EXCURSIONS IN WORLD MUSIC

EIGHTH EDITION

Edited by
Timothy Rommen and Bruno Nettl

ROUTLEDGE

EXCURSIONS IN WORLD MUSIC

Eighth Edition

Excursions in World Music is a comprehensive introductory textbook to the musics of the world, creating a panoramic experience for students by engaging the many cultures around the globe, and highlighting the sheer diversity to be experienced in the world of music. At the same time, the text illustrates the often profound ways through which a deeper exploration of these many different communities can reveal overlaps, shared horizons, and common concerns in spite of, and because of, this very diversity. The new eighth edition features six brand new chapters, including chapters on Japan, Sub-Saharan Africa, China and Taiwan, Europe, Maritime Southeast Asia, and Indigenous Peoples of North America. General updates have been made to other chapters, replacing visuals and updating charts/statistics.

Another major addition to the eighth edition is the publication of a companion Reader, entitled *Critical Themes in World Music*. Each chapter in the Reader is designed to introduce students to a theoretical concept or thematic area within ethnomusicology and illustrate its possibilities by pointing to case studies drawn from at least three chapters in *Excursions in World Music*. Chapters include the following topics: Music, Gender, and Sexuality; Music and Ritual; Coloniality and "World Music"; Music and Space; Music and Diaspora; Communication, Technology, Media; Musical Labor, Musical Value; and Music and Memory.

Instructors can use this resource as a primary or secondary path through the materials, either assigning chapters from the textbook and then digging deeper by exploring a chapter from the Reader, or starting with a Reader chapter and then moving into the musical specifics offered in the textbook chapters. Having available both an area studies and a thematic approach to the materials offers important flexibility to instructors and also provides students with additional means of engaging with the musics of the world.

A companion website with a new test bank and fully updated instructor's manual is available for instructors. Numerous resources are posted for students, including streamed audio listening, additional resources (such as links to YouTube videos or websites), a musical fundamentals essay (introducing concepts such as meter, melody, harmony, form, etc.), interactive quizzes, and flashcards.

Timothy Rommen is the Davidson Kennedy Professor in the College and Professor of Music and Africana Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

Bruno Nettl was Professor Emeritus of Musicology at the University of Illinois School of Music, and recipient of the Charles Homer Haskins Prize (by the American Council of Learned Societies) as a distinguished humanist.

To the Memory of Bruno Nettl (1930–2020)

I continue to believe that fundamentally,
despite differences in complexity and technology,
all musics are equal, equally valuable.

"*Have You Changed Your Mind? Reflections on Sixty Years in* Ethnomusicology"
(Acta Musicologica, 2017)

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Byron Dueck, Richard Jankowsky,
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Lei Ouyang, and Jim Sykes

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Chérie Rivers Ndaliko studied at Harvard University and teaches at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She also serves as director of research and education at Yole!Africa in Goma, DRC. Building on decolonial and subaltern perspectives, her research and activism on expressive culture, epistemology, and ecology seek to subvert global systems of power. Her books include *Necessary Noise: Music, Film, and Charitable Imperialism in the East of Congo* and *The Art of Emergency: Aesthetics and Aid in African Crises*.

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FOREWORD

Bruno Nettl

THE WORLD OF MUSIC HAS CHANGED

Each of the peoples, ethnic groups, and nations of the world have their own music. We take this for granted, but we also take for granted, generally speaking, that just about all people in the world can listen to virtually any kind of music at will, on the Internet, on the radio, or with CDs. Some of this music may sound very attractive to us—whatever our own national or ethnic background— some of it may sound just terrible, some of it boring, some disturbing. But every kind of music sounds familiar, cozy, grand, ideal, heart-warming, or inspiring, to the people who make it. One major purpose of this book is to help readers and students understand what makes these musics different from each other, and how the different peoples of the world think about music. But we take it for granted that we can hear any of this music whenever we wish.

It's useful to remind ourselves that about 120 years ago, most people in the world, and surely most people in the United States, only got to hear music that belonged to their own culture. Someone in a small Midwestern town about 1910—if you are a student, it might have been your great-grandmother—might have heard some popular songs, sung hymns in church, and might possibly even have taken an excursion to the big city to hear a symphony concert. She very likely also heard some Sousa marches on the Fourth of July, heard some folksongs that her grandma had learned, and listened to some songs sung by a German or Polish choir at a festival. Your great-grandma's musical life—in some ways it is surely a rich musical environment—might be considered very restricted compared to our ability today to be musical omnivorous. If someone in that small town in 1910 had heard Japanese, African, or even Native American music, they might have said, "oh, that's so strange, I can't listen to it," or even asked "is this really music?" Today, members of all of the world's societies hear each other's music, and recognize that every society is musically different, that the world consists of a large number of musics. What has also happened is that people take elements they find attractive from strange musics and combine them, fuse them, with their own, inventing new, hybrid kinds of music in the process. Millions of people take part in discovering, interpreting, and re-creating the musics of the world.

The people who are most concerned with trying to figure out what makes musics different from each other (and why they are different), and to figure out how different peoples think about and use music are members of a profession

called "ethnomusicology." Ethnomusicologists (and their predecessors, who called themselves comparative musicologists, or had no designation at all) began to work—at first in tiny numbers—in the late nineteenth century, when it became possible to travel to obscure places to hear music and to make recordings on wax cylinders. About 1900 there might have been about a dozen of them, and now there might be about 5,000 in the world—still not a very large profession. In that time, they have tried to learn what the world's musical cultures were like, and to teach about what they found out in schools and colleges and through publications; they have tried not only to preserve the world's musical diversity by encouraging the world's peoples to maintain their old traditions, but also to figure out why and with what mechanisms musics change. The authors of the chapters in this book are ethnomusicologists, and while this is not a book actually about ethnomusicology, it may help the reader to understand a bit of how the minds of ethnomusicologists work—if I may put it that way.

ETHNOMUSICOLOGISTS CONTEMPLATE THE WORLD'S MUSIC(S)

How did our attitude toward listening to sounds from a distant land and saying, "can we even call that music?" or "this must be some kind of prehistoric sound" shift to thinking, instead, "well, this sounds strange to me, but it might not if I got to know it better" or, "sounds a bit weird, but then, our music probably sounds weird to those people, too?"

There are several ways of going at this question, but let me try just one. Ethnomusicologists have changed in their way of interpreting the world of music. The person who is sometimes thought to have blown the first trumpet, Alexander John Ellis, a British polymath, writing in 1885, said in effect that all musics were equally natural and normal. After that, students of the world's musical cultures tended to adopt an "ours–not ours" attitude. They saw Western classical music as the purview of academics who called themselves historical musicologists, and everything else—the music of non-Western cultures and the folk music of all peoples—as the subject matter of ethnomusicology. Later on, the people who called themselves ethnomusicologists divided music into the categories of folk, classical, and popular musics—folk music as the music of oral transmission, classical music as the art of highly skilled professionals, and popular music as the music promulgated by mass media (recording, radio, TV) and often the result of cultural mixes. We still use these categories.

But also, in the early days before about 1955, ethnomusicologists looked at the world of music as one vast continent, variegated, to be sure, but something one could learn to understand with a single set of methods and approaches, and by finding ways of comparing musics with each other. Later they began to look at the world of music as a group of distinct musics—more like islands, as it were—each of which could be best comprehended by using a distinct approach derived from the way the people who created that music viewed it.

That included intensive fieldwork, and perhaps also learning to be part of that musical culture by performing the music. We still maintain this view, but we have also added a further one: We think of the world of music as distinct units relating to each other in many ways, like islands connected by bridges, realizing that in addition to studying the world's musics as individual systems, and perhaps getting insight from comparisons, we are enormously interested in how the world's musics interrelate. And so, studying what I've labeled as "bridges" between these islands has become one of our major tasks. And indeed, a very large proportion of the music that the peoples of the world perform and listen to today is based on many different kinds of fusion, combination, and interaction.

HOW WE GOT TO THIS BOOK

This is a book that tries to inform the reader about the music of the world's cultures, presenting each of the world's principal cultural areas such as East Asia or Sub-Saharan Africa by looking in some detail at the music of one of its cultures or societies. It has changed through its eight editions that have appeared every few years, trying to reflect advances in the approaches of ethnomusicologists as well as changes in the world of music, and the authors are proud now to join the distinguished program at Routledge, which has made many significant contributions to ethnomusicology and world music. But it is still, in essence, the book that first appeared under the title *Excursions in World Music* in 1992. Let me give a personal account of its genesis, beginning with its prehistory.

Ever since Alexander Ellis made his point about the diversity and equality of the world's musics in 1885, various scholars have tried to provide overviews of this realm—well, more accurately, of the world's musics outside those of Western civilization. Before 1950, the authors of these accounts were largely German or Austrian—I'll just mention some of their names, because they are major figures in the early history of this field: Carl Stumpf, Robert Lachmann, Curt Sachs, Marius Schneider. They tended to think that the diversity of the world's musics represented stages through which all musics were passing, some more quickly than others.

But none of them wrote books that were directed to students or to laypersons; that came to be an American specialty. By now, as I write, there are a number of books that try in various ways to survey the world's musics. Today, too, virtually every music department at an American university or college offers at least a survey of the music of the world's cultures, and there is a widespread need for textbooks. But when I began teaching, in the 1950s, there was no textbook or set of readings that I could recommend to my students. In the six decades since then, various approaches to teaching have been developed, and these books surveying world music constitute a kind of genre. But in the development of this genre, the previous publisher of the book at hand, Prentice Hall (and publishing houses related to it) played a major role. Let me tell you a bit of the role of Prentice Hall in this history.

In 1961, I received a call from H. Wiley Hitchcock, a distinguished music historian specializing in American music then teaching at the University of Michigan, telling me that he had undertaken to edit a series of textbooks to be titled *The Prentice Hall History of Music Series*, which was to consist of nine volumes—six about the major periods of European classical music, one about the classical music of the United States, and two about, well, everything else. Mr. Hitchcock asked me to write one of these volumes, and told me that William P. Malm, a professor at Michigan and an authority on Japanese music, would write the other. What, you might exclaim, seven volumes on Western classical music, and only two for everything else? Indeed. But I know that Mr. Hitchcock had a hard time persuading the publisher that even two volumes for "everything else" were justified. Anyway, what was being requested was material that might satisfy the need of courses people were actually teaching or planning to teach.

Two volumes for music of the non-Western cultures, and for all folk music? But how were we to divide this world of music into two halves? Well, Mr. Hitchcock said, it's up to you guys to decide, you can duke it out. So Professor Malm and I did just that, and while we've never been quite sure that we did a good job—it has been a half century since that time—the books in that series did appear between 1964 and 1966: Malm's volume, titled *Music Cultures of the Pacific, the Near East, and Asia*; and mine, *Folk and Traditional Music of the Western Continents* ("Western" included the Americas, Europe, and Africa). These short books were revised a few times and continued to be published and to be used as texts rather widely for some thirty years. Indeed, they were published in Spanish, Korean, and Japanese translations.

