

ROUND TABLE

Imagined Musical Geographies in a Global Age: Views from Jodhpur, Istanbul and Buenos Aires, c. 1870–1930

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Introduction

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Abstract

This collection of papers explores the intellectual history of music in global context during the period between around 1870 and 1930. Following an introduction that discusses the state of the field, each of the three papers presents a case study that explores the intersection between music and global history from diverse perspectives. The first paper discusses a Hindi music treatise published in 1896. By situating this work within multiple ‘significant geographies’, the paper highlights the limitations of ‘global’ approaches that neglect the more immediate musical, social and intellectual environments of their subjects. The second paper analyses the intersection between music and Islamic modernism in the late Ottoman Empire. It argues that a Eurocentric understanding of music history propagated by earlier reformists was succeeded at the end of the nineteenth century by an oppositional narrative that drew on the geopolitical imaginary of pan-Islamism. The final paper discusses the work of the Argentine composer Alberto Williams, particularly in relation to his views on race and national music. The paper demonstrates how contemporary scientific theories such as positivism and Social Darwinism contributed to a narrative of national musical development that created hierarchies of musical genres and excluded Argentine composers of African descent.

Keywords: global music history; Hindustani music; Ottoman Empire; music in Argentina; modernity

As historical musicology begins tentatively to expand its geographical and cultural horizons, there are conflicting notions of what going global might entail. In the first instance, reaching for those archives and perspectives closest to hand, the questions most commonly asked are about the dissemination of Western art music in colonial contexts, or historical writings by westerners on non-European musics. At the same time, ‘global’ often seems to be a euphemism for ‘non-Western’, just as the ‘ethno-’ prefix still tends to mark ethnomusicology as the study of ‘other’ musics, while ‘musicology’ remains the normative, unmarked shorthand for the study of Western art music. By this logic, the study of any non-European music, or of Western art music in any context apart from Europe, is global by default.

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Yet this is to ignore some of the fundamental insights of global history as a discipline. As Sebastian Conrad has argued, globality is both a process and a perspective.¹ As a historical process, it is characterized by increasing interconnectivity enabled by technology, mobility and circulation, which can be observed to differing degrees in different chronological periods. As a historiographical perspective, the 'global' is a way of understanding events and processes in terms of connection and entanglement rather than within a framework of isolated nation-states, area studies paradigms, or essentialized cultures. While this necessarily takes account of large-scale processes and long-distance connections, it is typically applied (unlike world history) to particular, microhistorical case studies. It thus seeks to connect localized historical events and processes with their regional and global contexts.

This round table asks how the lens of the 'global' might (or might not) be applied to music history through three discrete case studies, each of which focuses on texts about music written during the period between roughly 1870 and 1930. The case studies are drawn from diverse geographical and cultural contexts: north India, the Ottoman Empire and Argentina. They make a crucial contribution to the literature on global music history by drawing on linguistic archives and local perspectives that have hitherto been largely ignored in mainstream musicology. At the same time, the texts and their authors are not identified as 'global' simply by virtue of their non-European origins, but are critically situated within the global dynamics of their period as well as in relation to current debates about global music history. Indeed, a central aim of the round table is to argue that the study of such texts should not lead merely to a cumulative aggregation of non-Western writings on music, as exotic instantiations of already established music-historical narratives. Rather, the papers contribute to a rethinking of what global music history might still become, asking how we might establish a more plural and multicentred framework that engages critically and substantively with other intellectual and musical worlds.

While there are many possible chronological periods that might be identified as a 'global age', in this round table we focus on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In tandem with technological developments, this period saw the rapid expansion of European (especially British and French) overseas empires and economies and the associated spread of ideas about civilizational progress, often expressed in terms of racial, ethnic and cultural hierarchies. An immediate (and possibly insurmountable) challenge, then, is to address the brute reality of white European hegemony without reproducing the paradigms that informed the emerging field of musicology during this period, and which continue in many ways to shape our disciplinary categories and narratives today. These include models of evolutionary progress that were fundamental to comparative musicology and the consequent elevation of Western art music to the apex of human development, but also include the utopian valorization of 'traditional' cultures that are contrasted with the decadence of the 'modern' West. This dichotomy was axiomatic to classical ethnomusicology until the 1970s, though it has appeared less and less convincing in the face of the intensifying global flows of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.²

