may have been played with a bow as well as a plectrum, depending on the type of music being performed or other circumstances (Dick 1984). Much of this work has depended on written descriptions produced in the nineteenth century, such as the description of the French Collection *sarod* by Taylor: "accompanies [the sarangi] in chords, played by the bow, or by hand as a guitar" (257). Such a description would naturally seemed to lend credence to a supposition that a bow may have been used. It must be kept in mind, however, that Captain Meadows Taylor wrote his descriptions in Ireland, and had no direct experience with the instruments. A detailed examination of the *sarod* collected by Colonel French leads to the conclusion that this instrument was constructed in a way that would make it impossible to play with a bow. This early *sarod* was strung with a double course of gut strings on the high melody string. Such a string arrangement would make bowing very difficult. No early sarangi or related South or Central Asia bowed instrument seems to make use of a double course (Bor 1986-87). The shape of the drum and the location of the cutaways on the side of the drum also argue

against the use of a bow. Finally, the instrument is easily and comfortably held in the horizontal playing position customary for plucking a sarod, but is very awkwardly proportioned for being held in a vertical position.⁷

The Prinsep engraving mentioned above has also not been examined in earlier studies of *sarod* development. The instrument depicted by Prinsep also appears to be designed only for playing with a plectrum. It has been argued for both etymological as well as morphological reasons that the sarod and bowed instruments of South Asia have some common ancestry. Terms for bowed instruments such as the *sarinda* and the *saroz* are thought to have Persian roots similar to those presumed to underlay the name *sarod* (McNeil 1993, 159-163). The indented waist or cutaway and the use of a single block of wood are apparent morphological similarities (Bor 1986-87, 9). It would seem, however, that any connection between the *sarod* and the families of bowed instruments found in South Asia will have to be placed much further in the past than has been previously postulated.

Photos of Artists

Some of the best evidence available for tracing the development of the *sarod* comes from photographs taken in India of *sarod* players with their instruments. In such photographs we can at least see the most renowned musicians of their day with their own instruments. This can provide a basis for assigning a style of music, known to be associated with a particular musician or musical family, to a particular type of instrument construction, especially since recordings exist for at least some of these artists. Even here, however, there are potential difficulties and even pitfalls. Evidence suggests that many musicians settled on a particular instrument design and stayed with that design throughout their careers, even as the instrument continued to evolve in other hands. Fida Hussain Khan, a well known player of the early twentieth century, can be seen in a 1925 photograph holding a *sarod* that was probably unchanged from one designed and built 30 or 40 years earlier (plate #9). By this time the *sarod* being played by other artists had evolved to close to its modern form. While some artists were innovators and sought an instrument that was capable of expressing the content of the music as they conceived of it, others were traditionalists, and continued to use the style of instrument they were familiar with.

Photographs of another renowned performer, Sakhawat Hussain Khan, show him in the late 1940s (plate #10) playing a *sarod* similar in design to one he played in 1925 (plate #11). Interpreting photographs such as these therefore requires a thorough knowledge of the background of the musician and his tradition. Artists' perceptions of where they wish to position themselves within the larger tradition may influence their decisions about what type of instrument they will use. In the case of a rapidly evolving instrument such as the *sarod*, there may be significant differences between the instruments used by artists who are chronological contemporaries.

A rather different potential for distortion arose when a new generation of Western scholars arrived in India and proceeded to publish works aimed at educating the West about the ancient mysteries of Hindustani classical music. The well-known Indologist Alain Danielou published a Catalogue of Recorded Classical and Traditional Indian Music under the auspices of UNESCO (Danielou N.d.). Included are several photographs of musicians with instruments. One photograph shows the renowned musician Alauddin Khan holding a *sarod*. The *sarod* could not possibly be his own, however, because Alauddin Khan played the instrument left-handed, and in the photo he is holding a right-handed instrument upside down. In another picture, the *sarod* player Timir Baran is depicted playing the instrument dressed as a traditional Brahman, bare-chested, displaying the sacred thread. Most *sarod* players would agree that the instrument tends to stick to the body if played without a shirt or *kurta*. The photograph does contribute a certain aura to Danielou's attribution of ancient Sanskritic origins to the contemporary music described in the catalogue, a characterization he pursued in other publications on Hindustani classical music for which there is no substantial historical data.⁸

Oral Descriptions of Extant Instruments

The pair of instruments to be discussed next illustrates the more Indian side of instrument history. These instruments are both attributed to Abdullah Khan (1843-1926), a very influential figure in the development of the *sarod* in Bengal and a musical ancestor of Radhika Mohan Maitra (1917-1980), one of the most renowned *sarod* performers in the mid-twentieth century. Here we have both an extant instrument and an oral history to accompany it. The oral history is purportedly

from Radhika Mohan Maitra, as told to one of his last and youngest disciples in the last few years of his life (Das Gupta 1994). The first instrument (plate # 12) shows most of the characteristics of a late nineteenth century instrument such as semi-circular body, deep, straight sides, and a flat plate screwed directly to the top of the neck. There are some very unusual features to this sarod, however. Instead of the six large pegs usually seen in the main peg box there are eight pegs. There is also a secondary bridge by the peg box, made of a flat piece of horn typical of the type used on the sitar or tanpura to produce the buzzing sound known as *jawari*. According to Somjit Das Gupta, Abdullah Khan experimented with *sarod* design throughout his life, and this *sarod* was one of many he had built to his specifications in the course of a very long career spanning the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The innovation of the secondary bridge alone would make Abdullah Khan one of the more important figures in the history of *sarod*. There is an additional factor at work here, though. The most influential and, in most respects, final redesign of the *sarod* was done in the 1930s by Alauddin Khan, the father and teacher of Ali Akbar Khan, as discussed earlier in this article. The instrument he designed incorporates a secondary bridge and uses 8 pegs on the main peg box (see plate # 2). The presence of a presumably older *sarod* attributed to Abdullah Khan incorporating those features suggests that Abdullah Khan, or whoever produced this instrument, may have had an influence on the Alauddin Khan design, possibly by influencing the first *sarod* teacher of Alauddin Khan, Ahmad Ali Khan (1856/7-1919), to adopt the eight-peg design. This is indeed the story put forward by my sources, students descended from the teaching lineage of Abdullah Khan. The prestige of these descendants of the musical lineage of Abdullah Khan would be considerably enhanced if it were to be accepted that their ancestor had a significant influence on Alauddin Khan's work. Unfortunately, it may be difficult or impossible to unequivocally establish such a connection.

The next *sarod* to be discussed (plate # 13) has been attributed to three different *sarod* players in the line of Radhika Mohan Maitra: his teacher, Mohammed Amir Khan, his teacher's father, the already mentioned Abdullah Khan, and Abdullah Khan's adoptive father and teacher, Murad Ali Khan (see table #1). Photographic evidence exists showing Mohammed Amir Khan with this *sarod*, which implies that it must date from at least the first quarter of the twentieth century or earlier. The *sarod* itself is a remarkable instrument. It is still in use

today by an active and accomplished musician, which makes it one of the only historical instruments that can still speak for itself. Although the overall shape of the *sarod* is somewhat archaic, with straight sides and a very tall body relative to its width, this *sarod* incorporates many modern features, most significantly a metal plate which is attached by means of a flange and has some degree of curvature. This instrument is capable of great sustain, a significant improvement over older designs.⁹ Present-day descendants of Radhika Mohan Maitra attribute the *sarod* to Mohammed Amir Khan's father, Abdullah Khan. Considering how completely different this *sarod* is in basic design and craftsmanship from the *sarod* in plate #12, it would be remarkable indeed if both were designed by the same musician. Abdullah Khan did live to be over 80 years old, however, and as a musician in the employ of the prominent and wealthy regional court at Darbhanga he had access to skilled craftsmen to carry through his ideas.

More interesting to the present discussion is the apparent evolution of the history attributed to this instrument and the influence of this history on current research into the history of *sarod*. At one time this *sarod* was described as having belonged to Abdullah Khan's father, Murad Ali Khan. This would move the likely date of design for this *sarod* well back into the late nineteenth century, at the time the *sarod* began evolving to its present form. One researcher accepted this representation of the instrument's history and constructed a theory regarding twin independent origins of the *sarod* (McNeil 1983) that he incorporated into his later doctoral dissertation (McNeil 1992). At present, some 15 years later, the major representatives of the Murad Ali Khan lineage attribute the instrument to Abdullah Khan, which would make an early twentieth century date for this instrument design much more likely. In general, everyone interviewed about the instrument has become considerably more circumspect about its age and provenance than they were 15 or 20 years ago. Naturally this alteration of the history attributed to that *sarod* throws quite a bit of doubt on any theories that depend on an earlier interpretation of that history.

Conclusions

The photographs and illustrations shown here, and many others like them, may support only one truly indisputable conclusion about the evolution of the *sarod*, which is that the design of the early *sarod*

was a very fluid concept, subject to constant experimentation and revision. The boundaries of instrument design seem very wide to a modern Western outlook, and the pace of change very rapid, though there are precedents found in Euro-American music culture.¹⁰ The significant changes in *sarod* design can be specified, but it may never be possible to trace an unequivocal route through these changes and give what might be called a definitive history. There is a broader lesson for the researcher in ethnomusicology illustrated in the situations discussed above. These examples reinforce the requirement that we be very well grounded in the tradition we choose to study. We are trained to seek information about the music that interests us in its context. Our research success may depend on doing a careful analysis of context, so that we may understand the background that underlies our sources and its potential ramifications. Only in this way will we come to a sufficiently broad and open-ended understanding of how to contextualize our information. Interpretation of data, whether it comes from historical or contemporary sources, must be approached with as much knowledge as possible of the background and the motivation of the fellow humans who are our sources.

Notes

1. A version of this paper was presented to the annual meeting of the European Seminar in Ethnomusicology, held in Rotterdam in September, 1995.
2. Research included in this paper was funded in part by a grant from the American Institute of Indian Studies.
3. There are presently three major *sarod* performance traditions, tracing their musical ancestry respectively to Alauddin Khan, Ghulam Ali Khan, and Murad Ali Khan. Alauddin Khan, the father of Ali Akbar Khan, initiated the design changes incorporated into Ali Akbar Khan's instrument. Buddhadev Das Gupta, the principal representative of the Murad Ali Khan tradition, had the design of his *sarod* changed in 1959 to the Ali Akbar Khan design in order to take advantage of the improvement in tonal quality (Buddhadev Das Gupta, personal communication). Amjad Ali Khan, the descendant and principal representative of the Ghulam Ali tradition, had a *sarodf* built incorporating the design

changes seen in Ali Akbar Khan's instrument in 1969. The instruments of both Buddhadev Das Gupta and Amjad Ali Khan differ from the *sarod* of Ali Akbar Khan in string number and arrangement.

4. Transmission of knowledge or tradition directly from teacher to individual student.
5. Keramatullah Khan, the son of Niamatullah Khan, completed and published his father's manuscript in 1908. The drawing attributed to Niamatullah Khan shows the result of his design modifications made to the *sarod* between approximately 1860-1870.
6. The earliest reference to a *sarod* known to me is the 1830 drawing from Benares, which depicts an instrument with substantially different characteristics. The earliest reference to the *sarod* in Bengal is from the 1860s.
7. This observation is based on my own study of *sarod* performance, commencing in 1972.
8. See, for example, Northern Indian Music, Barrie and Rockliff, London, 1949-54.
9. Attaching the plate to the *sarod* by means of a flange, rather than directly from the top, stiffens the structure of the instrument and allows it to retain vibrational energy, improving the sustain.
10. The design of the piano underwent an extremely rapid evolution in the first half of the nineteenth century, and produced a number of highly innovative designs. The Steinway overstrung grand piano, first produced in 1885, was so successful that all other makers rapidly adopted the basic elements of that design, with only minor changes in the century since the Steinway design became the de facto standard. The *sarod* design conceived by Alauddin Khan and Ayet Ali Khan in 1934 has become a similar de facto standard, and was subsequently adopted by all major *sarod* performers by the late 1960s.

Recording Excerpts

- 1) Chunnu Khan (d. 1912) Rag Hamir, *gat* in *madhya laya tintal*

Specific listing information on this recording is unavailable. It has been identified as Chunnu Khan by various independent collectors of old instrumental recordings, and must be from a series recorded within a few years of the 1906-07 recordings. It has been chosen over one of the original series because the sound quality is slightly better, and because it is the only recording that displays something other than fast tempo performance. Slower tempo performance style underwent the greatest changes in the period between this recording and the one that follows.

- 2) Ali Akbar Khan (b. 1922) *Rag Chandranandan*, gat in vilambit tintal. Compact Disc, Signature Series, volume 1, CD9001, issued by Alam Madina Music Production, San Anselmo, CA. Originally issued as 33 1/3 disc recording: Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Master Musician of India, CS462 issued by Connoisseur Society, New York.

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Two Sarod Lineages

Allaudin Khan
(1881-1972)



Ali Akbar Khan (1922-)

Murad Ali Khan (d. 1910)



Abdullah Khan
(1843-1926)



Mohammed Amir Khan
(1876-1934)



Radhika Mohan Maitra
(1917-1980)