Well, there were many things about my volume, at least, that one might criticize, but one fundamental weakness—and this applies to William Malm's volume, too—was that while each of us had done field research as ethnomusicologists, most of what we wrote we knew only from books and records. Another was our inability to integrate Western music with the rest of the world, and a third one was the absence of popular music.

To address this last issue, Prentice Hall in 1975 brought out a text titled *Contemporary Music and Music Cultures*, by Charles Hamm, Ronald Byrnside, and Bruno Nettl. Never widely used, because it did not fit a sufficient number of courses, its nine chapters included essays on music and society in twentieth-century USA, jazz improvisation, current developments in the music culture of Native Americans and in Iran, and the fusion of musics in American popular music.

Through the 1970s and 1980s I kept in close touch with editors at Prentice Hall, who recognized that courses on world music were becoming an academic standard, and one of them said to me in about 1985, "when you write a text on world music you owe it to us." Indeed, I had all along felt very much at home in the publishing world of Prentice Hall. But I didn't think I should try to write a book about world music by myself; those early days when one person could survey the music world seemed long past. Parenthetically I had better point out that today there are still authors willing to try this, but most of their books don't

pretend to be comprehensive but provide spot-checks largely from the authors' own research experiences.

Now, to the book at hand: The moment came in 1987, when ethnomusicology at the University of Illinois, at which I had been teaching for years, had developed sufficiently to employ four of us. And further, our sister-campus, the University of Illinois at Chicago, had also appointed an ethnomusicologist, Philip Bohlman, to its faculty. When I thought about the interests of these colleagues, a light went on in my head: We really, in our research experience, did do a pretty good job of covering the world. And so, in the late fall of 1987, the five of us—Charles Capwell and his wife Isabel Wong, Thomas Turino, Philip Bohlman, and myself—sat for three or four hours in the Capwells' kitchen, brainstorming an idea for a text that we could present to Prentice Hall.

Our plan was to provide a book of ten essays plus an introduction, each of them based on an area of the author's expertise, providing some introduction to the area in the broad sense, but with a focus on the nation or culture with which the author had worked. Thus, Tom Turino would write about Latin America, with emphasis on Peru; and on Africa, with emphasis on Zimbabwe. I would write about Native Americans, concentrating on the peoples of the Northern Plains; and on the Middle East, with emphasis on Iran. Philip Bohlman, writing about Europe, would find ways to integrate Western classical music. Isabel Wong would write about East Asia, and Charles Capwell would consider South and Southeast Asian music. Prentice Hall approved, and we stuck to that plan as much as we could. We decided that each author should write essays appropriate to his or her personal style of writing and research, but we also agreed that all chapters should have things in common. For one thing, of course, the length. More important: We thought that the best way to introduce students to a music would be to present, right off the bat, one aspect of the culture in detail. Usually it might be a musical event—performance or ceremony, but it could also be an instrument or a particular musician. This would provide the basis for expansion into the musical culture as a whole, and into the larger musical area. Thus, my description of a Blackfoot powwow would expand into the ideas about music and the musical style of Blackfoot culture and then further into the things that Native American musics had in common, and the ways in which they exhibited significant diversity, and also how they had interacted with the musical cultures of white and black Americans.

One other thing we agreed on: Each chapter would talk about the music itself, its sound and style, instruments; but also about the role of music in culture, the ideas about music and the musical events that characterized each society we discussed. All of this we presented to our editor at Prentice Hall, with a plan for recorded musical examples and black-and-white photographs.

Well, with quite a lot of support and encouragement from the publisher, we completed a manuscript, and the first edition appeared in late 1991, with editions following in 1997, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2017, and now in 2020. In the fifth edition, Timothy Rommen was added to the roster of authors, in the sixth edition, Byron Dueck wrote a chapter, and in the seventh—which also found *Excursions in World Music* looking to the future with a new publishing home at

Routledge—Richard Jankowsky, Joshua D. Pilzer, and Jim Sykes contributed chapters. In this eighth edition, the voices of Marié Abe, Andrea Bohlman, Lei Ouyang Bryant, and Chérie Rivers Ndaliko join the conversation. Over the years, we have added devices to help students and teachers—definitions and verbal illustrations in the text, teacher's manuals, more color photos, and more sound examples with better Listening Guides. But the basic structure and the principles with which we began have, in essence, remained.

A NEW KIND OF ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

We, the original authors, are happy to have our work replaced by younger scholars who are more up on recent technologies and current events in world music. We can't deny it: The world of music has changed a lot even in the thirty years since we began working on this book, and the world of ethnomusicology too has changed. Ethnomusicologists look at the world of music somewhat differently than back in the long-ago era of the twentieth century. Some of these changes in both music and ethnomusicology are reflected in the most recent editions of *Excursions in World Music.*

How have we, the kinds of people who write books like this one, changed our attitudes? Let me give a couple of examples: They—well, really "we"—have stopped looking for "authentic" music. Decades ago, listening to Native American music, we would ask ourselves whether this was really like the music the singer's grandfather had sung; whether it was truly the music accepted by the entire nation or tribe; whether it showed influences of the music of white people; whether, in other words, it was or wasn't "authentic." We don't worry about that anymore but have not entirely abandoned that concept. Second—and I've mentioned this already—we are more interested in music that exhibits fusion, music that combines elements from various cultures, and that we once scorned. Along with that, we are much more interested in the study of popular music, and in the role of technology such as the Internet in the culture of music.

And finally, we have begun to take a greater interest in discovering how music can help people. We continue to try to discover what the musics of the various peoples of the world are like, as sound and also as bodies of idea and concept. Maybe even more, we are interested in how music is used to express identity, to communicate inside the society, and with the outside world, and with the supernatural, and what different societies believe music can do. Ethnomusicologists in fairly large numbers have begun to use this knowledge to do people some good—helping to develop equitable systems of music education, to aid in conflict resolution and in the problems occasioned by forced migrations, to understand the potential of music in healing, and even to do our part to fight the effects of poverty and help to save the environment.

Learning something about the world's musics can lead to great aesthetic and intellectual experiences, to an understanding of art and of society. It can also show us that music can be a powerful force for good of all kinds.

PREFACE

Excursions in World Music, *Eighth Edition* is designed to draw you into a series of musical encounters that open onto the widest possible range of social, political, ethnic, religious, racial, historical, and economic concerns facing communities throughout the world today. But this book is also designed to achieve this broad scope while remaining very accessible to you. Without requiring a working knowledge of music theory or harmony, the chapters in this book invite you to consider many pressing questions: How does music function? What does it mean to (or accomplish for) the communities who produce it? How is it mediated and circulated and why do these flows of sound, bodies, and capital matter? How does music illuminate or complicate race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality? What are the spiritual implications of performance? How do dance and theater participate in these musical contexts? In what ways do history and geography contribute to the conditions of possibility for musical creativity? What, moreover, can we learn about ourselves in the process of learning about the many musics of the world?

FEATURES

Your excursions will take you into the middle of musical advertisements in the streets of Japan (*chindon-ya*); immerse you in the things you can learn from listening to the soundscapes of cities like Taipei; allow you to get a working understanding of Javanese Gamelan performance; and challenge you to think with and listen to popular musicians hailing from Trinidad to Benin, and from India to Colombia, and that's just a start. *Excursions in World Music* is:

- Organized along an area studies model, in which individual chapters work to represent the multiple musical cultures of a given region.
- Comprised of a set of essays—by nine different scholars describing, with conviction and a sense of devotion, cultures in which they have had substantial field experience and done personal research, providing information and in-depth syntheses of the musical cultures of the world.
- Dedicated to illustrating what Bruno Nettl has, in his Foreword, called the "bridges" that exist between these various regions and nation-states.

- Written for students with no formal musical training, and challenging them to engage with the musics of the world and become motivated listeners.
- A complete course with book and dedicated web site that hosts instructor and student resources.

NEW TO THE EIGHTH EDITION

The most significant new components of the eighth edition are six new chapters, which incorporate new musical developments in these regions, integrate new approaches within ethnomusicology, and open new ways of considering these musical communities in global perspective. They all replace existing chapters from the seventh edition, expanding on and, in some cases, reframing the content to open onto additional topics and to offer new points of emphasis. These include:

- Musics of East Asia III: Japan, written by Marié Abe, replacing the previous chapter by Isabel K. Wong.
- Music of Europe, contributed by Andrea F. Bohlman, replacing the previous chapter by Philip V. Bohlman.
- Musics of East Asia I: China and Taiwan, written by Lei Ouyang Bryant, replacing the previous chapter on China by Isabel K. Wong.
- Music of Indigenous North America, contributed by Byron Dueck, replacing the previous chapter on Native American music by Bruno Nettl.
- Music of Sub-Saharan Africa, written by Chérie Rivers Ndaliko, replacing the previous chapter by Thomas Turino.
- Music of Maritime Southeast Asia, contributed by Jim Sykes, replacing the previous chapter on Indonesia by Charles Capwell.

Although each of these chapters confronts the impossibility of writing a satisfactorily comprehensive single essay on an entire region, or even about a nation-state, the chapter on Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, engages with the politics and stakes of teaching "Africa" in the context of a world music course. It is challenging by design, asking you to think carefully about the history of power and empire, the legacies of race and racism, and the systematic and continued economic exploitation of the continent. Some of these concerns are shared in other contexts, of course, but they are succinctly and powerfully articulated in this chapter and raise questions that you can productively apply to other chapters within the textbook.

Further, the authors of *Excursions in World Music* continue in this edition their commitment to the approach, structure, and content with which they have always conceived this work. The eighth edition:

- Responds to many of the significant changes that the world of music continues to experience (and this especially with regard to popular musics)—Chapter 2, for instance, considers the importance of Coke Studio for the production of South Asian popular musics.

- Interprets the rapidly changing conditions, repertories, and styles of world music since the beginning of the twenty-first century, focusing on traditional, art, and popular musics throughout the world. Chapter 3, for instance, explores the music and politics of the Arab Spring.
- Explores the world as a collection of places in which globalization, the explosion of new technologies, media flows, and the often dramatically shifting landscapes of a postcolonial and neonationalist world dominate the musical scene. Chapter 10, for instance, presents champeta (Colombia) and nortec (Mexico) as examples of how music is shaped by all of these factors.
- Enhances the instructional resources for educators with a test bank, PowerPoint slides, and a thoroughly updated instructor's manual.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Each chapter has several features that will enable you to get the most out of your experience with *Excursions in World Music*. Each chapter includes:

- An opening vignette or set of framing questions that introduces the musical ideas and social contexts you'll be studying for the rest of the chapter.
- A running glossary that helps you keep track of key words and concepts, and familiarizes you with vocabulary you might not have encountered before.
- A series of Listening Guides that help you listen closely to examples of the musical genres and instruments under discussion throughout the chapter. These Listening Guides offer you the chance to follow along and come to a deeper understanding about the significance, structure, and/or technical aspects of the musical examples. Where appropriate, they also offer translations of the lyrics.
- Icons in margins alerting you to supplemental materials on the companion website. These icons come in three varieties:

  
  LISTEN: These are placed above the Listening Guide and direct you to the website. Most musical examples are linked to YouTube or Spotify, where you will need to establish a (no charge) account to listen to certain tracks. See www.spotify.com.

