AAR

spotlight on
TEACHING

Spring 2001 | Published by the American Academy of Religion | Vol. 16, No.2

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The AAR Committee on Teaching and Learning (Thomas Peterson, Alfred University, Chair), sponsors *Spotlight on Teaching*. It appears twice each year in *Religious Studies News, AAR Edition* as a special pullout section focusing on teaching and learning around a particular theme, concern, or setting. Future issues will examine teaching about religion in the schools and teaching religion in Great Britian.

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Teaching Religion and Music

Tazim R. Kassam is Associate Professor of Religion at Syracuse University. A historian of religions specializing in the Islamic tradition, her research interests include gender, ritual, devotional literature, and syncretism. Her book, Songs of Wisdom and Circles of Dance *(SUNY Press: 1995) explores the origins and creative synthesis of Hindu-Muslim ideas expressed in the song tradition of the Ismaili Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent.*

"Those who sing pray twice"

Tazim R. Kassam, Syracuse University

No feature of religious life stands out with greater clarity for me than the fact of prayer intoned, chanted, sung. I remember being bundled into the car as a child on our trips to the coast in Kenya and even before my father had shifted into gear, he would have begun to sing a *ginan, bhajan*, or geet (all devotional songs in Hindi or Gujerati). No journey was without them. We also took along a collection of cassette tapes of devotional songs. There seemed nothing unusual about singing *ginans* or hearing *qawwalis* on the way to the beach, city, or school. *Ginans*, a tradition of hymns composed by Ismaili Muslim saints in South Asia, were an integral, daily feature of religious services which took place in the *jamatkhanas* or prayer assemblies, both in the morning and evening. As a child, I learned to articulate my first requests to God and to express my first feelings of devotion and surrender through the language and music of *ginans*. Singing was a thoroughly portable and enjoyable activity and I was convinced God paid special attention to prayers which were soulfully sung. Later, when I began to study religion academically, it came as quite a shock to me that one could dedicate years to reading, translating and analyzing sacred writings and not once hear them recited or performed in their liturgical settings. How was it possible to appreciate the aesthetic, emotional, social and cultural aspects of the Qur'an, Bhagavad Gita, Torah, and countless other scriptures and devotions without reference to and knowledge of their performance? I was to take up *ginans* as the focus of my specialized research, and to this day, when I pick up a book of *ginans*, my first impulse is not to read them as words on the page but to hear them as the melodic hymns they are meant to be.

Tazim R. Kassam, Syracuse University

A dimension of religious life which is not easily accessible in the context of teaching about religions, however, is religious experience and practice. Although the category of religious experience is presumed to be primary, the academic study of religion occupies itself mainly with its theological, symbolic and cognitive manifestations. Religious experience as such remains private, subjective, mysterious, and inaccessible, and is discovered or imagined principally through its mediated expressions in scripture, practices, and institutions. Although increasing attention is being paid to the performative aspects of religion in scholarship, the methods of experiential learning, ethnographic investigation, and participant-observation which are central to disciplines such as anthropology have not been readily embraced by nor incorporated into the pedagogy of religious studies. This is the case for a variety of reasons, with perhaps the principal one being the risks of blurring the line between advocacy and detachment, prescription and description, subjectivity and objectivity (dubious though these categories may be to postmodern critics). Hence, apart from the occasional 'field trips' to mosques, synagogues and powwows, the principal avenue of approach to understanding religious life remains the study of texts. The purpose of this issue of *Spotlight on Teaching* is to advocate a greater integration of performance approaches into the study and teaching of religion. The articles gathered here suggest that it is possible to encounter and explore religious experience through another window, namely, the performance and practices of sacred music traditions.

Central aspects of religions which exclusively textual approaches fail to capture are its aesthetic and synaesthetic dimensions. Oral and musical expressions of religious life are first and foremost sounded things: vibrations and movements experienced as rhythm, pitch, and duration. They often belong to ritual contexts which evoke all the senses through gesture, dance, music, incense, food, and brilliant colors. Internal senses of cognition and imagination are also evoked through storytelling, symbolism and ritual drama. In *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual*, Jonathan Z. Smith notes that "Ritual is, first and foremost, a mode of paying attention. It is a process of marking interest" (28). The performance of sacred music as ritual brings one back to one's senses and intensifies attention to the present moment. As a synaesthetic experience, ritual is a reminder that the origin of meaning or worldview is fundamentally rooted in the experience of the body in its own world, and the myriad feelings, sensations, and cognitions that arise from this dynamic interaction. Music helps draw attention back to be-ing, that is, to the category of experience and its nature as process, enactment, and embodiment.

> *Central aspects of religion which exclusively textual approaches fail to capture are its aesthetic and synaesthetic dimensions.*

The sensual impact of litany, chant and song mark interest and call attention through the evocation of feelings and aspirations. As textualists accustomed to thinking of sacred texts as words rather than as soundings, and analyzing them primarily as historical documents and sources of belief and doctrine, it is possible to miss their fundamental basis in human and social activity. The very articulation of speech or production of sound is an action which draws attention to the here and the now and engages participants personally and socially. As a social event, performance involves actors and doings which are rooted in a particular culture

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Hearing the Sacred: Introducing Religious Chant and Music into Religious Studies Teaching

Guy L. Beck, Tulane University

Guy Beck has been teaching courses on religion and music at Louisiana State University, College of Charleston, and now at Tulane University. He has published a book titled Sonic Theology: Hinduism and Sacred Sound *(University of South Carolina Press: 1993) and a CD recording of Indian Classical music in* Sacred Raga *(STR Digital, 1999). He is currently working on a project on Indic Influences on World Religious Chant and Music.*

Religion is regarded as a universal phenomenon by historians of religion, and music is recognized as a universal part of culture by ethnomusicologists and anthropologists. Yet the vital and perpetual relationship between religion and music is frequently side-stepped in academia, whether in music or in religious studies teaching. While higher education in America includes the teaching of courses in Religious Studies Departments and Programs as well as the teaching of World Music courses in Music Departments, both curricula have tended to proceed in separate directions regarding methodology, topical content, and historical and sociological context. Many scholars of religion and theology do not feel well-equipped to discuss music in their classes, and instructors of Folk Music of the World or World Music classes who are trained in ethnomusicology are inclined to dodge religion, as well as theological issues or questions that are thought to be outside their area of expertise. 'Religion and Music' as a singular entity appears to have tumbled down into one of those bottomless ravines between monolithic departments on present-day college and university campuses. At best, it survives somewhere in the nebulous zone of interdisciplinary studies.

The circumstance of the academic separation of religion and music is, however, due more to misconception and lack of information than from any deliberate judgment of non-importance. Many scholars of religion are simply unaware of the work of ethnomusicologists, and vice versa. Ethnomusicology, the academic discipline that focuses on the music of non-Western cultures, is closest to the social sciences in methodology and approaches music, like language and religion, as part of ethnicity and culture. Over the past fifty years, this field has made great progress in elevating world music as well as also highlighting the role of religion in musical cultures worldwide. It has dispelled some untruths such as, for example, that one needs to be a classically trained musician or theorist in order to study music as a cultural phenomenon worldwide.

I have followed the notion that while participation in a religious ritual or the acquisition of performance skills of a type of world music are both potentially helpful and even desirable for a specific academic pursuit, they are not 'necessary' for a preliminary understanding of a previously unfamiliar tradition, whether by students or faculty. This is the perspective that I use to approach the teaching of both world music and religious studies courses at Tulane University, especially at the introductory level. Attempting to reinforce the bridge between religious studies and world music, I will outline in this short article some important steps and aids in implementing religious chant and music into courses on religion, including textual, video, and compact disc (CD) resources.

> *Acting as a bridge between myth and ritual, such sacred music is accepted as symbolizing the "other" of religion, that which is beyond words or language.*

The significance of religious chant and music for the study of religion cannot be overestimated: there is virtually no religious tradition without it. Before the Western Renaissance, all religious texts in all religious traditions of the world were sung or recited orally. Through the centuries, priests, monks, and other specialists have sung and recited the Christian masses, Jewish services, Buddhist *pujas*, Islamic calls to prayer, Confucian sacrifices, Hindu *yajnas* and *aratis*, and other ceremonies that form the basis of organized religious observances in the world religions. Over-emphasis on silent textual study in modern academic religious studies is based upon Protestant notions of scripture as a written document that is read quietly to access its meaning regardless of the language of the text, as in the vernacular King James Bible. The overall importance of the oral form of scripture is cogently explained by Harold Coward in the introduction to his recently edited book, *Experiencing Scripture in World Religions*.

Instrumental music is frequently a part of religious observance as well. For most religions throughout history, myths have been embodied not in written literature but in musical performance, combining vocal and instrumental music, and often dance. Acting as a bridge between myth and ritual, such sacred music is accepted as symbolizing the 'other' of religion: that which is beyond words or language. Many religious traditions stress a distinction between vocal and instrumental music, assigning a higher value to vocal music; the human body is part of the divine creation (nature) whereas a musical instrument is 'man-made' and thus a part of culture. The human voice also has the innate capacity to communicate meanings through the words of a text (song-text). As such, instruments have generally patterned their sounds after the human voice as an ideal sound, though the reverse can be found. Hence, both vocal and instrumental music have functioned together in various ways that need not be overlooked in the study of religious ritual practice and experience.

The first step in introducing music into religion courses involves explaining the great importance attached to music as part of religious practice and experience. I follow this by presenting and discussing recorded examples of chanted scriptures and sacred texts. For example, during the time allotted for each religion in a World Religions or Asian Religions course, I present a listening selection that involves the oral performance of passages from scriptures of each tradition. Then I invite the class to hear the intonation, careful pronunciation, and emotional intensity of each selection, trying to empathize from the inside. The students may even write a short paragraph or essay describing their immediate response, both as a neutral outsider and as someone who might be attracted to the tradition based on what they are hearing. They may identify feelings of joy, peace, curiosity, and even perhaps, though hopefully not, revulsion. I follow this with more discussion drawing from the student responses, also including issues of social context, gender, and identity.

A further step is to invite representatives of living religions into the class to chant or perform on musical instruments. In this case, I have the fortunate advantage of being a trained vocalist in the North Indian music tradition, which allows for in-class demonstrations of Vedic chant and Hindu music. In addition, proficiency on the piano makes it possible for me, with the presence of a keyboard, to demonstrate scale or melody patterns used in religious music. Musical expertise by the instructor, while not necessary for teaching religion and music, is nonetheless an added bonus for the students.

Resources:

There are at present no satisfactory textbooks in Music and World Religions. A current project undertaken by the Centre for the Study of Religion and Society at the University of Victoria (Canada), directed by Harold Coward, is attempting to rectify that situation with a new book and CD, edited by myself, with chapters on music in each of six world religions. Meanwhile, instructors will need to create an ideal mix of religion and music by using assorted resources, both readings and recordings. When I taught *Religion and Music*, a course that I developed at both LSU and at the College of Charleston, I collected readings from various sources and matched them with recorded examples from my own collection or from the library.

Regarding the Jewish and Christian traditions of music, there are several very useful readings in the book, *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Experience* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), edited by Lawrence A. Hoffman and Janet R. Walton. *Enchanting Powers: Music in the World's Religions* (Harvard University Press, 1997), edited by Lawrence E. Sullivan, contains helpful chapters on music in Hindu Tantrism, Islam, Confucianism, Judaism, African and Native American religion. *Sacred Sound: Music in Religious Thought and Practice* (Scholars Press, 1983), edited by Joyce Irwin, has excellent chapters on the topic of sacred sound and music in Protestant Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Sufism, and Theravada Buddhism. These last two works also include a chapter or two on methodological issues in the study of religion and music. My own text, *Sonic Theology: Hinduism and Sacred Sound* (University of South Carolina Press, 1993) explores the theoretical basis of religious chant and music in Hinduism.