Table #1

Plate #1

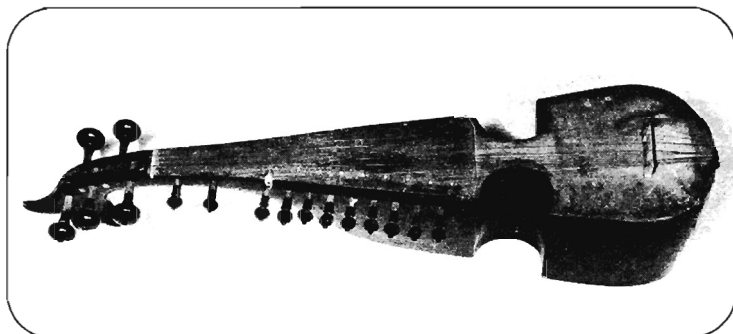


Plate #2

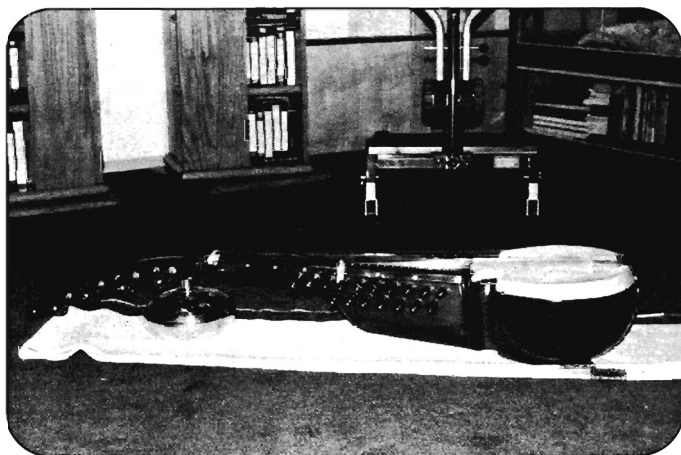


Plate #3



Plate #4

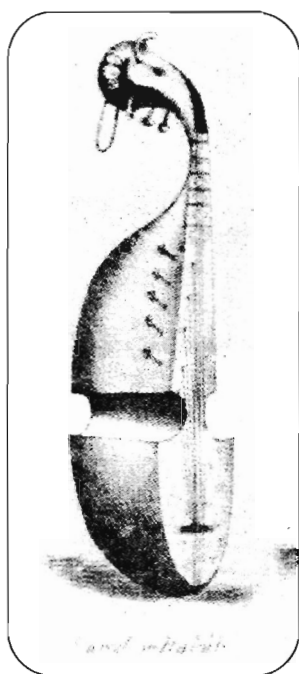


Plate #5

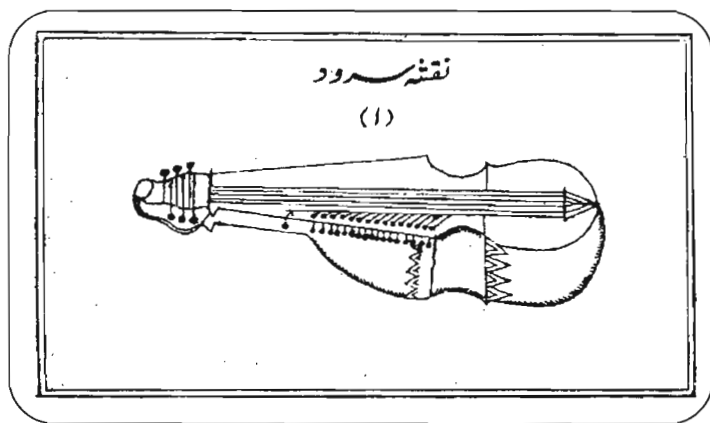


Plate #6

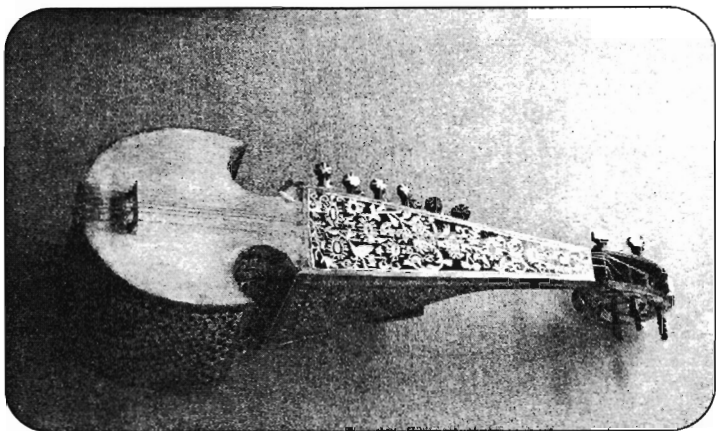


Plate #7

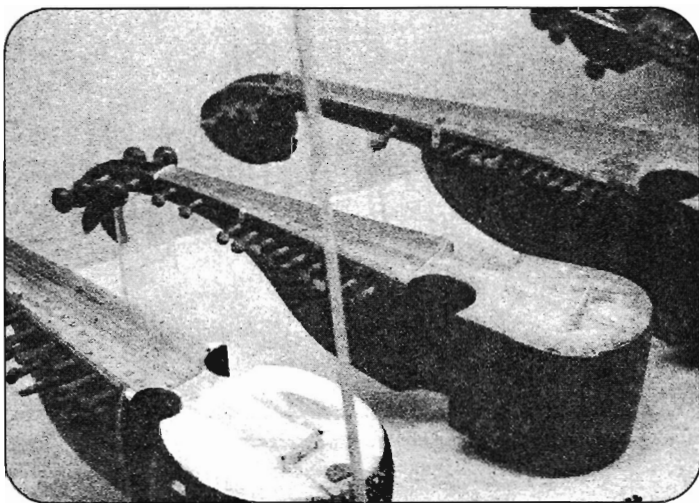


Plate #8

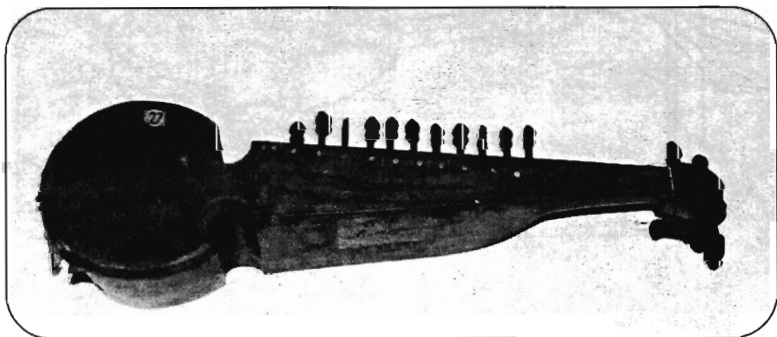


Plate #9



Plate #10



Plate #11

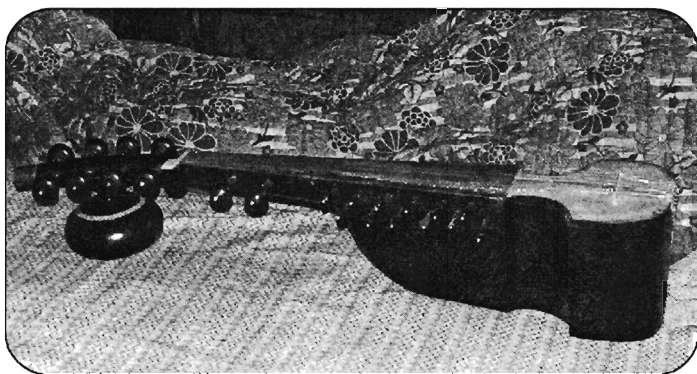
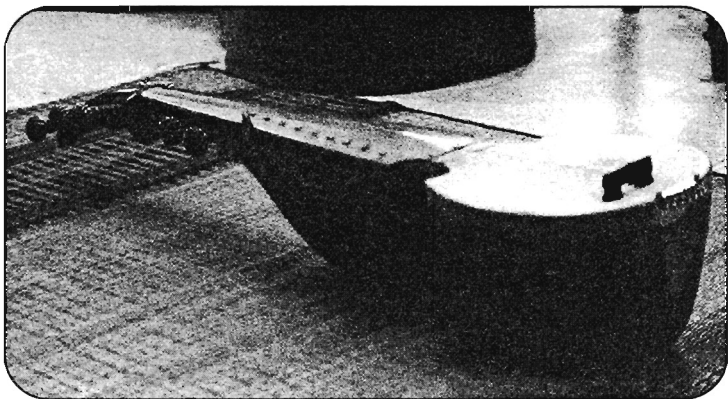


Plate #12

Plate #13



Ram's Chariot: Popular Culture, Music & The Hindu Nationalist Movement

Jeffrey Callen

In 1984, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was a minor player in Indian electoral politics with a total of two seats in the *Lok Sabha* (the 543-seat lower house of the Indian parliament). In 1991, relying on the emotional power of its pledge to build a *Ram mandir* (temple) in Ayodhya on a site then occupied by a mosque, its representation in the *Lok Sabha* grew to 118 seats. The BJP's electoral success in 1989 moved into the political mainstream a social and political movement that had existed on the margins of Indian society since the 1920s when V.D. Savarkar codified Hindu nationalist ideology into what he termed "*Hindutva*." Central to *Hindutva* ideology is the belief that Hinduism is not solely a religion, but the very foundation of Indian civilization and culture. Fundamental to *Hindutva* ideology is the assertion that India, despite influences from other cultures, is an inalterably Hindu culture. The ultimate goal of the *Hindutva* movement is the establishment of a Hindu social order in India (Patnaik 1996, 252-267; Malik 1994, 9-13).

In the 1998 elections, the BJP captured the most seats in the *Lok Sabha* of any single party and now heads the coalition government currently ruling India. The BJP's electoral success has depended upon a skillful use of cultural symbols presented in contexts that vary from traditional Hindu rituals to the Internet. The BJP and its Hindu nationalist allies have adeptly combined elements from traditional Hindu culture, contemporary popular culture, and modern technology to craft a message that has found a powerful response among a large portion of the Indian population. The skillful blending of these elements can be seen in the use the Hindu nationalist movement has made of music in its organizing efforts.

The message of the Hindu nationalist movement has been delivered to the Indian public framed in musical genres that range from Hindu devotional music to hip-hop. These various forms of music have served a variety of functions for the Hindu nationalist movement, some of which have remained constant and some of which have been tailored to particular campaigns. These uses can be broken down into three discrete areas: (1) as a tool for redefinition, (2) as a tool with which to claim public space (both physically and metaphorically), and (3) as an

agent of socialization. As a tool for redefinition, music has been used to present a particular version of Hindu identity, culture, and history. The Hindu nationalists have also used music to bolster their efforts to claim public space, both by its use in mass events to claim actual physical (including aural) space and as a part of their efforts to change the base of public discourse (metaphorical space). Music has also acted as a powerful agent in the process of socialization to help create a collective identity for the Hindu nationalist movement and personal identities for individuals within it.¹

I

Redefinition — A New Hindu

An integral part of the Hindutva movement is a looking back to an invented Hindu past.² This invented history contains three central elements: belief in the ancient rule of India by Ram, an incarnation of the god Vishnu; the primacy of soldier *sadhus* (ascetics) and saints in the Hindu struggle for independence; and the constant opposition to Hindu unity by an ideological Other, usually Muslims. This history has been integral to Hindutva organizing efforts and been presented to the Indian public by a skillful use of rhetoric (both written and oral), visual, imagery, and music.

The Ram Janmbhoomi Campaign and the Redefinition of Ram

Throughout its history, Ram has been the central symbol of the Hindutva movement. The belief in the ancient rule of India by the god Ram in a utopian political and social order (*Ram-rajya*) is at the core of Hindutva beliefs and imagery. This is despite the fact that, as Philip Lutgendorf has pointed out, no important version of the *Ramayana* (epic tale of the life of Ram) uses more than a few lines of verse to describe the *Ram-rajya*. Valmiki's *Ramayana* offers a typical depiction:

Everyone was devoted to his duty
According to class and stage of life,
And Ever following the Vedic path
Was happy and free from fear, sorrow, disease.
(quoted in Lutgendorf 1995:262)

The various versions of the *Ramayana* do not offer a collection of maxims or laws; Ram's presence on the throne is the defining characteristic of the Ram-rajya. The state of grace his people live under is an extension of his personality and behavior (Lutgendorf 1995, 255-256). In *The Hindu Nationalist Movement*, Christophe Jafferlot's offers the interpretation that this image of Ram served as a symbol for the unity of Hindus of diverse beliefs and religious practices within an all-encompassing Hinduism: a unit personified by Ram (Jafferlot 1996, 390).

Up until the 1980s, the Hindutva movement presented the traditional image of Ram as a tolerant, compassionate ruler.³ When coercive force was needed, it was supplied by Hanuman, the monkey general who aids Ram in the *Ramayana*. (Jafferlot 1996, 35-36, 389-390). The oldest Hindutva organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS—Association of National Volunteers), founded in 1925, dedicated itself to this role. Local units of the RSS generally include a temple to Hanuman and stress training in wrestling and weight lifting (Hanuman's physical skills) and loyalty (Hanuman's greatest virtue). When initiated into the RSS, new members pledge "their whole body, heart, and money" to the RSS in front of an effigy of Hanuman (ibid., 35-37).

In 1986, the Vishnu Hindu Parishad (VHP—World Hindu Council), an offshoot of the RSS, initiated the *Ram Janmbhoomi* (birthplace of Ram) campaign. The goal of this campaign was to build a Ram *mandir* (temple) on a site in Ayodhya they claimed was the birthplace of Ram; a site then occupied by a mosque.⁴ During this campaign, the VHP premiered a new image of Ram that incorporated feature that had previously attributed to Hanuman. The "new" Ram was depicted as more muscular and with a sterner countenance than the traditional image. He was usually shown drawing his bow, often alongside an image of the temple the VHP was planning to build in Ayodhya. In 1989, the BJP joined the *Ram Janmbhoomi* campaign and made the promise to build the *mandir* a centerpiece of its electoral campaign that same year. This promise coupled with an opposition to government corruption and a promise to end the government's alleged "appeasemen" of the Muslim minority⁵ led the BJP to its first significant electoral victories.

The presentation of the "new" Ram was an important tool in both the *Ram Janmbhoomi* and BJP electoral campaigns. This image was presented in Hindutva rhetoric and in a variety of cultural mediums,

most importantly visual images and music. Beginning in 1989, audio-cassettes featuring inflammatory speeches by VHP and BJP leaders intermixed with up-tempo songs played a prominent role in the intertwined *Ram Janmbhoom*—BJP electoral campaigns. Four of the tapes that appeared in 1990 were considered so inflammatory that they were officially banned within weeks of their first use. Despite this, they continued to have wide clandestine circulation and were used by the BJP as recently as 1993 in district elections. One of these four tapes, entitled *Mandir ka nirman karo* (Build the Temple), features speeches interspersed with a recurring up-tempo theme song sung by film singer Narender Chancal. The lyrics of the theme song draw heavily upon the images of the “new” Ram and of Hindu subjugation.

The time has come, wake up, young men and go to Lucknow
 You must vow to build Ram's temple
 The conches sound, Ram's forces are standing ready for battle
 Gandiv (Arjuna's bow) is twanging, his conch calls
 Whoever joins with the wicked, smash their dreams
 Turn the political dice and blast their policies
 Advance in the battlefield of politics and hit hard
 To compare Ram with the wicked is beyond disrespect
 Destroying his temple is the limit of madness
 Don't play their farcical game of acting in a courtroom
 Liberate the janmbhoomi of the jewel of the house of Raghukul
 If they don't heed with words, whip out your swords
 Face our enemies with courage
 Now isn't the time for contemplation.
 (Manuel 1993, 252-253)

The use of images such as those presented in this song amplified the message of VHP and RSS publications in which Hindus were described as passive and unprepared to meet the challenges facing them. Hindus were told to identify with Ram in order to gain strength and power, and to overcome their “inferiority” complex, which had caused them to “run away” from injustices. The re-identification of Ram was consciously intended to create a new kind of aggressive political Hinduism which the RSS itself has represented as the “Angry Hindu” (Jafferlot 1996, 391).

The symbolic battlefield set by *Mandir ka nirman karo* was amplified by speakers who presented similar “Angry Hindu” arguments framed in opposition to a Muslim threat:

Some say we're trying to make this into a Hindu nation. I say it already is a Hindu nation in 1947, when Partition happened, it was settled that Pakistan would be Muslim, and India would be Hindu . . . Now Muslims with swords in their hands are driving the Hindus out of Kashmir; would this be tolerated in any country? . . . The temple will be built, there's no need for further discussion. That decision has been made. We will build it, whether with force or love. (ibid., 253)

Despite their official banning, Peter Manuel states that some journalists reported that those four tapes were among the hottest selling tapes in 1990. Other less inflammatory tapes produced during the *Ram Janmbhoomi* campaign continued to be marketed openly in cassette stores. The tapes distributed by the Hindutva movement are regarded as having played a direct roles in instigating the waves of anti-Muslim violence that have periodically swept across North India since 1989 and resulted in the loss of thousands of lives (mostly Muslim) (ibid., 254; Manuel 1996, 133).

The reception by the public of Ram, in his new image as an "avenging deity," as a pan-Indian symbol was aided by the tremendous popularity of the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* television mega-series on Doordashan (Indian national television). A number of scholars have concluded that, though consciously written in a non-communal manner, these mega-series "nurtured the collective imagination with elements" that worked toward constructing a "national" Hindu identity (DeValle 1995, 317; Farmer 1996, 102) and presented a new image of Ram as an avenging deity (Manuel 1995, 130; Farmer 1996, 103). In a 1991 issue of the *Times of India*, commentator Anuradha Kapur went so far as to conclude that the mega-series were the source of the angry, aggressive image of Ram that the VHP began to present at the same time (quoted in Farmer 1995, 103). Whatever the source of the "new" Ram, the media savvy of the players in the Hindutva movement cannot be overlooked. They have been very aware of the salability of Ram's image. In *The Politics of Ayodhya & Hindu-Muslim Relations*, K.R. Malkani, a BJP vice-president and primary member of its intellectual establishment, favorably offers the following quote from a freelance journalist:

Unlike Krishna who is primarily a northerner, Ram is pan-Indian and transcends the north-south divide...The packaging of Ram is a master stroke...In short, Ram is the "national genius."

(Malkani 1993, 59)

The Doordashan mega-serials presented the Hindu nationalists with material that they eagerly appropriated for their own uses. Beginning with the 1991 elections, BJP activists decorated Toyota vans to resemble Ram's chariot as portrayed in the Mahabharata television series and drove these video *rath's* (chariots) throughout the countryside in northern India in order to play political videos. They received an overwhelmingly positive response and, the BJP increased the number of video *rath's* in subsequent elections.

The Hindutva movement has freely drawn upon Indian popular culture for resources to use in its organizing efforts. The music used on the audiocassettes since 1989 has drawn upon a variety of musical styles, including film songs (such as "Mandir ka nirman karo") hip-hop, and "bhajans" (Hindu devotional songs). Bhajans emerged as a commercially popular musical genre at the beginning of the 1980s.⁶ The Hindutva movement has produced a large number of tapes of politicized bhajans. One example was Narender Chanchal's *Le Ram ka nam* that included *bhajans* with lyrics such as, "We'll bring back the Ram-Rajya, let the *nagara* (kettle drum) and *dhol* (barrel drum) ring, "Jai Shri Ram" (ibid., 133). The infusion of such overt political messages into *bhajans* and their incorporation into the *Ram Janmbhoomi* campaign was a facet of the Hindutva redefinition of Hinduism. It was in some sense a claiming of territory. The Hindutva movement was claiming, as strictly Hindu, a musical genre that had traditionally been performed by both Hindu and Muslim musicians. There is an unintentional irony in the reference to the drums in *Mandir ka nirman karo*. The *nagara* is of Middle Eastern origin and the *dhol* is probably of Persian origin. The use of devotional music by the Hindutva organizations was particularly important in relation to another facet of its invented history: the primary role of soldier *sadhus* and saints in the continuing struggle of Indian Hindus for liberation from Muslim oppression.