  
  REVIEW: These are placed at the end of each chapter and alert you to the set of resources available for studying. These include flashcards for key terms and ideas, and interactive quizzes for your practice, and an instrument chart sorted by country or continent.

  
  EXPLORE: These are placed at various points in the margins, illuminating topics for which we have sought out additional information on the internet.

- A bibliography compiled in order to provide you with additional reading possibilities.

COMPANION WEBSITE: www.routledge.com/cw/rommen

The website for *Excursions in World Music* hosts two separate sites for Instructors and Students. Entrance is password protected, and instructions are given when you open the home page.

Instructors will find: an Instructor's Manual; Test Bank; a general essay on "Music Fundamentals" that presents some of the most common ways of talking about music and understanding concepts such as melody, harmony, and rhythm; and links to further resources for each chapter.

Students will be able to access: Learning Objectives for each chapter; Interactive Quizzes; an Instrument Guide, aligned by country/continent; the "Music Fundamentals" essay described above; and "Explore" topics.

Both Instructors and Students have access to an audio compilation of musical examples, keyed to the textbook. Links to these are organized by chapter.

NEW COMPANION READER: *CRITICAL THEMES IN WORLD MUSIC*

An exciting new resource that stands separate from *Excursions in World Music* but is integrated into its content is a new companion Reader, entitled *Critical Themes in World Music*. This new Reader includes an introduction and eight chapters on themes that are central to ethnomusicological inquiry. These include:

- Music, Gender, and Sexuality
- Music and Ritual
- Coloniality and "World Music"
- Music and Space
- Music and Diaspora
- Communication, Technology, Media
- Musical Labor, Musical Value
- Music and Memory

Each short chapter (approx. 4,000 words) introduces you to the theme at hand and then illustrates it with reference to musical examples drawn from at least three chapters of *Excursions in World Music*. In so doing, the Reader becomes a way for you to engage with the musics of the world thematically as well as from the area studies perspective presented in the textbook. More on this below.

FOR STUDENTS

You will find resources available both within each chapter and on the thoroughly redesigned companion website for the book. Within each chapter, you will be

able to focus your learning with the help of integrated sidebar definitions of key terms; additional and, in many cases, updated photos; detailed Listening Guides; a word bank of key words and concepts, distilling the most salient ideas from each chapter; and updated bibliographies and discographies designed to point students toward further reading and listening. Callouts for additional material, housed on the companion website, are also common throughout each chapter. You can turn to the companion website for a range of additional resources including: videos and photos of instruments, ensembles, and genres discussed in various chapters; study guides and sample quizzes; flashcards; and audio Listening Guides keyed to those found in each chapter.

You should think of the audio examples, in particular, as a major component of your learning, paying close attention to the Listening Guides and working to understand the performances as growing out of and deeply connected to the issues and ideas each chapter's author is presenting in the text. Ideally, you'll find that the companion website gives you a wide range of material to take your inquiries further and ground your understanding in additional examples more deeply. Make sure you make use of both the book and the companion website in your studies, and you'll find that you'll gain a great deal more from your experience. *Excursions in World Music* was written with a belief that knowledge of the world's musics not only opens many doors to a better understanding of today's most pressing social, political, and cultural problems, but also engenders respect for those who make and experience music everywhere.

The new Reader, too, should be considered a major resource for generating deeper engagement with and understanding of the musical practices and communities you read about in the textbook. Your instructor may choose to assign only a few chapters from the Reader to augment thematically the goals of the course, but it is equally possible to use the Reader as the first point of entry into materials in the textbook. However the Reader is integrated into your classroom experience, it is my hope that you'll explore all of the short chapters in order to get a better sense of the enduring concerns and political stakes that animate ethnomusicological inquiry.

FOR INSTRUCTORS

You will find the eighth edition of *Excursions in World Music* more explicitly dedicated to providing teaching resources and pedagogical support than ever before. The photos and videos available to students are also made available to you in a secure portion of the companion website, where you can also find: a completely redesigned instructional guide; a generous set of sample test questions; a general essay on elements of music that you may use to supplement your lectures or simply assign to your students; PowerPoint slides to supplement your lectures; and links to further resources for each chapter. The goal is to provide a ready set of tools that can be deployed in the classroom, both during lectures and for testing purposes and I believe that you will find the textbook more user-friendly and easier to teach from than ever before.

The authors of *Excursions in World Music* know that there is never enough time to cover every chapter in a given semester or quarter. As such, we have designed the chapters to work as discrete units. Feel free to teach them out of order, and to select those chapters that help you craft the narrative and set of issues you are most interested in conveying to your students. The companion website is envisioned as a repository of resources to help you manage the course, and I hope you'll make use of the PowerPoint slides, and the user guide in particular. You should feel free to modify the PowerPoint slides as you see fit, using them as templates for creating your own path through the material. They are, however, designed to provide you with the basics of what you'll need for each chapter. The user guide, too, is designed to offer you some starting points for lecture notes and to offer support for the concepts and issues that emerge in the course of each chapter. We hope that you'll also find the test bank and the essay on the elements of music helpful in managing the range of students and skill levels that you may encounter in the course of teaching this material.

One of the most exciting new resources for your course design is the publication of the companion Reader, entitled *Critical Themes in World Music*. This thematic Reader can be integrated into your course plans in any number of ways. You could choose to introduce students to a chapter from the textbook and then augment their engagement with that material by assigning a chapter from the Reader that connects, in its examples, to that chapter. Conversely, you could decide to engage a broad theme (such as gender and sexuality, or music and memory) first, and then follow the examples offered in the Reader to the chapters in the textbook for further study. The goal here is to offer multiple paths through the material, such that those instructors more comfortable teaching thematically have a strong set of essays to help organize such an approach while still connecting directly to the textbook. But, for those instructors who prefer the area studies approach of the textbook, the Reader offers a set of additional readings to generate more depth, opportunity for classroom discussion, and thematic focus for a few units within a given semester.

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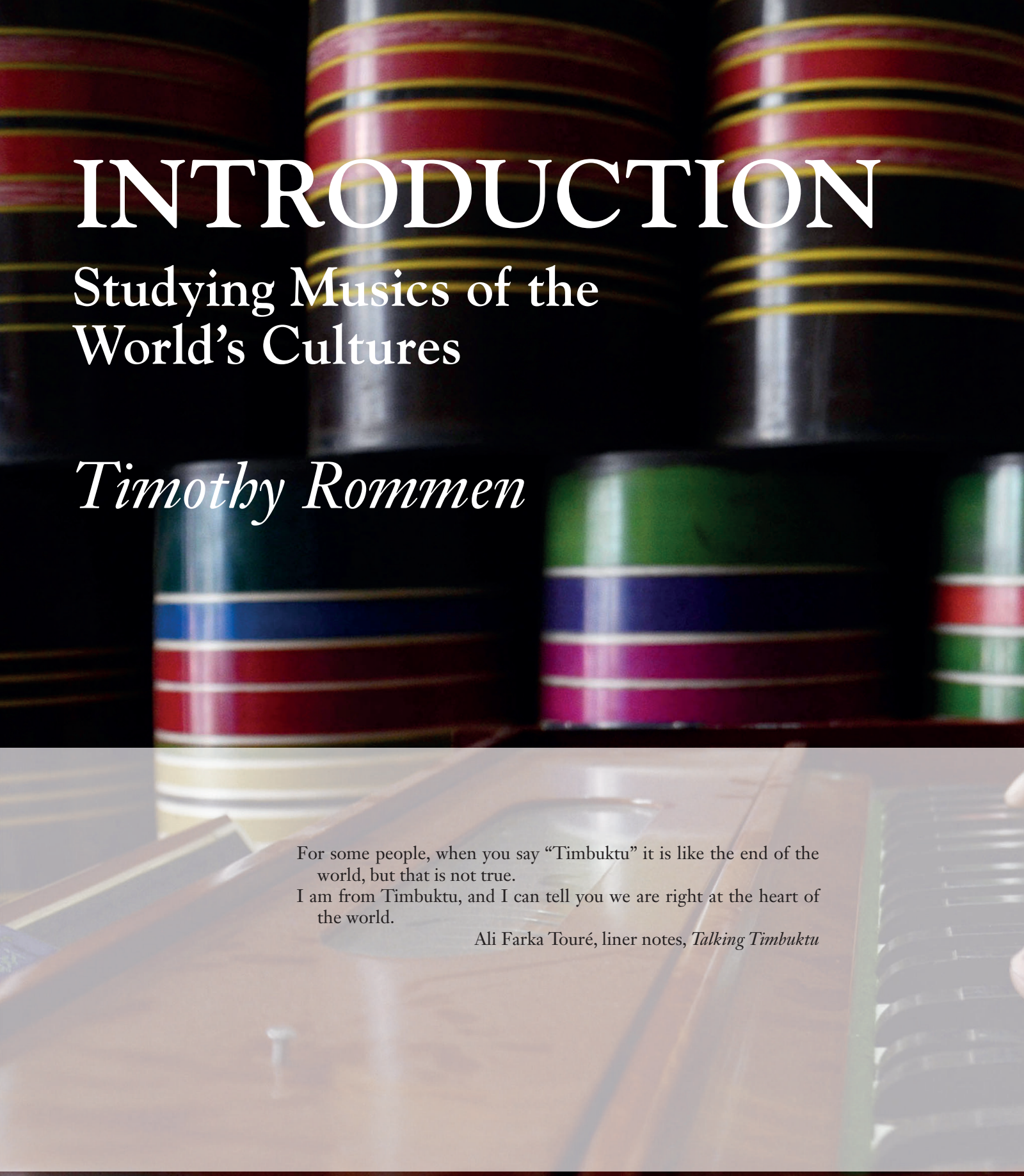
Timothy Rommen
January, 2020



INTRODUCTION

Studying Musics of the World's Cultures

Timothy Rommen

> For some people, when you say "Timbuktu" it is like the end of the world, but that is not true.
> I am from Timbuktu, and I can tell you we are right at the heart of the world.
>
> Ali Farka Touré, liner notes, *Talking Timbuktu*

CHAPTER

1

A CONCERT AT THE MANN CENTER

It's a beautiful summer evening and my daughter, Natalia, and I have just managed to find our seats at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts in Philadelphia, PA. The Center is presenting a double billing that has brought people out *en masse*. It's still an hour before show time, and already the amphitheater is full. The lawn behind the seating area, moreover, is almost completely covered in blankets and lawn chairs as patrons mill about, making preparations for the evening's entertainment. Natalia and I have been looking forward to this evening, because we're going to hear the South African vocal group Ladysmith Black Mambazo open a show that also features the famous gospel group, the Blind Boys of Alabama. Both of these Grammy Award-winning ensembles are iconic in their own way, the former for showcasing a South African style of singing called *isicathamiya* and the latter for sustaining upwards of seven decades of innovation within the African American gospel tradition in the United States (the group was

founded in 1939). Both of these groups have achieved notoriety within their respective national contexts and have also garnered tremendous international fame. Ladysmith Black Mambazo tours extensively and visits the United States regularly. The Blind Boys of Alabama are also veterans of heavy international touring schedules.