Yet the assumption of an essential non-Western authenticity that has been unilaterally erased by Western modernity still lurks in the shadows of musicological discourse, and has unwittingly been given new impetus by recent debates about decolonization. Without doubt, musicology urgently needs to become more diverse, more equitable, more global. However, these aims are not necessarily well served by reducing the immense variability, ambivalence and complexity of global historical processes to a morality tale about Western colonial hegemony and non-Western victimhood, resistance or virtue. Indeed, such narratives are often built entirely on the basis of Western sources and perspectives and thus inevitably tell us more about 'the West' (as if either this or its negated counterpart were a stable,

¹Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), pp. 11–14. See also *Global Intellectual History*, ed. by Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

²On the relationship between comparative musicology, early music and anti-modernist movements in the context of German imperialist and missionary projects, see Anna Maria Busse Berger, *The Search for Medieval Music in Africa and Germany, 1891–1961: Scholars, Singers, Missionaries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020). See also *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology*, ed. by Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), and *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, ed. by Philip V. Bohlman, Stephen Blum and Daniel M. Neuman (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993).

homogeneous entity rather than a mutable discursive construct) than they do about other global experiences. Moreover, they reinforce a belief in European exceptionalism, even if this is now interpreted in negative terms.

How then, without disregarding the indisputable historical impact and contemporary legacies of European colonialism, might we think differently about global music history? How do we account for alternative distributions of power and agency, beyond the uncomplicated dichotomies of colonizing oppressor and colonized subaltern? And perhaps most importantly, how can we learn more about other people, their social and intellectual histories, their musical thought and practices, rather than once again about ‘the West’ and its manifest failings? As this round table suggests, an obvious place to start is by engaging with historical texts produced by non-European subjects, rather than assuming that the latter can only be imperfectly represented (if at all) by reading against the grain of familiar Western travelogues, ethnographies or universal histories.³

By entering into dialogue with such texts, we ask how the ‘global’ was sounded in musical discourse in the decades around 1900, not in London, Paris and Berlin, but in Jodhpur, Istanbul and Buenos Aires – or, put differently, not in English, French and German, but in Hindi, Turkish and Spanish (which are, of course, no less determined by histories of social distinction or political power). This presents possibilities to imagine alternative geographies of the global which go beyond the supposedly unidirectional relationship between Western metropolises and their distant colonies. How did individual intellectuals and musicians in South Asia, the Middle East or Latin America construct musical worlds in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as they simultaneously negotiated shifting local, regional and global dynamics? Asking such questions involves not only listening to seldom-heard voices from the archive, but attempting to understand how the abstract category of the global was experienced, fashioned and contested by locally situated subjects who are often supposed to be passive recipients of geopolitical processes initiated elsewhere.

However, as the essays demonstrate in different ways, listening to voices from beyond Europe does not lead to a promised land of pre-modern, indigenous innocence, or provide a miraculous antidote to the dominance of the West. On the contrary, it belies the notion of an essential separation between Europe and the majority of the globe, and further compounds the complexity of global historical processes and their continuing legacies. Precisely because of the increasing connectedness of the world during this period, paradigms that lie at the root of musicology as a field – such as evolution, civilization, or essential cultural difference – were also defining features of the discursive landscape in other places. However, far from being something to be wished away as evidence of the pernicious influence of Western coloniality, the active, critical engagement with such ideas by musicians and intellectuals in diverse places offers an important opportunity to rethink the directionality, scope and moral stakes of global modernity, while also situating current musicological debates within a wider historical and geographical framework.

Western art music and global modernity

Although the field of global history has been around for several decades, global approaches are only now beginning to occupy a more central place in musicology. Conversely, global historians, like historians in general, have mostly avoided consideration of music, perhaps in the belief that it requires specialist training, or that it somehow transcends the material, social and ideological conditions that are normally taken for granted in historical research. In cases where music has been discussed by global historians, they have sometimes invoked tropes of Western musical exceptionalism that have their origins in the age of European imperialism, and have long been subject to critique (though are evidently far from being discarded altogether) in musicology itself.