Soldier Sadhus and the Muslim Enemy

Hindutva organizations have relied heavily upon the participation of *sadhus* (ascetics) and saints in their campaigns. They have presented a romantic, and largely fanciful, history of the role soldier *sadhus* played in defending India from foreign, particularly Muslim, domi-

nation. A powerful martial tradition did exist within Indian monasticism but the orders of soldier *sadhus* usually participated in battles not as fighters for Hindu freedom, but as paid mercenaries or in struggles with other orders for control of religious festivals or lucrative trade routes (Pinch 1995, 140-142). The image of the soldier *sadhu* meshed perfectly with the VHP's campaign to "capture" the birthplace of Ram. The association of the *sadhu* image with the struggle to capture Ram's birthplace pre-dates the *Ram Janmbhoomi* campaign of the 1980s. In 1976, a *sadhu* who sang "non-stop" *kirtans* (Hindu devotional songs) just outside the contested mosque in Ayodhya published a pamphlet describing a history of struggle between Muslims and Hindu soldier monks for the site (ibid., 143-144).

Much of the invented history of the soldier *sadhus* can be traced to the novels of Bengali writer Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay who is generally regarded as the originator of the Indian novel. In *Anandamath* (Abbey of Bliss) written in 1882, Bankim presented a tale of wandering soldier *sadhus* fighting for the liberation of "Mother" India from Muslim rule. The soldier monks in *Anandamath* sing a hymn to Mother India entitled "Bande Mataram." This hymn was later put to music and became the unofficial anthem of the freedom movement. At the time of independence, it was advocated by many as an anthem for the new nation but rejected because of Muslim opposition. Since 1947, its primary use has been by the Hindutva movement (ibid., 146-147). *Bande Mataram* is commonly sung at rallies and its adoption as the national anthem is a part of the BJP's electoral program.⁷

II

The Battle For Public Space — The BJP Takes Center Stage

The battle to claim public space has been an integral part of numerous modern social and political movements, as disparate as the American Civil Rights Movement and post-World War I Italian fascism.⁸ Music has often been a part of this effort. The Hindu nationalist movement has prominently featured music in its battle to claim public space, both physical and aural. Music is prominently featured during

BJP and VHP rallies and processions. Speakers set up in supporters' shops, homes, and cars broadcast Hindutva audiocassettes of speeches and music. Through their campaigns in the later 1980s and early 1990s, the BJP and VHP made themselves a major presence in communities throughout northern India, using music as a prime tool in taking over large sections of public space. A direct effect of their frequent appropriation of public space, both physically and through a skillful use of print and audio/visual media, was to shift the base of political discussion in India.⁹ By the late 1980s, Hindutva organizations, particularly the BJP, were no longer categorically discounted as fringe groups. They had become influential and powerful players in Indian life whose messages had to be acknowledged and discussed.

Inflammatory Hindutva audiotapes of the type discussed above were commonly heard throughout northern India beginning in 1989. The message sent out by the recorded speeches and music set the foundation for what Susana DeValle called an orchestrated *theater of terror* directed at the Muslim population. DeValle feels that this campaign had a clear objective: to create a persistent feeling of terror among the Muslims, leaving them feeling humiliated by and subordinated to the Hindu majority. The "irrationality" of crowd behavior that led to attacks on Muslim populations was usually due to planned provocation (DeValle 1995, 315-317). One standard technique was for a heavily armed Hindu procession to march through a Muslim neighborhood chanting communal slogans. Another was for a Hindu procession to pause in front of a mosque at prayer time and noisily render a Ram *bhajan*. In both scenarios, inevitably a scuffle would ensue, followed by a rampage by the well-armed Hindus. In Agra, police seized an audiotape of screamed slogans that had been played from passing car stereos during the night and incited violence between Hindus and Muslims. The tape began with "Allah-ho-Akbar" (Allah, the Greatest) followed by "Jai Shri Ram" (Praise to Ram), then "bachao-bachao" (help, help) and "maaro-maaro" (kill, kill). Incidents were reported throughout northern India involving similar tapes (or copies of the same tape) and others that featured gunshots and screams (ibid., 316-317; Manuel 1996, 133).

After the BJP suffered a reversal in the 1993 elections, it decided upon a new strategy that downplayed ethnic-religious concerns and focused on the economic and social issues that were preoccupying the electorate. Since then, the BJP has publicly distanced itself from its more ideologically strident allies, the RSS and VHP, and attempted to

present an image of moderation. However, it has not refuted its commitment to Hindu nationalism¹⁰ (Jafferlot 1996, 538). Acts of provocation and confrontation have decreased but the BJP continues to benefit from its appropriation of public space and its Hindutva allies in earlier campaigns. It has followed a model successfully used by fascist parties in Europe and South America. This model consists of two discrete stages: (1) acts of real and psychological terror are used to move the party to center stage in the political debate of the country, and then (2) an image of moderation is presented in order to consolidate the gains and appropriate control.

During the 1988 electoral campaign the BJP sensed a real possibility of gaining power and tried to project an image of maturity and moderation. Their speeches and campaign songs no longer relied upon images of Ram or the Muslim threat. The main message they presented was the honesty and integrity of the BJP, the one party able to save the country from its economic problems and the rampant corruption plaguing it. Three songs taken from the election coverage of the Indian electronic news journal *Rediff on the Net* (<http://www.rediff.com>) are indicative of the BJP's new mainstream approach. Its *Rock 'n' Poll* webpage includes audio clips of three songs prominently used by the BJP in the 1998 electoral campaign. They are all parodies of recent popular songs, the original lyrics replaced by new lyrics. This is the common practice in Indian political campaigns and a common practice in Indian music in general.¹¹

The first song, "Phir Se Jeete Karmal Hamara" (May Our Lotus Win Again),¹² is a parody of a song from the film *Jorduwa* (Twins). It promises that no matter how much they are pressured, the BJP will not become corrupt. To adapt the original film song for use as a campaign song, a male vocalist is added who repeats the lines sung by the female vocalist, presumably to make the message clearer to listeners. The second song "BJP Balle Balle" is a parody of a Punjabi hip-hop song that was a dance hit. In conversations with Indian students, I was told that Balle Balle is best translated as "raise the roof" and is a phrase you will hear shouted from enthusiastic crowds in Punjabi dance clubs. The double meaning presented by the similar sounding Hindi "Bhalle Bhalle," which means goodness/honor, is used to amplify the anti-corruption message of the song. The students told me that the essence of what the BJP is saying in this song is (to put it in American slang) "we're the bomb" and we are going to save the day. The third song appears to be from an audiocassette because the short song,

"Bhajpa Lami Hai" (BJP Has to Bring), is preceded by a spoken introduction and then followed by a spoken introduction to another song. "Bhajpa Lami Hai" is a parody of the title song of the most popular Indian film of 1997, *Dil to Pagal Hai* (My Heart is Crazy). Its message is that the BJP is the sort of party that makes everything better: it educates the country, improves relationships between people, etc.¹³

Despite the skepticism of much of the Indian press, the electoral strategy of the BJP worked. The BJP has successfully presented a positive image and played down its reliance on a communal appeal. What cannot be forgotten is that the stage for this triumph was carefully set by the prior Hindutva campaigns, which relied upon messages of Hindu subjugation and the Muslim threat.

III

The Use Of Music In Forming Hindutva Identity

The Hindutva movement has used music as a powerful tool in the process of socializing its members. Music has helped create a collective identity for the movement and personal identities for individuals within it. Through this process, individuals come to identify themselves with the movement and move to higher levels of involvement, commitment and activism (Lahusen 1996, 15-16).

Hindutva political and social messages are disseminated through music used in the public events of its organizations and everyday broadcasts in communities by Hindutva supporters. For many listeners, the music sparks an interest in the message. For some, the movement's songs become an emblem of identity and belonging. From that point, some people move on to a level of greater involvement and may become members of one or another Hindutva organization. Once they are part of the family, music is used as part of the glue that holds the movement together.

Bankim's hymn "Bande Mataram" (from his novel *Anandamath*) which has served an important socializing function for the RSS. Founded in 1925, the RSS modeled itself after the tight-knit cadre organization used by the freedom fighters in *Anandamath*. In each local unit of the RSS, a guru instructs the initiates in physical and spiritual discipline (Jafferlot 1996, 146). "Bande Mataram" is an important part

of their daily practice: each training session is concluded with the singing of "Bande Mataram" in its entirety. The hymn is thought to embody the undivided, pre-partition *Bharatmata* (Mother India) and anabridgement amounts to a "symbolic mutilation of the sacred body" (Sarkar 1995, 162-163). Members of other Hindutva organizations also use the hymn as a symbol of identity. One of the BJP's stated objectives is to establish the "Bande Mataram" as the national anthem. The BJP followed through on this pledge on the district level when it came into power in Delhi, making the singing of the hymn compulsory in Delhi State schools. The BJP's official webpage (<http://www.bjp.org>) prominently features *Bande Mataram* offering an audio clip of an abbreviated portion of the hymn and links to the *FreeIndia* website (a Hindutva news journal—<http://www.freeindia.org>) that offers a Hindutva history of the hymn and its rejection as the Indian national anthem. The version of *Bande Mataram* offered by the BJP offers only the first section of the hymn.

I bow to thee, Mother, richly-watered, richly-fruited
cool, with the winds of the south,
dark, with the crops of the harvests, the Mother!
her nights rejoicing in the glory of the moonlight,
her land clothed beautifully with her trees in flowering bloom,
sweet of laughter, sweet of speech, the Mother
give of boons, giver of bliss! (English translation by Sri Aurobindo)

After this evocation of a bountiful motherland, the hymn presents a tale of a peaceful land that is deprived of its power by an angry and destructive force. The hymn concludes with a reiteration of the original sense of bounty and an exhortation that the children of the motherland enrich her strength with their own (Sarkar 1995, 172-173). "Bande Mataram" was widely used in the anti-colonial movement as a metaphor for the struggle against the British. The RSS, which did not involve itself in the national struggle, viewed the hymn differently: as a metaphor for the Hindu struggle against Muslim domination. Tanika Sarkar interprets "Bande Mataram" as presenting the imaginative resources of a violent political agenda while at the same time laying claim to gentle and peaceful images. This parallels the use the BJP and VHP have made of the image of the "new" Ram.

Another example of a song seeking to create a collective

identity for the Hindutva movement is the "BJP Theme Song", which is included in its entirety in an audio clip in the BJP website. Two distinguishing features of this song are its resemblance to older style Indian film songs and its use of Sanskritized Hindi. The song identifies the BJP as the "peoples' party," then presents an array of religious based images. For example, the BJP is presented as the "fire of Mother India."¹⁴

IV

Modern mediums of popular culture are powerful conveyors of information and influence that are used by political and social movements throughout the world. They are ideal tools with which to move people to action; to intimidate and harass others; to redefine situations and identities; and to lay claim to real and metaphorical space. The Hindutva movement has made adept use of modern media, including forms that were just beginning to emerge in India during the 1980s such as cable television and the Internet. This use of media was foreshadowed by the experiences of several prior movements. One in particular, the anti-Shah movement in Iran during the 1970s, shared both its sophisticated use of emerging technology and, perhaps surprisingly, a fundamental point of philosophical agreement.

For fifteen years, fundamentalist clergy in Iran put modern technology to use to keep the opposition to the Shah in touch with its leader, the Ayatollah Khomeini, who was then in exile in France. Primary to this effort were two technological developments new to Iran: the direct dial telephone system and the audiocassette. Daily telephone messages from Khomeini were recorded onto audiocassettes, copied, and disseminated to supporters throughout Iran (Couch 1996, xi).

The anti-Shah and Hindutva movements share an intellectual undercurrent: a rejection of the separation between public and private (secular and sacred) that is fundamental to modern liberalism. This philosophical underpinning may offer some explanation as to why the same organizing method was effective for these two movements. Both movements stake claim to the primary identity of their country's citizens. Their quest for an integration of their citizen's fractured selves into a "whole" Hindu or Muslim found clear expression in their use of the mediums of popular culture.

The Hindutva movement is a prime case study of how social and political movements use popular culture. Its message of change was

presented to the Indian public in a skillfully crafted combination of cultural material that included religious imagery, song texts and musical genres ranging from devotional “bhajans” to hip hop. The extent to which specific images were thrust to the fore and then withdrawn or changed in tone speaks to the movement’s level of sophistication in using multiple elements of popular culture to promote its social and political goals. The shifting content of the music — from aggressive confrontation to pledges of maturity and moderation — that the Hindutva movement used highlights the adeptness with which it tailored cultural material to its needs. The movement’s level of sophistication in framing its message was matched by the adept manner in which it delivered its message, combining the traditional organizing tools of Indian political campaigns (such as political speeches and rallies) with newly emerging technologies (such as cassette recordings and the Internet).

Addendum

Since gaining political power in India, the Hindutva movement has continued its use of popular culture. When the government fell upon difficult times in mid-1998, it quickly turned to the cultural front to rally support. In May 1998, the Indian government conducted five atomic arms tests, which were greeted with widespread, enthusiastic support in India but resulted in the imposition of international trade sanctions on India. The sanctions did little to dampen the public’s enthusiastic support of the testing and the BJP led government. However, within a few short months, political unrest in the country had grown in response to the soaring prices and crippling strikes that accompanied the nation’s worsening economy. One response of the BJP to this political crisis was to commission a music video celebrating the still widely popular atomic tests (Fineman 1998, A12). The six-minute music video, *Hum Hain Indian* (We Are Indians), performed by a collection of artists, presents the story of an Indian soldier who returns to universal celebration in his village after the tests. The BJP’s top officials in the state of Maharashtra released the video in Bombay (center of the Indian film industry) in July 1998 as a tribute to its Prime Minister’s “unwavering leadership.”¹⁵ The video in Hindi opens to the boom of five nuclear blasts followed by lyrics celebrating an aggressive national pride reminiscent of many of the songs the BJP had used in earlier campaigns:

Every heartbeat is singing,
 'Do not threaten us!'
 Every heartbeat is singing
 'We are afraid of no one!'
 We now have tested a new power
 Our heads are high, our minds full of courage
 (ibid.:A12).

Notes

1. This discussion draws heavily upon Christian Lahusen's presentation of political mobilization as a process based on three levels of directed action: information, persuasion, socialization (Lahusen 1996).
2. This has included a rewriting of the relatively recent past. Hindu nationalists maintain that only Hindus sacrificed themselves in the anti-colonial struggle and attempt to erase from the collective memory instances where the Hindu elite collaborated with the British colonials (De Valle 1995, 314).
3. This was consistent with the practice of many Ram devotees of making images of the vulnerable and innocent child Ram the focus of their devotional practices. (Jafferlot 1996, 388)
4. No historical evidence exists for the identification of present-day Ayodhya as the site of Ram's birthplace. Its assertion as a fact is based on invented evidence or faith can be considered another facet of Hindutva's invented history. (Jafferlot 1996, 401-403)
5. The BJP claimed that this policy of appeasement included the special status given Kashmir, the only Muslim majority state, and the precedence given to Islamic law over national law in certain circumstances (see Ludden 1996, 50 and Mihir Meghani's 1998 article "Hindutva: The Great Nationalist Ideology" which is posted on a website linked to the official BJP website).
6. In *Cassette Culture*, Peter Manuel explains how the emergence of a commercial cassette recording industry in India in the late 1970s helped bring about changes in the nature of Indian popular music.

Among the significant changes was a loss of the overriding dominance of Indian film music over other types of music and a gain in the popularity of regional and devotional music (Manuel 1993).

7. In a chapter in David Ludden's *Contesting the Nation*, Tanika Sarkar presents a detailed analysis of "Bande Mataram" and how its power lies in its ability to simultaneously lay claim to a violent political agenda and gentle, peaceful images (Sarkar 1995).
8. Mabel Berezin's *Making the Fascist Self* presents a thoughtful examination of how the Italian fascist movement consciously used public spectacles to build its political support (Berezin 1997).
9. Victoria Farmer points out how Hindutva organizations have skillfully manipulated large segments of the Indian press. Some Hindu priests and leaders of religious organizations allied with the Hindutva movement have gained direct access to the press by signing on as freelance correspondents for Hindi newspapers (Farmer 1995, 110). The BJP has also used the new cable television networks to spread its message. They have offered their tapes to cable operators who have either willingly showed them or done so because of fear of retaliation (ibid., 112-113).
10. Commentators in the Indian press have questioned whether this was merely a ploy by the BJP. See "Is It Real?" cover story in the 2/9/98 issue of the electronic version of the *India Today* magazine.
11. Parody is a consistent and accepted practice in Indian musical culture. See, "The Politics of Parody," Chapter 7 of Peter Manuel's *Cassette Culture* (1993, 131-152) and Marcus 1993 and 1995. Parody is also a common device used in political campaigns in many countries. In the United States, the practice dates back at least to Abraham Lincoln 1864 campaign for the presidency that used parodies of the then popular songs "Yankee Doodle" and "Rally round the Flag." (samples from Carl. E and Amelia Door Collection of Syracuse University Library at (<http://www.soling.syr.edu/library/exhib/lincoln/songster/index.html>))

12. The lotus is the symbol of the BJP.
13. The analysis of these songs is based on conversations with Professors Scott Marcus, David White & Corrine Boyle of U.C. Santa Barbara and the members of Ms. Boyle's Hindi class.
14. My understanding of the lyrics of this song are based on translations by members of Corrine Boyle's Hindi class at U.C. Santa Barbara.
15. The video debuted on all of India's music channels and was slated to air regularly on most of them for several weeks (Fineman 1998, A12). The song was also released as an audio cassette on the Shasha Music label and can be ordered from the Rediff on the Net, "Music Shop" website for 38 rupees (http://www.rediff.co.in/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/execmacro/music_detaildisp.d2w/output?product_id=21504).