Ladysmith Black Mambazo take the stage around 8 pm and perform their trademark show, complete with stories from Joseph Shabalala, the group's leader and principal arranger, humorous and playful interactions between members of the ensemble, choreographed dancing, heavy on Zulu aesthetics, and, of course, complete control over their subtle and virtuosic vocal production. Most of the songs are sung in languages like Zulu and Sotho, and only a few are performed in English. The Blind Boys of Alabama, for their part, take everyone to "church." Dressed in matching, bright blue suits and gathering emotional momentum as the set wears on, they call boisterously to the audience for participation (and receive it), tell jokes, and generally put on a great show, singing in their trademark, close harmony while treating us to a series of gospel standards. The concert, as it turns out, is amazing, and both groups live up to their considerable reputations, leaving the audience buzzing about the night's musical experiences.

As Natalia and I walk to the parking lot, I am struck by how well this concert highlights many of the issues with which ethnomusicologists (and this book) are concerned. For instance, the concert offers a glimpse at the ambiguity inherent in the terminology we use to discuss the music of groups like Ladysmith Black Mambazo. The music industry, based largely in the North Atlantic, tends to market groups like Ladysmith Black Mambazo as "World Music," whereas the Blind Boys of Alabama are categorized as "gospel" musicians. Ironically, the

Ladysmith Black Mambazo. *Source*: Steve Mack/Getty Images.

Blind Boys of Alabama. *Source*: Przemek Tokar/ Shutterstock.com

expansive-sounding label—World Music—achieves a rather delimiting effect. It inscribes difference, otherness, and, at times, exoticism onto musical practices that do not squarely fit into North Atlantic modes of traditional, popular, or art music. The many musics of the world are, thus, homogenized into a category that serves as a catch-all for the performances of artists who, unlike, say, the Blind Boys of Alabama, do not sing primarily in English and do not, generally, hail from a North Atlantic nation-state.

And yet, both of these groups are clearly "world musicians" in the broadest and best sense of the word—in the sense that opens the world to new sounds, new encounters, and new possibilities. The authors of this book explore the world's music in this broad, open-ended way. They consider each of the many musics of the world as offering meaningful and vital experiences on both local and translocal levels. In this book, the authors explore how music functions in communities throughout the world; how musical practice intersects with politics and economics; how it is bound up in questions of ethnicity, class, race, and identity; how religion, aesthetics, and ideology affect the production and consumption of music; and how dance and art are intertwined with it, to name but a few of the book's major themes.

Setting its flaws and ambiguities aside for a moment, however, the music industry markets "World Music" with recourse to difference precisely because it is a quantifiable (if often over-determined and essentialized) performative and sonic reality. Indeed, the musics of the world are endlessly diverse. This evening's musical performances offer a good case in point, for the styles of these two groups are quite different from each other. Ladysmith Black Mambazo sing relatively softly, though there are many members in the group, while the Blind Boys of Alabama are few in number but are very loud in terms of their vocal production. Ladysmith's music is called *isicathamiya*, a Zulu-derived word

that means something like "walk softly," and which conveys in the name of the genre itself the necessity for the low volume required of the early performers and innovators of this style. These performers, active in the early decades of the twentieth century, were employed as migrant laborers at South African mines and thus lived in the mine barracks. Their after-hours singing and dancing needed to be quiet enough so that security would not notice and come shut them down. The gospel music sung by the Blind Boys, by contrast, is rooted in the notion of proclamation and is, thus, intended to be heard both far and wide.

Ladysmith works with small units of musical material that they gradually transform over the course of performances, often lasting more than ten minutes. The Blind Boys work mostly within a shorter, verse–chorus structure that easily opens up to an improvisatory jam toward the end of the song—a jam that can extend these three- or four-minute compositions to well over ten minutes as well. Ladysmith is an *a capella* group, which means that they sing unaccompanied by instruments, once again because the genre developed within a context where playing instruments would have, in many cases, been impractical. The Blind Boys, though, travel with a small gospel band (organ/piano, guitar, bass, drums). One group sings primarily in African languages; the other sings exclusively in English.

These divergent approaches to musical structure, aesthetics, language, dance, and style suggest an important way of thinking about musical difference: Difference, like sameness, is best understood as a matter of perspective. Sameness is constructed out of identifying difference and, as such, is bound up in who you are, the experiences you've been in a position to accumulate, and the traditions from which you are selecting in the process of assembling your own sense of the world. As we all know, throughout history, difference has been mobilized to tragically destructive purpose—genocide, slavery, the Holocaust, exile, religious fundamentalisms, and exoticisms of one stripe or another have all been justified through such mobilizations of difference. And yet, difference can also become truly productive if it is mobilized in service of mutual exchange and open encounter. It is in this sense that ethnomusicology is engaged with the musics of the world.

Importantly, acknowledging the ways that the musics of the world differ from each other can (and often does) lead to new insights and to rich and meaningful musical encounters that illustrate sameness, solidarity, and shared horizons. Difference can, in other words, enable us to see (and hear) ourselves in the other and the other in ourselves. This is especially the case if we approach these musical encounters open to the possibility that our own perspective is subject to reinterpretation and to change in the face of new experiences. Returning, just briefly, to this evening's concert, these two ensembles share several significant themes in common. First, both groups have overcome devastating social inequality tied to race and class. Ladysmith Black Mambazo was formed during the height of the Apartheid regime in South Africa, while the Blind Boys of Alabama have lived and performed through Jim Crow laws and the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. In this sense, both groups have been affected by the prior and unequal movements of money, goods,

and people that characterized the colonial period. Ladysmith's ancestors were witness to the colonial subjugation of the Zulu and the successive injustices that culminated in Apartheid. The ancestral heritage of the Blind Boys is rooted in West Africa, the slave trade, and the southern plantation economy. Both groups have chosen to perform music of deep spiritual significance, raising their voices in defense of social justice and contributing in significant ways to the ongoing process of articulating a way forward after Apartheid and in building on the as yet unfulfilled promise of the Civil Rights Movement, respectively.

Both groups have also benefitted from the long-term exchange of musical practices. This exchange has seen African practices inform musical lives throughout the African diaspora, including the musical practices of African Americans and Afro-Caribbean communities. As such, a whole host of musical ideas—often called African retentions, and including instruments, drumming styles, ensemble structures, dance styles, and rhythmic cells—have been incorporated into and adapted to the musical contexts of traditional, sacred, and popular musics throughout the African diaspora. This exchange has also witnessed the return of new genres and practices from the diaspora to Africa. For instance, *isicathamiya* is, itself, informed by the sounds of vaudeville and ragtime groups—such as the Virginia Jubilee Singers and Orpheus McAdoo—who toured South Africa during the 1890s.

A closer exploration of these two groups, then, reveals a deep solidarity, born of shared social and political histories (though experienced in different contexts) and worked out in shared musical horizons through the multiple crossings and re-crossings of what has been called the Black Atlantic. Both groups, moreover, have remained committed to the musical traditions they grew into locally while collaborating with a wide range of other musical artists (including Peter Gabriel, the English Chamber Orchestra, Lucky Dube, Paul Simon, Bonnie Raitt, and Ben Harper to name but a few), thereby modeling the possibility of pursuing shared musical horizons and solidarity—of seeing the other in one's self and one's self in the other.

The historical, economic, political, and social horizons of Ladysmith Black Mambazo and the Blind Boys of Alabama are thus different in detail and local context, but very similar in terms of the way that music is being mobilized to address local issues and struggles. When viewed from this perspective, the concrete musical differences so obvious in their back-to-back performances are no longer central to an analysis of the musical power of these two groups. What emerges instead is an appreciation for the shared human concerns and histories that these two ensembles have consistently confronted throughout their careers, an appreciation that is deepened by the powerful illustration these two ensembles offer of the multiple musical paths that artists forge in addressing these concerns.

The title of this book, *Excursions in World Music*, then, is chosen in order to question and explore the overarching category "World Music." The book engages the many musics of the world, offering excursions that highlight the concrete differences and sheer diversity to be experienced in the world of music. At the same time, however, the text illustrates the often profound ways

through which a deeper exploration of these diverse communities of practice can reveal overlaps, shared horizons, and common concerns in spite of and, at times, because of this very diversity.

PRESENTING THE WORLD OF MUSIC

As the preceding vignette has illustrated, an ears-wide-open approach to sameness and difference—a recognition that concepts like home and away, self and other, are constructed and constantly shifting based on one's perspective—is crucially important as we embark on journeys that explore the musics of the world. With this in mind, let's briefly explore how such an approach informs our answers to the following basic, yet foundational question: "What is music?" This question seems harmless enough at first, but as soon as an explanation or definition of the term is offered, things become a bit more complicated. *Webster's New World Dictionary*, for example, offers the following entry for music: "Music 1. the art of combining tones to form expressive compositions. 2. such compositions. 3. any rhythmic sequence of pleasing sounds." Now, this definition introduces an array of additional concepts that, when we begin to unpack them, make an answer to our question more difficult to come by, for in defining "music," *Webster's New World Dictionary* invokes the concepts of composition, of time, and of aesthetics, each of which presents us with a set of serious complications on the road to a workable definition. In an earlier edition of this textbook, Bruno Nettl, one of the pioneers of ethnomusicology, suggests a more general understanding of music when he writes that music is "a group of sounds" (2011). You'll notice that Nettl avoids mentioning how these sounds are grouped, what they sound like, or even whether or not they are in sequence, for he understands the multiple ways that music is conceptualized around the world and has learned to be careful when dealing with words or ideas that can delimit the horizons of possibility inherent in musical life. In fact, he points out that "to be properly understood, music should be studied as a group of sounds, as behavior that leads to these sounds, and as a group of ideas or concepts that govern the sound and the behavior" (2011).

Composition

In order to understand more fully why Nettl chooses such a broad definition over a more specific and bounded definition such as the one offered by *Webster's New World Dictionary*, let's take a closer look at the three concepts that Webster's definition raised. The first of these concepts is composition itself. Composition is one of the most ubiquitous of all musical ideas, but by ubiquitous, I do not mean to suggest that everyone conceptualizes composition in the same way. For example, a composition in the Western art music tradition is inextricably tied to written notation—to a score—whereas a Trinidadian calypso can be famous and well-known as a composition but is almost never written down. So, we need to

Calypso singer. *Source*: Wolfgang Kaehler/Getty Images.

free the idea of notation from the concept of composition. While a composition can, and in many contexts does, exist as a text within a written tradition, it may also exist as a different kind of "text" within an oral tradition. In fact, oral traditions are much more prevalent throughout the musics of the world than are notated ones.