Excursions in World Music 3rd edition, by Bruno Nettl, et al (Prentice-Hall, 2001), with accompanying 2 CD packet, is one of the best comprehensive textbooks for courses in World Music. There are helpful references to religious music, not in the general context of a world religion, but rather in association with folk rituals and sectarian or regional varieties. This work includes a sound introduction to world music that is advantageous to instructors in religion and music. The bibliography and discography at the end of each unit is helpful in building a collection for personal or library use. Some of the selections on the accompanying CD are directly related to religious practice or ritual, while others include folk and work songs, ballads, theatrical songs, and blues. Other survey texts include Jeff Titon, *Worlds of Music* (Schirmer Books, 1992), and David Reck, *Music of the Whole Earth* (Scribner's, 1977). The definitive reference work for world music is the new Garland *Encyclopedia of World Music* (Garland Publishing, 2000) to be complete in ten volumes. The one-volume *World Music: The Rough Guide* (The Rough Guides, 1994) is very useful for instructors in world music and religion, with many in-depth articles.

There are good video resources available to teachers of world music. For religious studies courses, however, the religious themes and issues need to be highlighted by the instructors within what are often solely musical presentations. *The JVC Video Anthology of World Music and Dance* is available through the World Music Institute (49 W. 27th St., NY, NY 10001-6936, 212-545-7536, *www.heartheworld.org*), and contains 30 video cassettes, each of 60 minute duration, along with nine booklets that are distributed over 8 areas: East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Middle East and Africa, Europe, Soviet Union, The Americas, and Oceania. The quality of the production is very good, and each selection is accurately timed and briefly described. There are also many other singular performances of concerts by world music artists which are useful, e.g., Festival of India Concerts, Reggae concerts, Tibetan Monks in Concert. In terms of instant replay or location of selected footage, DVD format is preferable to VHS though many titles are still unavailable in it.

Among the enormous variety of world music titles, several established record labels contain a distinct world music series which can be ordered by your library. Some

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Sacred Music in the Religious Studies Classroom

Stephen Marini, Wellesley College

Stephen Marini is Professor of Religion at Wellesley College and, in Spring 2001, Visiting Professor of Religion and Literature at Yale Divinity School/Yale Institute of Sacred Music. His book Sacred Song in America: Religion and Music at the Twenty-First Century *is forthcoming from the University of Illinois Press.*

Sacred music is an intrinsic element of virtually every religious culture, yet it remains one of the most difficult aspects of religion to convey to students. Up to the recent past, one could assign technological reasons for that difficulty. While slide projection technology had made religious iconography and architecture relatively available in the classroom, the means for providing sacred music lagged far behind. Recordings of any but the most popular Christian sacred music – works of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms from the 'classical' repertory – were hard to come by and cumbersome to use. Vinyl discs were easy to scratch; cassette tape tracks were hard to find.

The advent of the compact disc, however, has rendered these technical drawbacks moot. High quality digital recordings are now available for the sacred musics of many religious traditions, and finding the correct track on compact disc is effortless. Similarly, videos of ritual performances including music have proliferated over the past decade. The advent of the 'smart classroom,' moreover, has made it possible to pre-program and present a selection of audio, or video music examples at the touch of a finger. Yet sacred music still has far less currency in the religion classroom than does iconography or architecture. Why?

If the answer is not a matter of technology, then it most probably lies either in the perception that special skills are required to present music, or in the interpretive framework the instructor employs. Some training is indeed required if one expects to present music as a sacred art. Such an approach entails knowledge of how to read and perform music, as well as an acquaintance with appropriate academic disciplines, including musicology and history of music. But interpretation of sacred music as an art form is not what the pedagogy of religious studies requires. Our task is to present the religious meaning of sacred music, not its technical history and performance standards. For this agenda, teachers need not possess special musical training.

The musical mastery needed to present a hymn, chant, cantillation, or sacred song from most religious traditions is in fact quite minimal. Teachers who have sung in a chorus or taken basic lessons on an instrument can likely explain the elementary melodic and rhythmic contours of such musical forms well enough to include them in their presentations of religious traditions. Those teachers who are musically inexperienced, tone-deaf, or as one of my recent students called himself, 'musically challenged,' however, will consider even the most elementary attempt to explain sacred music to be an impossible task. Yet these colleagues can and should use music in their classrooms. They can, after all, at least play some sacred music on a boom box and say something about how it expresses a religious t radition and how it is used in ritual practice.

My favorite use of sacred music, however, is the presentation of colonial and antebellum Evangelicalism through the music of the Early American singing school.

The primary reason why sacred music is largely absent from our courses is not the need for special training. The problem lies elsewhere, in the inadequacy of our interpretive and pedagogical models of what religion is in the first place. Most of us have been trained in a logocentric approach to religion that focuses on religious thought, especially belief systems and moral teachings. The perusal of any recent AAR Annual Meeting program book will confirm that we devote overwhelming attention to sacred literary texts and discourse about them. This interest advances our scholarship and the standing of our field, but it is inadequate for addressing the full range of what David D. Hall has recently termed 'lived religion': the reality of religion as it is practiced.

Logocentrism especially limits our teaching in the undergraduate classroom, where our first task is descriptive. There, our logocentrism fails us by tending to exclude the ritual and popular dimensions of religious culture, especially sacred music. A great irony attends this situation because sacred music often sets texts that have been included in the canon of religious thought. Consider in this regard the Vedic hymns, the Psalms, or the song cycles of Native Americans. We regularly invoke these works as religious texts but ignore the musical dimensions and ritual contexts in which they were created and performed. Some sacred music has gained immense popularity because of the simple yet representative qualities of its words and music. These songs are of special usefulness in the classroom because they articulate so well the everyday religiousness in which most human beings live.

Sacred music, and especially sacred songs can readily be used in the classroom to teach the ritual and popular dimensions of religious culture. In my own work as a teacher of American religious history, I have used the rich trove of Protestant psalms and hymns to punctuate my presentation of the Puritan, Evangelical, Fundamentalist, Liberal, and Pentecostal movements. The literalistic translations of *The Bay Psalm Book* and their unison singing in worship alert students to the Word of God as a foundational category of Puritan religion. The rival hymnodies of Ira Sankey's *Gospel Hymns* and Washington Gladden's *Pilgrim Hymnal* give voice to the emotional and doctrinal sensibilities of Fundamentalism and the Social Gospel, respectively. Recordings of Thomas Dorsey's gospel songs by the Rev. James Cleveland convey the power of the Black Pentecostal and Holiness tradition.

My favorite use of sacred music, however, is the presentation of colonial and antebellum Evangelicalism through the music of the Early American singing school. Evangelicalism was a profoundly hymnic religious movement, driven by the powerfully emotional lyrics of Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley. After its spectacular eruption in the Great Awakening, Evangelicalism spread across America assisted not only by its doctrine of the New Birth and the emotional preaching of its ministers, but also by the hymns of Watts and Wesley. Their lyrics were set to a new musical style created by itinerant singing masters, beginning with Boston's William Billings around 1770, who convened local singing schools to teach music literacy. By 1800, the singing school had become a fixture of American religious culture, aided greatly by a unique system of music notation called shape-notes. Notes were printed in four different shapes corresponding to syllables used in sounding out the musical scale.

Thousands of singing school compositions were published in hundreds shape-note collections before 1850. The music's sturdy harmonies and powerful rhythms articulate the fervor of the itinerant evangelists and camp meeting revivals of the Second Great Awakening, and its full-throated style of performance has been preserved by traditional singers in the rural south. I can present to students a selection of singing school source materials including the original lyrics, reprinted shape-note scores, and recent recordings that teach the style and sensibility of Early American Evangelicalism in ways that the texts of Jonathan Edwards, Lyman Beecher, and Charles Finney simply cannot.

Not every teacher of American religious history will feel comfortable presenting such materials, but their courses will be impoverished if they do not. Sacred music, especially popular hymnody, can provide access to realities of religious culture otherwise unavailable. The inclusion of sacred song informs students that religion is an embodied ritual phenomenon, that believers actually worship their divinities, and use their bodies as well as their minds to do so. Sacred song is perhaps the most potent, and popular, synthesis of head and heart in American religious culture. To exclude it is to disembody religion artificially and inaccurately. To include sacred song, on the other hand, invites our students to confront religion for what it has been in human experience: a synergy of belief, ritual, institution, and spirituality that always remains beyond the reach of logocentric inquiry. When our students hear how a religion sounds, their study of it, and our teaching of it, can be fundamentally transformed.

Resources:

Tunebooks:

McGraw, Hugh, et al. Eds. *The Sacred Harp: 1991 Revision.* Bremen, GA: Sacred Harp Publishing Company, 1991. The oldest American singing school tunebook in continuous publication. Originally compiled by Benjamin Franklin White and E. J. King and published in 1844.

Walker, William. Ed. *The Christian Harmony.* Greenville, SC: A Press, 1979. Originally published in 1835. Reprint of the 1873 edition.

Wilcox, Glenn C. Ed. *The Southern Harmony.* Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1987. Compiled by William Walker in 1835. Reprint of the 1854 edition.

CD Recordings:

Old Harp Singing by the Old Harp Singers of Eastern Tennessee.
Smithsonian Folkways 2356 (1951).

Sing and Joyful Be: Early American Fuging Tunes, Anthems, and Spiritual Songs. (1989). Norumbega Harmony NBH-0001 (1989); *www.norumbegaharmony.org.*

White Spirituals from the Sacred Harp: The Alabama Sacred Harp Convention.
New World Records 80205-2 (1959).

Secondary Sources:

Buell, Cobb Jr. *The Sacred Harp: A Tradition and Its Music.* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1978. A superb account of the singing school tradition in the rural south by an expert current practitioner.

Dickson, D. Bruce, Jr. *And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain- Folk Camp-Meeting Religion, 1800-1845.* Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1974.
A study of the belief and ritual context of singing school music.

Pullen, Jackson George. *White Spirituals in the Southern Uplands.* New York: Dover Publications, 1965.
Reprint of the classic 1993 monograph on the subject.

References:

Hall, David D. *Lived Religion in America: Toward a Theory of Practice.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

In Pursuit of Active Listening

Vivian-Lee Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

Vivian-Lee Nyitray is an Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Riverside. Her research interests include the feminist appraisal of Confucian traditions, the cult of the goddess Ma-tsu, and the representation of virtue in religious biographies. During her time at Barnard College, she was the first recipient of the Sears Teaching Award. Since moving to UCR, she has received a student-generated award for outstanding teaching in Religious Studies.

Out in the field, the compelling power of music is manifest. Hypnotic hours of resonant drumming while Taoist temple staff prepare coals for a firewalking, the reedy *sheng* blown at intervals during Confucius' birthday celebration, the muezzin's call to prayer, and the intonation of the doxology--all these sacred sounds have suffused my field experiences and, I hope, brought insight and empathy to my scholarship. Even after the passage of years, the mere hint of a particular chord progression or the timbre of a certain bell, like a musical *madeleine*, transports me back to a particular realm of religious experience that no text or image can approach.

Yet when I reflect upon the course of my own undergraduate years and subsequent graduate training in Religious Studies, the connection between religion and music was one made outside the classroom. The formal study of religion encompassed the examination of thought, texts, and, to a lesser extent, images. In the classroom, apart from music punctuating the occasional documentary, religion was a surprisingly quiet field of study.

How, then, to open this dimension of religion for my own students? The answer would appear to be simple: bring music into the classroom often and in whatever manner possible. In my first year of teaching, I watched my colleague Vincent Harding carry a small boom box with him to class. He used it to set the tone for the hour and to ease students' transition from their previous activities to the present course. He created an aural space wherein the day's discussion could take place. I have since followed his example, playing Vedic chants or Marian masses as students enter the room. I often close a lecture with another selection in order to send students out with a musical summary of the day's material. Yet, for all my meticulous attention to appropriateness and aesthetic quality, to students the music is little more than aural wallpaper in the mental hallway that leads to and from my class. The pervasiveness of music in our lives has dampened our appreciation of its power.