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Other Resources

BJP Party Home Page (<http://www.bjp.org>)

FreeIndia Website (<http://www.freeindia.org>)

Rediff on the Net. "Rock 'n' Poll."

(<http://www.rediff.com/topten.ttelect.htm>)

_____. "Music Shop." (http://www.rediff.co.in/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/execmacro/music_detaildisp.d2w/output?product_id=21504)

Thinking Gender: Feminisms, Epistemologies, and Ethnomusicology

V. Patricia Truchly

Ethnomusicologists struggle with epistemological issues in their quest to verify truths about music from cross-cultural perspectives. But they continue to work within the boundaries of certain frames of reference that serve to structure their research projects and govern the writing of their ethnographic texts. For scholars who attempt a feminist ethnomusicology, the challenges of the feminist movement and its corresponding theories have further complicated the epistemological question. Feminism is a political and discursive practice that struggles to end sexist oppression. It is also necessarily a struggle to eradicate ideologies of domination that permeate cultures in terms of race, class, and sexuality. There are many different kinds of feminisms, and some have developed over time in response to the hegemonic dominance of white feminisms. Despite their many differences, feminists share the political goal to combat and contest gender oppression. "Masculine" and "feminine" are always categories within every class, race, and culture. Women's and men's experiences, desires, and interests differ in accordance with these same categories. The range and scope of such multiple identities are a rich source of insight for feminist inquiry, and they can inform ethnomusicology as well. Feminist scholarship has always had the ambition to transcend disciplinary boundaries, and this flexibility also has potential for ethnomusicology. Feminist projects often begin with the acknowledgment that every account produced by human beings cannot help being fully political. Scholarly practices in ethnomusicology are also inscribed in relations of power, and so my project is to map, as it were, feminist social science theory onto ethnomusicological inquiry.

In the first half of my discussion, I shall consider different epistemologies as the justificatory strategies behind our research projects. There are several different ways in which feminist scholars can justify their projects and introduce a feminist mode of critique into ethnomusicology. For example, they could draw on Brian Fay's multicultural philosophy of social science and his corresponding notion of "interactionism". Other helpful theories or conceptual frameworks include feminist standpoint theory (Harding 1987 and 1991; Hartsock 1983; Hill Collins 1991); poststructuralist thought (Weedon 1997); and 20th century

hermeneutics (Gadamer 1976, 1991; Ricoeur 1991, 1995). I will briefly outline each of these approaches in the first part of my discussion. The second half of my discussion addresses methodological issues in terms of outlining a theory and analysis of how feminist research may actually proceed. For this section, I will draw upon the work of sociologists Judith Cook and Mary Fonow (1990, 1995). They delineate five intriguing principles for feminist research in the social sciences. Feminist ethnomusicologists might find these principles useful in their own fieldwork projects. In conjunction with the strategies or conceptual frameworks that have already been mentioned, feminist ethnomusicologists should be able to apply new modes of thought toward ethnomusicological inquiry and create feminist ethnographies of music that are fluid, dynamic, and counter-hegemonic.

During the past five decades, ethnomusicologists have been both challenged and limited by the metaphor of the "etic" and the "emic," or the insider and the outsider perspectives within a particular music culture. Although the metaphor harbors some degree of truth, it is also fraught with contradictions. Ethnomusicologist Timothy Rice addresses these limitations in his article "Toward a Mediation of Field Methods and Field Experience in Ethnomusicology" (1997). Maintaining that ethnomusicologists "believe in fieldwork," Rice calls for a re-ordering of insider-outsider perspectives based within a new ontology. In Rice's schema, both the researcher and the researched selves qualify as potentially interchangeable and as capable of change through the dialogues that typify the fieldwork experience. His adamant rejection of the idea that we are forever doomed to a partial understanding permits him to account for the dialogical relationships that develop during the fieldwork process in terms of language, dance, and music. Rice's work sets the stage for the introduction of feminist epistemologies or feminist knowledge production in ethnomusicology. It outlines the problem of representation that lies at the heart of many feminist debates.

Many feminist scholars are motivated by the drive to dismantle remnants of imperialism in ethnographic work. But the cultural critic bell hooks warns that: "participants in contemporary discussions of culture highlighting difference and otherness who have not interrogated their perspectives, the location from which they write in a culture of domination, can easily make of this potentially radical discipline a new ethnographic terrain, a field of study where old practices are simultaneously critiqued, re-enacted, and sustained" (hooks 1992:125). With this danger in mind, how can we integrate feminist methods and

approaches into ethnomusicology? How might we reconstruct the self-understanding of our subjects and provide a critical account of the racist, classist, sexist systems which affect their lives?

One starting point is to acknowledge that we cannot be value-neutral researchers. Instead, we might try to become aware of the strengths and limitations of the conceptual frameworks that guide our research projects. Poststructuralism holds that meaning is always open; that language is the sphere where social organization and its political consequences are defined and contested. It maintains that language is the site where our subjectivity is constituted; that discursive practices create subjects which lead us to misrecognize ourselves in language; and that the subject is contradictory, fragmented, fragile, and always in progress. Power, according to poststructuralism, is exercised through various types of institutional and bodily disciplines. Clearly poststructuralism is a powerful strategy for dismantling insider and outsider dichotomies by virtue of its sophisticated analyses of social power and identity.

Another helpful approach for feminist scholars is standpoint theory. Feminist standpoint theory advocates placing the perspectives of marginalized groups as our starting point in the research process. It allows us to access distinctive resources that have gone unnoticed by non-feminist researchers. Many claim that starting our projects from the lives of those who have been oppressed or neglected results in empirically more accurate descriptions and theoretically richer explanations. The early origin of feminist standpoint theory "originates in Hegel's insight into the relationship between the master and the slave and the development of Hegel's perceptions into the 'proletarian standpoint' by Marx, Engels, and Georg Lukacs. The assertion is that human activity, or 'material life,' not only structures but sets limits on human understanding: what we do shapes and constrains what we know" (Harding 1991:120). In this instance, philosopher Sandra Harding refers to Nancy Hartsock's claim that oppressed or subordinate groups proffer a vision of reality that is an inversion of the dominant group's reality. It follows that in systems of domination, the vision available to the rulers will be both partial and perverse (Hartsock, 1983).

A cognitive dissonance exists between poststructuralism and standpoint theory as feminist modes of thought. But there are reasons why this tension can be understood to promote the growth of knowledge. While feminism uses the tools of poststructuralism to deconstruct dominant notions of gender, sexuality, race, and class, it can also use

the tools of standpoint theory to politicize activities and challenge dominant social institutions and hegemonic practices. To tolerate the tension between these two distinct approaches is to trust that it is a productive tension in light of feminism's interdisciplinary character.

Yet another resource for feminist inquiries is social science philosophy. Brian Fay outlines this approach in terms of concepts such as interchange, openness, interaction, and learning. He designates his own approach to the issue of multi-culturalism as "interactionism." Interactionism contrasts with the doctrines of perspectivism, relativism, and essentialism. Without directly invoking the influence of poststructuralist thought, Fay elucidates how the clear conceptual boundaries that constitute a scheme of meaning are not as clear cut as they appear to be to the agents who live and act in terms of them. He claims that every confirmed meaning is enmeshed in a deferred meaning that serves to uphold it. For example, the concept of homosexuality in Western culture is critical to upholding a definition of heterosexuality.

In Fay's scheme, the distance of the ethnomusicologist affords her a perspective that her subject cannot access. Fay asks the question of whether we must comprehend others solely in their own terms. He teaches us that to do so is to limit ourselves to solipsistic accounts. Though deconstruction involves "assessing the rationality and unmasking the duplicities of forms of interaction and ways of thinking, this assessment and unmasking are required for purposes of explanation. Here interpretation involves making peoples' self-understandings clearer than they can be to themselves by showing that these self-understandings are illusory, contradictory, wrong-headed, or narrow" (Fay 1996:132). Fay does not advocate a moral evaluation, but rather a form of critique dependent upon its ability to illuminate the self-understanding of a group of people. His model interprets what this group is doing from its own vantage point even as it transcends that vantage point. In other words, a critique must possess a detailed knowledge of the original schema in order to translate the self-understanding of agents into a richer understanding of agents and their activities.

Twentieth-century hermeneutics presents us with yet another means to support feminist inquiry into ethnomusicology. An interpretative philosophy whose main proponents include Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur, hermeneutics refers to the art of clarifying and mediating by our own efforts of interpretation what is said by persons we encounter within a tradition. Gadamer demonstrates how the historicity of being pertains to understanding our historically situated con-

sciousness and the human sciences in which that consciousness expresses itself. He embarks on a project to rehabilitate the notion of prejudice, claiming that pre-judgments are the means by which one strives for truth. In other words, one's prejudices can make one more open-minded, provided that one puts these prejudices at risk by testing them through exposure to and encounters with the prejudices of others. Through this process, one's limited and finite horizon opens to relate and connect with another, resulting in a "fusion of horizons."

Ricoeur treats hermeneutics as a theory of the operations of understanding. He elaborates upon the fusion of horizons, emphasizing that communication at a distance between two differently situated consciousnesses occurs by means of the fusion of their horizons, that is, the intersection of their views on the distant and the open. Once again, an element of distancing within the near, the far, and the open is presupposed. This concept signifies that "we live neither within closed horizons, nor within one unique horizon . . . this concept implies a tension between what is one's own and what is alien, between the near and the far, and hence the play of difference is included in the process of convergence" (Ricoeur 1995:62).

To understand, according to hermeneutics, is to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of proposed worlds that are the subject of interpretation. We understand through the "playful" process of appropriation and distancing, so that the ego divests itself of itself. Since the conflict of interpretations is insurmountable and inescapable, we are compelled to choose between absolute knowledge and hermeneutics. This brief outline of the potential of hermeneutics for feminist approaches in ethnomusicology does not do justice to the breadth and scope of hermeneutics in its own right. Hermeneutics is an area of study that is well worth pursuing in more detail. But we must turn to the matter of developing feminist methodologies for ethnomusicological inquiry.

The feminist question in ethnomusicology was first raised in the early 1980s. Since then, many important music scholars have undertaken feminist projects. Some of these include Abu-Lughod (1986); Cook and Tsou (1994); Koskoff (1987, 1993); Herndon and Ziegler (1990); Keyes (1993); McClary (1991); Rebollo-Sborgi (1992); Solie (1993); and Sugarman (1997). For an excellent compilation of publications about women and music in general, see Bowers and Bareis (1991). These ethnomusicologists, musicologists, and anthropologists have addressed the feminist question in music scholarship through a variety of conceptual

frameworks and methodologies. Their writings are exemplary because they introduce a feminist politic into their inquiries. There is a decided difference between an anthropology of women's music and a feminist ethnography of music. But a feminist mode of inquiry into ethnomusicology has yet to be fully developed. Although ethnomusicology is in dire need of data on women's music, projects must purposively adopt feminist frameworks if they are to qualify as being feminist at all. There is nothing inherently feminist about studying women's lives since so many non- or anti-feminists have done so in the past.

Mary Cook and Judith Fonow survey a variety of research strategies informed by feminist assumptions about social reality. They outline five basic epistemological principles for a feminist methodology in social science research. These tools can be found in the work of many different feminist social scientists, from psychologists and sociologists to urban planners and anthropologists. The first principle calls us to continually reflect upon the significance of gender and gender asymmetry as a basic feature of all social life. The second advocates using "consciousness-raising" as a specific methodological tool and as a general orientation in social science research. Third, scholars are called to challenge the norm of objectivity throughout the duration of the research project. The ethical implications about using women as subjects for study, or the recognition of the exploitation of women as objects of knowledge, comprise the fourth principle. Finally, the fifth principle seeks to empower women and to transform patriarchal institutions through research. I shall explore these principles in greater detail below.

According to the first principle, feminist ethnomusicologists must consider the significance of gender asymmetry within cultures, and devote their research to a description, analysis, and interpretation of the world viewed through the eyes of their female subjects. This is not to say that feminist projects cannot study men (or that men themselves cannot undertake feminist projects), but that we can gain important data by starting from the viewpoint of women. Around the globe, women's lives are different from men's, from the realm of the social and physical to the economic and political. Through the use of feminist standpoint theory, researchers who start their study from the viewpoint of women's lives glean unexpected perspectives of the world. In this regard, researchers should validate the private and interiorized world of their subject, recognizing that androcentricity has continually marred knowledge about human beings. Most scholars agree that gender and

sexuality have a crucial influence on the network of relations encompassing the research act. Feminist ethnomusicologists can act on this observation to offset the centrality of men in their analyses.

Consciousness-raising, as the second principle, is intended to foster politicization and activism between the researcher and the subjects. It seeks to uncover aspects of social reality not previously visible, assuming that feminist consciousness can see both the apparent reality and its underlying contradictions. Studying women in a cross-cultural context necessitates uncovering the mundane and devalued aspects of social life such as child rearing or housekeeping, both aspects not often present in ethnomusicological writings about women. Researchers must maintain an awareness, however, that women simultaneously oppose and conform to positions that deny them their freedom. This realization has implications for my own project, and for bell hooks' warning about re-inscribing practices of domination. Consciousness-raising is not meant to be a tool for Western feminism to assert its superiority over other feminisms from around the world. Rather, consciousness-raising is intended to operate as an interactional tool facilitating a shared experience between the researcher and her subjects. It strives to trigger moments of consciousness in which a woman experiences a "rupture" in her everyday life. This "rupture" may allow her to become aware of certain aspects of her condition, and the researcher works with the subjects to develop further understanding.

In *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research* (1991), the authors confront consciousness-raising once again. Since it is the most controversial of their five principles, Cook and Fonow wish to qualify it as "a process of self-awareness familiar to those involved with the women's movement... 'Click moments' for both researcher and subject are often used as sources of creative insight that are transferred into the research process" (Fonow and Cook 1991:4). Some practical forms of consciousness-raising include techniques such as role-playing, rap groups, simulations, and psychodrama undertaken in a self-conscious and deliberate manner. In this way, consciousness-raising has great potential for forging bonds between a variety of selves.

The third principle challenges the norm of objectivity and rejects the separation between subject and object. It is a participatory research strategy emphasizing the dialectic between the researcher and the subjects throughout the entire process. Cook and Fonow suggest that scholars must grapple with this dialectic from the initial formulation of research problems through to the collection of the data, the interpre-

tation of the findings, and the implementation of the results. This is a reflexive process, though the authors caution that "emphasis on collaboration between researcher and researched masks the real power of the researcher, who has much greater control over the research process and product. Moreover, the researcher is free to leave the field at any time, and is generally the final author of any account" (Fonow and Cook 1991:9). In regards to music and culture, ethnomusicologists might ask: Why did I choose to embark on this particular project? How does music making in my chosen culture area relate to the material conditions of women's lives? Would gaining proficiency in my subject's musical medium (or becoming "bi-musical") accomplish some or any of my goals as a feminist scholar?

Since feminism ultimately seeks to transform oppressive institutions, then our commitment as researchers requires us to struggle with ethical issues. Cook and Fonow's fourth principle compels us to address the dignity and the welfare of our subjects. Feminist ethnomusicologists have an opportunity to make a mark in this regard by engaging in the ethical questions that most other ethnomusicologists avoid. Cook and Fonow also explore the issue of intervention in the lives of our research subjects. For example, we might ask whether we are capable of withholding needed information from our subjects. Since women have been exploited as subjects of knowledge in the past, we need to take steps to ensure that our research projects are not co-opted.

Finally, the fifth principle calls for the empowerment and transformation of women's lives. The authors tell us, "description without an eye for transformation is inherently conservative and portrays the subject as acted-upon rather than as an actor or potential actor" (Cook and Fonow 1990:79). Consciousness-raising is related to this principle because it has to do with raising political awareness. We run the risk of reinstating colonialist paradigms through the presumption that we have something to "teach" our subjects, or that we have the ability to "enlighten" them. Yet the authors hold that researchers and their subjects can work together and strive against forms of oppression which plague women in various cultural contexts. Ultimately, feminist social science theory advocates transferring our methodological tools to our research subjects so that they might confront their oppression and formulate their own plan of action.