It is important for us to recognize from the outset, then, that the concept of composition suggests a combination of musical elements that somehow forms a logical whole—a unit of some sort—and this without regard to how that unit is preserved and transmitted. The emphasis here is on a unit of "some sort," for the authors of this book make a point of illustrating that the methods for generating musical elements as well as the combinations themselves are infinitely varied. For example, the concepts of scale and/or mode are articulated in most musical contexts, but the variety with which scales are built and modes function is virtually endless. The highly developed maqam system, used in one variant or another throughout North Africa and the Middle East, is predicated on the performer being able to hear and appropriately reproduce microtonal content that shifts in quality and quantity from maqam to maqam, of which there are dozens (hundreds according to some ways of categorizing them). More importantly, the maqam within which a performance is played determines which paths can be pursued in terms of modulations (i.e., some modulations [transitions from one maqam to another] are simply not possible from a given maqam, while others are common and conventional).

The tonal content of a Javanese gamelan, by contrast, is derived from just two scales or tuning-systems, one made up of five pitches (*slendro*), the other comprised of seven pitches (*pelog*). In addition, neither of these tuning systems is consistent from gamelan to gamelan, because the instruments of each gamelan are commonly tuned to each other without being tethered to a common

Oud player. *Source*: ALI YUSSEF/Getty Images.

reference pitch (like the A440 of Western art music). The compositional horizons of possibility in these two examples are thus shaped in very different ways, and this not least because the musical materials in play for compositional purposes grow out of radically divergent approaches to mode/tuning-system.

We also find that musical building blocks and techniques commonplace in one community of practice or musical context are almost unheard of in others. Take, for example, the practice of throat singing (sometimes called overtone or diphonic singing) in Tuva and Mongolia. Throat singing is predicated on singing a fundamental pitch as a drone and manipulating the tongue, lips, velum, larynx, and jaw in order to isolate and then amplify individual overtones already present in the fundamental pitch being produced, such that two pitches (and sometimes more) are simultaneously sounded by the performer. Entire melodies are then constructed from the overtone content that the performer isolates, and it is in this fashion and from these musical materials that songs are formed (composed). While throat singing is commonplace in Tuva and Mongolia, this technique for generating vocal music is quite rare outside of Central Asia (though the Xhosa in South Africa, and the Inuit also practice forms of throat singing).

Of course, the types of musical combinations at which communities arrive have a great deal to do with the functions assigned to music in a given society.

Before addressing the second concept introduced by Webster's definition—time—let's briefly explore the various functions that music fulfills and how these very functions can drastically impact the shape of music. Because music is so deeply implicated in human experience, we find that it enhances religious practices (trance, transcendence, ritual, meditation, etc.), politics (propaganda, nationalism, minority rights, human rights, etc.), social functions (such as

Gamelan performer. *Source*: Education Images/Getty Images.

weddings, funerals, life cycle events, and community festivals), and other arenas of human interaction such as work (threshing songs, boat launching songs, and sea shanties) and play (ring plays and chants at sporting events). What we find as students of the world's musics is that it becomes increasingly difficult to know what functions music is fulfilling and what the basis of its role in society is without knowing about the society itself in some deeper way. In fact, if we only think about music from our own perspective, we might even make serious mistakes in our assessments of various "musics."

A case in point is found in the realm of Qur'anic recitation. This religious exercise, which sounds convincingly musical to many North Atlantic ears, in part because it is modeled on the conventions of Arabic Art music, is, in fact, not considered music at all in Islamic contexts. It is, instead, understood as a form of heightened speech fit for religious use. This is an extremely important point of distinction within Islamic thought—a distinction that develops out of an approach that confines "music" to the secular realm of human experience and, as such, makes it less suited for use as a sonic vehicle for the sacred (the Qur'anic text).

What the authors of this book stress—and what I'm sure will become very apparent over the course of the chapters that follow—is that ethnomusicology is, in fact, about people and that we, as students of the world's musics, are therefore ultimately concerned about what is important to people as reflected in the ways that they use and configure their various musics. As such, ethnography (fieldwork) is a crucial methodological element in pursuing the study of the musics of the world, for it allows us to engage with people about the musics that they love, use, and produce, both within and outside of their communities. And it is in this context that the merits of Nettl's choice to omit specific discussion

of musical elements such as "composition" and "time" from his definition begin to shine. These musical specifics are, according to Nettl, best explored through encounter rather than delineated at the outset, and the flexibility inherent in this approach is central to ethnomusicology as a discipline and to the excursions that follow. In other words, we come to understand what music is not only through attending to sound itself, but also by studying it ethnographically as "behavior that leads to these sounds, and as a group of ideas or concepts that govern the sound and the behavior" (2011).

TIME

It is surely clear from the preceding pages that this book's authors are committed to encouraging a relativistic approach to studying music. In other words, we are going to take Nettl's lead and examine each musical context on its own merits and attempt to understand it on its own terms. This intellectual stance is extremely important in every facet of our study, and the concept of "time," introduced to us in Webster's definition, provides us with an apt illustration. North Atlantic conceptions of time have consistently stressed linearity, the teleological idea that things progress from a beginning to an end. It should come as no surprise that this understanding of time is reflected in the way that music is put together.

If we explore, for instance, the way that the great majority of canonical, Western art music is structured (think of composers like Brahms, Beethoven, and Mozart), we find a few clues to the way that linearity informs compositions in this tradition. Small units like motives (from as short as a few notes to slightly larger structures) are combined to create phrases that, when combined with other phrases, themselves form periods. Periods, in turn, combine with each other to form sections that, when combined with other sections form entire movements and pieces. There is, in other words, a progression from beginning to end based upon the very way that pieces are constructed. The average rock song is no different in this regard. If you've ever played in a band or memorized your favorite tune, you'll no doubt recognize the following structure: Intro, Verse 1, Chorus, Verse 2, Chorus, Bridge, Solo, Verse 3, Chorus, Chorus, Outro. The musical materials here can be schematically represented as follows: A, A1, B, A2, B, C, A solo, A3, B, B, A. So, there are basically three ingredients with regard to melody and chord progression in this (admittedly formulaic) rock song. "A" covers the intro, outro, solo, and all the verses; "B" stands for the chorus; and "C" is the bridge. Each of these ingredients is connected to the next through time in performance (or recording) in order to create a linear progression from beginning to end.

South and Southeast Asian conceptions of time, however, are often cyclical as opposed to linear in nature. Although they, too, unfold through time and are, in this sense, progressing linearly through the performance, the musical emphasis is placed on returning to points that have already been visited—to cycling through instead of moving through musical material.

For example, the system of tala in Hindustani music (a bit like time signatures in Western traditions, but much more complicated in its implications for performance) is predicated on returning to the beginning, and musicians (especially drummers) go through incredibly complex calculations in order to ensure that their improvisations arrive back at the place where they started. Within jhaptal (just one of the many taals available to musicians), for instance, each cycle consists of ten beats (2+3+2+3) and the goal is to move as elegantly and virtuosically as possible through the cycle, completing beat 10 (and approaching beat 1 of the next cycle) anew each time throughout the performance. Each arrival is, as such, by necessity also a new departure. Drummers in particular have developed this cyclic approach to time into an art, and aspiring tabla players apprentice themselves for many years in order to learn from masters how to perform effectively and with sufficient improvisational creativity.

Sitar player, Anoushka Shankar. *Source*: Jack Vartoogian/Getty Images.

At an even more fundamental level, however, the very concept of music within Hindustani thought offers a much broader view of time as it pertains to performance. For instance, each raag (part melodic possibility, part scale/mode) comes complete with prescriptions for the time of day, and even the appropriate season, in which the particular raag should be performed. There is, in short, a much more cosmological, temporal framework in place in North Indian thought about music than we tend to find in Western art music. And, just as days, weeks, and seasons are cyclical, so too the approach to performing a raag in a particular taal is conditioned by a cyclical conception of time.

If we think of the ways that time is configured when it is combined with and subsumed into religious practices, then additional possibilities emerge. Within Aboriginal Australian ritual life, for instance, there are, in fact, two distinct modes of interacting with time. On the one hand stands the clock time of everyday life—a type of time with which we are all familiar. On the other hand stands the spiritual realm, which can be accessed through what is commonly called dream time. It is during excursions into this ritual time, into this time-out-of-time, that musicians are given songs, artists are inspired to paint, and clock time becomes meaningfully filled. Trances associated with music, too, function in conjunction with but also outside of clock time, affording both individuals and communities the opportunity to experience time anew. In each of these contexts, time is experienced and conceptualized in specific and localized fashion. Depending on the context, then, referring to music as consisting of a "sequence" of sounds, as Webster's definition does, can describe local conceptions of time in ways that are by turns apropos, misleading, or flat out inaccurate. So we see, once again, the reasoning behind the thoughtful omission of these specific references to musical elements in Nettl's short definition.

Aesthetics/Culture

Now that I've briefly explored the ideas of composition and time, I turn to the last of the concepts that Webster's dictionary invoked in defining music—aesthetics. Unlike the first two concepts, which are concerned with the sound and structure of music, aesthetics is ultimately bound up in the tastes and values of a particular community or society and extends right down to individuals' preferences and conceptions of beauty. As such, it trades on the dynamic I've already raised regarding sameness and difference. For the purposes of this book, the way that aesthetics is deployed—and this by critics and practitioners alike—offers a window onto the larger concept of culture. "Culture" is one of the least defined but most used (and perhaps misused) words of all time and it has, for good reason, been subjected to increased scrutiny within academic circles since the 1980s. Think, for example, of how the concept of culture has been mobilized to justify hesitant action or inaction in the face of human rights abuses (like genocide) or, conversely, to advocate for political and economic encroachment by one group on another (colonialism, neocolonialism, even war). Think of the ways that culture has, in conjunction with difference, been used to "naturalize" hierarchies of power (narratives of savage-civilized and third world–first world, for instance), and this even as it continues to thrive in everyday parlance (think of comments you've likely heard, such as "it's really multicultural" or "that's her culture," etc.). The concept of culture, then, is not benign, and can be turned to destructive ends in spite of its rather ubiquitous presence in our everyday discourse.

The authors of this book are keen to create an intellectual atmosphere within which a healthy skepticism about the idea of culture as it is generally (and uncritically) deployed—that is, as referring to a group of people, or a region of the world, wherein most people share the same values and like the same things—can be questioned without abandoning the concept out of hand. This monolithic approach to culture was popular in anthropology during the 1950s, when scholars attempted to describe the world by splitting it up into what were then called "culture areas." But, in a world that is increasingly globalized in terms of communications, technology, and travel—in a world where we are all, to some degree, travelers—the idea of a "culture area," or even of a culture in the singular, becomes suspect. So, in order to get at any working definition of culture, it is important for us to view culture not as a monolithic set of values and practices that a particular society claims as its own, but as something far more complex, fluid, and negotiated. To that end, I would like to steer our understanding of culture in a direction that will be more fruitful and that is able more accurately to portray the everyday workings of social interactions.

