“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 gijnan, bhajan, or qawwals on the way to the beach, city, or school. Gijnans, 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 jamahkhanas 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 gijnans. 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 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

Central aspects of religion 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. 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 remains the study of texts. The purpose of this issue of Spotlight on Teaching is to advocate a greater integration of performance with teaching in the study and teaching of religion. The articles gathered here suggest that it is possible to encounter and explore religious experience through performance, namely, the performance and practices of sacred music traditions.

Spotlight on Teaching Religion and Music

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

IN THIS ISSUE

Religion and Music

“Those who sing pray twice”
Tazim R. Kassam, Syracuse University

Hearing the Sacred: Introducing Religious Chant and Music into Religious Studies Teaching
Guy Bed, Tulane University

Sacred Music in the Religious Studies Classroom
Steve A. Marini, Wellesley College

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian L. New, University of California, Riverside

Religion, Musically Speaking
Carol Babiracki, Kenyon College

From the Dutar to the Electric Guitar: Exposing Students to the Music of the Muslim World
Veron J. Schulc, Kenyon College

Explorations in Jewish Music, Joshua Jacobson
Northeastern University

Environmental Activism: Music As Community-Building Ritual
Maine U. Lisa, University of Colorado at Boulder

The Importance of Listening to the Heartbeat of Mother Earth
Carol Babiracki, Syracuse University

Hearing the Sacred: Introducing Religious Chant and Music into Religious Studies Teaching
Guy Bed, Tulane University

Sacred Music in the Religious Studies Classroom
Steve A. Marini, Wellesley College

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian L. New, University of California, Riverside

Religion, Musically Speaking
Carol Babiracki, Kenyon College

From the Dutar to the Electric Guitar: Exposing Students to the Music of the Muslim World
Veron J. Schulc, Kenyon College

Explorations in Jewish Music, Joshua Jacobson
Northeastern University

Environmental Activism: Music As Community-Building Ritual
Maine U. Lisa, University of Colorado at Boulder

The Importance of Listening to the Heartbeat of Mother Earth
Carol Babiracki, Syracuse University

Call for General Editor, p10

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 Britain.

Richard A. Freund, University of Hartford, Editor.

Laurie L. Patton, Emory University, Associate Editor.

Tazim R. Kassam, Syracuse University, Guest Editor.
Religious Studies News, AAR Edition

Hearing the Sacred: Introducing Religious Chant and Music into Religious Studies Teaching
Guy L. Beck, Tulane University

Religion is regarded as a universal phenomenon by historians of religion, and music is recognized as an 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 their topics 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 religion, and hence are commonly left out of religious studies courses, however, the religious themes and issues need to be highlighted by the instructor. In teaching religion, and music is recognized as an important part of human culture. The human voice also has the innate capacity to communicate meanings through the words of a text (song-text). As such, instructors have generally patterned their sounds after the words 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 and practice. 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 includes the oral performances 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 write a short paragraph or draw a diagram that illustrates their intuitions. Next, I ask the class to consider the role of religious chant and music in the religious practice of each of the 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 and audio recordings that matched 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. Encountering Powers Music in the World 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 H. Rice, 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 instead 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 world songs, ballads, theatrical songs, and blues. Other survey texts include Jeff Titon, Worlds of Music (Schirmer Books, 1992), and David Roik, Music of the Whole Earth (Schirmer, 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 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 DVD.

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

Continued on page 8
Sacred music is an intrinsic element of virtually every religious culture. 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 of 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 music of many religious traditions and can be used in the classroom, on compact disc players, or piped through speakers. Some of the benefits 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 religious studies 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 the 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 presentation of the Puritan, Evangelical, Fundamentalist, Liberal, and Pentecostal movements. The liturgical translations of The Bay Psalm Book and their union 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. 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 quickly reveal our students’ ignorance of virtually every religious culture, and how it is used in ritual practice.

To include sacred song, on the other hand, invites our students to confront religion for what it is in the present day. To exclude it is to disembody religion artificially and inaccurately. 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.

Resources:

Tunebooks:


CD Recordings:


Sing and Joyful Be Early American Fuging Tunes, Anthems, and Spiritual Songs. (1889).


Secondary Sources:


References:

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

Vivian-Le 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 virtuosity 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.

It was one made outside the classroom. The formal study of religion encompassed the examination of text, thought, 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 itself into the classroom along with the text 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 Māriam masses as students enter the room. I often close a lecture with another selection in order to send students out with a musical memory of the day’s material. Yet, for all my meticulous attention to appropriateness and aesthetic quality, to play music is to invite the students to bring their own experience of music itself to the classroom, filling any void that I may have created in the previous exercise.