³For a subtle discussion of these issues in the context of Siamese political and cultural history, see Parkorn Wangpaiboonkit, ‘Voice, Race, and Imperial Ethnology in Colonial Siam: *Madama Butterfly* at the Court of Chulalongkorn’, *The Opera Quarterly*, 36 (2020), 123–51.

In his influential history *Die Verwandlung der Welt*, for example, Jürgen Osterhammel identifies opera as the quintessential art form of the global nineteenth century, made concrete in the new opera houses that sprang up from New Orleans to Hanoi.⁴ In a later article, he expands this idea to consider the ‘global horizons of European art music’ from the mid-nineteenth until the early twentieth century.⁵ The ubiquity and prestige of European art music (and of opera in particular) during this period are incontestable, and Osterhammel’s brilliance as a historian can hardly be doubted. But his approach to music historiography nevertheless appears somewhat crude in comparison with his more nuanced and complex analyses of, say, economics or transformations in urban space. In particular, Osterhammel’s exceptionalist argument that European art music, uniquely amongst art forms, was immunized against foreign influence since its inception, and relatedly that it underwent no substantial alteration when it was exported to other parts of the globe, might be challenged from any number of angles. To take only the most obvious, when and how did ‘European art music’ cohere into a unified practice or conceptual category?⁶ And was this process wholly independent from Europe’s interactions with the rest of the world? Furthermore, was a performance of *Rigoletto* in Milan, Paris or London really the same thing as one in Sydney, Calcutta, or Havana?⁷

Despite its shortcomings, Osterhammel’s understanding of global music history is not entirely unrepresentative of the rapidly growing body of work in this area. The period between around 1870 and 1930 – the age of high imperialism – was a time of unprecedented western European dominance across the globe, enacted through colonial occupation and indirect means of political, economic, and cultural influence. Historical musicologists have therefore concentrated mainly on the relationship between colonialism and the representation of non-European musics in contexts such as music scholarship, the Great Exhibitions, or exoticist compositions.⁸ Conversely, other scholars have studied the processes by which Western music was disseminated to the rest of the world, in the form of genres,

⁴Jürgen Osterhammel, *Die Verwandlung der Welt: Eine Geschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2009), pp. 28–30. For the English translation, see Jürgen Osterhammel, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. by Patrick Camiller (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 5–7. For other global histories of the period, see C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004); *A World Connecting, 1870–1945*, ed. by Emily S. Rosenberg (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2012); and Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914* (London: Abacus, 1994 [1987]).

⁵Jürgen Osterhammel, ‘Globale Horizonte europäischer Kunstmusik, 1860–1930’, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 38 (2012), 86–132.

⁶Osterhammel’s answer to this question leans heavily on Max Weber’s rather idiosyncratic analysis of the rational foundations of Western art music, published in 1921. See Osterhammel, ‘Globale Horizonte’, pp. 96–102. For a critical evaluation of Weber’s musicological work, see James Wierzbicki, ‘Max Weber and Musicology: Dancing on Shaky Foundations’, *The Musical Quarterly*, 93 (2010), 262–96. For a historicization of the concept of ‘Western art music’ in the context of Europe’s colonial expansion during the early modern period, see David R. M. Irving, ‘Rethinking Early Modern “Western Art Music”: A Global History Manifesto’, *IMS Musicological Brainfood*, 3 (2019), 6–10.

⁷For more recent and sophisticated analyses of global opera, see Wangpaiboonkit, ‘Voice, Race and Imperial Ethnology’; Benjamin Walton, ‘L’Italiana in Calcutta’, in *Operatic Geographies: The Place of Opera and the Opera House*, ed. by Suzanne Aspden (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019), pp. 119–32; *Italian Opera in Global and Transnational Perspective: Reimagining Italianità in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Axel Körner and Paulo M. Kühl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022); and Charlotte Bentley, *New Orleans and the Creation of Transatlantic Opera, 1819–1859* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022).