In order to illustrate this, let's take a closer look at the idea of aesthetics. Clearly, none of us are going to be able to agree on what is beautiful or on what sounds good all of the time. Just think for a moment about the arts and entertainment section of any major online magazine, dedicated blog, or newspaper and you will find critics who vehemently disagree with each other

over films, plays, and music that are all considered a part of "our culture." Performers, too, struggle with aesthetics, disagreeing with each other about how best to play, say, bluegrass, tango, or salsa. The aesthetic, along with the authentic, then, is always negotiated in practice and subject to change, for the fact of the matter is that each "culture" also incorporates many subcultures within its broad umbrella, some of which are entirely opposed to the normative values and structures promoted by the society (or community of practice) in which they happen to be living. Multiply this complexity within individual communities out across the globe and it becomes clear why an approach to culture that privileges sameness (patterns of homogeneity) is no longer considered a viable analytical tool for studying the musics of the world.

It is more productive to approach culture by focusing on the multiple registers within which cultures are in motion (changing and fluid, that is). There are many arenas within which we can observe and analyze this motion, including ethnicity, technology, finance, media, and ideas/ideology, to name a few. Because there are multiple arenas of action and flow, there are also different rates and directions of cultural change occurring at any given time across these arenas. So, for instance, technology might rapidly be moving from an industrialized nation to a developing one, but a simultaneous movement of media (fueled by that very technological change) might be streaming back to that industrialized nation (among others), contributing to changes in perceptions of that developing nation and inspiring new cultural practices in both locations.

What I like very much about exploring culture through recourse to several arenas of action (what Arjun Appadurai has called scapes (as in techno-scape and media-scape)) is that this approach goes a long way toward explaining the movements we see all around us, not only within but also between cultures. And if we remember that these arenas are activated by human interactions, if we make the people who are animating these contact zones from day to day central to our efforts at understanding a given cultural context, then we will come to appreciate the degree to which the musics of the world are consistently at play in these arenas, affected by and also affecting the ever-shifting terrain we think of as culture.

The popular forms of "World Music" often provide excellent examples of this kind of dynamic change, for we can witness how technology, money, media, religion, and ideology variously shape the efforts of artists and even the formation and dissemination of new styles such as hiplife (Ghana), zouk (French Antilles), dangdut (Indonesia), and K-pop (Korea), to name but four. The authors of this book are thus committed to viewing culture as a concept that should immediately suggest many levels of complexity and movement, and this both within and between individual cultural contexts.

Although I have only begun to unpack the concepts of composition, time, and aesthetics (along with culture), I now return to the definitional task at hand. At this point, it should be clear why Bruno Nettl suggests that music constitutes "a group of sounds." This definition affords the greatest amount of flexibility for addressing the variety and multiplicity of musics and musical approaches

on offer throughout the world. Unlike Webster's definition, Nettl chooses to allow encounter with a given musical context to flesh out the structural, temporal, and cultural details. And yet, I think we can make this definition a bit more specific without sacrificing its flexibility. I suggest that we add an observation by Martin Stokes to Nettl's words. Stokes (1997: 5) defines music as follows: "music is what any social group consider it to be." When combined with the more element-oriented words of Nettl, this definition is about as close as we are likely to get to a working definition of music—"Music, being a group of sounds, is what any social group consider it to be." This definition successfully sets up the study of the world's musics—of ethnomusicology, that is—as an intellectual enterprise that requires: flexibility; a recognition that sameness and difference are a matter of perspective; an understanding that musical approaches to composition and musical materials, to formal structures and to time itself, as well as to aesthetics are all negotiated in and through practice; and a commitment to people (to ethnography), for we need to engage with "social groups" in order to better understand what sounds and practices they recognize as constituting music.

A MODEL FOR STUDYING MUSICAL CULTURES

The preceding pages have introduced some of the complexities attendant to the study of the world's musics and they have also offered an introduction to the way that ethnomusicologists go about thinking musically with people. The definition we have arrived at is, itself, subject to critique, of course, but it has the benefit of further articulating the intellectual approach we will be pursuing throughout this book. It also maps well onto a three-part model for the study of music articulated by one of the pioneers of ethnomusicology, Alan Merriam. Merriam posited that music should be analyzed in three arenas of action: sound, behavior, and conception.

Sound

Musical instruments, tuning systems, rhythmic ideas, ensembles, genres, styles, vocal timbre, language use, and a whole host of music-specific "nuts-and-bolts" elements fit into Merriam's category of "sound." One of the tasks that ethnomusicologists have set for themselves throughout the last century or so has been to categorize and come to a better understanding of all of the elements that contribute to sound. So, for example, Alexander John Ellis classified as many scales as he could during the late nineteenth century and also worked extensively on measuring pitch (suggesting the cents system still in use today). In the same spirit and at roughly the same time, Erich M. von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs developed four categories of instruments as a means of clarifying their sonic principles and also in order to distinguish them more carefully from one another. These included: areophones, chordophones, idiophones,

BOX 1.1 CLASSIFICATION OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

- Aerophones (wind instruments)
  - — Flute-like
  - — Trumpet-like
  - — Reeds
- Chordophones (string instruments)
  - — Zithers
  - — Lutes
- Idiophones (self-vibrating instruments)
  - — Rattles/shakers
  - — Gongs
  - — Xylophone
- Membranophones (membrane instruments or drums)
- Electrophones (electronic instruments)
  - — Synthesizer
  - — Computers

and membranophones, to which another classification—electrophones—was later added.

These classifications are still apropos and useful, but in an era of increasingly digital circulations of sound, and in a moment when phones, tablets, and computers are becoming ubiquitous platforms for both production and consumption of sound, new tools are necessary. So, although ethnography remains firmly at the core of how ethnomusicologists approach their research, ethnomusicologists are also incorporating ideas from disciplines such as new media studies and sound studies (among others) in order to explore and explain "sound" in the contemporary moment.

Behavior

Merriam's category of "behavior" focuses attention on how people interact with music and with each other (how people engage with music at concerts, for example); the contexts within which it is performed (is the event occurring at a church, in a concert hall, or on an urban street-corner?); and the kinds of conventions that govern interactions among musicians and within audiences (who leads, who gets to sing, who dances, gender issues, class issues, etc.). It should be clear that behavior often results in direct consequences for the way that music sounds. For instance, social conventions and gender roles often impact directly on who sings, who is able to perform on instruments, or who dances. Often it is in the controversy generated by non-normative performance and in the sounds that such performances generate that a great deal can be learned about "behavior." Merriam's categories are, as such, crosscutting and overlapping. It may also be obvious to you that ethnomusicologists regularly draw on ideas and literatures across a wide range of disciplines in order to find

vocabulary and achieve analytical sharpness in the process of thinking about "behavior." So, for example, if an ethnomusicologist is working on women practitioners of sacred music in an Afro-Caribbean context, it is likely that she will, in addition to her ethnographic work and musical expertise, at the very least, also incorporate ideas from religious studies, gender studies, transnational studies, and postcolonial studies.

Conceptions about Music

The category that Merriam calls "conceptions about music" incorporates more abstract ideas relating to music that, nevertheless, often dramatically affect the sound and attendant behavior of musical life in a given context. Time, composition, aesthetics, philosophy, ideology, theology, nationalism, ethnic identity, and ownership, to name but a few common sources of these conceptions, are thus intimately involved in the formation of "behavior" and "sound." In this connection, recall our earlier exploration of the complexities attendant to cyclic time and the incorporation of these principles into Hindustani musical performance. With regard to ownership, in particular, one important area of ethnomusicological inquiry involves work on intellectual property rights and questions surrounding appropriation. Here, too, ethnomusicologists find themselves pursuing their projects in interdisciplinary fashion, requiring tools from legal studies, globalization, economics, and, depending on the communal context at hand, also indigenous studies.

SUMMARY

REVIEW CHAPTER RESOURCES

Merriam's model, thus, helps open our excursions into the musics of the world to the whole range of ideas, practices, and sonic experiences that comprise musical life the world over. It also helps focus attention on the necessarily interdisciplinary nature of ethnomusicological thought. The authors of this book put this model into action in the chapters that follow, offering insights into all three of these categories and illustrating how they are interdependent and mutually entangled. Applied to specific case studies, this model affords us a means of encountering the musics of the world in a way that encourages us to decenter our own perspective in the process of centering the sounds, behaviors, and conceptions of others such that we can understand that "music, being a group of sounds, is what any social group consider it to be."

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MUSIC OF SOUTH ASIA

Jim Sykes

INTRODUCING SOUTH ASIA

By 2050, India is expected to have a population of 1.6 billion, surpassing China as the world's most populous nation. India is already the world's largest democracy, and in the first two decades of the twenty-first century, the country emerged as a global economic powerhouse. Regardless of whether this era really turns out to be the "Asian century," India will undoubtedly have an essential role to play in shaping the world's dynamics for years to come, from geopolitics and information technology to debates on environmental regulations.

It is worth emphasizing, then, that if India seems to be just on the verge of achieving a global prominence worthy of a population of over a billion, Indian culture is already ubiquitous. Bollywood films are screened on international flights and watched daily in cities such as Lagos, Jakarta, and London. Classes on Bollywood dance can be found in many small towns across the world. Yoga is practiced so widely that some practitioners probably don't know of its Indian

CHAPTER 2

roots. Buddhism, a religion whose founder lived in what is now a border region between India and Nepal, long ago spread globally but achieved much recognition in the West in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. And while the British rock group the Beatles inspired a generation of Westerners to turn to India in the 1960s through their use of the **sitar** (a North Indian instrument), musicians in recent decades have continued to reference Indian sounds, such as by sampling them in hip-hop songs.

In the past few decades, Indian pop musicians have broken through the global mainstream, perhaps most notably A.R. Rahman with music for the 2008 film *Slumdog Millionaire*. In the 1990s, British Indian electronic music artist Panjabi MC reached a global pop audience with a modernized version of a folk music genre called bhangra (more on this below). Perhaps no South Asian musician has captured global attention in recent years more than the rapper and visual artist

"South Asia" is the collective name for the countries of India, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives. The category "South Asia" is a term used by scholars typically more than the people of the region, and the countries included in South Asia have shifted over time. For instance, sometimes Tibet is considered a part of South Asia, though we do not include it here. *Source*: Rainer Lesniewski/ Alamy Stock Vector.

Maya Arulpragasam (better known as M.I.A.), who grew up in London but was born in Sri Lanka, a small island off of India's southeastern coast.