The development of feminist approaches to ethnomusicology is a project that is still in its early stages. To impose closure upon it at this point would be premature. But we can draw certain conclusions. First of

all, it is possible to claim space for feminist epistemologies in ethnomusicology. Strategies or approaches that create room for feminist thought include multicultural social science theory, interactionism, hermeneutics, poststructuralism, and feminist standpoint theory. Moreover, the five principles outlined by Mary Cook and Judith Fonow for feminist scholarship in the social sciences show us how our research methodologies can be reconstructed. Interdisciplinary approaches and new conceptual frameworks can be applied in our ethnomusicological projects even as feminist ethnomusicologists innovate new frameworks of their own. Feminist ethnomusicologists can contribute towards feminist enterprises through their own ideas about feminisms and women's lives, and how music is embedded in both.

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The Personal Politics of Scholarship

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The Humanities Research Institute of the University of California some time ago called a number of us from various disciplines to a brainstorming session to produce ideas for future projects. Raking over the past to predict the future, we came up with several ideas about what had been ground shaking and what needed doing next. At one point, though, I managed to touch a point of consensus among the large number of people from truly diverse ethnic as well as academic backgrounds assembled there by saying that the most important change in the humanities during my lifetime had been the acceptance of our selves into our work as scholars—including those parts of ourselves that we had previously thought unacceptable. It is a sentiment that applies particularly to what we do in music (it seems to me), and is of special importance to any of us who have any sense of personal disadvantage or powerlessness—it should be clear from the outset that I am speaking as a gay white male committed to being upfront about my sexuality, but of course I am thinking chiefly of others: graduate students are by definition in this category and are often oppressed by the very same people who themselves “wear their tribulation like a rose,” to use a phrase of W. H. Auden’s.¹ The women’s movement should have taught us about the varying scale of oppression by which each of us is oppressed in one situation and the oppressor in another, but more self-consciousness around that particular issue is always badly needed. In this talk I shall also be speaking from my (abject) position as a musicologist working on Western music; but of course I am also conscious of working in certain ways that create a natural alliance with cultural ethnomusicologists and anthropologists. I shall not attempt, however, to speak for anyone but myself. I am hoping that these few ideas will simply stimulate thought about your own involvement, each of you, in whatever branch of scholarship you identify with. Our subsequent discussion, then, could aim toward clarification, shared joys and problems, or simply differentiation.

Music and musical scholarship cannot easily be reconciled to this idea of the personal, which is why musicology will probably progress rather quickly from a positivistic or modernist discipline believing in

the power of objects and the myth of objectivity to one engaged with the ruptured subjective (but scarcely personal) experience of postmodernism. I have argued in an essay entitled "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet" that at stake, in the world of Western classical music, is a social contract in which we as musicians are allowed a deviant status, able to express and channel emotion in public places, in return for our implicit support for a societal status quo and also of course for the production of the "masterworks," "great performances," or even just Grammy awards that validate the profession.² In other words, we can act out, but not act up. Popular musicians of all kinds get to do a bit more in the way of disrupting society, but even among them the agony of getting someone like the Pet Shop Boys to own up to their deviant sexuality indicates the existence of the same shibboleths across the entire entertainment industry. World Music, too, has its own function to play in maintaining a center by the articulation of the margin in acceptable ways; and its marketing of exoticism is arguably even more central to our society's idea of its centrality than its own increasingly unfashionable art music. Musicology, a fringe activity in this arena, has been assiduous in policing itself to take part in this program, which explains a good deal about the misogyny traditionally associated with the discipline as well as its fear of all questions surrounding sexuality.

There are of course other reasons why musicians in general, and scholars in particular, abjure the personal. Perhaps one of the most important contributions made by cultural musicologists of all kinds is the idea that music does not simply reflect its social background but works actively to constitute subjectivity in the individual. We are as much what we listen to as what we eat—music affects our bodies in the immediately powerful matter of rhythm and movement, and it also conditions us in a manner analogous to the cumulative effects of food. Hence our strong investment in the music we identify with. But ideologically "art" is universal: hence the frequently encountered "I may be X (where X is any recognizable identity) but that has nothing to do with my art" (which those on the receiving end of such statements are meant implicitly to understand is far more important than X). In addition to divorcing art from identity, scholars are often likely to go into denial about the visceral nature of musical experience as they distance themselves from the body in the process of embracing musical scholarship as it is encountered in the academy today. From the mono-aural standpoint of the majority of the musicological profession, those individuals working on music therapy and psychoacoustics are

marginalized; the mainstream is still plowing on with the influence of x on y or the discovery of lost manuscripts and the like. I am sure that you will be able to supply your own scenario from the world of ethnomusicology.

I see no reason to try to create guilt about any of this (there has been quite enough of that in the past, quite enough co-opting of everyone under those invidious plural pronouns), but greater self-consciousness and self-awareness would lead to greater respect for the difference of others, their legitimate right to that difference, and the desirability of everyone's remaining in conversation. All this can only be done when one has learned to say "I" rather than "we" or "it." Helen, the impulsive sister in E. M. Forster's novel *Howard's End*, relates this to desire: "No superman ever said "I want," because "I want" must lead to the question "Who am I?" and so to Pity and Justice, He only says "want," "Want Europe," if he's Napoleon: "want wives," if he's Bluebeard; "want Botticelli," if he's Pierpont Morgan. Never the "I".³ Much musicology gives the impression of saying "want control," "want objectivity," "want authority," "want never to give myself away." It is an unusual pleasure to read an article like the one Don Randel wrote about his role in making a new version of *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, in which he admits that he "probably felt the need to compile such a book because I can never remember anything without one."⁴ For in truth (or as near as we can get to that problematic ideal), our scholarship always reflects our selves however hard we try to objectify it. The truths we discover and reveal are never so much about a historical situation as they are about our own situations, tastes and perceptions. Once acknowledged, this idea actually facilitates the Platonic search for, and dialogue with, the past and its denizens—and, I imagine, with any community not one's own—characteristic of genuine scholarship. And it leads to the further acknowledgment that critical judgments, however "right" they feel, are only further aspects of the training, personality, associations and predilections of each of us.

There was a time when my profession almost thought it held the critical keys to the kingdom—a set of criteria which, suitably modified to account for the differences in the musical production of various periods, could be relied on to produce universal assent. Schenker and his system promised for past music what Schoenberg and his system promised for the future. All this came to a head, ironically, at about the time that also saw an explosion in our societies of various forms of group protest dedicated to what was then called "liberation." A quarter

of a century later, these movements have amassed a scholarship of their own. And their critique of Western scholarship of the earlier kind—the kind many are still pursuing unselfconsciously within music departments—has had the effect of up-ending such certainties. A critical principle condemning excessive detail, for instance, is revealed as a patriarchal ideal in a culture which assigns decoration to the feminine; “the economy of means” is all well and good for those who can afford to economize; the racist implications of the preference for contrapuntal over rhythmic values (not to mention the traditional Hanslickian downgrading of rhythm) can now clearly be perceived.

To discern in “classical music” an element of homophobia (in addition to elitism, misogyny, racism and the rest) may be thought particularly surprising because of the large numbers of (especially male) homosexuals who find refuge in the profession and are well assimilated by it. But here the “social contract” enters as a special double-bind to prescribe a form of homosexual participation that only strengthens the heterosexual status quo. It is often argued, of course, that “homosexuality”, a nineteenth-century pseudo-medical label for what had previously been a diverse set of practices, came into existence precisely for that purpose, to define the new bourgeois ideal of heterosexuality by providing a deviant alternative which in the new “medicalized” terminology could be seen as a kind of mental illness. But pederasty, a strain of same-sex relation older than “homosexuality” and endemic to Western pedagogy, itself models (or is modeled on) heterosexuality, as Jane Gallop and Juliet Flower MacCannell argue: “A greater man penetrates a lesser man with knowledge. The student is empty, a receptacle for the phallus; the teacher is the phallic fullness of knowledge.”⁵ And furthermore, as Eve Sedgwick has shown in a celebrated passage on Allan Bloom, the closeted author of *The Closing of the American Mind*, “the homoerotic tradition of homophobic Western culture” depends especially upon two features: one, a situation in which the stimulation and glamorization of the energies of male-male desire “is an incessant project that must, for the preservation of that self-contradictory tradition, coexist with an equally incessant project of denying, deferring, or silencing their satisfaction” (a “mechanistic hydraulicism” even more reductive than the Freudian model of sublimation); and two, on a “precious representational compact by which a small, shadowily identified group both represented the hidden, perhaps dangerous truths about a culture to itself, and depended on its exiguous toleration.”⁶ The male homosexual who keeps a discreet front

("everyone knows so I don't need to say") and who is not "shrill" can participate at a full level in the power games of the patriarchy (as the portrait of Senator McCarthy's legal aide, Roy Cohn, in Tony Kushner's remarkable play, *Angels in America*, so notably demonstrates). And homosexuals who feel that they once had or still have no option but to settle for this accommodation to society often unthinkingly overcompensate, either like Captain Vere by sacrificing the Billy Budd they "love," or by indulging in what often seem grotesque parodies of heterosexist attitudes (like Copland's contempt for women composers).⁷

* * *

I have mentioned the word "criticism" in this talk a good deal, and I need to explain that my attitude to it is a bit like E. M. Forster's attitude to democracy. This is what he said:

Two Cheers for Democracy: one because it admits variety and two because it permits criticism. Two cheers are quite enough: there is no occasion to give three. Only Love the Beloved Republic deserves that.⁸

I find myself throwing my lot in with criticism for a particular reason, though: Joseph Kerman's championing of it, whether he intended it or not, produced the only antidote to musicology's baleful tendency to seek authority wherever it may be found outside the subjective. This tendency also has its roots, I believe, in the psycho-sexual realm. Since writing about the connection of musicality and homosexuality as social mechanisms in *Queering the Pitch* a devastating passage in Havelock Ellis has been brought to my attention by my colleague, the dance scholar Susan Leigh Foster. It opens with the clarion call, "[i]t has been extravagantly said that all musicians are invert," goes on to quote Oppenheim to the effect that "the musical disposition is marked by a great emotional instability, and this instability is a disposition to nervousness," and finally comments, "[t]he musician has not been rendered nervous by his music, but he owes his nervousness (as also, it may be added, his disposition to homosexuality) to the same disposition to which he owes his musical aptitude."⁹ No wonder, with sentiments like this floating around, and the shadow of the Oscar Wilde case casting such a long shadow into the twentieth century (the ninety-one-year-old Virgil Thomson, speaking to his biographer, gave this as the chief reason no one ever talked about

"it"),¹⁰ that musical studies have had to be firmly policed out of the possibility of expressing "inversion" by the removal, for many years, of almost anything personal at all.

Neither Kerman nor myself is immune from the tendency to seek authority ourselves I admit. We both backslide a good deal in pinning some hope on history in this role, though perhaps he might allow me to invoke Collingwood (discussing Oakeshott) to the effect that "[t]here is no past, except for a person involved in the historical mode of experience; and for him the past is what he carefully and critically thinks it to be."¹¹ Others want to find authority in the notes and therefore decide that their form of immanent criticism is science. Still others want to spread the (white man's) burden and listen for the authentic voice of the native; but ethnographies end up with critical opinions too, and they are no more or less authoritative for being attributed to communal judgment. Criticism is radical in musicology because it is personal, and has no authority whatsoever. In this I disagree profoundly with Edward T. Cone, who in an essay marked perhaps by a greater number of "shoulds" and "musts" than any piece of writing since the Pentateuch, turns from pillar to post, from performance to composition, from impression to conception, in an anxious attempt to remedy the contradiction of his title, "The Authority of Music Criticism." At least Cone withdraws from the position of requiring "eternal truths" and single interpretations, those final resorts of the bankrupt authoritarian.¹² But there is no room in his scheme for the oppositional, for keeping works of art alive, especially during this crisis-time for "classical music" (its record-buying public now lower than 3 per cent of the total market), by opposing them and their makers, and for stopping the hagiographic industry's wheels by jamming skeptical words into the spokes. I am too fond of most of the music I write about to want to adopt that approach, but at least I try not to speak for the composer in the peculiar kind of ventriloquism that invests the critic with authority by adopting the composer's voice: "here in a typically astute lyrical move, Clara Schumann, sets her second theme in motion." In the essay I have just written for *19th-Century Music* about Schubert, I try, through the device of describing a performative moment from the inside, to get at certain aspects of meaning without attributing them to some higher power.¹³ Too much of a historian (even when it is "not my period") to ignore the contemporary scene completely, I attempt to engage with it in some sort of dialogue—by imagining it in the Schubertian instance as personified in the man of feeling, a historical friend, recognizable in the

notes and gestures, with whom I can maintain a conversation even as I acknowledge I am talking to myself. To endorse the personal is to take a stand against the authoritative (and authoritarian). It is to connect to a cross-cultural and possibly transhistorical desire to gossip about performance, either as performer's own powder-room talk, or the voyeur/fan's excited chatter. "Historically, music has been defined as mystery and miasma, as implicitness rather than explicitness, and so we have hid inside music," writes Wayne Koestenbaum: "in music we can come out without coming out, we can reveal without saying a word."¹⁴ Perhaps the need some of us have now is not to stop talking about this "condition" of music so that the "Love that Dare Not Speak Its Name" really can become the "Love That Won't Shut Up" until the difference is erased, and no one cares; or, more simply, "we're here, we're queer, get used to it."

* * *

Finally I want to say a few words about Benjamin Britten, the composer whose music initiated my personal odyssey in musical scholarship. One day in 1973, standing at the back of the stalls in the San Francisco Opera House in a rare moment of attention to the opera—there are lots of other things to claim one's attention in that interesting spot—I heard a musical relationship in *Peter Grimes* that absolutely fit with the theory of the social experience of oppression in the book I was reading, Dennis Altman's *Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation*, a classic of the early seventies.¹⁵ In between the lyrical arches of melody in his storm soliloquy in Act I, the anti-hero, Peter Grimes, sings obsessive rhythmic and fragmented gestures that, I suddenly realized, were an inversion of the crowd's motive in the earlier court-room scene. This was not a feeble musical metaphor for sexual inversion, but rather a signifier of Peter's having internalized society's opinion of him, the really destructive aspect of oppression. Later events in the opera, particularly Peter's climactic "So be it, and God have mercy upon me" on a cadence on to the Borough's key of B flat after an extended dominant pedal during which the church congregation off-stage sings "Amen" (the word that means "so be it") confirmed my insight. And so, three years later, I plucked up the courage to write and then publish the first article connecting my sexuality and that of Britten with my musical training.

It was a big deal then, more than twenty years ago, and it got a rather tight-lipped response, which is to say, a certain respect but no

discussion. Now of course things are different. We have moved into the new "queer" era in which anyone can appropriate deviant status by using the "Q" word of themselves, and in which the identity politics of gay white males is, quite rightly, scrutinized rather more carefully for signs of its gathering privilege under the guise of oppression. How on earth could a person like Edward Benjamin, Lord Britten of Aldeburgh, O.M., be said to have suffered "oppression" of any kind comparable to that of the starving, the imprisoned, the sexually abused, the ethnically or religiously persecuted, and so on. Well, no. But suffer he did, if only in his own mind, and that led him to take a path in his work, which, I would argue, is not a bad model for those of us who find ourselves secure in the academy and perhaps doubtful about our security and privilege.

What makes the crucial difference with Britten as a notionally "leading British composer" is the very different way in which he pursued a social and political agenda itself far removed from the liberal socialism of Vaughan Williams, his predecessor in that role. Along the lines of inter-war homosexual pacifist ideals, it puts personal relations above allegiance to institutions; it puts the individual before society; it tends to show institutions such as the law, the military and the church as hypocritical, unjust or simply evil; it favors erotic relations and exposes marriage; the patriarchal family it portrays as shallow and oppressive; justice for the victim and the victimized are passionately argued; and the difficulty of homoerotic relations is presented as a legacy of this society. The work presents itself as other, as a voice from the margins.