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 understanding of the role of music in our society underwent profound changes that the role of music in our society underwent in the 20th century enabled people everywhere to hear all kinds of music anytime, anywhere; indeed, as Musil notes, we can hardly escape it. Music provides the accompaniment to all the events of the day: Adas, speaking from a Western music orientation, identifies important cultural distinctions that can play in reinforcing religion. Musical interludes force discussion of the need to listen with nothing smaller than a half step, whereas the Indian octave comprises twenty-three equal divisions.

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.

In Pursuit of Active Listening
Vivian-Le Nyitray, University of California, Riverside

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 general selection from a performance of the epic, or I discuss Zen notions of emptiness and repeat an excerpt from a Zen chant. The combination facilitates perception of the relation of Asian religions to Euro-American popular culture. 

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 tangible, interior experience of religious truth. While passive at first, students become active listeners. What follow are strategies that I believe have the potential to make the music noticeable to students over the din of chatter, backpack zipping, etc., for example, focus attention on Jesus’ humanity and divinity.
Religion, Musically Speaking  
Carol M. Babiracki, Syracuse University

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 interconnections 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 am lucky, a diverse student population jumps-starts the process from the beginning. My objective is to use cross-cultural interpretative themes as the threads that hold together courses that (impossibly) cover the world.

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 that helps me link 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 secular is a rich field of study and research. In most cases, musical performance is an exercise in the human mind’s capacity to attune itself to other realities or provoke other realities into resonating with it. This is an ethnographic approach that ensures that the students seeking to understand music and religion, benefit from illustration with the sounds and sights of performance. Linking Becker’s writings, as is true of all of those dealing with musical performance and religion, with the students seeking to understand 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 Lévi-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 performances 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.

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 engage, 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 “miraculous 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, interwoven 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 into the 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—musicians to cross and confound otherwise discrete social and conceptual categories. In my work with the court dance in the textbook Dancing: The Pleasure, Power, and Art of Movement, I have mediated the assimilation of ancient Tantric Buddhist/Indic beliefs and more recent Sufi beliefs in central Java. Sakti Qureshi’s recent Sufi beliefs in central Java.

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,” 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, “Tantram, 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 it is bound 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 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 a challenge. For audio recordings, I recommend some Nonesuch re-releases: Javanese Court Gamelan: Gamelan of Pura Pakualaman; Javanese Court Gamelan: Gamelan of Pura Magkunagaran and T’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 IVIC 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 Chuschi of qawwals (saintly Sufi minstrels) in the Indus Valley, “Qawwals of the African Diaspora” in South Asia (Sufi Music of South Asia and Pakistan, 1986). Qureshi’s is a close ethnographic approach that helps me link the study and teaching of musical performance, which underscores the latter’s relevance for the study and teaching of religion.
From the Dutar to the Electric Guitar: Exposing Students to the Music of the Muslim World

Vernon J. Schubel, Kenyon College

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 (bid'a). This view is reaffirmed by such anecdotal takeovers as the Islamic 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 Hindustani music came through the Beatles' association with the M Anand traditional music of India, 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 sub-current among a substantial segment of our students. There is a strong interest in so-called 'world music' - especially among students adventuring into the study of African 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, 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. In fact, if one listens in sequence to the music of Central Asian folk musicians, Anatolian ashiks, Spanish Flamenco guitarists, gauwa singers, lora 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 Islamic 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 Ganghis Blus, 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 Central Asians is unimpeachable. A particularly good piece for introducing students to the dutar is "Qara Koz" performed by Abdrakhman Haridov 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. The students immediately relate the music to the Beatles and Robert Johnson, 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.

The Aliev-Bektashi tradition of Anatolia, called nefe, 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 Aliev tradition is the figure of the ashik (lover) who wanders composing songs of devotion for God, the Friend (Oz) and the beloved. The tradition's great poet, such as Pir Sultan Abdal, were also ashiks. The Aliev tradition is one of the most influential in Central Asia, and its influence can be found in the music of the Beatles, Hinduism, and Classical music.

In upcoming issues:
Spotlight on Teaching ... At Primary and Secondary Schools
In the United Kingdom, An International Report
At Community Colleges
About Material Culture

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.

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. The students immediately relate the music to the Beatles and Robert Johnson, 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.

The Aliev-Bektashi tradition of Anatolia, called nefe, 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 Aliev tradition is the figure of the ashik (lover) who wanders composing songs of devotion for God, the Friend (Oz) and the beloved. The tradition's great poet, such as Pir Sultan Abdal, were also ashiks. The Aliev tradition is one of the most influential in Central Asia, and its influence can be found in the music of the Beatles, Hinduism, and Classical music.