Vivian-Lee Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

In an essay on the use of music in history education, Jane Adas charts the profound changes that the role of music in our society underwent in the course of the twentieth century. Once, if you wanted to hear music, she says, you had to make some considerable effort to attend a live performance or, more commonly, you had to make it yourself. Musical exposure was limited by geography and tradition, as well as time and financial resources. Advances in communications during the twentieth century enabled people everywhere to hear all kinds of music anytime, anywhere; indeed, as Adas notes, we can hardly escape it. Music provides the accompaniment to all the events of our lives, however dramatic or mundane.

The challenge, then, is how to present music, an invaluable primary source for the study of religion, to individuals whose experience of music itself is largely unexamined, and whose response to the constant presence of music is to ignore it or to keep it in the background. The task is to move students away from habits of passive and apathetic listening to become active, critical, and sympathetic listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have increased my success in confronting the problem.

The Challenge of the Unexpected Just as students don't anticipate grammatical corrections on papers outside the English department, so too are they surprised to find structured listening exercises in the Religious Studies classroom. I discuss the *Ramayana* and present a *gamelan* selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and offer an excerpt from Noh theater music. The combination facilitates perception of the influence of religion on other cultural phenomena and underscores the cultural role music can play in reinforcing religion. Musical interludes force discussion of the need to listen and, by implication, to think differently across cultures.

Adas, speaking from a Western music orientation, identifies important cultural distinctions among the basic elements of music: melody, rhythm, and harmony. She notes that whereas harmony plays a minor part in the music of South Asia, melodies are extremely sophisticated and untutored ears "can scarcely take them in." The Western octave comprises twelve tones with nothing smaller than a half step, whereas the Indian octave comprises twenty-three tones, producing microtones that are difficult for novice listeners to distinguish. "In African music," she says, "rhythm is the central component and is so highly developed that it contains subtle complexities unknown in even the most advanced Western jazz or classical music" (16).

Bringing these differences to student awareness is crucial, as such knowledge undoes misperceptions that what is familiar is superior. Indeed, I frequently use music to complicate the familiar. Teaching in southern California, my courses are populated largely by Asian/American students. Often breezily confident of their mastery of family culture, their assumptions are shaken by the Japanese Orthodox Church's *Litany of the Catechumens,* composed by Priest Gregori T. Ogawa, performed by the Japanese Liturgical Chorus.

All students benefit from closer examination of religious music. Is this liturgical or ceremonial music, and what's the difference? Does this music aid contemplation or serve some pedagogical function? Is this music intended for the service of the living, the dead, the divine, or the human? Who performs this music, and who pays for it? And so on. People attend to things out of place, and the study of music in the non-'Religion and Music' classroom is, to our present benefit, unexpected.

The Unexpected Challenge For some time, I have experimented with take-home essay 'music midterms.' Students check out audiotapes that present a musical selection followed by questions requiring them to tie the selection to the historical-textual material covered in class. For example, in testing aspects of Hindu traditions in a Women and Religion course, musical settings of Mirabai's poems function as a prompt for analysis of the gendered aspects of *bhakti;* a *bhajan* ("Jai Durga Lakshmi Sarasvati…") prompts explanation of Devi in multiple manifestations. The same exam might feature contemporary women's folk music to prompt analysis of goddess-centered spirituality movements. My test questions could be posed without the musical preface, but the unique test form catches student imagination and, based on evaluation comments, prods them to 'really think' about our subject matter. Added pedagogical value derives from the underscoring of the ongoing vitality of the religious tradition under study.

I have also enlisted students to the cause of active listening by challenging them to bring me music samples to share with the class. In earlier years, I would create a 'Greatest Hits' compilation tape (for reserve use only to avoid copyright infringement). For my *Introduction to Asian Religions* course, it has included such favorites as Taoist chants for universal purification and Rg Veda 1.1:

AUM! I sing to Agni, the celebrant of the sacrifice, the resplendent one, the bearer of offerings, the possessor of jewels/ Agni--worthy of the praises of the ancient and the new sages, he who convenes here all the gods.

I now digitize musical selections and stream them on the (password-protected) course website. Thanks to my students (and their parents), I have a growing collection of tapes of devotional Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, and Hindu music--as well as Kurt Cobain and Nirvana--all suggesting that course content is the subject of conversation at home and in the dorms. In return, my students know that the lyrics to the Beatles' sitar-saturated "The Inner Light" are not, as liner notes suggest, the words of "an obscure Japanese poem" but in fact comprise chapter 47 of the *Tao Te Ching.*

Without going out of your door/ You can know all things on Earth./ Without looking out of your window/ You can know the ways of Heaven./ The farther one travels, the less one knows./ The less one knows…./ Arrive without traveling./ See all without looking./ Do all without doing.

In this way, even secular musical appropriations can be catalytic for important conversations about cultural hegemony, Orientalism, and the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture.

Frequency and Volume In music, as with texts and images, repetition makes real: it entrains the listener, making the material amenable to examination on various levels. Even linguistic barriers can be breached: once accustomed to listening across languages, students realize that they can, in fact, hear the key words "Buddha, *dharma, sangha*" in Pali recitations of the Triple Refuge.

To lesser extent, frequency here refers to the ongoing effort to enhance aural experiences across my own curriculum. Students expect that in any Nyitray course, they will be exposed to recitation, chant, and music. In a *Religious Biography* course, for example, musical selections provoke discussions of the theological imperatives that drive the construction of religious lives. Anguished lyrics from *Jesus Christ Superstar*, for example, focus attention on Jesus' humanity and divinity:

(Crowd) Will you touch, will you mend me Christ?/ Won't you touch, will you heal me Christ?/ Will you kiss, you can heal me Christ?/ Won't you kiss, won't you pay me Christ? / (Jesus) Oh, there's too many of you, don't push me/ Oh, there's too little of me, don't crowd me/ Heal yourselves!

Evita, another Webber and Rice opera, offers similar opportunities to examine the notion of saintliness, the biographical process, audience reception, folk piety vs. institutional approval, and so forth.

Finally, when using music to set the tone for class, one needs to break the 'wallpaper' barrier. Vincent Harding's conspicuous handling of his boom box and his own obvious listening drew student attention. I have learned to turn the volume up in my cavernous classrooms to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc. After a few days, students begin to enter listening, anticipating later references in class. Once students are accustomed to active listening, I sometimes juxtapose quieter traditional music at the start of a class, such as hymns in Chinese to the bodhisattva Kuan-yin, with some louder modern appropriation at the end of the class, for example, Steely Dan's "Bodhisattva."

In reflecting upon my experiments with musical truth, I find that the physical encounter with music resonates with (and in) students, providing an embodied realization of this salient dimension of religious life. While passive at first, students become active listeners. Their response shifts from expressing preferences for certain genres to discussions of the significance of hearing the voice of a female cantor, or of the symbolic value of particular instruments such as the *vina*, or Chinese bronze chimes. When music is introduced into the classroom, the payoff is clear. The ritual power of sound is suddenly and viscerally understandable: the ritual concept of sound as creating sacred space is appreciable to the group, and the background music of religious life is, I think, forever foregrounded.

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Religion, Musically Speaking

Carol M. Babiracki, Syracuse University

Carol M. Babiracki is Associate Professor of Music History and Culture (Ethnomusicology) in the Department of Fine Arts at Syracuse University. Her articles on village music, dance and gender in India are published in the journal, Asian Music, *and in* Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology, Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music, *and* Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History. *She is currently preparing a monograph on music, dance and autonomy among the Mundas of southern Bihar.*

I was asked to write about why and how I use music to talk about religion in my teaching, but upon reflection I realize that, as an ethnomusicologist, I usually think of it the other way around: I use religion to talk about music and performance. More precisely, I am interested in the interconnectedness of music (and dance) performance with other aspects of social and culture life, not only beliefs and values, but also social organization and identity formation, politics and power, and the ways in which all are articulated through space and time. Issues of religion are woven throughout most of my courses on world music and dance, even when the course is not explicitly about them. Most cultures construct their central beliefs and values, often including those about music, in terms that we might define broadly as religious (sacred, supernatural, spiritual, shamanic, and so forth), and music and dance performances are intrinsic to the practice of religion throughout the world. As an ethnomusicologist, I also inevitably consider the music-religion connection in cross-cultural terms. In my courses, students are continually moving from 'self' to 'other' until the two become blurred or even disappear. If I'm lucky, a diverse student population jump-starts the process from the beginning. My objective is to use cross-cultural interpretive themes as the threads that hold together courses that (impossibly) cover the world.

Carol M. Babiracki, Syracuse University

My approach is also ethnographic, privileging oral traditions and understandings shaped in the process of field research: observations, interviews, participation in performance, lived experience. It is this ethnographic approach, especially as we apply it to the study and teaching of musical performance, which underscores the latter's relevance for the study and teaching of religion. Both music and religion, as they are practiced and experienced, are fundamentally performative. Their very existence depends on continual re-articulation, re-creation, and renewal. What prompts cultures so often to use musical performance to mark the sacred and musical ideas to ground systems of belief is precisely what make music so relevant to the teaching of religion: performance actualizes, localizes, and socializes. Its enactments invite transformations, whether of traditions, meanings, or states of mind. Religious performances cast belief systems as emergent, creative, and dynamic--and immediately relevant.

Musical performance localizes religion. Music and dance performance, like ethnography, privileges the local and the particular. This principle is surely relevant to our teaching, particularly when we seek to understand religions with unifying scripture-based doctrines that lend themselves to easy essentializing. As Judith Becker observes in her article "Tantrism, Rasa, and Javanese Gamelan Music":

> *…musical performance in the context of ritual performance often makes social relations and roles explicit, even refining them as ideal models*

For the most part...the role of music in religious practices is not scripturally defined. Its function comes about through age-old custom and is part of 'common,' unreflective understandings. (15)

When considered through the frame of music and dance performance, religious practices can be seen as locally situated and contingent processes through which people continually evaluate, reflect upon, and even challenge beliefs and values.

Musical performance actualizes beliefs, often multiple and shifting. Musical performance makes possible re-negotiation of meaning because of its special properties; it is ephemeral, fluid, malleable, and multivocal. Lawrence Sullivan, in his introduction to *Enchanting Powers,* refers to music's ability to attract multiple meanings as "omni-dimensional:" a "mimetic capacity to attune itself to other realities or provoke other realities into resonating in tune with it" (9).

Musical performance socializes religion. With its power to attract and affect, musical performance also works to unite groups of people both physically and psychologically and, when combined with movement of any kind, kinesthetically as well. Performance, like religious practice, is experienced socially, intertwined with multiple identities (gender, ethnic, age, class, occupation) and hierarchies of social power. Musical performance in the context of ritual performance often makes social relations and roles explicit, even refining them as ideal models of natural and supernatural order--for both religious communities and the students seeking to understand them.

Musical performance plays at/with social and conceptual boundaries, including, potentially, our own. Related to all of the above is the ability of musical performance–and musicians--to cross and confound otherwise discrete social and conceptual categories. In many parts of the world, such as Africa and the African diaspora, India, Indonesia, and indigenous Oceania, the musical performances that accompany religious practice are polysemic, intended to be understood simultaneously as music, entertainment, theater, transformative ritual, sacred metaphor, spiritual messenger, and transcendent vehicle (to paraphrase Judith Becker). A cross-cultural consideration of religious musical performance inevitably throws students' own conceptual categories, such as the discrete Judeo-Christian domains of sacred and secular, into sharp relief. They have only to be reminded of Christian rock, gospel-blues, or the concert oratorio to understand that, even in their world, musical performance is boundless, crossing and blurring (if not erasing) conceptual boundaries, mediating the movement of ideas and meanings across them.