In a recent book, John Champagne discerns the two critical responses to what he calls the Other, or the marginal.¹⁶ One, the liberal humanist response, grants the Other greater subjectivity by trying to remake it in the image of the dominant or center: this process has been at work in white responses to African American music, or in the male canon's tentative acceptance of women composers, for instance. The second valorizes or privileges the marginality of the Other, not by extending greater subjectivity to it, but by making a resistant and transgressive use of the very lack at the center which first caused the construction of the margin. These two processes are of course not separate but contingent on each other. I would like, then, to argue for the effectiveness of Britten's version of marginal politics—realizing full well as I try that they are also related to the self-justification that I feel required to make. "All a poet can do is to warn" is the conclusion of the

Wilfred Owen epigraph on the cover of the score of the *War Requiem*. But in order to warn, or do anything else, the poet/composer has to be heard. What his time in North America (1939-42) may have taught Britten was that to work for centrality at home would ultimately be more artistically and therefore politically effective than marginality abroad—as a means of articulating a message to society from that margin where Britten, at least, always imagined he lived, as countless tales of his depressions and darkneses attest. His old left friends like W. H. Auden were irritated to see him waltzing up and down church aisles on the arm of the Queen Mother; gay men like myself often have to work through a certain resentment at his exercise of privilege without disclosure; younger radicals presumably have no time for his compromised politics at all. But granted the isolated space of art music and the difficulty of any effective opposition along the lines indicated by Champagne's second option, especially in the pre-1967 conditions of criminalized same-sex activity under which Britten lived and under which his social imagination was formed, one still needs to grant to the composer consistency and integrity in pursuing, sometimes to his friends' acute discomfort, a fairly incisive and certainly passionate line on the linked issues of pacifism and homosexuality in relation to subjectivity, nationality, and the institutions of the capitalistic democracy under which he lived. This line he maintained in his work rather than his life, where he acted out the role of charm and compliance laced with occasional brutality. The political stance of the music is all the more remarkable because it barely exists anywhere else in art music outside avant-garde circles already too self-marginalized to offer any hope of serious intervention in the status quo. And, as a starting point, it certainly wins hands down over the tired and tiring credo of the many composers today who are openly gay but vow that homosexuality has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with their music; or those composers—composers who just happen to be gay—who ask for homosexuality to be accepted as ordinary rather than seeing it as a site from which to disrupt present notions of subjectivity and from which to imagine different organizations of power and pleasure, as I believe Britten did.

Britten's artistic effort was an attempt to disrupt the center that it occupied with the marginality that it expressed. In this it was comparable to E. M. Forster's achievement which, though it did not specifically alleviate the persecution of his own kind, nevertheless contributed, in the novel *A Passage to India*, as much as any uprising of colonized peoples to the eventual downfall of the British Empire. "We

are after all queer & left & conshies which is enough to put us, or make us put ourselves, outside the pale, apart from being artists as well," wrote Peter Pears, Britten's partner, in response to a letter from his lover.¹⁷ It was Britten's real achievement, then, to turn British classical or art music during those years indelibly queer and left and conshie. And instead of being instantly marginalized, his music has traveled all over the world. Maybe few of us can hope to gain any such grand effect, but when all is said and done, I think it helps a bit to be able to say to one's self, "I tried to make a bit of difference. I didn't go along with the old boys and their period studies or their area studies. I learned to say 'I,' and didn't hide behind the empty authority of the discipline (that odious word). I tried to disrupt authority and to speak up for the unpopular cause I believe in without wantonly hurting other people." With any luck, such a person can claim membership in Forster's aristocracy, "not an aristocracy of power based on rank and influence, but an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky."¹⁸ "They represent," he says in his inimitable way, "the true human tradition, the one permanent victory of our queer race over cruelty and chaos." A high-flown late-Victorian way of putting things, perhaps, but...hey...I can go for that.

Notes

1. "Anthem for St. Cecilia's Day" (final line), *Collected Poems*, ed. Edward Mendelson (New York: Vintage, 1991), 282; the poem was written for Benjamin Britten and set by him as *Hymn to Saint Cecilia*, op. 27.
2. "Musicality, Essentialism, and the Closet," in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, ed. Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood and Gary C. Thomas (New York: Routledge, 1994), 9-26.
3. E. M. Forster, *Howard's End* (New York, Vintage Books, nd), 234-35.
4. "Defining Music," *MLA Notes*, 43 (1986-7), 751-66.
5. Jane Gallop, "The Immoral Teachers," *Yale French Studies*, 63 (1983), 118; see also Juliet Flower MacCannell, "Resistance to Sexual Theory," *Theory/Pedagogy/Politics: Texts for Change*, ed. Donald

- Morton and Mas'ud Zavarzadeh, (Urbana, 1991), 74-77. Examining the implications of this "heterosexual pederasty," Greg Bredbeck argues that the pedagogic condition "always changes...the sexual difference of the pederastic ur-scene into...sexual indifference," and thus erases women: see "Anal/yzing the Classroom: On the Impossibility of a Queer Pedagogy," *Professions of Desire* ed. George Haggerty and Bonnie Zimmerman (New York: Modern Language Association Press, 1995), 169-80.
6. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley, 1990), 56-57.
 7. See his 'appreciation' of Nadia Boulanger, his composition teacher, reprinted in *Women in Music*, ed. Carol Neuls-Bates (New York, 1982), 240-42.
 8. "What I Believe," in *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London: Edward Arnold, 1951), 79.
 9. *Sexual Inversion, The Psychology of Sex*, 2 (New York, 1910), p. 295. I am indebted to Susan Leigh Foster for drawing my attention to this passage.
 10. Anthony Tommasini: *Virgil Thomson: Composer on the Aisle* (New York, 1997), 69.
 11. G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (London, 1946), p. 155, on Michael B. Oakeshott, *Experience and Its Modes* (Cambridge, 1933).
 12. "The Authority of Music Criticism," *JAMS*, 34 (1981), 1-18; quotation on p. 18.
 13. "Piano Four Hands: Schubert an the Performance of Gay Male Desire," *19th-Century Music*, 21 (Fall, 1997), 149-76.
 14. *The Queen's Throat: Opera, Homosexuality, and the Mystery of Desire* (New York, 1993), pp. 189-90.
 15. See the most recent edition with a new introduction by Jeffrey Weeks and an afterword by the author (New York: New York

University Press, 1993).

16. Champagne, John. 1995. *The Ethics of Marginality*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press.
17. Humphrey Carpenter, 1992. *Benjamin Britten: A Biography*, (London: Faber & Faber), 419-20. "Conshie" is the British abbreviation for "conscientious objector."
18. "What I Believe," 82.

Agua Larga (Long Water): Musical Tales in Northwest Ecuador

Jonathan Ritter

Night falls quickly on the mangrove delta. Sitting on the second-story verandah of the Hotel Panama City in Borbón, Ecuador, I had a rare panoramic view of day's brief end in this flat and riverine world. Pregnant clouds and a canopy of trees claimed the last of the sun where the horizon should have been, and darkness descended with a lazy efficiency not unlike the local pace of life. With the light went the afternoon stillness, fading under a swell of birdsong, the putter of generators, and competing Colombian radio stations blasting *cumbia* into the humid air. While the electricity lasted, I sat under an open bulb writing myself into the local tapestry, watching and listening for Borbón to reveal its secrets.

A small town with a river waterfront, an afternoon market, and not much else, Borbón is a transition zone in multiple dimensions. Twenty kilometers downstream the Cayapa River opens up into the Pacific Ocean at La Tola, a largely Afro-Ecuadorian fishing town. Upstream, the mangrove swamps cease and the rainforest closes in to conceal the remaining indigenous Cayapa villages. To the south lies the bustling metropolis of Esmeraldas, the province's namesake and capital situated at the terminus of the trans-Ecuador oil pipeline. To the north of Borbón is San Lorenzo, a culturally conservative port town with an unreliable railroad and abandoned pier. Lying somewhere in the middle of the tangle, Borbón's only route inland is the river, which fizzles out somewhere in an uninhabited nature reserve on the western flanks of the Andes.

I had arrived in Borbón via a new road from the south, rattled after a five-hour ride in a mud-splattered bus whose driver seemed oblivious to the potholes and other precipitous hazards in the road. Abundant rainfall—as much as ten to fifteen feet a year, exacerbated in 1997-98 by El Niño flooding—and the aggressive vegetative re-colonization of any cleared land threatens all *tierra firma* routes in the province, and new roads are the worst. Days later, I departed to the north, cruising smoothly in a motorized dugout canoe whose steady hum seemed to pointedly question the “progress” of land-based transportation in a region dominated by rivers and mangrove swamps.

I was in Borbón to interview and record an elder *marimbero*, a marimba player, and see if anything remained in the upriver towns of the rich marimba tradition that was once a defining feature of cultural life in the province. Previously, on weekends and religious holidays, the Afro-Ecuadorian population had gathered to dance in local *casas de la marimba*, or "marimba houses," for parties that could go on for days. These *currulaos*, ritualized social-musical events, had been declining steadily since the 1950s and had disappeared entirely from most towns in the province.¹ When I arrived in Borbón, I was informed that the only *casa de la marimba* left in town was the private home of Papa Roncón, the very man I had come to see. Unfortunately, despite our appointment to meet that day, he was gone and had not left word regarding his return. And so, with no dancing to be seen and no one to interview, I joined Borbón in waiting, without expectations, for something to happen.

I had met Papa Roncón one week earlier in the provincial capital of Esmeraldas, just hours before his featured performance at an enormous festival of Afro-Ecuadorian and Afro-Latin music. At age 67, Roncón is the local patriarch of traditional music, with a performing career that spans five decades and several continents; he is also one of the few remaining *marimberos* to have played in the rural *currulaos*. That day, he was seated in his daughter's house just off the banks of the Esmeraldas River, watching TV while surrounded by instruments and photos from numerous international appearances. Broad-chested with a low, gravelly voice, he spoke in slow but serious phrases about the upcoming festival with my companion, another local musician with whom I was studying named Alberto Castillo. I had a hard time reconciling this image of the province's elder statesman of the marimba with the characterization of him I had earlier found printed in the pages of the *South American Handbook*. That book—the independent trekker's bible for the continent—advised adventurous young travelers in the town of Borbón to "Ask for Papa Roncón, the King of the Marimba, who, for a beer or two, will put on a one-man show."²

The day after our scheduled interview, I stopped by his house in the early morning to see if he had returned during the night, and found him waiting for me in the doorway. He immediately sent me back to town "to buy a couple of beers in order for the morning to flow smoothly." When I returned, two liters of Victoria Cerveza in hand, he settled into his hammock for a forty-five minute discussion of his interview fee and what connections I might have to set him up on a

cultural exchange to the United States. Assuring him I had no friends with pockets deep enough to fund such an exchange, we settled on the payment of twenty dollars, a few more beers, and a set of American marimba mallets I had brought as a gift. In exchange, I got his undivided attention for the morning, though he was vague about whether he would play one of the three marimbas suspended from the ceiling behind him under a sign demanding "No Interumpir las Clases"—don't interrupt his marimba classes.

It was the beginning of a relationship that captivated me during my fieldwork experience in Ecuador. Though I would ultimately spend more time with other musicians, particularly while living with Alberto and his mother (famed local singer Petita Palma), Papa Roncón's status and idiosyncratic personality offered a peculiar but panoramic window into the soul of Esmeraldeñan music and history. The parallels between his life and provincial history are telling, but do not alone account for the riveting experience of talking with him; it is Papa Roncón's very individuality—his keen wit, shrewd eye for business, and above all musical artistry—that transcends any role mere longevity may have bestowed.

He began our interview with a long monologue on his personal life. Born Guillermo Ayoví Erazo, he spent his childhood along the shores of the Cayapa River with his mother, in several small villages just upstream from Borbón. Like all of his older siblings, Papa Roncón left home early. At fourteen he contracted to work as a *motorista*, running the outboard engine on one of the many dugout canoes that to this day continue to serve most transportation and shipping needs in the province. For the next six years of his life, he spent every waking moment on the delta's rivers, learning the trade and people of the province.

Water, he pointed out, is hard to ignore in Esmeraldas; beneficent and malicious, it is the source of sustenance and disaster, the base for subsistence, the medium for transportation, and a core part of cultural activity. Thousands of miles of rivers lay like a capillary network on the land, connecting sea to home and work to play. At one time or another, rubber, bananas, tagua nuts, and other rainforest products have all descended the mangrove delta's placid waters, while *concheras* and fisherman have run against the current, plying the late afternoon waters in canoes filled with the harvest of the sea.

As a symbol, water is central as well. Verses sung with the marimba frequently refer to aquatic events in Afro-Ecuadorian oral

history; disasters such as floods and tidal waves are even named, such as *el divino patriarco*, the Divine Patriarch, a tidal wave that leveled the coast at the turn of the century and was said to portend the end of the world.³ Other songs and *decimas*, traditional ten-line improvised poems, pay homage to the sea and rivers as metaphors for traditional Afro-Ecuadorian culture. Today, cultural revitalization efforts in San Lorenzo include water-related subsistence activities such as *concha* and other shellfish gathering.

Papa continued his testimony, informing me that one entire genre of instrumental marimba music is simply labeled *aguas* (waters), and usually performed in either a short (*corta*) or long (*larga*) version. Hinting broadly, I suggested to him that I had never heard of the distinction before and looked longingly at the trio of marimbas hanging silently behind him. After a pause, he ascended a ladder into the second story of his cinder block house. Excited, I pulled out my DAT recorder and began setting up microphones while I heard him rummaging around upstairs. When he returned, rather than marimba mallets, he carried the split end of a wire, which he promptly plugged into a plywood box standing in the corner. Spinning it around, he revealed an enormous speaker, its four fifteen-inch woofers appropriate for a large dance hall sound system but deafeningly out of place in his tiny home. "Marimba music," he explained, "is communal music"; a proper performance requires at least a half a dozen people to play all of the necessary instruments. Though he often plays solo for the tourists "who know nothing and have no respect for the tradition," he assumed that I was not interested in a tourist show. I nodded meekly and tried in vain to stand in front of my accusing microphones. He returned upstairs to begin playing a tape of an *agua larga*, performed and recorded several years earlier by his folklore ensemble *La Catanga* [CD Track #3].

His version of *aguas* differed substantially from those I had recorded in the city of Esmeraldas. Though all retained a rollicking two-against-three hemiola, the *tiple*, or melodic line, followed an entirely different contour in Papa Roncón's recording. When I queried him on the differences, he warned me not to trust what *marimberos* in the city played, and for explanation returned to the story of how he was first introduced to the marimba. At the age of twenty, he quit work on the rivers and went to work with his brother, Tomás, harvesting plantain, yuca, and corn from slash-and-burn fields carved from the tropical rainforest.

It was an uninhabited place, where one could only hear the forest, the birds that sang at night, the snakes, and the water that roared under the force of the river's current. My brother was still young, and wanted a wife, so we traveled over to the Cayapa people on the Santiago River. While he went looking, he left me in the care of an indigenous family. He left for eight days, but was gone for two years! I was left to live with the "Chachis"—whose real name is Cayapa—for a long time. I learned to speak their language, as none of them could speak Spanish. I spoke it fluently [at that time]. I settled in and began to live with them, working in the forest, traveling the channels and rivers in their canoe.

The only music that they had, and have to this day, is the marimba. I knew nothing of it. And so, in those moments of rest, when we left our work clearing the forest, they would begin to play the marimba. I said to them, "Teach me!" and sat down in front of the them; they began to teach me how to play. But I knew nothing about this marimba, and when I did not play the right notes, they hit me on the hands with their mallets so forcefully that I would have to drop mine and go sit down. It was a punishment, called *castigo a la mano*, "punishment on the hand," for learning to play. But I kept returning; I don't know why I liked it.

Today, Papa Roncón is widely regarded as the most knowledgeable and talented elder *marimbero* in the province, a reputation that he both relishes and cultivates through performances throughout Ecuador and abroad. However, the history of how he learned to play the instrument is unusual, and frequently puts him at odds with other *marimberos* who claim he only knows the Cayapa repertoire, regarded by many others as a poor "hand-me-down" of the Afro-Ecuadorian tradition. Papa's Roncón's reply is emphatic:

One bit of truth: all blacks here in the north learned to play from the Cayapa. I know that. I am sixty-seven years old and have lived in the north zone all of my life; I know all of the people on the Cayapa River, blacks, Indians, everyone. And all that play the marimba learned it from the Cayapa.

Though I accepted it at face value that day, this final assertion was hotly contested by nearly every other *marimbero* I interviewed, as were many of Papa Roncón's opinions on a variety of contemporary issues. The dissension on this particular topic stemmed in part from the sensitive relationship between the Afro-Ecuadorian and indigenous

populations in the province. Though more than four centuries of intermarriage and physical proximity have resulted in a number of shared cultural expressions, including the marimba, tensions have persisted between the two groups since the first slave ship crashed on the province's shores in 1553. That history adds a poignant twist to Papa Roncón's story, and explains some of the hostility others feel towards his valorization of the Cayapa marimba repertoire. Of course, the dynamics of (re)constructing any history or tradition are always messy, and in this case they pit a powerful individual's experience against popular knowledge and ideology. The struggle between them is indicative of the many issues facing Esmeralda's fledgling folklore movement, confronted with temperamental elders and contradictory narratives. Regardless of his idiosyncrasies, Papa Roncón and the folklorists share a common concern with the future of the marimba. He voiced their collective opinion in his list of reasons for the marimba's decline: the younger generation's desire to escape the province's dismal economy; their ignorance and, worse, disinterest in the marimba; and finally, those who would profit from the marimba by playing in the tourist venues without first properly learning the instrument and its repertoire.