⁸See e.g. Annegret Fauser, *Musical Encounters at the 1889 Paris World’s Fair* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2005); Jann Pasler, ‘The Utility of Musical Instruments in the Racial and Colonial Agendas of Late Nineteenth-Century France’, *Journal of the Royal Musicological Society*, 129 (2004), 24–76; Ralph P. Locke, *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); *Music and Orientalism in the British Empire, 1780s–1940s*, ed. by Martin Clayton and Bennett Zon (Abingdon: Ashgate Publishing, 2007); Nalini Ghuman, *Resonances of the Raj: India in the English Musical Imagination, 1897–1947* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Timothy D. Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); James Q. Davies, ‘Instruments of Empire’, in *Sound Knowledge: Music and Science in London, 1789–1851*, ed. by James Q. Davies and Ellen Lockhart (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2017), pp. 145–74.

instruments, institutions, pedagogical practices, and theoretical concepts.⁹ The exponential increase in European musical practices and ideas around the globe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is usually understood to be not just a consequence of colonialism, but the culmination of a longer history of musical encounters between Europeans and others beginning in the early modern period.¹⁰ Analyses of this process tend to oscillate between salvific claims of intercultural harmony and apocalyptic denunciations of cultural imperialism.¹¹

As suggested above, however, terms such as ‘Western music’ do not refer to a stable or unified object. In many contexts globally, genres such as opera or the symphony were less important as signifiers of civilized modernity than ‘lighter’ genres such as vernacular music theatre or couples dances. It was especially in such domains of public sociability that new, creolized practices emerged, which drew on the technical and formal resources of European music but subverted them to fit local performance environments, social structures, and aesthetic sensibilities.¹² Likewise, the spread of commercial printing and recording technologies transformed local musical economies, often to the advantage of hybridized genres which embodied the popular urban cultures that flourished in global port cities and imperial metropolises around 1900.¹³ The emergence of new forms of popular music and dance was undoubtedly

⁹Nicholas Cook, ‘Western Music as World Music’, in *The Cambridge History of World Music*, ed. by Philip V. Bohlman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 75–99; Kofi Agawu, ‘Tonality as a Colonizing Force in Africa’, in *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*, ed. by Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), pp. 334–55; Bob van der Linden, ‘Non-Western National Music and Empire in Global History: Interactions, Uniformities, and Comparisons’, *Journal of Global History*, 10 (2015), 431–56; John Joyce, ‘The Globalization of Music: Expanding Spheres of Influence’, in *Conceptualizing Global History*, ed. by Bruce Mazlish and Ralph Buultjens (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 205–24; Bradley G. Shope, *American Popular Music in Britain’s Raj* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2016); Walton, ‘L’Italiana in Calcutta’; Körner and Kühl, *Italian Opera*; Bentley, *New Orleans*.

¹⁰David R. M. Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manila* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Olivia A. Bloechl, *Native American Song at the Frontiers of Early Modern Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Thomas Irvine, *Listening to China: Sound and the Sino-Western Encounter, 1770–1839* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020); Vanessa Agnew, *Enlightenment Orpheus: The Power of Music in Other Worlds* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Geoffrey Baker, *Imposing Harmony: Music and Society in Colonial Cuzco* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); Gary Tomlinson, *The Singing of the New World: Indigenous Voice in the Era of European Contact* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Ian Woodfield, *English Musicians in the Age of Exploration* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1995).

¹¹For a recent attempt to articulate the conceptual and ethical basis of global musicology, see Daniel Chua, ‘Global Musicology: A Keynote without a Key’, *Acta Musicologica*, 94 (2022), 109–26. Some recent studies have attempted to produce synthetic accounts of global music history, usually with a jarringly sanguine and depoliticized notion of the role of Euro-America in processes of globalization. See e.g. Harry Liebersohn, *Music and the New Global Culture: From the Great Exhibitions to the Jazz Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019); Michael Spitzer, *The Musical Human: A History of Life on Earth* (London: Bloomsbury, 2021); Mark Hijleh, *Towards a Global Music History: Intercultural Convergence, Fusion, and Transformation in the Human Musical Story* (London: Routledge, 2018); Richard D. Wetzel, *The Globalization of Music in History* (New York: Routledge, 2012). The edited volumes that emerged from the Balzan Project ‘Towards a Global History of Music’, led by Reinhard Strohm, are mostly a collation of unrelated case studies (many of them nonetheless valuable in their own right), rather than a sustained and coherent effort to engage with the theory, methodology and politics of global music history. See *Studies on a Global History of Music: A Balzan Musicology Project*, ed. by Reinhard Strohm (London: Routledge, 2018); *The Music Road: Coherence and Diversity in Music from the Mediterranean to India*, ed. by Reinhard Strohm (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); *Transcultural Music History: Global Participation and Regional Diversity in the Modern Age*, ed. by Reinhard Strohm (Berlin: Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung, 2021).