An ideal course on music and the sacred would place students in the midst of the performative intersection of music and religion, doing their own ethnographic research in religious communities around them. But that model doesn't always suit the college constraints of time and travel. Still, when my students have chosen to do ethnographic, experience-based research, especially when it leads them to unfamiliar religious ground, their experiences have been richly rewarding, sometimes even transformative.

Ethnographic research confronts students with many challenges of belief, meaning and understanding, whether it is encountering Native American concepts of song ownership and exclusivity or the startling incomprehensibility of unfamiliar music itself. As Claude Levi-Strauss noted and Lawrence Sullivan quotes in his introduction to Enchanting Powers, "...music is the only language with the contradictory attributes of being at once intelligible and untranslatable" (1). Musical performance's magical, malleable, polysemic power can both engender understanding and confound it. It is no wonder, then, that ethnomusicologists have turned to religion, considering it to be as important to understanding music as music is to understanding religion.

Resources:

A few examples will illustrate in more detail how attention to musical performance can open understandings of religious practice and belief. Judith Becker's writings on music and religion in Java are particularly effective in the classroom. She speaks about musical structure in accessible terms, contextualized within broad ideas about belief, ritual, cosmology and cultural change. In her articles, "Earth, Fire, *Sakti*, and the Javanese Gamelan" and "A Musical Icon: Power and Meaning in Javanese Gamelan Music," Becker explains how the musical instruments and sound structures of the Central Javanese court gamelan are iconic of deep cosmological concepts of power, space, and time. Her more recent article, "Tantrism, *Rasa*, and Javanese Gamelan Music" considers the Tantric Buddhist and Sufi underpinnings of the aesthetics of the Javanese court gamelan, exposing layers of powerful coincidences of musical and religious beliefs that will come as a surprise to students more familiar with gamelan music as the sound-track for television ads or the happy, shimmering sounds on a CD. She explains how belief has shaped the very aesthetics of musical perception of court gamelan, and how performance itself has been considered a spiritual practice. Gamelan performances confound our often unquestioned categories of sacred and secular. Over time, they have mediated the assimilation of ancient Tantric Buddhist/Indic beliefs and more recent Sufi beliefs in central Java.

Becker's writings, as is true of all of those dealing with musical performance and religion, benefit from illustration with the sounds and sights of performance. Linking audio and video recordings with articles and monographs in ethnomusicology, though, is still a challenge. For audio recordings of Javanese gamelan, I recommend some Nonesuch re-releases: *Javanese Court Gamelan: Gamelan of Pura Pakualaman; Javanese Court Gamelan: Gamelan of Pura Magkunagaran;* and *The Sultan's Pleasure: Javanese Gamelan and Vocal Music* (Music of the World). There is a good discussion of Javanese court dance in the textbook *Dancing: The Pleasure, Power, and Art of Movement* (1992), which is accompanied by an 8-part video series. The 30-volume *JVC Video Anthology of World Music* (1990) also includes several selections of Javanese musical performance, the best of which is excerpts from a shadow puppet (*wayang kulit*) performance filmed in Java.

Until recently, much of the writing about music and Islam has focused on the doctrinal polemic concerning its propriety. But recent ethnographic studies of musical performance in Islamic contexts have challenged that singular view of Islam, revealing its localized practices and multiple meanings. Two such studies are worth noting. The first is the classic study by Regula Qureshi of *qawwali* (ecstatic Sufi) performance in South Asia (*Sufi Music of India and Pakistan*, 1986). Qureshi's is a close ethnographic

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From the Dutar to the Electric Guitar: Exposing Students to the Music of the Muslim World

Vernon J. Schubel, Kenyon College

Vernon James Schubel's primary research interest is Islam in Central and South Asia. He spent seven months as a Fulbright scholar in Multan, Pakistan, in 1989, where he conducted research on centers of Sufi pilgrimage. His book, Religious Performance in Contemporary Islam, *was published by the University of South Carolina Press in 1993. In 1996, he traveled to Uzbekistan to conduct research on the re-emergence of the Sufi tradition in the former Soviet Union. He is currently working on aspects of the Alevi-Bektashi tradition in Turkey.*

It sometimes comes as a surprise to my students and colleagues that music plays such a central role in my classes on Islam. After all, there is a popular school of thought which presents Islam as a religious tradition that opposes music. From this perspective, the music one finds in abundance in the Islamic world is not truly Islamic. Music is rendered peripheral--an aberrant form of religious innovation (*bida*). This view is reaffirmed by such anecdotal evidence as the initial public rejection of music by Yusuf Islam, the former Cat Stevens, following his conversion to Islam. (Of course, there are western musicians who have converted to Islam and continue to perform--for example Richard Thompson and Peter Murphy.) For many people, the notion of music in Islam--and particularly sacred music in Islam--seems out of place. 'Islamic music' is an oxymoron.

Perhaps because of my own personal history, I give a prominent place to music in my classes. Before I became an academic, I was a musician and I continue to play electric guitar in a local blues band. Coming of age in the late '60s, my interest in Islam arose in the context of a general interest in Asian religions, fueled in part by the music of the period. For many of my generation, our first awareness of Hinduism came through the Beatles' association with the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, and our first exposure to Indian classical music came through George Harrison's connection with Ravi Shankar. Like millions of other Americans, I first became aware of the Bauls of Bengal when they appeared on the cover of Dylan's John Wesley Harding, and only later became aware of the sacred musical tradition they represented. As my interest in the religions of Asia focused more specifically on Islam, I was predisposed to seek out its musical traditions. In fact, part of my attraction to the study of Islam was its remarkable musical heritage.

The interest in Asia and African music that began in the 1960s continues today as a subcurrent among a substantial segment of our students. There is a strong interest in so-called 'world music'–especially among students adventurous enough to take courses on Islam and Asian religions. For example, I find that many of my students are familiar with the music of the late qawwali master, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, through his associations with Peter Gabriel, Eddy Vedder and Joan Osborne.

Teaching at Kenyon College, I have few Muslim students in my classes. For the great majority of my students, Islam is something initially alien. Thus my courses are designed to introduce non-Muslim students to an unfamiliar tradition. These students typically maintain a variety of stereotypes and preconceptions about Islam. Among the most negative of these is the notion that Islam forbids music. For today's students, who habitually carry portable CD and cassette players everywhere they go, how much more alien and unappealing can a religious tradition be than one without music?

Of course, the reality does not fit the stereotype. Music is a vital and vibrant art form within Muslim cultures. Varieties of music--sacred and secular, courtly and folk--exist in every part of the Islamic world. While it is true that certain culama have argued against the permissibility of music, they have never been successful in abolishing it. I have never traveled to the Muslim world without returning with cassettes, compact discs or musical instruments. Much of this music has a religious content. Interestingly, my students generally find this music remarkably accessible. One reason for this is that they were raised on the African-American traditions of the blues and rock and roll, whose aesthetic sensibilities share remarkable similarities with Islamic music, particularly the folk traditions. In both there is an emphasis on improvisation. Both rely heavily on lyrics that express separation, loss and longing. Many of these traditions rely on stringed instruments played rhythmically and emotively. These similarities are not mere coincidences. They are, in fact, the result of complex historical connections between the Muslim world and North America.

The central instrument of both the blues and rock and roll, the guitar--like all of the 'tar' instruments of Eurasia--is the direct descendant of the elementary stringed instruments of Central Asia such as the *dutar* and the *dombra*. African-Americans adapted the guitar and used it to transform their own musical traditions, which had roots in the musical traditions of West Africa which were themselves connected to the larger Muslim world. If one listens in sequence to examples of the music of Central Asian folk musicians, Anatolian *ashiks*, Spanish Flamenco guitarists, *gnawa* singers, *kora* players, delta blues players, and post war electric blues players, the aesthetic similarities between these genres is astonishing. It is clear that the popular music of our North American students would not have come into existence in its current form except for its historical connections to the Islamicate world. By demonstrating these similarities and connections between African-American Music (which is the popular American musical tradition) and Islamic music, the specific musical heritage of Islam becomes recognizable as a part of our students' larger human heritage. And, Islam itself becomes less alien.

A good place to begin discussions of Islamicate music is with examples of Central Asian *dutar* music. There are clear similarities and resonances between Central Asian music and acoustic blues music. This connection has recently been documented in the award winning film *Genghis Blues*, which chronicles the journey of the blind African-American blues singer Paul Pena to Tuva, where he performed with Central Asian musicians. Although the Tuvans are not Muslims, the common origins of their music and that of Muslim Central Asians are unmistakable. A particularly good piece for introducing students to the *dutar* is "Qara Koz" performed by Abdarahim Hamidov on the 1993 CD, Central Asia: *The Masters of the Dutar* (AIMP & VDE-GALLO). This piece demonstrates an astonishing level of technique and richness of sound, especially considering that it is rendered on a simple 2-stringed instrument. My students see immediate comparisons with Hendrix and Clapton, and other familiar guitar virtuosos. This music, performed by a Central Asian Muslim, resonates with the students in a way which renders it accessible and familiar, rather than alien and exotic. While this music is not religious in its content, its form is similar to explicitly sacred music such as the nefes tradition of Anatolia.

> *Music is a vital and vibrant art form within Muslim cultures. Varieties of music-sacred and secular, courtly and folk-exist in every part of the Islamic world.*

The Alevi-Bektashi music of Anatolia, called *nefes*, has its roots in the nomadic musical traditions of Central Asia. Its primary instrument is the *baglama*, a seven-stringed long-necked lute, which takes on a nearly sacred status. At the center of the Alevi tradition is the figure of the *ashik* (lover) who wanders composing songs of devotion for God, the Friend (*Dost*). The tradition's great pirs, such as Pir Sultan Abdal, were also *ashiks*. Depicted pictorially

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In upcoming issues:

Spotlight on Teaching …

At Primary and Secondary Schools

In the United Kingdom, An International Report

At Community Colleges

About Material Culture

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Explorations in Jewish Music

Joshua R. Jacobson, Northeastern University

Joshua R. Jacobson is Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities at Northeastern University, and Adjunct Professor of Jewish Music at Hebrew College. An authority on Jewish choral music, his many musical arrangements are performed by choirs around the world. He is the conductor and host of the PBS film, Zamir: Jewish Music Returns to Europe. *His latest publication,* Chanting the Hebrew Bible: The Sense of Cantillation, *will be published by the Jewish Publication Society in Spring 2001.*

I teach Jewish music in several different contexts: in college courses that expose students to cultures other than their own, in graduate courses and seminars for specialists, in adult education workshops, and in concerts for the general public. In each case I try to make people more aware about how they 'use' music, and to help expand their definition of Jewishness in music.

What is Jewish? Music can be a powerful tool in the exploration of Jewish identity. But what is 'Jewish'? Is it a religion, a race, a culture or a nation? If 'Jewish' is a religion, then Jewish music would be limited to music used in conjunction with Jewish ritual and spiritual praxis. If 'Jewish' is defined as a race, then Jewish music would be music composed or performed by anyone who has Jewish blood. If 'Jewish' is a nation, then Jewish music would be music that comes from the Jewish state, the land of Israel. If 'Jewish' is a culture (or sub-culture), then Jewish music would be that music which is used uniquely by people who share certain cultural traits. Under which definition would you consider Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" to be Jewish music? What about "Tov LeHodos," composed by Franz Schubert for Vienna's Seitenstettengasse synagogue? Modern Israeli rap music? A Yiddish lullaby? An Ethiopian Jewish chant for the circumcision ritual? These and other works can be used to initiate and stimulate a discussion on Jewish identity.