Amidst this rampant circulation of South Asian cultures and sounds, the musicians who perform the region's "traditional" musics are hardly standing still. The two Indian classical music systems—Hindustani music (from North India) and Carnatic music (from the South)—continue to develop in the digital age. Today, Indian classical musicians travel internationally to perform and give clinics, after which they might log on to Skype and teach one of their students (who might live in New York, Singapore, or Copenhagen). While the musical knowledge contained in North India's famous *gharanas* (lineages) used to be heavily guarded and revealed only through a long and arduous apprenticeship

to a *guru* (esteemed teacher), today it is easy to gain at least a cursory musical knowledge of different regional styles by watching videos online—a situation that does not please musical purists.

Hinduism is a vastly diverse religion whose followers constitute about 80% of the populations of India and Nepal, with significant numbers in Sri Lanka and Bhutan. South Asian Hindu cultures are globally audible, as well, though here it is worth considering their *physical* presence in ethnically and religiously diverse public spaces. Trinidad, South Africa, and Malaysia are all countries with significant Hindu diasporic populations and temples that routinely hold festivals and processions, bringing Hindu musics to a wide array of people. The annual Hindu festival Thaipusam is held at a cave complex (Batu Caves) outside Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), now drawing 1.5 million people a year, with a procession that cuts right through the Malay-majority city.

Likewise, Islam is a diverse religion whose followers constitute the majority of the populations of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, with significant minorities in India (where there are over 200 million Muslims), Sri Lanka (2 million), and Nepal (1 million). Sufism, the mystical form of Islam, emerged in the Middle East and found roots in South Asia centuries ago. A network of saints' shrines (dargahs) developed across the region, some of which draw enormous crowds for special events like the commemoration of a saint's death. South Asian Sufi musics became globally known through the music of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, a Pakistani Qawwali singer (see below) who achieved global fame in the 1990s. This Sufi shrine network expanded during the British colonial period across the Indian Ocean, as South Asian Muslims moved west to South Africa and east to Singapore and Malaysia, leading to a lively contemporary circulation of Sufi teachers (sheikhs), pilgrims, and musicians.

Finally, a discussion of South Asian religious musics should not skip over Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, three major South Asian religions with a global reach. Buddhism is a majority religion in Sri Lanka and Bhutan, while significant Buddhist communities exist in Nepal and the regions of Ladakh and Sikkim in India. For many centuries, the growth of Hinduism in India facilitated a decline in the amount of Buddhists in India, though Buddhism spread far and wide to places like Thailand and China. Sites associated with the Buddha's life in North India fell into disrepair until they were increasingly revitalized and developed as tourist sites for foreign Buddhists in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Though Buddhism is today a small, minority religion in India, one can find Buddhist shrines and pilgrims in many places in India, such as Bodh Gaya (where the Buddha found Enlightenment) and Sarnath (where he taught his first disciples). In turn, South Asian Buddhists have moved throughout the world, opening temples and bringing Buddhist chant and lay devotional musics to new communities. While Buddhism is not globally famous for music, farther below in this chapter we will consider an example of a lay Buddhist musical tradition from Sri Lanka. Jainism is a religion from Western India that dates back to the time of the Buddha, which still thrives; and Sikhism (which we return to below) is associated with India's Sikh community who trace their heritage to the Punjab region (now split between India and Pakistan).

Given the astounding circulation of Indian musical traditions, one could be forgiven for thinking "South Asian music" is synonymous with "Indian music." But as we have already glimpsed above, this would be a mistake. The impact of India's musical reputation on other South Asian musicians was brought home for me by a story recounted by the anthropologist Anne Sheeran, who researched Sri Lankan music in the mid-1990s. A tiny island nation, Sri Lanka is roughly the size of the U.S. state of West Virginia, but with a population of 22 million people (by comparison, West Virginia's population is around 1.8 million). Sheeran found the Sri Lankan people welcoming, but when she mentioned she was there to study music they looked bewildered: Didn't she know that India is nearby, and so much more famous for music? As one local put it, "Music in Sri Lanka? Haven't you come a bit too far south?" South Asian musics are not equivalent to Indian musics, but as Sheeran's experience shows, musicians from other South Asian nations now have to grapple with India's global musical prominence. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives each has its own musical traditions worthy of recognition.

It is important to stress at the outset that the borders of today's South Asian nations are modern constructions. What is known as India was, throughout history, numerous regional kingdoms, whose populations spoke different languages and had their own cultural traditions. Regional identities are still evident in India today: such as the Bengalis (a population whose global total is estimated to be about 300 million, whose homeland is split between the Indian state of West Bengal and the country of Bangladesh, and who speak Bengali); the Tamils (an ethnic group comprising 65 million people who live in the southeastern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, and who speak the Tamil language); and the Malayalis (who live in the southwestern state of Kerala, number about 33 million, and speak Malayalam). Amidst such regional identities are smaller populations, such as the scattered indigenous peoples the Indian government calls "Scheduled Tribes," who tend to live in rural areas (e.g., the Nilgiri Hills in Tamil Nadu) but who make up a significant portion of the population of India's northeastern territories.

Medieval Muslim travelers from Central Asia were apparently the first to use the term "Hindu" as a geographical designation—it originally referred to "the people beyond the Indus River" (which runs through present-day Pakistan). Something more closely resembling today's national borders arose through the efforts of the Mughal Empire (1526–1857), a dynasty of Central Asian Muslim migrants and their descendants, whose power spread throughout much of the Indian subcontinent.

From the early seventeenth century, European traders began coming to South Asia, including the Portuguese, Dutch, British, and French. By the late nineteenth century, the British had gained control of the old Mughal provinces while forging treaties with some nominally independent regional kings to rule over most of the subcontinent and Ceylon (the British name for Sri Lanka). Not long after World War II, in 1947, India finally achieved independence, but the achievement was bittersweet, as growing divisions between the region's

Hindu majority and Muslim minority resulted in the cataclysmic Partition—the largest mass migration in recorded history—during which a huge portion of northwestern India was split off to become Pakistan, and many Hindus and Muslims moved from one country to the other (India still has a sizeable Muslim minority, however). Meanwhile, another region with a large Muslim population, Bengal, had by 1947 already been long divided between Hindu and Muslim populations, and with Partition the Muslim-majority part of Bengal became East Pakistan (in 1971, it would split off and become the independent country of Bangladesh).

Partition is far from the only important border reconfiguration in the recent South Asian past. For example, the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan was drawn in 1893 by a secretary of the British Indian government, Mortimer Durand, and named the Durand Line: It divided the Pashtun ethnic group between Afghanistan (where they are the ethnic majority) and what is now Pakistan, which has a Pashtun population of about 26 million. Similarly, there was much movement between Sri Lanka and South India over the centuries, and a sizeable Tamil population has lived in Sri Lanka's north and east; but the British ruled Ceylon as a separate province, and in 1948 the entire island became an independent country (later renamed Sri Lanka), separating Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils.

So where does this leave us for our discussion of South Asian musics? For simplicity's sake, in what follows I adopt a "national" lens, describing musical genres and histories of various South Asian nations; but I want you to keep in mind that, as Sheeran's story above shows, the historical construction of South Asian borders is perhaps most important as a factor that has shaped how South Asians understand their own music histories today, rather than something that can be taken to mark natural divisions between people.

In sum, to know South Asian musics is to know the historical construction, similarities, and differences between music in places like India and Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal; between regional folk musics in places like Rajasthan (a state in northwestern India) and Kerala (a state in southwestern India); between the famous classical dance traditions of North India (such as Kathak) and South India (such as Bharata Natyam); and between diverse sacred musics associated with world religions, like the Hindu temple music played by South Indian Tamils (the nadaswaram reed instrument and thavil drum), Christian musics in the former Portuguese colony of Goa, Buddhist ritual musics in Sri Lanka or Nepal, or the Sufi Muslim devotional music Qawwali, associated with Pakistan and North India. Knowing South Asian musics requires exploring the hip-hop and rock scenes in cities like Mumbai, Bangalore, and Delhi; the globally circulating pop musics of the South Asian diaspora; and the famous film musics of Hindi language-dominated Bollywood (centered in Mumbai) and the regional film traditions in South Indian languages like Malayalam and Tamil. These days, one can learn about Indian musics by watching Coke Studio (a television show created by MTV India and sponsored by Coca-Cola), in which pop and folk musicians perform on television, sometimes together. In other words, knowing South Asian musics requires learning about a range of pop,

EXPLORE

Kathak Dance

classical, folk, and sacred music traditions; it requires being able to place some of these in specific regions, while drawing commonalities between them; and it requires realizing that terms like "Hindu" and "Muslim" denote populations with a lot of regional musical variation.

Confused yet? The rest of this chapter attempts to unpack this overwhelming buzz of musical, cultural, and demographic diversity.

HINDUSTANI MUSIC: THE GROWTH OF A TRADITION

VEDAS
The ancient texts of Hinduism, traditionally recited by Brahmins and passed down by them orally.

VARNA
Division of society in Indian culture, sometimes translated as "caste."

BRAHMINS
The highest varna, or caste, in Indian society.

According to Indian lore, the country once had a uniform musical tradition that dates back to the time of the **Vedas**—ancient Hindu texts divided into four canonical books—whose earliest sections were completed circa 1200 BC (they were passed down orally for many centuries and only written down much later). One book of the Vedas, the *Samaveda*, contains hymns sung to a collection of melodies, called the Samagama. The *Rigveda* is a collection of poems that tells stories of Hindu deities. In the *Rigveda* one finds the earliest articulation of India's "caste system" (**varna**), through which people were divided into different categories based on profession (each with their own subcategories and regional differences), including the **Brahmins** (ritual specialists), Kshatriya (warriors), Vaishyas (merchants, landowners), and Shudras (servants and subordinates). The Brahmins received an extensive education in memorizing and reciting Vedic hymns. The *sound* of the recitation was crucially important for Vedic recitation to work, more than the meaning of the text recited. The proper pronunciation was necessary for the gods to accept the offerings made by the Brahmins in ritual contexts (this connection between recited words and supernatural power can still be found in many South Asian religions today). Outside of the varnas were peoples who became known in English as "untouchables": they were formally outside the caste system, considered impure because they were forced to engage in impure activities, such as playing drums at funerals or cleaning latrines. Scholars still debate the historical emergence of the caste system and its relative strength or weakness in Indian society today, and later on I will consider its continuing musical importance.

NATYASASTRA
An early treatise on the performing arts attributed to Bharata and concerned with music, dance, theater, and drama.

RASA
The aesthetic "flavor" or feeling connoted by a raga or other artistic expression.

Sometime before the fifth century CE, a treatise called the **Natyasastra** was written that would have an enormous impact on the Indian arts. As with the Vedas, the Natyasastra was written in Sanskrit (an ancient and sacred language of Indian origin that spread throughout South and Southeast Asia). According to legend, it was written by a person named Bharata, though scholars believe it may have been compiled by several individuals. The text provides detailed discussions on music, dance, and drama, showing an affinity for complex systems of categorization—a tendency one still finds in Indian musics. Over 36 chapters, the Natyasastra describes three types of acting and ten types of theater. It is famous for its theorization of **rasa**, the moods, emotions, or flavors produced through artistic expression. Over the centuries, rasa became integral to understandings of Indian music.