Mellowed by a few beers, Papa's stories and polemics slowed down for the day. Rising from his hammock, he ascended the ladder for a second time and returned, to my surprise, with a guitar. Decades ago, in the evening prior to a marimba dance, or at times in place of one, groups of Afro-Ecuadorian men would gather in cantinas or saloons to sing ballads from the Ecuadorian highlands, called *pasillos*, or up-beat Afro-Colombian genres such as the *cumbia* or *gaita*.⁴ Because I had not seen or heard of any solo guitar performances since arriving in the province, I had assumed that the guitar tradition had died with the *currulao*. Furthermore, contemporary efforts toward a marimba revival generally shunned any association with highland *mestizo* forms, siding with an Africanist ideology of *negritud* in opposition to any Hispanic influences on local culture.

Papa Roncón's first song demonstrated that the guitar tradition was neither dead nor overtly *mestizo* in style [CD Track #4]. "This is a song from the people way up the river, in a town called Cachaví," he explained. "They sing like this, on themes about the countryside and contact with the forest. They are black folks from way, way up the river; they have their own dialect and way of speaking." He then turned to a *pasillo*, a highland genre known as Ecuador's national music (*musica*

nacional) but rarely heard in the coastal province. Unlike the forlorn lyrics and schmaltzy vocal style associated with most highland renditions of the form, Papa Roncón's pasillo detailed a shipwreck in the *zonas negras*, the "black zones," and was delivered in the hoarse *ronco* voice that first gave him his nickname [CD Track #5].

Thoroughly enjoying himself now, he finished the interview by singing what he called "a salsa" in honor of my visit, in order that I remember him not just as some "old guy," but as *buena gente*, a "good person." Though the genre remains a mystery to me, containing none of the elements that one would normally associate with salsa, the lyric content was not difficult and made the more comic by his nearly horizontal performance while rolling back and forth in his hammock [CD Track #6]:

Ay, ay, ay, que yo me siento, ay, ay,
Ay, ay, ay, con un besito me da.

Ay, ay, ay, how I feel, ay, ay
Ay, ay, ay, with a little kiss she gives me.

With that, Papa Roncón stood up and told me he had a bus to catch. A little drunk myself after helping him drain another Victoria, I thanked him and repacked the microphones, hoping that I would neither forget anything in his house or say anything incriminating. We agreed to meet again the following week in Esmeraldas to discuss the cultural exchange project with a German friend of his. I said a congenial goodbye and, as though on cue, a small army of young boys stood by the door clamoring to carry my tripod two blocks back to my hotel for a tip. I acquiesced, and the magic of the morning dissolved within moments under a tropical noonday sun as I tried to keep track of which boy was carrying my stuff.

Later that evening, I sat out on the hotel verandah again, writing in my journal of the day's events. Dark clouds had been rolling in over the bamboo antennae poles and rusty tin roofs all afternoon, and with the evening the previous day's thunderstorm returned and settled in for an all-night soak. As dark descended, I could no longer tell if the rumbles I heard were distant thunder or the protesting groans of the last daily bus to Esmeraldas leaving town. Behind me, a neighbor's tinny radio came to life and blasted through the thin wall of

planking. No marimba came over the airwaves, nor soulfully sung pasillos, but at one point the cumbia did stop for a moment. As the rain poured off the hotel roof in great sheets of water, a voice called out over the static: "Francisco Quiñonez, urgent message. Your sister has suffered an accident and has broken her hip. Go to Esmeraldas immediately and bring money. Call..." Then the electricity cut out, leaving all to ponder if Francisco had received the message. I plugged a battery into the DAT player, and sat listening to Papa Roncón's recording of *agua larga*, thinking of the long water between me and my next upriver destination, between me and the clouds pouring down on Borbón, between me and my home.

Notes

1. For more information on the marimba tradition and its current state see the author's *La Marimba Esmeraldeña: Music and Ethnicity on Ecuador's Northern Coast*, M.A. Thesis, UCLA (1998).
2. Box, Ben, ed. 1998. *South American Handbook*. Bath, England: Footprint Handbooks, p. 1119.
3. The story of the Divine Patriarch tidal wave, and more on the historical context of Afro-Ecuadorian marimba performance, is detailed in Norman Whitten Jr. and Aurelio Fuentes' 1966 article "Baile Marimba! Negro Folk Music in Northwest Ecuador." *Journal of the Folklore Institute*, 3(2): 169-191.
4. Carlos and Lidia Rubio of San Lorenzo later informed me that guitar performance and the singing of highland songs happened primarily as a "warm-up" to a marimba dance. Norman Whitten Jr. contends that the style and function of guitar-song performance varied according to the venue, being one entertainment option among several in the male-only cantina, but taking a primary social role in the mixed company of the saloon. In "Ritual Enactment of Sex Roles in the Pacific Lowlands of Ecuador-Colombia," *Ethnology* 13:2 (1974), 129-43.

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Reviews

Historical Field Recordings From Brazil: "Endangered Music" as Roots of National Idioms

**L.H. Corrêa de Azevedo: Music of Ceará and Minas Gerais.
Rykodisc RCD 10404. 1997.**
**The Discoteca Collection: Missão de Pesquisas Folclóricas.
Rykodisc RCD 10403. 1997.**

Compact discs with booklets and photos. Produced by Mickey Hart and Alan Jabbour. Edited by Mickey Hart, Morton Marks, and Fred Lieberman. Notes by Morton Marks (Portuguese translation by Cambridge Translation Resources).

Most recent in the Endangered Music Project series created by former Grateful Dead drummer Mickey Hart's 360° Productions in conjunction with the Library of Congress, this pair of discs present Brazilian field recordings dating from 1938 (Discoteca collection), and 1943-44 (Azevedo collection). Though Afro-Brazilian musics predominate, the discs draw from a wide spectrum of genres rich in unique instrumentation and regional heritage reflecting varying degrees of Portuguese, African, and Indigenous musical traditions. These essential releases bring in part to listeners legacies of Brazil's two leading mid-century musicologists, Luiz Heitor Corrêa de Azevedo and Oneyda Alvarenga. Thanks to digital-age production techniques, remastering by Tom Frye restores to life the music's vibrant drumming, strumming, and singing of diverse sacred and secular genres.

Brazil, with a land area of 8,511,965 square kilometers and a current population of roughly 160 million, has a long story to tell about its famed yet somewhat enigmatic musical past. Here, listeners find rare recordings ranging from northeastern Afro-Brazilian religious music performances from Belém, Recife, and São Luís, to caipira songs of the South Central highlands of *Minas Gerais* (literally general mines) as aural treasures then destined for big city archives in the south: Azevedo's Centro de Pesquisas Folclóricas (now the Federal University of

Rio de Janeiro's Center of Folklore Research), and the Discoteca Pública Municipal de São Paulo, founded by Alvarenga's mentor and leading nationalist intellectual Mario de Andrade in 1935. The Discoteca has since been renamed the Acervo Histórico Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga (Oneyda Alvarenga Historical Archive Recording Collection) within the municipally funded Centro Cultural São Paulo (São Paulo Cultural Center). Duplicate sets of field recordings were archived in the Library of Congress.

Marks' informative notes connect Azevedo's meticulous recording efforts to his position as a "perfect link" between Brazilian folklorist circles and both Alan Lomax's Archive of American Folk-Song at the Library of Congress and the Pan-American Union Music Division directed by Charles Seeger, from whom the Brazilians received recording equipment, supplies, and formats for field research documentation. Azevedo and de Andrade remain fascinating figures when considering the era of these activities: Getulio Vargas' quasi-fascist Estado Novo regime (1937-1945) with its selectively nationalistic preservation of folklore and co-opting of Brazilian intellectuals; and Roosevelt's W.W. II-era Good Neighbor Policy, by which the United States hoped to gain and secure Latin American cooperation in the Allied war effort.

That hard-boiled domestic and international politics played a role in financing and planning these field recordings will perhaps prove secondary to listeners, who are treated to a treasure of mid-century rural Brazilian music. Likewise, de Andrade's musicological desire to create the Discoteca in part as a sort of folk music data bank for Brazil's *música erudita* composers of nationalist concert music, is a sentiment outlived by the vitality and beauty of the recorded performances, and by the wealth of regional musical cultures captured on disc.

Roughly seventy percent of Brazilians lived in comparative rural isolation at the time of these recordings. By the early 1990s, eighty-five percent lived in urban environments. With basic radio and recording industries established before these performances were documented, two primary forces of music popularization accompanied this urbanization: professionalism and mass communication. Increased material wealth and media growth created migrant urban group markets for a culture industry which transformed the character of much of these musics. This holds true for secular folk idioms and their popularization, while off-shoots of orthodox Afro-Brazilian sacred musics became increasingly syncretic as sects affiliated with Umbanda, for instance, negotiated their new environments by incorporating a variety of

musical traits shunned by orthodox centers of Afro-Brazilian Candomblé, Xango (Discoteca track 1, Alvarenga tracks 9-12) and Tambor de Mina (Discoteca tracks 2-6). Marks outlines syncretic transitions of Belém's Babaçuê sect (Discoteca track 7, now referred to as batuque), one of his anthropological specialties, as those practices absorbed Amerindian shamanism, popular Catholicism, folk beliefs, and musical styles such as rural samba.

The CDs present a total of seventeen tracks featuring côco, an eclectic group of stylistically diverse dance/vocal genres originating in Pernambuco and Alagoas, and reflecting Iberian textual/literary traditions and musical instrumentation, circular choreography of Amerindian origin, and African-derived dance movements, call and response vocals, and drumming (Azevedo tracks 1-4, 16-20, and Discoteca tracks 12-19). Brazilian music fans of all stripes now get to hear diverse instrumentation of "old" côco from inland Minas Gerais and coastal Paraíba and Ceará. "O laço da fita" (The Ribbon Bow; Azevedo track 16) features vocal soloist José Querino da Silva accompanying himself on pandeiro, the tambourine-like, one-sided frame drum with jingles so popular throughout Brazil and found on many tracks here. Subsequent côco cuts feature unique sounds and musical moods: "Côco baiano" is performed on the viola, a five-course, ten-string descendant of the Iberian vihuela; solo voice with tambor, or drum, on "Fala nego do chapéu Morrudo"; and the vocal duet with *violão* (nylon string guitar) and what sounds like spoons on "Pancada é um."

Early Afro-Brazilian dança-de-roda (circle dance) traditions from which certain côco dance genres developed spawned other modern dance styles such as samba, and were often characterized by percussive instrumental accompaniment and umbigada dance moves in which male and female dancers touch navels (from umbigo, Portuguese for navel). The Kimbundu language term for this dance move, semba, has been frequently pointed to as the etymological origin of samba. Discoteca track 20 brings to listeners a samba performed by viola soloist José da Luz of Paraíba. The liner notes of both CDs include recording dates, locations, instrumentation, and names of performers for most tracks. José Eduardo Azevedo of the Acervo Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga has, when possible, made complimentary CDs available to survivors of performers [telephone conversation, 1998].

What is found on these releases to be rural in origin is now likely a transformed part of urban, modernized Brazil: an aural time

capsule in the face of the tourist meccas that are Rio, Bahia, and the larger regional carnivals; post-Rock in Rio Brazilians with MTV; highly influential Caribbean rhythms such as ska, reggae, and merengue; and ubiquitous hip-hop beats found on radio and dance floors from Porto Alegre in the south, 4,000 kilometers to Belém in the north. "Endangered" hardly characterizes the long-lost regional culture of, for instance, the Afro-Brazilian miners of the Minas Gerais interior and their work songs - the haunting, monodic *viçungos* (Azevedo tracks 24-26).

Likewise, Discoteca researchers managed in 1938 to record an isolated group of relatively unacculturated indigenous Pancaru, not in the interior of the Amazon basin where the fewer than 150,000 indigenous peoples are today generally limited, but instead in the coastal state of Pernambuco. It must be noted that we are not necessarily listening to endangered musics, but in some cases, extinct musics from peoples and regional subcultures no longer with us. Tracks 10 and 11 of the Discoteca Collection offers vocal Pancaru music which awakens us to the past with a blend of plaintive Portuguese and indigenous language accompanied by Amerindian *maracás* and ghostly, thoroughly non-Western male chorus.

Interestingly, the sole appearance of the Afro-Brazilian *berimbau de barriga* (a musical bow: literally "Jew's harp of the belly") on the Discoteca collection is in conjunction not with capoeira, as it is commonly associated, but *carimbó* dance recorded in the northeastern city of São Luis, Maranhão (track 21). The São Luis region is also home to the *danca-de-roda* known as *tambor-de-crioulo*, a genre perhaps still known to incorporate capoeira inspired dance known as *punga*.

Repertoires of every musical culture, national or regional, change and adapt to influences of enveloping socio-cultural processes. "Precious human ways of life", as the Endangered Music Project's liner notes read, are, in spite of ourselves, certainly just that. Tracks 6-8 of the Azevedo collection offer rare recordings of the *congo*, or *congada*, a processional tradition with partial roots in both 15th-century Africa and the institution of Afro-Catholic lay brotherhoods, or *irmandades*, venerating Our Lady of the Rosary, Saint Benedict, and others. Several *irmandades*, with roots in 15th-century Lisbon, predate the presence of African slaves in the New World. *Congada* groups, in their theatrical elections crowning Afro-Brazilian kings, queens, and royal courts, remain active throughout Brazil, often in state-sponsored events such as Belo Horizonte's *Semana do Folclore*, in the heart of Minas Gerais.

Azevedo CD tracks six through eight present "songs of the congos" from Ceará. Congada traditions and other Afro-Brazilian processional musics have long been pointed to as historical components of modern carnival.

Incidentally, the Azevedo collection's liner reproduction of the painting Festival of Our Lady of the Rosary, depicting a congada's crowning procession, should be attributed to Maurice Rugendas. The French artist's early 19th-century collection of important works illustrating Afro-Brazilian society, *Voyage pittoresque dans le Brésil*, was published in Paris in 1835. The painting in question was completed in the late 1820s, not in 1880 as indicated. Photographic and film documentation completed by the Discoteca group, some of which appears in Alvarenga's influential book *Música Popular Brasileira* (1945: second edition 1982) represent important Afro-Brazilian iconography in line with Rugendas and other early 19th-century artists such as Debret, Americano, Denis, and Puhl from the 18th-century.

Priceless are tracks featuring performances of Xango and maracatú (Azevedo, 9-12, 13-15), recorded not as the Discoteca Collection's Xango excerpt was - in Recife, the birthplace of these Afro-Brazilian practices - but 1,000 kilometers to the north in Fortaleza, capital of Ceará. Field recording documentation reveals importantly that one Raimundo Alves Feitosa directed what sounds like the same Fortaleza ensemble in performances of sacred Xango and the now quasi-sacred processional maracatú. Popularization of sacred Afro-Brazilian music styles by the likes of Raimundo is key in the development of contemporary Brazilian popular music: maracatú now doubles as a northeastern carnival genre as well as a popular music rhythm.

Sacred musics representing Xango, Tambor de Mina, Babaçue, and Pajelança share disc space with regional folk idioms such as bumba-meu-boi, a theatrical genre associated with a somewhat secularized church calendar and functionally syncretic saints days. Today, some elements of bumba-meu-boi traditions have been "carnivalized" in urban areas and stretch from their place of origin in the São Luis region to Belém and points west along the Amazon river, namely the cities of Manaus and Paratins.

A rustic example of the best selling genre in Brazil today, música sertaneja, akin in certain respects to North American country music, is found on the Azevedo collection track 21 in the form of a traditional dupla (duet) performing the canção paulista, or moda-de-violão, "Vendi minha tropa" (I sold my mule). Paulista is synonymous

with música caipira and later developed as an element of the urbanized galaxy of música sertaneja, a genre which by the mid-40s had garnered a huge following in Brazil's recording market. The sertão is the parched interior of Brazil's northeast. Far to the south, the caipira consists mainly of expansive stretches of rural São Paulo and southern Minas Gerais, and is characterized musically by the dupla's use of the legendary viola, the five-course "guitar" found on Azevedo track 17. Migrants from these areas brought tunes such as "Vendi minha tropa" to cities like São Paulo, and later, Brasília. The dupla, with its signature vocal technique of parallel thirds and sixths remains vital to some of Brazil's most popular contemporary performing acts, though modern production values repress the unpolished, traditional roots heard on this track.

These recordings inspire comparative inquiries regarding; rates of stylistic change in relation to mainstreaming, commercialization, and the growth of Brazil's culture industry; transformations of identity relating to urbanization; socio-economic class stratification, race, gender, and forms of nationalist sentiment; and the socio-political ramifications of censorship and manipulation of expression and media such as during Vargas' Estado Novo and the military dictatorships of 1964-1985. Some of these "human ways" of making music have developed and changed over time, becoming components of commercial popular music and regional Brazilian carnivals as found in Rio, Recife and Olinda, and Bahia. Marks dutifully notes the resurgence and strong influence of regional folk styles in the works of many modern day recording artists of MPB (música popular brasileira). Such aspects of both discs underline a growing area of ethnomusicological concern: historical study of popular culture.