Music as a Window. If music is a vehicle of expression, then we learn something about a composer's personality by listening to his or her music. Listening to Beethoven's "Eroica Symphony," we can sense something of the composer's inner struggle. But, at the same time, we can sense something about the society to which Beethoven belonged or the society against which he rebelled; the turmoil of a Europe engulfed in war, striving for emancipation. Music can be used in the classroom as a means of instantly accessing other cultures. Analyze the polyphonic synagogue music created by Salamone Rossi (c. 1570 - c. 1630), and you begin to understand something about a unique period in pre-modern Jewish history when Jews emerged from their ghettos and participated in the Italian Renaissance. Analyze the song "Jdische Todessang" by Martin Rosenberg, composed in the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1942, and you have opened a window to empathize with the horrors of the Holocaust.

Sacred Bridges. Some music illustrates that which is unique to one culture, while other music illustrates what different groups may have in common. When I juxtapose a Gregorian chant, "In Exitu Israel" (Tonus Peregrinus) with a Jewish chant, "Betset Yisrael" (Moroccan tradition), my students will grapple with the fact that the two are virtually identical. How can both religions each claim that its melody is ancient, authoritative, and unique? The answer lies in the dawn of Christianity, when its liturgy was nearly identical to that of the synagogue.

Why Chant? In traditional Jewish practice, the liturgy of the sacred service is chanted, not recited with the spoken voice. In fact, Jewish law requires that ritual texts be chanted. I invite my students to speculate on the reasons for this practice. Here are some of the points that we cover.

(1) The human urge to communicate with supernatural beings through music is virtually universal. In the mythology of many peoples, music is presented as an invention of the gods. Since it was the gods who granted music to humankind, it was natural that music should be the vehicle for communication between the mundane and the heavenly spheres. In many traditions, including the Jewish, the angels and the planets are portrayed as continually praising God through music. This angelic praise then serves as a model for human behavior. Hassidism, a Jewish pietist movement that began in eighteenth-century Poland, emphasized the power of music to elevate the soul. Certain tunes, called *dveykus niggunim,* were sung, often without words, and repeated over and over until the Hassid had entered a trance, and was said to be 'clinging' to God.

(2) People create songs as a means of intensifying the emotional and dramatic impact of their words. In a wide range of forms, from folksong to madrigal to opera to liturgical chant, composers have used music to heighten the theatricality of a powerful text.

(3) A text set to music is easier to memorize than one without music. In pre-literate societies, or those in which books are scarce, melody is used as an effective means of assisting the memory.

(4) In Judaism, the sacred is set off from the profane. Time is divided into sacred and secular; the borderlines between the two are marked with ritual ceremonies. Certain objects, such as a Bible or a prayerbook, are deemed sacred and as such are treated with great reverence. Certain words, such as the Tetragrammaton (God's four-letter name), are considered too sacred for ordinary mortals to pronounce. In like manner, a distinction is drawn between secular and sacred *reading.* The sanctity of the liturgical service is enhanced by the fact that its texts are chanted, not merely spoken. This dialectic is all the more pronounced because this musical repertoire is considered 'exotic' and 'ancient.' This special music has become emblematic of Jewish society's resistance to acculturation, and of clinging to traditional values and practices.

(5) Anthropologists have speculated that music may have originated as a means of projecting the voice over long distances. Before the development of electronic amplification, the artful use of sustained pitch was recognized as a practical way of amplifying the voice. Where large crowds would assemble to hear one person, singing was more effective than speaking.

(6) Since ancient times, Jews have adorned their ritual to enhance the pleasure of the liturgical dialogue. Rabbi Tanhuma bar Abba (4th century C.E., Palestine) wrote, "If you have a pleasant voice, chant the [prayers], for it is written, 'Honor the Lord with your wealth' (Proverbs 3:9), i.e., with that [talent] which God has endowed you."

(7) The Jewish liturgy is organized according to an elaborate system of musical leitmotifs. For example, there is a unique melody, which is used only for the evening service on a Festival. Similarly, the Sabbath evening service, the High Holiday evening service and the weekday evening service are each characterized by their unique melodies. In addition, on any given day in the Jewish calendar, there are different melodies used to distinguish the morning, afternoon and evening services. Music is a symbol used to evoke the special atmosphere of each service and each day. A spoken service lacks these rich calendric cues.

Music as a Banner. Ethnomusicologists remind us that we use music in many different ways. We use music to wake us up in the morning, to relieve loneliness, to entertain us while we are driving, to make it possible for us to dance, to stimulate us to exercise, to relax after an anxious day in the office. We use music to express our feelings, to alter our mood. Some of us also use music as a banner with which to assert our identity. Many Native Americans will make a point of singing their traditional songs at tribal gatherings. In the 1950s, Rock 'n' Roll was a means for white middle-class kids to escape out of what they felt was a boring and restrictive environment. Today, rap music is the vehicle for an expression of anger and frustration. For many Jews, singing certain songs is an act of self-identification as Jews. Singing a synagogue tune can be an act of religious identification: a Zionist song, national identification; a Yiddish folksong, cultural identification.

Composers such as Ernest Bloch, Arnold Schoenberg, Leonard Bernstein, and Steve Reich have created works that are overtly Jewish. Bloch's *Schelomo* is saturated with rhythms, modes and motifs drawn from traditional synagogue chant. Schoenberg pays tribute to the martyrs of the Holocaust in his *Survivor from Warsaw.* In his first symphony, Bernstein has taken, note for note, an ancient chant used for cantillating the prophetic books of the Bible in a synagogue service, and developed it with a fascinating angularity and asymmetry. The music to Reich's *Tehilim* was inspired by the sound of Hebrew Psalm texts and middle-eastern percussion. Composing these works was a Jewish action, whether conscious or subconscious. Listening to them, if the listener has sufficient background to recognize the source material, can stimulate intellectual delight, spiritual uplift, and cultural pride.

> *The music to Reich's* Tehillim *was inspired by the sound of Hebrew Psalm texts and middle-eastern percussion. Composing these works was a Jewish action, whether conscious or subconscious.*

Issues of Acculturation I also use music to teach acculturation. I begin by playing the traditional music used by Russian Jews to chant (cantillate) the Bible, pointing out that, since it is associated with the most ancient and holy Jewish text, this music has been zealously preserved and protected from change since ancient times. I then play a recording of a Yemenite Jew chanting that same passage from the Bible. How can they be different, if each community claims that it has preserved the ancient melodies as they were revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai some 3300 years ago? The answer lies in the fact that, existing as a subculture, it was impossible for Jews to be unaffected by the sounds of the surrounding superculture, Thus each Diaspora community gradually evolved its own musical traditions, based on the ancient *melos,* but bearing the marks of its geographical host. A less subtle form of acculturation can be heard in those synagogues whose cantors use guitars to accompany a liturgy in the style of Joan Baez, or whose choirs sing hymns borrowed deliberately from Protestant worship.

For many years, America placed a high value on assimilation. Immigrants to this country were pressured into conforming to an imaginary normative cultural ideal. In recent years, however, the model of the 'melting-pot' has given way to a more pluralistic picture of the rainbow, emphasizing the richness of a land in which many diverse cultures coexist. I challenge my students to compare these models with totalitarian and ultra-nationalist societies in which music has served political ends. The treatment of music in Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and Communist China provide dramatic models for the study of artistic censorship. In that context, we also examine the restrictions on music which have been imposed by Jewish, Christian, and Moslem religious authorities. Of course, music can and should be experienced for its own sake. But music can also be a powerful tool for the exploration of issues relating to religious, cultural, and national identity.

Resources:

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examples, with websites, are Smithsonian/Folkways (*www.si.edu/folkways*); Nonesuch Explorer Series (*www.warner.com/nonesuch*); EMI Hemisphere (*www.hemisphere-records.com*); Rounder Records (*www.rounder.com*); ARC Records (*www.arcmusic.co.uk*); UNESCO Collection (*www.unesco.org/cdmusic*); Music of the Earth Collection from Multicultural Media (*www.multiculturalmedia.com*); Rough Guide to World Music (*www.worldmusic.net*); Lyrichord (*www.lyrichord.com*); Shanachie/Yazoo (*www.shanachie.com*); and Putumayo World Music (*www.putumayo.com*). The quality of the recording on these is generally superior, with informative liner notes and commentary regarding the history and context of the music, the types of instruments used, and information about the performers and music styles. The music also tends to be more authentic in most cases, as traditional instruments and styles are used. I am wary of budget CD's or random compilations without notes or descriptive inserts, and, unless specifically sought, global pop, world beat, or so-called 'fusion' music does not fit into the study of traditional religions.

Below are some basic selections of religious chant or musical performances related to the major world religions easily available on compact disc for class presentation, either from internet stores, World Music Institute, or Barnes & Nobles, Borders Books, or Tower Records retail outlets.

Judaism: The traditional music of King Solomon's temple is inaccessible from the descriptions found in the Hebrew Bible. However, the recent *La Musique de la Bible revelee/The Music of the Bible* (Harmonia Mundi, 2000), based on a recently discovered ancient notation, vocal and instrumental reconstructive settings include seven of the Psalms, along with passages from Deuteronomy, Numbers, Exodus, Lamentations, and II Samuel. The traditional art of the Jewish Cantor is marvelously preserved in *Mysteries of the Sabbath: Classical Cantorial Recordings 1907-1947* (Yazoo/Shanachie,

The challenge, then, is how to present music, an invaluable primary source for the study of religion, to individuals whose experience of music itself is largely unexamined.

1994) from old 78 RPM recordings. More recent renditions are found in *Kol Nidre: Sacred Music of the Synagogue* (EMI Classics, 1995). For traditional songs of Jewish festivals, there is *The Jewish Experience: Passover,* and *The Jewish Experience: Chanukkah,* both from Delta Music, 1994.

Christianity. As in rabbinic Judaism, the early Church forbade musical instruments in favor of vocal hymns and psalms. For our purposes, Christian religious music begins with Gregorian Chant or Plainsong, Latin settings of the Hebrew Psalter from the Vulgate. Students may even be familiar with the recent best-selling recording of *Chant,* by The Benedictine Monks of Santo Domingo De Silos (Angel, 1994). Furthermore, I recommend *Gregorian Chant* Vols. 1 & 2, by Schola Cantorum (SONY Classics, 1995) as well as Russian and Greek Orthodox chant available from Nonesuch Explorer series. The Protestant Reformation translated the Psalter into vernacular, and Calvinist psalmody is well represented in *Psaumes de la Reforme/Psalms of the French Reformation* (Naxos, 1994). In addition, there are innumerable Latin polyphonic settings of the Roman Catholic Mass (i.e., Palestrina), Lutheran chorales in German (i.e., J.S. Bach), *Messiah* in English by G.F. Handel, and several famous versions of the Requiem Mass by Mozart, Berlioz, Verdi, Brahms (non-traditional), Dvorak, and Faure, that illustrate the role of music in expressing the relationship of the living with the deceased in Purgatory. There is, of course, a plethora of modern Christian hymns and gospel singing available.

Islam: Although technically not classified as music, the recitation of the Holy *Qur'an* in Islam is nonetheless religious chant at its finest, and its audible presentation to students conveys the depth and beauty of this sacred tradition. There are not many recordings, however I recommend *Qur'an Recitation,* Volume 10 in series *The Music of Islam* (Celestial Harmonies, 1998). The other volumes in this 17 CD set contain various types of music within the vast geographic expanse of Islam, which are valuable in courses on Islam. *Music of the Whirling Dervishes* (Atlantic, 1987) is a genuine rendering of the devotional music of the Mevlevi Sufis that also contains a short *Qur'an* recitation. For Islamic *Qawwali* music, *Pakistan: The Music of Qawal* (UNESCO, 1999) is authentic. Also, the recordings of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, a world famous *Qawwali* singer, are good and may even be known to some students.