¹²Ananya Jahanara Kabir, ‘Rapsodia Ibero-Indiana: Transoceanic Creolization and the Mando of Goa’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 55 (2021), 1581–1636; ‘Cultural Brokers and the Making of Glocal Soundscapes, 1880s to 1930s’, special issue, ed. by Martin Rempe and Claudius Torp, *Itinerario*, 41 (2017); Matthew Isaac Cohen, *The Komedi Stamboel: Popular Theatre in Colonial Indonesia, 1891–1903* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006); Tan Sooi Beng, *Bangsawan: A Social and Stylistic History of Popular Malay Opera* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1993); Janet L. Sturman, *Zarzuela: Spanish Operetta, American Stage* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000). Missionary activity also led to complex musical adaptations and creolizations: see e.g. Agawu, ‘Tonality as a Colonizing Force’; Hyun Kyong Hannah Chang, ‘Colonial Circulations: Japan’s Classroom Songbooks in Korea, 1910–1945’, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 27 (2018), 157–83; Makoto Harris Takao, ‘“In Their Own Way”: Contrafactual Practices in Japanese Christian Communities During the 16th Century’, *Early Music*, 47 (2019), 183–98.

¹³*Phonographic Encounters: Mapping Transnational Cultures of Sound, 1890–1945*, ed. by Elodie A. Roy and Eva Moreda Rodríguez (London: Routledge, 2021); Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese*

related to the adaptation of technologies and social practices that had their origins in western Europe, as their practitioners were well aware. But this is not to say that they were simply the result of ‘Westernization’: rather, they emerged from the global confluence of cultural and aesthetic practices precipitated by technological interconnectivity, while at the same time embodying the particularities of local ways of being and knowing.

It was also during this period that elite musicians and intellectuals around the globe began to reconceptualize existing musical and aesthetic practices in response to broader political and social transformations. This set of processes has often been interpreted within a diffusionist paradigm of modernization, or as the classic study by Bruno Nettl defined it, ‘the Western impact on world music’.¹⁴ While more recent work has added further detail, the essential outlines of the story often remain the same: non-Western peoples first came into contact with Western music through colonial, missionary and diplomatic encounters in the early modern period; reforms by modernizing states in the nineteenth century led to a more sustained engagement with Western music; finally, in the twentieth century, ‘traditional’ musics died out, declined, or were irrevocably altered by the influence of Western musical practices and concepts. This includes, for example, the adoption of equal temperament, the use of European instruments, the introduction of staff notation, the canonization of repertoire and the decline of improvisation, the establishment of conservatoires and concert halls, and the adoption of new aesthetic and bodily practices in the space of performance.¹⁵ The impact of the West is understood as universal, but each cultural region or musical tradition is said to respond in a slightly different way. Thus, East Asia is typically held up as an exemplary case of successful musical Westernization, whereas countries in the Middle East were supposedly hampered by a lack of confidence in their own musical traditions and by their allegedly slower response to the imperatives of modernity.

There is, of course, a certain kind of truth in the ‘Western impact’ model. But there are surely alternative ways to interpret and narrativize the historical evidence, which might help to destabilize the myth of European primacy that underlies the discourse, and indeed the practices, of musical Westernization. Intellectual elites and reformers in different places and with diverse cultural backgrounds subscribed to ideals of civilization, progress, and evolution that had global currency in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and which were predicated on the idea of Europe as the measure of modernity.¹⁶ Furthermore, they often emphasized a binary division between what they understood as their own culture and that of Europe, which typically corresponded to broader imaginaries of the ‘old’ and the ‘new’. Yet the propagation of such ideas by Asian, African or Latin American intellectuals does not mean that they are historical facts rather than discursive constructs. Indeed, as many postcolonial and decolonial thinkers have argued, it is precisely the construction of difference between Europe and others, understood as a kind of asynchrony, that produces the ideology of modernity. This is in contrast to the assumption that modernity is a given, something with self-perpetuating agency that emerges to challenge a pre-existing, ahistorical ‘tradition’ (which, needless to say, is co-constitutive of ‘modernity’ as its discursive other).¹⁷