The twelfth century was a watershed period when the musical system of North India is said to have broken off from the South due to the musical influence of Muslim migrants. Two systems of Indian music emerged that remain separated to this day: **Hindustani** and **Carnatic** music. The conquering Mughals were descendants of the Mongol Empire who lived in the Central Asian Turkestan region, but they spoke Persian—a language from Iran, which had widespread cultural currency during this period. The classical music tradition of the north, Hindustani music, became heavily influenced by Persian cultural traditions, and one can still find similarities between Hindustani, Iranian, and related musical traditions of the Middle East (such as in Turkey, Iraq, and Egypt).

As Hindustani music developed, much of its musical knowledge came to be owned and guarded in large part by Muslim families of professional musicians. By the nineteenth century these musical lineages, called **gharanas**, were well defined and associated with certain places across the north of the subcontinent. A rigorous system for learning Hindustani music developed. It involved years of training through apprenticeship to an **ustad** (the word for a Muslim musical master) or pandit (Hindu musical master). In this day of easy access to information over the internet, it may surprise readers to learn how difficult it was to obtain the most esteemed musical knowledge. As a student apprentice (**shishya**), one might labor for a few years simply doing household chores for one's teacher (**guru**)—the goal at this point would be just to hang about and soak up musical knowledge. It could take a few years before one would be allowed to learn anything substantial on one's instrument, and the more guarded musical secrets could take the better part of a decade or more.

Many of the best musicians during the Mughal and British periods were associated with the courts of regionally-based kings, even as courts lost their political power during British rule. One famous example is the court of Lucknow, a city southeast of Delhi, which before and during the rule of Wajid Ali Shah

HINDUSTANI
In music, referring to North Indian musical style.

CARNATIC
In music, referring to South Indian music style.

GHARANA
A lineage of professional musicians in India who trace their heritage through certain guru-shishya relationships, and usually associated with a particular city.

USTAD
A Muslim teacher.

SHISHYA
A term for pupil, typically used to describe the teacher-student relationship in Hindustani music (guru-shishya).

GURU
A term for "master teacher" that is prominent especially in the teaching of musical instruments.

Classical vocalist Kaushiki Chakraborty along with Ajay Joglekar on harmonium and Ojas Adhia on tabla. *Source*: Arunabh Bhattacharjee/Alamy Live News.

Ustad Ali Akbar Khan playing a sarod. *Source*: Jack Vartoogian/Getty Images.

(ruled 1847–1856) was known for its musicians and dancers. The British exiled the king to a suburb of Calcutta (in Bengal), where he brought many of his musicians and dancers in what now seems like a golden age for the Hindustani arts—an achievement that occurred during a time of immense political and social turmoil.

There are many legendary stories about the lengths to which students would go to obtain musical training and secrets from gurus. One of the most famous is about Baba Allaudin Khan (circa 1862–1972), one of the twentieth century's most revered virtuosos on the **sarod**, a fretless plucked lute. As a boy, Khan was fascinated by music, but his parents tried to turn him away from the profession. At ten, he ran away and joined a musical theater troupe. Lured to Calcutta, he learned singing and instrumental music as a young man from two well-known gurus. But his musical curiosity was not satiated. Khan's dream was to go to the court of Rampur, a city east of Delhi, to learn from esteemed sarod player Wazir Khan, who was a court musician and descendant of the famous Mian Tansen (c. 1493–1586), one of the most revered Hindustani musicians of all time. According to legend, every day Allaudin Khan went to the gates of the Nawab (an honorific title granted by the Mughal emperor to semi-autonomous Muslim rulers) to ask to learn music from Wazir Khan. Every day he was turned away. Allaudin Khan was married by this point, and he had given up his family in the hopes of studying with Wazir Khan.

SAROD
A fretless, plucked string instrument of Hindustani music originally coming from Afghanistan.

According to legend, one day Khan wrote a suicide note and tied a cyanide capsule around his neck; when the gates opened and the Nawab left his estate, Khan flung himself on the Nawab and said he was determined to study with Wazir Khan or die. When the Nawab learned that Khan had left his family to study music, he remarked that he must be very serious. The Nawab invited him inside, whereupon Khan dazzled him with a virtuosic display of his performance ability on several musical instruments—but that is not the end of the story. For a few years after this, Khan was allowed only to do chores and simply watch Wazir Khan. It was after this point, and another bout of desperation,

that Khan finally managed to gain a proper audience with Wazir Khan, after which he become his favorite disciple, and the rest is history. Allaudin Khan's son, Ali Akbar Khan, would become one of India's most famous musicians in the twentieth century, eventually setting up a music school for the Indian arts in California (the Ali Akbar Khan College of Music) which still exists today. Another student, the sitarist Ravi Shankar (1920–2012), would achieve global fame in the latter twentieth century on account of his association with the Beatles and concert tours.

EXPLORE

Ravi Shankar

One can imagine what kinds of musical complexity are involved in a tradition that requires such devotion, dedication, and—in myth if not in reality—such suffering for one's art. Indeed, Hindustani musicians are famous for virtuosity, a skill they achieve through hours of laborious practice—though whether such feats are real or exaggerated is open for debate. In his study of the Hindustani gharana tradition, ethnomusicologist Daniel Neuman describes Hindustani musicians' practice routines as a common topic of conversation, something that musicians brag about to others, in order to display their prowess. One well-known trick, associated with the **tabla** (a set of bowl-shaped drums) player Ustad Ahmed Jan Thirakwa, was to grow his hair long and tie it by a rope to the ceiling, so that when he fell asleep his head would jerk and he would wake up, enabling him to practice longer.

TABLA
A pair of drums used in Hindustani music.

HINDUSTANI MUSIC: THEORY AND PERFORMANCE

EXPLORE

Hindustani Music

The standard melodic framework for Hindustani music is called **raga**, and the rhythmic framework is called **tala**. Each raag (the singular) is not only a scale (a precise ordering of tones in a row) but also a system of rules about how to play that scale. For instance, a raag might have a slightly different scale going up and down, and it might necessitate emphasizing one note in the scale over others. Musicologist Harold Powers came up with a way to define the word "mode" that can help us here (raga is a good example of a "modal system"). To paraphrase Powers, he said that if we think of a continuum with a basic "scale" at one end and a full-fledged "tune" at the other, "mode" falls in between. A particular raag might have some melodic turns of phrases that frequently appear when it is performed—i.e., it is more than just a scale—but these phrases do not coalesce into a specific song. It is best to think of each raag as a modal framework (a scale plus a set of rules that state how to perform that scale) in which performers improvise.

RAGA
The melodic framework for Hindustani classical music (spelled "ragam" in Carnatic tradition) that includes a scale in ascending and descending versions, its predominant pitch, certain standard melodic fragments, and even non-musical elements like certain moods (rasa), deities, and images.

TALA
The metric framework or system of beat cycles in Hindustani musics ("talam" in Carnatic tradition).

Hindustani raags are classified according to many extra-musical criteria, according to their rasa (mood, emotion, flavor). Traditionally this includes a specific time of day or season in which the raag should be performed; some raags were accorded supernatural power, such as one that is supposed to start fires, and another that drives away evil spirits (jinns). Raag Malhar, for instance, is thought to bring down buckets of rain. While raags continue to hold such metaphysical connotations today, it is common nowadays to perform Hindustani music on a concert stage and merely tell the audience (if they are not

already familiar) what the raag's name is and what its extra musical associations are (especially the time of day at which it is supposed to be performed). Raags might also connote stories about Hindu gods and goddesses, as well as colors, flowers, and animals. Medieval Indian painters devised a style of painting that represents each raag visually, and they often strung together such paintings in a series, called ragamala, or "garland of raga."

The opening of a Hindustani classical music performance begins with the **alap**—an unmetered, free-flowing introduction without percussion—in which the soloist explores the raag. I like to think of the alap as akin to carving a statue: unlike a pop song, where a riff or melody may be presented right away, in an alap the characteristics of the raag are revealed gradually. It takes much experience with Hindustani music to understand this unfolding. In an alap, the instrumentalist or vocalist typically begins at the low or middle of the scale and starts off slow, eventually going up higher and then descending in fast runs, while picking up speed.

After the alap section, the percussion usually kicks in, which in Hindustani music is typically played on the tabla (two bowl-shaped drums, played with the fingers while sitting down). At this point the soloist, along with the percussionist, improvises not only in a raag but also in a system of "beat cycles" called tala. Each *taal* (the singular) includes an amount of beats that are *additive* in nature. For instance, Jhaptaal has ten beats and is counted 2 + 3 + 2 + 3, while Rupak Taal has seven beats and is divided 3 + 2 + 2. Most taals are easier than this; for instance, the most widely played taal is probably Teentaal, which has 16 beats split into four divisions of four each (it sounds a lot like the Western meter 4/4). Just as each raag includes rules about what to do and not do while performing, each taal has its own rules, as well. Most importantly, each taal contains "claps" and "waves" that denote which beats are stressed (the claps) and unstressed (the waves). In Teentaal, for instance, claps are on beats 1, 5, and 13 (that's every four beats, skipping over beat 9, which is not stressed—that is the wave). An audience member will commonly clap or tap their leg on beats 1, 5, and 13, and wave (usually marked by simply turning one's hand upside down while tapping one's leg) on beat 9 (the term for the "wave" is khāli, which means "empty"). The khāli is important for tabla players: in Teentaal, for instance, drummers will often leave out the lower-pitched tabla drum between beats 9 and 12, creating an audible emptiness due to the lack of a bass sound; the drummer then returns with the low drum from beats 13 through 16, creating heightened tension (perhaps adding some complicated fills along the way) that resolves on beat 1, after which the cycle repeats. The first beat of each cycle is called the **sam**, an important concept in Hindustani music: as the music gets more and more complicated, performers will often make eye contact before the sam, and smile when they reach it—for it means they made it through a difficult section of music without messing up!

Have you ever *seen* a sitar? A plucked lute instrument, it has around 18 to 21 strings, including six or seven that lie above the frets, with the rest being smaller strings that lie *beneath* the frets and which are not usually played by hand. These smaller ones are "sympathetic strings" that resonate when particular pitches on the main strings are played. In other words, playing one note on the sitar

ALAP
The opening section of a raag, which is improvised in free rhythm.

SAM
The first beat in a taal.

JOR
The section of Hindustani instrumental performance that follows alap and introduces a pulse.

JHALA
The concluding section of instrumental improvisation following jor in Hindustani music during which the performer makes lively and fast rhythmic patterns on the drone strings of an instrument.

TIHAI
A formulaic cadential pattern, normally repeated three times with calculated rests between each statement so that the performance ends on sam.

TAAN
A rapid and florid kind of improvised melodic passage in Hindustani music.