Hinduism: Authentic Vedic chant is rarely available on modern recorded media. However, *Ravi Shankar: Chants of India*, produced by George Harrison (Angel, 1997), has examples of traditional Vedic chant, Bhagavad-Gita recitation, and mantra chanting all in one CD. There is also *Religious Chants from India--Sikh, Buddhist, Hindu* (ARC Records, 1999), which has some interesting items from three Indic traditions. *Ramnad Krishnan: Vidwan, Music of South India, Songs of the Carnatic Tradition* (Electra/Nonesuch Explorer Series, 1988), contains devotional songs from the Carnatic (South) music tradition. Sacred Raga (STR Digital Records, 1999) contains classical compositions and bhajans of the Hindustani (North) tradition sung and performed on authentic instruments by myself. (I trained in India for six years under traditional circumstances.) Devotional prayers from ISKCON (Hare Krishna Movement), including the famous "Hare Krishna" chant are often effective in classes. I use, *Hare Krishna Mahamantra*, by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1994).

Sikhism: This is the only world religion in which the founder was a musician who preached his message primarily through song and music, and thus is a prime example of the combination of religion and music. There are some excellent recordings of Guru Nanak's songs or *Shabads* as well as other verses from the *Sikh Adi Granth,* or Holy Scripture, set to music. I use *Asa Di War,* 2 CD set (New Delhi, T Series, 1997), morning prayers from the *Adi Granth* sung by Bhai Ravinder Singh Ji of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, Punjab.

Buddhism: *Chants and Music from Buddhist Temples* (ARC Records, 2000), contains good examples of chanting of the Pali canon (similar to Vedic chant) and Buddhist music in Taiwan, China, India, Thailand, and Tibet. *Buddhist Music of Tianjin* (Nimbus, 1994), contains Chinese Buddhist ensemble music that is similar in style to older forms of imperial court music (Confucian and Taoist). *Buddhist Drums, Bell & Chants and Drums* (Lyrichord, 1994) contains music recorded at actual services in the temples of Kyoto, Japan. For Noh drama and other music, there is *Japanese Noh Music* (Lyrichord, 1993), and *Japanese Temple Music: Zen, Nembutsu, and Yamabushi Chants* (Lyrichord, 1980). Also recommended is, *Japan: Kabuki and Other Traditional Music* (Nonesuch, 1980).

Shinto: *Japanese Shinto Ritual Music* (Legacy, no date) contains traditional Shinto kagura music, difficult to find, as well as Norito prayers to Amaterasu sung by a Shinto priest.

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study of the dynamics of qawwali performance and its central roles in activating ecstatic experience and enacting social hierarchy. Audio recordings by traditional groups such as the Sabri Brothers and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan are widely available on the RealWorld label from the UK. Qureshi's own videotapes have not yet been released, but performances on the video *Nusrat! Live at Meany, A Concert of Qawwali* (Arab Film Distribution, Seattle, WA) are effective, though not filmed in a religious ceremonial context. I like to supplement Qureshi's study with articles by Hiromi Lorraine Sakata ("The Sacred and the Profane: Qawwali represented in the Performances of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan," *The World of Music* 36/3, 1994) and Philip Bohlman ("World Musics and World Religions: *Whose World?*" in *Enchanting Powers,* 1997) These articles focus on the 'world music' phenomenon and traditional *qawwali* practitioner, the late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, who became a force in the global marketplace of popular fusion music without relinquishing his own sense of the sacred purpose of his performances.

Finally, I highly recommend the recent, award-winning book by Virginia Danielson, *The Voice of Egypt: Umm Kulthum, Arabic Song,* and *Egyptian Society in the 20th Century,* (1997) and the film based on that book, *Umm Kulthum: A Voice Like Egypt,* produced and directed by Michal Goldman (available from Arab Film Distribution). Both works are grounded in excellent historical and ethnographic research. The story of the thoroughly modern and wildly popular female singer Umm Kulthum is ideal for localizing a discussion of music in Islamic contexts. Her life at once defies all stereotypes about Islam, music, and gender, and yet her popularity and enduring value to generations of Arabs rests on her deep knowledge of religious vocal art.

I could cite many more examples of ethnographically based studies of musical performance that would work to localize, actualize, and socialize religious practice in the classroom. Audio recordings of many of those that follow are widely available, and short video examples of many can be found in the video series *Dancing* (a production of thirteen/WNET and BBC-TV)and the *JVC Video Anthology of World Music.* Look for the writings of Katherine Hagedorn on the music and dance of Afro-Cuban Santeria, playing at the boundaries of religious practice and tourist art (diss. from Brown University, book forthcoming from Smithsonian Institution Press). The video Oggun (Center for Cuban Studies, NYC, c1993) illustrates her points nicely, though the opening scenes may not be suitable for a classroom audience. David McAllester's large body of writings on music and the religious life of the Navajo is engaging and accessible for undergraduates. His chapter in the book *Worlds of Music* (ed. Jeff Todd Titon, 3rd ed. 1996, accompanied by CD set), in which he discusses music of a full range of Navajo religious practices, traditional, Christian, and the Native American Church (or peyote religion), is a good entry for the undergraduate. Charles Capwell has written the best account of music and its connection to ritual life of the Bauls of Bengal in eastern India, a syncretic community of mystic musicians (*Music of the Bauls of Bengal, 1986*). Deben Bhattacharya's film *Waves of Joy* (video-forum) works well in conjunction with Capwell's book. Finally, Kay Kaufmann Shelemay (*Let Jasmine Rain Down: Song and Remembrance Among Syrian Jews,* 1998, with CD) and Ellen Koskoff (forthcoming book on gender in Hasidic performance traditions) have both researched Jewish music in New York City and its mediation of the boundless continuities of Jewish thought with the exigencies of local culture.

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Environmental Activist Music as Community-Building Ritual

Masen Uliss, MA Candidate, University of Colorado

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The challenge which closes Ed Abbey's introduction to *Desert Solitaire,* and its more recent echoes by activist folk singer Casey Neill, are celebrations of the attitudes of many contemporary environmental activists. Affirmations of this kind, which seem eager to topple all forms of conventional institutional legitimacy hardly seem to be the stuff of religious inquiry. Indeed, these voices seek to undermine what many in our culture would consider to be the bedrock of religious life and conviction. However, the themes of nature and religion are consistently intertwined and woven in American culture, and debate over conceptions of and attitudes toward 'nature' often occur within a 'religious' context. I will examine the 'radical environmental' movement and its conceptions of nature religion through an analysis of its music. In so doing, I will examine conceptions of 'nature' and 'religion,' and how these relate to one another. Using the music and texts of activist songwriting, we can see how debates on 'nature' play out in American culture and also see how activist music functions as community-building ritual activity.

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Central to this discussion are the terms 'nature' and 'religion.' Catherine Albanese has argued that since conceptions of nature and environment have played important roles in how participants in American cultures relate to reality, it makes sense to talk about *nature religion* in this culture (Albanese, 6). However, we as *scholars* of religion have an odd orientation to 'nature' as it relates to what we study as 'religion.' As Ronald Grimes points out, "Mircea Eliade… made much of the idea of sacred space and the symbolism of the center, the orienting place from which a people's sacred cosmos is generated." Even when scholars did look at space and place as important aspects of religion, they treated it "in ways that were largely metaphoric, having little to do with actual geography or the concrete complexities of the environment" (Grimes, 72). The study of religious life placed in the physical context of 'nature' is thus an obvious enterprise but an absent one, and music offers a useful index to the radical environmentalist nature religion.

The Musical Religious Activity of the Movement. The 'road shows' which activists undertake to raise consciousness about various issues and to build solidarity are an important means for disseminating the message of radical environmentalism. They aim both to gain supporters on the outside of the movement, and to bring new individuals inside the movement. But these interests spring from more than simply a political agenda; they are linked to a sense of spirituality. The road shows combine the practical environmental concerns of the movement with its spiritual orientation in expressive forms seen to mystically connect the two.

Expressive forms are also central to the various gatherings of activists that occur regularly, such as regional wilderness meetings, camps, trainings, and the larger national 'rendezvous.' Among activists, expressive and artistic forms in general and song in particular help reinforce activism and spirituality as well as cement the bond between activists and their community. While the often light-hearted character of these gatherings is reflected in the songs, rowdiness and joking occur in the context of an assumption that the gatherings are important on both a temporal and spiritual level. Although combined with other activist activities, music is central to the fulfillment of the purposes of these gatherings, and analysis of how the themes of radical environmentalism are woven into lyrics and music proves very interesting and provides insight into the ways in which the political and philosophical sides to the movement are presented in an artistic forum. Let us examine two particular themes of environmental activist music.

The 'Environmentalization' Of The Everyday. This first type of song might at first listening seem to be deceptively frivolous and tenuously connected to the serious business of activism. These songs are playful, satirical, and humorous; they tend to deal with the activist life in contrast to the 'mainstream' life, and with 'actual' environmental issues in indirect ways. They also are significant in their placement of 'everyday' things, such as romance, travel, and humor, in the context of radical environmentalism. In so doing, they bring a sense of unity and 'normalcy' to the activist community; they address the commitment to environmental activism as an ideological and spiritual lifestyle choice, in addition to a political orientation or set of beliefs.

Folksinger/songwriter Danny Dolinger has several such songs, which, in spite of their jovial quality and clever lyrics, still manage to make clear his intense activism. This is evident in his song "If I Had A Dollar," a love song by an activist trying to convince his lover to follow him in an economically trying but spiritually rewarding and morally correct life of activism:

We'll move on the highway and see the whole world my way/ Eat out of the dumpsters outside the health food stores/ We'll eat lots of fruits and berries that are just a little scary/ Sleep beneath the bridges on the freeway of dreams.

Dolinger's sense of humor is also evidenced in "Hillbilly Hippie," a hilarious song that juxtaposes '60's folk and country-flavored sounds with a silly but still not altogether unrealistic pairing of rural 'red-neck' culture with 'new-age' religious sensibilities:

I think of Jesus and the Buddha and the pyramids and such/ And that cowboy kind of wisdom that I've come to love so much/ So I put on some Grateful Dead and have another beer/ I start to seeing auras and the answer comes quite clear.

I'll be a hillbilly hippy and a new-age redneck/ And if you don't dig my karma, well, I just don't give a heck/ I'll carry a crystal and a pistol in my pocket just for luck/ And put a 'Peace Through Music' sticker on the back of my pick-up truck.

In both songs, Dolinger is able to convey a sense of what it means, practically, to be an activist. That is, to have an unpredictable life on the road that still seems more satisfying than the 'straight' alternative, and to juggle (sometimes ridiculously) a patchwork of ideologies and lifestyles in support of one's convictions.

Pagan Environmentalism: While the movement is not formally tied to any institutional religion, there is frequent overlap between the activist community and the Pagan community. The spiritual perspectives that can be called 'pagan' in the movement are varied; sometimes Wiccan practitioners take leadership roles at EarthFirst! gatherings, but in many less formal ways, 'pagan' elements are also well represented. Bron Taylor asserts that "most of those involved with the 'deep ecology' and 'radical environmental' movements can be called pagan environmentalists; they generally use these self-referents interchangeably, whether they find their primary spiritual home in Native American spirituality, neopaganism, Taoism, Buddhism, or some other nature-based spirituality. All such traditions are believed to express deep ecological sentiments" (Taylor 1995, 99). The threads of these traditions are woven together by activists in innovative ways, juxtaposing disparate elements and creating a bricolage of previously unassociated elements. A masterful example of such a song is Casey Neill's "May Day:"

Welcome in the wondrous Spring, and the oncoming Summer/ The festival of Beltane, and the nectar of the lovers/ It's the holiday of pagans, and the holiday of labor/ And we merry meet at the mountain side, and praise the Creator, praise the Creator!