As rewarding additions, these Rykodisc titles earn a place alongside the surprisingly few commercially available in situ field recordings of Brazilian folk and sacred Afro-Brazilian music. Primary examples of the latter are Lyrichord titles *Afro-Brazilian Religious Songs* (LLST 7315, no date), drawn from Gerard Behague's 1967-75 fieldwork on Candomblé ritual music from Salvador, Bahia, and *Amazônia: Festival and Cult Music of Northern Brazil* (LYRCD 7300, no date), presenting Marks's 1975 recordings of syncretic rituals from the Belém region. *Candomblé, Brésil: Les Eaux d'Oxalá*, from the Musique du Monde series, offers undated recordings of ceremonial music from a Bahia-affiliated terreiro in Rio de Janeiro (Buda Records 92576-2). *Music Travelogue: Brazil, the Nordeste region from Terres Records* (YA 225707, 1995), provides brief, undated

excerpts from religious and folk performances from Salvador, Recife, São Luis, Caruarú, and Fortaleza.

Rykodisc's well-packaged recordings represent not only an important, stylistically broad look into the past but also, hopefully, offer a glimpse into the future of commercially available historic recordings of Brazilian folk music in general. With even essential MPB recordings routinely going out of print in Brazil, scholars and students alike would clearly benefit from an established, growing catalog of commercially available Brazilian field recordings. These releases tap into a only tiny fraction of what Brazilian archives hold. Indeed, making field recordings available to larger audiences, though fraught with complications and costs, is nonetheless a necessary direction for both ethnomusicology and commercial label catalogs.

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Editor's note

At the behest of Fredric Leiberman, Jonathon was involved in research for the Discoteca Collection. In July of 1995, he met with José Eduardo Azevedo at the Acervo Histórico Discoteca Oneyda Alvarenga in São Paulo for the purpose of evaluating the playback quality of the original acetate discs.

The State of Irian Jaya (Indonesia) Music Research: Artur Simon's Six-Disc Set

Music From The Mountainous Region Of Western New Guinea (Irian Jaya)—

A Documentation in Sound of the Vanishing Musical Cultures of the Eipo and Their Neighbors.

Artur Simon. 1993. Berlin: Museum Collection Berlin. CD 20. Six discs with 176-page booklet in German and English. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Museum fuer Voelkerkunde, Abteilung Musikethnologie, Arnimallee 27-14195 Berlin. Telephone 030/8301-240. FAX 030/8301-292.

A mere one million people speaking 251 languages; penis gourds instead of trousers; a classic anthropological film by Robert Gardner; Michael Rockefeller's disappearance; a bloody takeover by a foreign power. Despite having one of the richest concentrations of cultural diversity in the world and a fair amount of exotic overseas press, history has conspired to keep the music of the western half of the world's second largest island concealed within its borders. Although Jaap Kunst's early studies enjoyed a second edition (Kunst 1967), Irian Jaya remains a virtual blank in the musical world-maps of ethnomusicologists and Indonesians alike.

At last things are about to change. Artur Simon has published a magnificent set of recordings that document the music of the Eipomek people as it was in 1975, before evangelization put an end to most of their traditional music. Simon also included recordings of other researchers, among them a whole disc of music from neighboring language groups. The recordings are described in detail with a 176-page book in German and English.

How important is this publication? Let us consider three aspects: the number of recordings available from this region, historical importance, and aesthetic appreciation. In terms of filling the gap in recordings of the world's musics, it ranks very high because it is the first full-length recording of the indigenous music of Irian Jaya released internationally. Until this set appeared, the only hint of what Irian

Jayan music sounded like came from published transcriptions, and a couple of brief cuts on *The Columbia World Library of Folk & Primitive Music: Indonesia*, a record found only in a few archives and libraries.

Both Westerners and Eipomek have a stake in the history of Eipomek music. The Eipomek were the subjects of a huge documentation project sponsored by the German government that resulted in the publication of 20 books and an extensive film archive housed at the Max Planck Institute (Schieffenhoevel 1975). Musical history conveys things about a culture that no other history can express. Interest in past or forgotten musics seems to be a near-universal. Western nostalgia for ancient Greek music, Hildegard of Bingen, etc., has parallels with cultural revivals of Maori music, Hawaiian hula, and Papua New Guinean rituals. Will future generations of Eipomek appreciate the music their ancestors performed in 1975, or will they wish to forget it? An illuminating parallel might be found in the interest in sound recordings at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, where the largest number of requests for recordings come from Aboriginal people (followed closely by requests from music researchers) (Grace Koch in Moyle 1992, 245).

The aesthetic appreciation of Irian Jayan traditional music has been a moot point for anyone outside of that province until now, as no recordings were available, and published transcriptions provided only the barest hint of the music's qualities. Irian Jayan forms are especially fragile because they rely on a particular set of social circumstances for their conception and performance, circumstances which are undergoing radical change through outside intervention by missionaries, the Indonesian government, and "Javanese" settlers. To appreciate such music as sounds-only, divorced from the excitement of a dance or the tragedy of a death, requires an open mind or a familiarity with similar sounds from other parts of the world. This set of recordings may not appeal to listeners who require a steady beat and tonic-dominant chord progressions, but it includes a rich variety of sounds that can be marveled at for their unusual timbres, group textures, and virtuosity. Fans of avant-garde music will feel at home with Xenakis-like clouds (the *fotfotonga* in CD2:1, p. 137), and Amy Denio-like virtuoso babbling (c.f. CD4:19) [Listening Examples *7* and *8*].

Artur Simon and his assistant Ekkehart Rojl conducted ethnomusicological research among the Eipomek of Jayawijaya regency in the eastern highlands of Irian Jaya, as part of a team that included

world-renowned ethnologist Iranaeus Eibl-Eibesfeldt. Their project, "Man, Culture and Environment in the Mountainous Region of Western New Guinea," was supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, and planned by the Berliner Museum fuer Voelkerkunde. Simon and Royl conducted research from December 1975 through April 1976. Royl continued his field research, resulting in his doctoral dissertation (Royl 1992). This CD set provides in-depth documentation of Eipomek music, including commentary, transcriptions, and photographs, all contextualized with examples from same-family-languages Nalca and Ketengban (Silzer and Clouse 1991, 30, Map VIII). Simon also includes a wonderful disc of music by neighboring language families.

The Eipomek were chosen because of their extreme isolation. They had had virtually no contact with anyone except their immediate neighbors, and still used stone tools. Their first substantial contact was with the German research team in 1974 (p. 131). Although the Indonesian government refused permission for research following the "Man Culture and Environment" project, it allowed entry by the American Unevangelized Fields Mission, which led to the burning of the Eipo "holy relics" in 1980 (Heeschen 1990, 9, quoted on p. 129).

These sound recordings convey a huge amount of rich information that cannot be gotten from printed transcriptions, which up until now were the only sonic information available. Conventional notation cannot, without crippling complexity, specify subtle shadings of timbre; attack and decay; or minute rhythmic and dynamic fluctuation. However, coupled with the recordings, the transcriptions provided in the book provide an excellent way to perceptualize the flow of sound events, and make it easier to think about the general pitch relationships and structures.

The main village where these recordings were made is situated between 1600 and 1800 meters in elevation. The adaptations humans make to altitude include not only environmental and biological factors (see for example Haas 1983), but also musical responses. As part of a project involving multidisciplinary scientific comparison, it seems reasonable to wonder whether Eipo music parallels other high-altitude musics. This topic could not, undoubtedly, be dealt with given the space limitations of the compact disc booklet. However, members of the research team wrote a book concerning Eipo communication, and included substantial discussion of ritual/dance/ song from a global perspective (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Schiefenhoel, and Heeschen 1989). Their discussion of the phylogeny of music ritual (at page 181, for example) is particularly welcome, given the avoidance of this topic

by American ethnomusicologists over the past few decades.

How does this recording affect the Eipo people? Looking back, the German research project was able to send food aid when the area was struck by two earthquakes in 1976 (p. 129). The Eipo situation is different from some Papua New Guinean situations, for example, where researchers (relatively wealthy whites) sparked a renewed interest in past music by valuing it highly and investing resources in its documentation. At the time of this project, the Eipo had not been converted to Christianity, and had not gone through a decline in their musical practices. The researchers must have been met with curiosity and wonder, as reported in first contact accounts from neighboring Papua New Guinea (see O'Neill 1961; and Michael Leahy's 1933 photograph of men listening to the first gramophone in Mount Hagen, in Connolly and Anderson 1987, 229). Any respect for tradition the research team may have encouraged did not prevent the Eipo from stopping their musical customs under the advice of the Christian evangelists. I suspect that the Eipo will eventually, if they haven't already, revive some of the musical forms they abandoned. If and when that time comes, Simon's publication makes it far easier to reproduce music that had not been performed for a long time. The high quality of compact disc transfers ensures the survival of the details of the sounds. Publication is important because archival recordings deteriorate, are difficult to access (for Irian Jayans, probably impossible), and are usually not organized in a usable documented format. There may be no compact disc players in the Eipo area now, but this will change, and meanwhile a cassette copy of the recordings is a practical way for Eipo to hear their music.

Shame is an important aspect of Melanesian life (c.f. Epstein 1984), and the question may arise as to whether future generations of the Eipo will approve or disapprove of the German team's work. Certainly, Eipo people will react over time in complex and diverse ways. If Indonesian officials condemn the wearing of penis gourds instead of trousers, some might feel ashamed of their clothing and wish to forget the past, while those who are proud of their indigenous dress might be glad for the photos used on the cover and in the booklet of this set. Similarly, some Eipo may wish to sever ties with musico-religious customs as documented by Simon and Royle, while others may take pride in or enjoy the recordings, knowing that their music is now heard around the world. Simon's respect and compassion for the Eipo is evident in his text, the careful selection of tracks, the photographs, the transcriptions, and the large size of the set. I suspect that most Eipo

are profoundly proud of this publication.

Eipo music has aesthetic appeal to adventurous listeners. A single disc created purely to celebrate the beautiful and remarkable sounds of Eipo music would probably do quite well in the growing world-music market. Some of the sounds which I find most appealing include a whole group of massed textures consisting of alternating rhythmic cries on vocables, chugging sounds using inhaling and exhaling, and two types of inhaled whistling (p. 137). The men sing quasi-unison descending glissandi, sometimes spanning an octave and sometimes pausing on the way down, blurred by group heterophonic imprecision (CD2:1, pp. 74-77) [Listening Example 7]. Children as young as age four have a great deal of skill in performing songs, firing off rapid words and vocables with great virtuosity (c.f. CD5:6, CD4:1, etc.) [Listening Example *9*], and the fun they have comes through on the recordings, where they sometimes interrupt the singing with their own laughter (c.f. CD5:3, etc.). The healer we hear performing *funfungana* sucking magic punctuates his text with an inspirative noise that doesn't quite become a whistle (CD3:13) [Listening Example *10*].

This set makes it possible to extend research in the use of vocables (see also Royl 1990, 3; Royl 1992), compare highland musics across New Guinea, and to consider Irian Jayan heterophonic practice in the light of recent publications on Papua New Guinean and Brazilian heterophony. To bring Irian Jayan music into global discussion, Royl's two-volume dissertation should be translated into English, and above all into Indonesian.

The CD-sized book accompanying Simon's set consists of maps, a detailed track listing, 52 pages of German text along with its 46-page English translation, 33 pages of music transcriptions, 22 black and white photographs, a bibliography, and a concordance of CD tracks with the nine collections the recordings came from. Artur Simon wrote the main body of the text, Ekkehart Royl contributed some commentaries, and linguist Volker Heeschen wrote brief notes and song translations (also published in Heeschen 1990). Simon recorded 77 of the tracks, Royl 62, and the remaining 26 tracks were drawn from a variety of collections.

Simon distinguishes four types of Eipo songs: *mot*, *dit*, *fungfungana*, and *layelayana* (p. 135). Men perform *mot* group songs at a variety of occasions, represented here by long parts (totaling 90 minutes) of a festival in Munggona village, as well as 44 individually recorded songs from a variety of locations in both the Mek Sub-Phylum-

Level Language Family (Eipomek, Nalca, and Ketengban languages) and the Ok Family (probably Ngalum language)(see Silzer and Clouse 1991: Map VIII). Both men and women sing *dit* individual songs, either solo or with others. Included here are 41 solo *dit*, 20 duets, six trios, and eight group performances. Simon presents one example of *fungfungana* curing recitation, and four *layelayana* laments. The Eipo use only one musical instrument, the jew's harp. In his commentary on the example included here, Royle notes that the playing of the instrument is termed *bingkong-yupe*, meaning "jew's harp language" (p. 150).

The booklet contains partial music transcriptions of 32 of the songs, and many more transcriptions have been published elsewhere (Simon 1978, 1992; Royle 1992). Also included are lists of 23 *mot* structures, and 36 *dit* structures divided into seven groups (pp. 78-81). The *dit* structures follow the track order on the compact discs, but the *mot* structures do not. Volker Heeschen, the German team's linguist, translated the texts to 41 of the songs and provided brief commentaries on them. The vernacular texts appear either with the German translations or with the music transcriptions. Heeschen's book on Eipo texts includes chapters on *mot* and *dit* songs (Heeschen 1990, 224-59, 305-33).

In addition to the five discs consisting mainly of Mek Language Family music, Simon has wisely provided a disc of music from the surrounding areas, illustrating the diversity of musics existing in close proximity. The rugged terrain of New Guinea isolates peoples living only a few miles apart, which in turn contributes to the development of different languages and musics. Royle (1990, 3) notes a correlation between the geographic locations of language families and "special musical style[s]." Not enough music has been documented in either Irian Jaya or Papua New Guinea to know the exact nature of this correlation, but broad-ranging surveys such as *The Papua New Guinea Music Collection* (Niles and Webb 1987) lend support to the common-sense notion of separate language families having, at least to some extent, their own musics, with border areas tending towards multiple styles or transitional differences.

The survey disc included here contains eight songs from the Ok Language Family, 17 songs from the Great Dani Family (Yali and Dani languages), one from the Ekagi-Wodani-Moni Family (Moni language), and five Christian songs spread by Dani evangelists to various language groups in the region. The Ok Language Family straddles the border with

Papua New Guinea, where three of the songs were recorded (CD6:3, 7, 8). The Yali and Dani sing "highly developed polyphony" (p. 171). During a 1993 visit to Wamena, I recorded music similar to the Dani song in CD6:25, but with much faster tempi [Listening Example *11*]. In the booklet (p. 171), Royl states that the western Yali and Dani areas constitute a single musical region. Further west, the Moni also sing polyphonically, as demonstrated by the remarkable recording (CD6:26) made in 1952 by Father Van Nunen, the first white man to contact some of the people in the area (personal communication, 1993).

SUMMARY

Artur Simon and Ekkehart Royl participated in one of the major cultural-scientific projects of this century. Through the group effort of the research team covering a broad range of disciplines, they were able to reach a level of understanding that would have otherwise taken many years of fieldwork. Royl completed his doctoral dissertation based on research he started in this project. Simon has published several articles concerning Eipo music, and followed with this most valuable document, a carefully chosen selection of songs covering most of the song types, complete with contextualization by examples from surrounding language groups.

This set holds great importance as the first full-length recording of Irian Jayan music available globally, as a rare example of late 20th-century music by a people who had experienced virtually no outside contact, and as the largest single set of commercial recordings of a Melanesian musical region published to date. I applaud Simon's emphasis on the sounds, which were carefully recorded and organized. Importantly, the 90-minute excerpt of the mot performance at Munggona for the first time starts to give outsiders some sense of Melanesian music's time span. Typically, a dance performance lasts all night (c.f. pages 136-37). The effects of inexact repetition and altered states of consciousness due to staying up all night can at least be hinted at through these seven hours of music.

The booklet accompanying these recordings packs all the most pertinent information into a small space. Readers seeking more transcriptions and information can consult the references included in the bibliography. The photographs are well chosen, the musical transcriptions helpful, and the song texts include vernacular, translation, and commentary. Libraries and Melanesianists will find this

an essential item. (At the moment, Museum Collection Berlin does not seem to have an American distributor.)

In closing, I should mention that the forthcoming *Oceania* volume of the *Garland Encyclopedia of World Music* will include important articles on Irian Jaya music, and a second Irian Jaya disc is under preparation, in the joint series of Indonesian recordings being issued by Masyarakat Seni Pertunjukan Indonesia and Smithsonian Folkways.

Many more recordings will have to come out before we can begin to map the musical regions of Irian Jaya's 251 language groups. Artur Simon's *Music from the Mountainous Region of Western New Guinea* has set a high standard that should serve as a model for future Melanesian music publications.

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Contributors Page

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Jonathan Ritter is a doctoral candidate at UCLA in the Department of Ethnomusicology. He has conducted research among indigenous and African-American communities throughout North and South America, and is currently writing his dissertation on music and violence in Ayacucho, Peru.

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