Jazz Age (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001); Ziad Fahmy, *Ordinary Egyptians: Creating the Modern Nation Through Popular Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011); Michael Denning, *Noise Uprising: The Audiopolitics of a World Musical Revolution* (London: Verso, 2015).

¹⁴Bruno Nettl, *The Western Impact on World Music: Change, Adaptation, and Survival* (New York: Schirmer, 1985).

¹⁵See especially Osterhammel, ‘Globale Horizonte’; Cook, ‘Western Music’; van der Linden, ‘Non-Western National Musics’; Joyce, ‘Globalization’.

¹⁶*Global Spencerism: The Communication and Appropriation of a British Evolutionist*, ed. by Bernard V. Lightman (Boston, MA: Brill, 2016); Christopher L. Hill, ‘Conceptual Universalization in the Transnational Nineteenth Century’, in *Global Intellectual History*, ed. by Samuel Moyn and Andrew Sartori (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 134–58; Prasenjit Duara, ‘The Discourse of Civilization and Pan-Asianism’, *Journal of World History*, 12 (2001), 99–130; Christian Geulen, ‘The Common Grounds of Conflict: Racial Visions of World Order, 1880–1940’, in *Competing Visions of World Order: Global Moments and Movements, 1880s–1930s*, ed. by Sebastian Conrad and Dominic Sachsenmaier (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 69–96.

¹⁷Gurminder K. Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton:

As scholars such as Ana María Ochoa Gautier and Fumitaka Yamauchi have shown, debates about the ontology and epistemology of music and other sonic practices, which went to the heart of questions about national and cultural identity, were integral to the construction, translation and contestation of modernity by non-European intellectuals during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁸ These discussions did not emerge from a vacuum, provoked by the shock of sudden confrontation with a vigorous West, but were filtered through longer histories of intellectual engagement with music and sonic practice, and shaped by shifting local and regional interactions between multiple stakeholders. While certain conditions and developments had global ramifications, they did not interact with every locale or community in the same way, and there was no singular, unified process of Western impact and non-Western response. ‘Western music’ was understood and practiced in multiple ways in different locations and by different actors. Equally, local music cultures were not homogenous traditions but expansive fields of praxis and discourse with convoluted histories that were subject to ongoing processes of negotiation. It was in the more intensely connected world of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, that many intellectuals began to construct reified national traditions that were defined in opposition to the music of the West. The challenge, then, is to acknowledge the ubiquitous power that such binary distinctions had to define the limits of contemporary discourse, while also attempting to think beyond them in order to understand the ambiguities, contestations and refusals that they conceal.

Localizing the global

The essays that follow focus on texts about music written in the decades around 1900. These texts were produced by relatively elite men in urban centres with varying levels of regional influence. The authors were all cosmopolitan and mobile in varied ways, connected through heritage, travel, technology and learning to places distant from their immediate surroundings. Their texts also had the potential to travel far and wide, being produced and disseminated in the medium of print. They were intended to be read first and foremost by local audiences, but at the same time the authors located themselves, and the musical practices they wrote about, within transregional or global spaces. Ideas and debates about music in these distant geographical locations reflect some of the conditions of globality that were part of the shared experience of educated city-dwellers during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. All of the protagonists were conscious at some level of the onrush of modernity – the sense that history is moving swiftly and surely forwards, through education, technology, or national awakening – and of the connection between this process and the geopolitical hegemony of Western Europe. Music is directly implicated in this nexus of modernity and geopolitics, and the authors construct musical histories and futures that might adequately speak to new local, regional and global configurations.