May Day! May Day at last! May Day! May Day at Last!
Hearken the future, remember the past,

So pass the jug of wine, pass the honey mead/ Pass the pipe around again, petals snow from the cherry trees/ And we consecrate this season on this eve with our own sweet copulation/ The joy we share together here will smash the state of the nation!

> *You're holding a tombstone in your hands. A bloody rock. Don't drop it on your foot - throw it at something big and glassy. What do you have to lose?*
>
> -Edward Abbey (*Desert Solitaire)*

> *Hurray for our band of happy ragged folk*
> *Tellin' all the stories and fire-side jokes*
> *Living for the music, the love and the laughs,*
> *Hurray for the riff-raff!!*
>
> -Casey Neill (*Hurray for the Riff-Raff)*

The song begins with a quiet, slow section, reminiscent of 1960's folk song, which it soon blends with quicker, rowdier elements, blending in more modern energy with the modes of a traditional Irish reel. These subtle but effective musical juxtapositions are mirrored by the ideological ones; activist themes are placed beside pagan ones ("It's the holiday of pagans, and the holiday of labor"), and Casey claims that their pagan and activist rejoicing will "smash the state of the nation."

As we have seen, activist song and music occupies several important roles. First, it serves the vitally important role of community building. The playful interpolation of seemingly disparate ideas, traditions, and aspects of life is part and parcel of expressive and religious life in the movement. Through this process of creative juxtaposition, disparate parts of a difficult activist life are sewn together to make this sort of life cohesive and possible for participants. The 'ordinary' parts of life are drawn into the activist world, and the activist world is made 'ordinary' for those living it. Closely related to this notion of music being a community-forming activity is the notion that music occupies a central place in ritual activity. The road shows and wilderness gatherings serve a religious function in concretizing spiritual ideals of the community, and connecting them to play, humor, and art. The freedom and innovation in the music reflect and are a product of the movement's critique of capitalism and power structures. Further, the musicians understand

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their music to be their activism and their central contribution to their community. The lyrics, sounds, and forms of the music itself support these conclusions: they pull together disparate forms and styles, and they playfully enact the beliefs, concerns, and passions of the activist community that generates them.

Resources:

Discography

Dolinger, Danny. *Rome Wasn't Burnt In A Day.*

Hoyt, Robert. *Dumpster Diving Across America.*

---- *Just As American As You*

Hull, Timothy. *Brambleland.*

Lyons, Dana. *Cows With Guns.*

Neill, Casey. *Casey Neill*

---- *Scree.*

Websites

Casey Neill Trio Home page, *www.speakeasy.org/~jlks/casey/*

The Official Danny Dolinger Homestead *www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Lounge/3267/danny.html*

We're All Travelers Here (Timothy Hull Web page) - *www2.whidbey.net/tinker/*

Dana Lyons Web page - *http://www.cowswithguns.com/*

EarthFirst! Media Center - *www.geocities.com/RainForest/Vines/9901/*

Hayduke Rocks! EF! Media and Action Network - *www.efmedia.org/*

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with his baglama over his head in a defiant image of resistance, Pir Sultan Adal is a hero not only to Alevis but also to the secular Left who see him as a defender of the poor and oppressed. Although *nefes* is a sacred musical tradition used in *zikr*, it has a huge following in Turkey which extends beyond the Alevi community.

There are clear resonances between the *nefes* tradition and African-American music. These are evident in the work of the young performer of *nefes*, Ulas Ozdemir, who also records with the blues band, Istanbul Blues Kumpanyasi, which incorporates Turkish instruments into their music. On the eve of his concert in Istanbul, a newspaper article about the American blues singer Ben Harper referred to him as an American *ashik*. (Ben Harper, has in fact studied Turkish music and uses imagery from the story of Pir Sultan Abdal's martyrdom in his song "Rose from a Friend.")

Like the guitar, the *baglama* is relatively easy to learn to play. Ordinary people can quickly learn to accompany themselves on folk songs in order to perform in households or small gatherings. Like the guitar, however, in the hands of a master it becomes a vehicle for great technical artistry. I have found the performances of artists like Arif Sag, Erdal Erzincan, and Musa Eroglu make a powerful impression on students. Erdal Erzincan's CD, *Gurbet Yollarinda*, is particularly useful in this regard. Not only is the music of exceptionally high caliber, but the Sufi and Shici imagery of the poetry provides a forum for discussing the intimate connections between mysticism, poetry, and music within Islam. The Alevi-Bektashi *nefes* tradition, which functions both as a form of popular music and as music used in *semah,* is an exquisite example of the interpenetration in Islam between so-called 'high traditions' and 'popular traditions,' challenging the artificial distinction between textual and 'popular' Islam. Musical traditions like *nefes* demonstrate the ways in which even non-literate people gain access to profound spiritual ideas through the medium of music. Despite its relatively simple musical structure the *nefes* facilitates the transmission of poetry that carries deep and multivocal ideas. As in the blues, whose relatively simple form masks a deep subtlety which allows it to carry profound and ambiguous messages, *nefes*, like other folk music traditions in the Islamic world, operates on numerous levels and communicates, among other things, deeply esoteric notions of *tauhid*.

Of course, *nefes* is only one example of Islamic sacred music existing both in the context of *zikr* and as a popular musical form. Two other examples are the aforementioned *qawwali* tradition of South Asia and the *inshad* tradition of Egypt. For the former, CDs and videos by Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and the Sabri brothers are particularly useful. The prominence of rhythm and the call-and-response patterns in the singing are particularly attractive to students. In lectures on Sufism, I have made fruitful use of video of a *mehfil-i samah*, which I filmed in Multan, and which shows *qawwals* facilitating a state of *wajd* in a visiting *pir*. Similarly, Valerie J. Hoffman's recent video documenting the *inshad* tradition in Egypt shows the importance of music in the North African Sufi tradition. These provide powerful examples of the ways in which Sufi ideas penetrate into Islamic culture at the popular level through music.

Exposing students to the music of Islam makes the religion less exotic and foreboding. Seldom have I played music for my students without them asking where they can purchase the CDs. Over time, they begin to appreciate this music not as a curiosity but as something that speaks to them as a part of their common human musical heritage. In so doing, the larger world of Islam becomes a part of their world as well.

Resources:

A wide variety of CDs and cassettes by Turkish artists is available from the Turkish Music Club at *www.turkishmusic.com.* Along with the Erdal Erzincan CD mentioned above, I recommend Arif Sag, *Umut*, and Musa Eroglu's Bin *Yillik Yuruyus* (Volume 1 or 2). Valerie J. Hoffman's video is called *Celebrating the Prophet in the Remembrance of God: Sufi Dhikr in Egypt*, available from Educational Technologies Assistance Group. *Genghis Blues* is available on DVD, video and CD through the Tuva Trader at *www.TuvaTrader.com.* A particularly good sampler of various 'tar' instruments, which includes a recording of "Qara Koz," is *Asya Iclerinden Balkanlara Saz,* available from Kalan Music, a truly remarkable resource located at *www.kalan.com.*

General Editor, Spotlight on Teaching

The AAR seeks nominations (including self-nominations) for the General Editor of the nationally recognized publication, *Spotlight on Teaching*, a biannual publication of the American Academy of Religion.

Spotlight on Teaching, an initiative of the Committee on Teaching and Learning, is a principal venue for exploration of teaching and learning issues in the field of religion. It appears as a special supplement to *Religious Studies News, AAR Edition* in the spring and fall.

Responsibilities include:

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Please direct questions and nominations (including a cover letter, C.V., the names of three references, and teaching philosophy statement to): Edward R. Gray, Director of Academic Relations. See page 2, staff listing, for full contact information.

The Importance of Listening to the Heartbeat of Mother Earth

Ina J. Fandrich, Swarthmore College

Ina J. Fandrich is Assistant Professor of Religion at Swarthmore College with specialization in African-American, Afro-Atlantic, and Indigenous Religions. Her primary research area is African-based Religions (Voodoo/Hoodoo) in Lousiana. Her book, The Power of Marie Laveaux: A Study of Power and Female Leadership in Nineteenth-Century New Orleans, *is forthcoming from University of California Press*

I teach courses on African American Religions, Afro-Atlantic or African-based New World Religions like Haitian Vodun or Cuban Santeria, and Indigenous Religions such as Traditional African Religions and Native American. In all of my courses, music plays an important role. Not only do my students read texts about the significance of sacred music in the religious traditions we are studying, but they also watch numerous videos about religious ceremonies and, if possible, make field trips to religious worship sites. Both the videos and field trips include music. At least once per semester, I invite a professional musician to my classes to facilitate a workshop on music for my students. This may sound exotic, but, as far as I know, many of my colleagues in this field would do the same provided an artist and the funding were available. Why is that so? Why is music so crucial for the understanding of indigenous religions such as traditional African Religions and the African-derived religions in the Trans-Atlantic American diaspora? Let me begin with the words of an African American master drummer and writer Sule Greg Wilson. In *The Drummer's Path*, he states that

Music is sacred. It is an integral part of the Way of Life of many traditional cultures throughout the world; it is the invocation of vital energies that ensure a community's survival. Music helps maintain harmony in and with both the visible and the invisible world. (Wilson, xiii)

It is true that all world religions have their own brands of sacred music. Hence, the integration of music into the curriculum of any form of religious education would be meaningful. Yet, in religions with sacred written documents (revered as 'the word of God'), such as the Bible, the Torah, the Qur'an, and the Veda, the study, contemplation, interpretation, and recitation of sacred texts is at the core of the believers' religious practice. Performing sacred music may appear less significant in comparison. To the contrary, in the religious traditions of oral cultures musical expressions are at the center, not the margins of religious practices and experience. The ceremonies of these traditions are elaborate communal performances involving musical instruments (mainly drums and percussion instruments), songs, dances, and drama. In these sacred performances the believers communicate with the invisible forces of the divine and experience their deepest forms of religious devotion-a mystical union with the divine, often called 'possession.' (The term 'possession,' though still used in the literature on traditional African and African diaspora religions is very misleading . 'Spirit mediumship' would be more accurate. For further clarification see for instance Felicity Goodman, *How About Demons?*) Therefore, a close examination of sacred music becomes an essential part of the study of such religions. It can no longer be just the icing on the cake so to speak, but rather has to be one of the fundamental ingredients of the cake itself.

All indigenous religious traditions consider the earth sacred; that is why they are sometimes referred to as 'geocentric' religions. In their view, the heartbeat of mother Earth is represented symbolically in the rhythms of their drums, which ubiquitously accompany the sacred ceremonies. It is no surprise, then, that among indigenous cultures throughout the world, drums and the rhythms they invoke are held sacred. The intense, often extraordinarily complex rhythms of the musical ritual performances thus become the venue where the realms of the human and the divine intersect. There, the living rejoin with the dead as they celebrate and honor the traditions of those who have gone before them. Nigerian author Amos Tutuola, for instance, in *The Palm-Wine Drunkard and My life in the Bush of Ghosts,* illustrates this multiple reconnection in the following words:

And when 'Drum' started to beat himself all the people who had been dead for hundreds of years, rose up and came to witness 'Drum' when beating...

All of the religious traditions I address in my courses stem from primarily oral cultures, with the exception of African American Christians and Muslims who use the same sacred scriptures as their counterparts everywhere else in the world. A combination of music, dance, song, and performance is essential to the religious devotion and ritual practice of these indigenous traditions. Written texts, if at all existent, have no part in their ceremonies. The rhythms of their music, mainly carried out by drums and percussion instruments, together with the poetic lyrics of their sacred songs and the elaborate movements of their dances are the sacred 'texts,' and thus the essence of all 'traditional' religions.

In order to facilitate a well-rounded inquiry into the study of traditional religions, it is important to address such musical sacred 'texts.' There is no way one can comprehend the power and impact of music through reading erudite texts about it, however. Music has to be experienced on a first-hand basis. If this is true for music in general, it holds particularly true for the powerful impact of African drum music. Hence, I turn at least one or two class sessions into music workshops led by a professional musician. For instance, in a course entitled *Shamans, Rituals, Magic, and Dreamtime: The Indigenous Religions of the Americas, Africa, and Australia*, I invited a master drummer who is well versed in West African and Afro-Caribbean rhythms and songs. In addition, he is an initiated priest in the sacred drumming society of the Yoruba Religion, is therefore a spiritual leader in his community, and can speak and perform with authority. He provided a superb introduction to the complex syncopated polyrhythms from West Africa and challenged the whole class to accompany him in some shape or form. The students were delighted. They had a good time, but they also realized how difficult it is to hold even the most basic beats. By the end of the session, they had developed a deep respect and admiration for the skills of our guest speaker and the cultural tradition he represents. They realized through experience that the playful and joyful ease with which his hands mastered the most complicated rhythms is deceiving. They also learned that the depth, complexity, elegance, and spiritual intensity of the language of sacred African music is just as sophisticated as even the greatest written sacred texts born in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. Later on in the same course, when discussing the religions traditions of Australia's Aboriginal peoples, a digeridoo artist joined us and introduced us to the language of the eerie vibrations of this sacred instrument, and the spirituality of the people who created it. This workshop carried us like nothing else into the mythology and the elaborate belief system associated with the term, 'dreamtime.'

Many people of African descent in the New World, especially in North America, lost their beloved drums because of the traumatic impact of the Atlantic slave trade and the deprivation and dehumanization endured under slavery. In order to break their spirit and separate them from their cultural roots they had to give up their ancestral beliefs and were more or less forcibly introduced to the Christian faith. Nevertheless, their African spirituality survived the ordeal. The collective memory of their sacred rhythms and music lived on in the clapping of their hands, in the stomping of their feet, in the intensity of their spiritual expression, in the melodies of their songs and in their sense of aesthetics. They created the Spirituals which later developed into Gospel music. Over time, the same resilient African spirituality also brought forth the African American secular cousins of these sacred musical traditions: Blues, Jazz, Rock 'n Roll, and Hip Hop -- all of which have become American mainstream music. In his 1903 classic *The Souls of Black Folk* the great African American intellectual, W.E.B. Du Bois, stressed already this impact of African spirituality on the development of American music. Insisting on the significance of what he calls "The Sorrow Songs," better know as Negro Spirituals, he explains:

... by fateful chance the Negro folk-song-the rhythmic cry of the slave-stands today not simply as the sole American music, but as the most beautiful expression of human experience born this side the seas. It has been neglected, it has been, and is, half despised, and above all it has been persistently mistaken and misunderstood; but notwithstanding, it still remains as the singular spiritual heritage of the nation and the greatest gift of the Negro people (265).

In the 1960s, the Sorrow Songs became liberation songs. Without them there would have been no Civil Rights Movement. Without the comfort of songs such as the famous "We Shall Not Be Moved" and "We Shall Overcome," the freedom fighters would not have been able to withstand the violence and oppression they endured. They would not have been able to face the threats, the police dogs, the water cannons, and the bullets. Bernice Johnson Reagon, former civil rights leader, Grammy Award winning musician, and Smithsonian Institute scholar, has highlighted the crucial importance of music in the African American Protest movement in numerous publications and video documentaries. When jailed as a protesting college student she discovered the spirit-sustaining power of song. She joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) Freedom Singers, and traveled the country teaching the songs of the movement. This subversive 'freedom' music became a powerful non-violent weapon in the often demoralizing struggle for justice and equality against the heavily armed police force of the white-supremacist system.

The heartbeat of mother Earth is represented symbolically in the rhythms of their drums, which ubiquitously accompany the sacred ceremonies.

Taking DuBois' and Reagon's assessments into account, in my course on African American Religions I set aside at least one whole week to explore the significance of music in these faith traditions. In addition to the workshop on traditional African music, I often invite a musician from one of the major American Black Church traditions to demonstrate how contemporary African American sacred music still reflects ancient African spirituality, though it has evolved and transformed. For instance, I once invited the director of a local gospel choir who is also an ordained minister and a professional entertainer, to visit my class. Members of his gospel choir perform on a regular basis in his church, but they also sing at various public and private functions and have several recorded CDs on the market. The presence of a real person and the active involvement in live music always intensifies the students' attention and participation in the learning process.

In conclusion, I could not teach my religion courses without the mesmerizing beat of sacred Yoruba bata drums or Cuban congas, the spooky echoes of a didgeridoo, or the uplifting sound of a gospel choir. The music is an essential part of the subject matter.

Resources:

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Maultsby, Portia K. "Africanisms in African-American Music" in Joseph Holloway, Ed. *Africanisms in American Culture.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

Olupona, Jacob, Ed. *African Spirituality: Forms, Meaning and Expressions.* New York: Crossroads, 2000.

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at a given historical moment. Examining these particularities of performance discloses the dialogical and dialectical relations between religious experience and cultural system, and how each structures and reshapes the other. In *The Anthropology of Experience*, Edward Bruner observes that "Expressions are constitutive and shaping, not as abstract texts but in the activity that actualizes the text. It is in this sense that the text must be performed to be experienced" (7). Therefore, the exercise of situating sacred music within precise historical and social contexts provides an opportunity to examine the dynamics of cultural change, difference, and transformation. Of the various artistic expressions of religion, sacred music often conveys in the most poignant and powerful manner a given culture's aesthetic ideals, and marries them to its spiritual technologies of transformation. Principles of beauty, perfection, and the good, irrespective of their specific cultural definitions, are frequently identified as one. A well-known *hadith* attributed to Prophet Muhammad says: "God is beautiful and loves all Beauty." In the Islamic world, the Qur'an is experienced not only as the Word of God, but also as a literary masterpiece and a spell-binding vocal art. Its beauty is rehearsed through the senses by hearing it artfully recited, beholding its verses in elegant calligraphy, and feeling the power of its words move the heart. Stories abound within the Muslim tradition about rulers and paupers alike who, on hearing the Qur'an, were moved to tears. The philosopher al-Ghazali wrote that verses of the Qur'an could induce ecstacy (*wajd*) in the listener, and argued that religious music should be permitted as a form of worship, as it prepared the heart to intensify worship of God. Aesthetic pleasures that celebrate the glory of God and creation are thus theorized as forms of prayer. Islamic literature is replete with imagery and allusions which take for granted that beauty in the world was created by God for enjoyment and God's praise. The Sufis developed Ibn Sina's position that pleasure is rooted in the human soul and is a path to spiritual joy and release. Sufis emphasize cultivating love of God through taking delight in the beautiful. The heart - the organ that loves God - is quickened by religious music which, practiced properly, induces states of trance and ecstacy. In the following verses, the famous poet Rumi describes himself, the lover, as the reed which sings its sad and soulful melodies in search of its divine beloved:

Hearken to this reed forlorn, breathing since 'twas torn
From its rushy bed, a strain of impassioned love and pain.
The secret of my song, though near, none can see and none can hear.
Oh, for a Friend to know the sign and mingle all His soul with mine!

As guest editor, I invited contributors to this issue of *Spotlight on Teaching* to reflect on how and why they have used musical resources, very broadly defined, to teach courses in religious studies, and to describe their aims, methods, and experiences of teaching their courses on religion with music. The articles argue how and why a study of sacred music deepens students' appreciation of the manifold aspects of religious life, and encourage readers to consider how they too might integrate sacred musical traditions into their teaching. The articles also respond to how traditions of sacred music help engage issues of identity, religious change, ritual process, and communal worship which arise when analyzing the musical examples and performances within specific historical and social contexts. Illustrating how they have used music as a primary source in their courses, our contributors provide theoretical arguments in support of doing so and offer specific pedagogical techniques, and music and audio-visual resources for teachers.

Does one have to be trained in music to use musical sources in teaching? While it may be an advantage, Guy Beck and Steven Marini argue that it is not a prerequisite. Does simply hearing sacred music make it comprehensible? Vivian-Lee Nyitray talks about ways of avoiding the wallpaper effect of music and teaching students how to listen attentively and critically. What can we learn from ethnomusicologists who teach students what to listen for and how to analyze music? Carol Babiracki speaks to the point that the sacred music of other cultures is unfamiliar not only from the point of view of sound, but cultural meaning. At the same time, cross-fertilization of sacred musical traditions is to be found in many traditions. Vernon Schubel explores the links between the string instruments of the Islamic world as precursors of the medieval lute and modern guitar, and uses music to make Islam less alien. Jacob Jacobson uses the variety of Jewish music to problematize the question of identity: What is Jewish about Jewish music? Indeed, is religious music too narrowly construed in religious studies? Uliss Masen urges that the music of environmental activists be considered religious in as much as it expresses veneration for nature and creates communitas. Not all religious music has lyrics or word texts. Ina Frandrich draws students into an appreciation of the 'heartbeat' of earth-based indigenous religions through workshops in African and Native American drumming. In sum, sacred sound provides an infinite number of entry points into religious life and history, and lends itself very well to multidisciplinary, cross-cultural study.

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Recordings of folksongs and popular music:

Hear Our Voices: Songs from the Ghettos and the Camps. The Zamir Chorale. HaZamir HZ-909.

Israel's 240 Greatest Songs (Gadalnu Yachad). Hed Artzi ACUM15950.

Jewish Alternative Movement: A Guide to the Perplexed. Knitting Factory Records KFR216; Klez. The KlezmerConservatory Band. Vanguard VMD-79449.

Recordings of chants:

Haftarah: Tradition Ashekenaz; Tradition Sepharad Yerushalayim; Tradition Yemen. Jerusalem: The Institute for Jewish Music.

Recordings of artistic works based on Jewish themes.

Bernstein, Leonard. *Bernstein Judaica* (including *Jeremiah Symphony, Kaddish Symphony, Dybbuk, and Chichester Psalms*). DG 289 463 462-2 CD.

Bloch, Ernest. *Schelomo*. SVC-11HD.

Golijov, Osvaldo. *K'vakarat*. Performed by the Kronos Quartet on *Night Prayers* Elektra/Nonesuch 979346-2.

Reich, Steve. *Tehillim*. ECM 827411-2.

Schoenberg, Arnold. *A Survivor from Warsaw*. SONY S2K-44571.

Statman, Andy. *Between Heaven and Earth: Music of the Jewish Mystics*. Shanachie 64079.

Videos:

Sepharad: *Judeo-Spanish Music* (Ergo Media, 27 min).

Teiman: *The Music of Yemenite Jewry* (Ergo Media, 27 min).

Zamir: *Jewish Voices Return to Poland* (PBS 2000, 57 min).

Websites:

Ergo Media *www.jewishvideo.com* (videos).

The Institute for Jewish Music: *www.renanot.co.il* (CDs and print anthologies of sacred music traditions).

The Jewish Music Center at the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv: *www.bh.org.il* (CDs).

The Jewish Music Research Center:*http://shum.cc.huji.ac.il/~jmrc/jmrc.htm* (research materials).

Jewish Music Web Center: *www.jmwc.org/* (links).

Jew-who: *http://jewhoo.com/cgi-bin/f2b/jewhoo/catagory.cgi?music* (a listing of prominent Jewish musicians).

Tara Music: *www.jewishmusic.com* (CDs, books, anthologies,and videos).

Transcontinental Music Publications: *www.etranscon.com* (sheet music).

World Music Press: *www.worldmusicpress.com* (sheet music, anthologies, and educational materials).

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