Yet beyond the level of shared conditions and developments there are significant differences and internal complexities, which might help us to arrive at a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the intellectual history of music in global context. The essays also offer different interpretative perspectives, partly reflecting the diversity of historical, musical and intellectual materials under discussion. While empire and colonialism are relevant in all three cases, they take quite different forms. Relatedly, the political and social imaginaries of the authors are diverse, in terms of the ways that they understand and locate themselves within structures of power, and in relation to other social groups or political formations.

Princeton University Press, 2008 [2000]); Enrique Dussel, *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of ‘the Other’ and the Myth of Modernity*, trans. by Michael D. Barber (New York: Continuum, 1995).

¹⁸Ana María Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); Yamauchi Fumitaka, ‘Contemplating East Asian Music History in Regional and Global Contexts: On Modernity, Nationalism, and Colonialism’, in *Decentering Musical Modernity: Perspectives on East Asian and European Music History*, ed. by Tobias Janz and Yang Chien-Chang (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2019), 313–43. I thank Alexandra Leonzini for bringing Yamauchi’s work to my attention.

In Richard David Williams's case study, Goswami Pannalal's treatise *Nād Binod* ('Sonic Delight', 1896) is situated within multiple geographies, each with specific but overlapping historical trajectories. These include the British Empire, then at the height of its power, which represents the most obviously 'global' space, complete with railways, telegraphs and printing presses. Yet as Williams argues, there were other 'significant geographies' that may have been more important to Pannalal's identity and his understanding of music. These include the worlds of Hindu cosmology, the transregional histories of Persianate and Mughal courtly culture, and the networks of patronage and lineage that connected diverse locales across Rajasthan and north India. As Williams suggests, it is imperative that global music history finds ways to articulate the relationships between these multiple geographies, rather than focusing solely on the more familiar spaces of colonial modernity.

My own paper focuses on debates about musical reform in the Ottoman Turkish press during the final decades of the nineteenth century. While Mughal rule over India had been replaced by the British Raj, the Ottoman Empire remained the largest independent Muslim state during this period. Nonetheless, Ottoman intellectuals grappled with the growing influence of European cultural and musical forms, which was connected with the increasingly vulnerable geopolitical status of the empire. However, rather than reprising the predictable story of indigenous tradition overcome by Western modernity, I highlight the multiplicity and ambiguity of positions adopted in debates about musical reform. Furthermore, I argue that these debates should be understood as part of the wider transregional history of Islamic modernism, which allowed Muslim intellectuals to repurpose European notions of progress and civilization in order to construct an oppositional narrative of pan-Islamic universalism.

In the final essay, Vera Wolkowicz discusses the writings of the Argentine composer Alberto Williams (1862–1952). Like musical reformists in Asia, Williams was a firm believer in civilizational progress and scientific positivism. However, the ways in which he expressed this belief were determined by his position within the particular historical and social landscape of Argentina. When Williams published his article 'La patria y la música' ('The Fatherland and music') in 1921, Argentina had been an independent republic for over a century, and Western art music was a thriving area of cultural production supported by numerous conservatoires, performance venues and publishing houses. As Wolkowicz demonstrates, Williams's writings reflect his identity as a *criollo*, or person of European descent, and his Social Darwinist faith in white racial supremacy. His appropriation of indigenous and rural elements to create a distinctive national art music thus invokes the diverse racial heritage of Argentina while simultaneously effacing the contributions of contemporary Afro-Argentine composers such as Zenón Rolón (1856–1902).

In sum, the papers provide alternative perspectives on the social and intellectual history of music in global context during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. While they do not by any means presume to offer a comprehensive or unified account of global music history, they suggest new ways to think about the interaction of global conditions and processes with local and regional histories and social formations. If all of the papers engage with the seemingly inescapable geographies of imperialism, nationalism and modernity, they also historicize and localize the discourses produced by non-European intellectuals that constructed, critiqued, or subverted these geographies. Furthermore, while the papers demonstrate that ideas about music were integral to global visions of progress and civilization, they also highlight the complexity and diversity of positions adopted in different locales and by different social actors. It is hoped that this might suggest new directions for debate about music and global history, which go beyond the impact of European music or the Western representation of others, in order to enquire more deeply into how local actors constructed their own narratives of globality.