In upcoming issues:
Spotlight on Teaching ... At Primary and Secondary Schools
In the United Kingdom, An International Report
At Community Colleges
About Material Culture
Explorations in Jewish Music

Joshua R. Jacobson, Northeastern University

I teach Jewish music in several different contexts: in college courses, in educational settings, 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 land of Israel. If ‘Jewish’ is a culture or sub-culture, then the 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 Le’Holodo,” composed by Franz Schubert for Viennese Sefardim in the 19th century? A Yiddish fiddle? An Eastern European Jewish chant for the circumcision ritual? If so, what other works can be used to initiate and stimulate a discussion on Jewish identity.

Music as an Interface. 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.

Analyse the polyphonic choral work by Salomone 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. Analyse the song “Ich bin ein deutscher Knecht” by Martin Roth, composed in the Saxon Hebrew concentration camp in 1942, and you have opened a window to experiencing 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 Christo Trau” (c. 1200) with a Jewish chant, “Betzat Yisrael” (17th century tradition), my students will grapple with the fact that the two are virtually identical. How can both religions claim that their melody is ancient, authoritative, and unique? The answer lies in the dawn of Christianity, when its liturgy was nearly identical to Jewish worship. How can both religions claim that it has preserved the ancient melodies as they were revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai? 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? The answer lies in the instruction to which the melody is assigned.

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, the angels and the planets are portrayed as musical beings. Moreover, in many traditions, music is presented as an invention of the gods.

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 sacred choral music, composers have used music 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 borders between the two are marked with unique 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 sacred and secular ritual and the sacred is elevated by the4.

5. 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 texts, this music has been assiduously preserved and protected from change. 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, existing as a sub-culture, it was impossible for Jews to be unaffected by the sounds of the surroundingcultures. Thus each Diaspora community gradually evolved its own musical traditions, based on the ancient melodies, but bearing the marks of its geographical location. A less subtle form of acculturation can be seen in the way that Eastern European Jews have adapted Western liturgical traditions to the style of Jewish composers. I also 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 acculturation.

The Music of Israel

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 texts, this music has been assiduously preserved and protected from change. 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, existing as a sub-culture, it was impossible for Jews to be unaffected by the sounds of the surrounding cultures. Thus each Diaspora community gradually evolved its own musical traditions, based on the ancient melodies, but bearing the marks of its geographical location. A less subtle form of acculturation can be seen in the way that Eastern European Jews have adapted Western liturgical traditions to the style of Jewish composers. I also 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 acculturation.

(3) 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 artificial 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 altered their ritual to enhance the power 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 voice’ (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 Holyday 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. Musica symbol is used to evoke the special atmosphere of each service and each day. A spoken service lacks these rich calendrical cues.
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 unknown.

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, 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 the major world religions easily available on compact disc for class presentation, either 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. Students may even be familiar with the recent best-selling recording of Gregorian Chant or Plainsong, Latin settings of the Hebrew Psalter from the Vulgate. The traditional music of King Solomon's temple is inaccessible from the ancient notation, vocal and instrumental reconstructive settings include seven of the Psalms, along with passages from Deuteronomy, Numbers, Exodus, Lamentations, and Isaiah. The sacred and the profane: Qawwali represented in the performances of 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 music. Finally, I highly recommend the recent, award-winning book by Virginia Danielson, The Sacred and the Profane: Qawwali represented in the Performances of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, (Nonesuch, 1994) and Philip Bohlin, "World Musics and World Religions: Whose World?" in Enchanting Powers, 1997. I also recommend is, Japan: Kabuki and Other Traditional M (Dell, 1980), as well as other verses from the Sikh Adi Granth, or Hindu Sacred Raga (UNESCO, 1999) which contains classical compositions and bhajans of the Hinduist (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 as well as other verses from the Sikh Adi Granth, or Holy Scriptures, set to music. I use Aa 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: Charts and music from Buddhist Temple (AARC Records, 2000), contains good examples of chanting of the Buddhist canon (similar to Vedic chant) and Buddhist music from Taiwan, China, India, Thailand, and Tibet. Buddhist music of T'ai (Nimbus, 1994), contains Chinese Buddhist music that is similar in style to older forms of imperial court music (Confucian and Taoist). Buddhist music of T'ai (Nimbus, 1994), contains music recorded at actual service in the temple of Kyoto, Japan. For Noh drama and other music, there is Japan: No Music (Lyrichord, 1993), and Japanese and the Performing Arts (Putumayo, 1998). Also recommended is, Japan: Kabuki and Other Traditional Music (Putumayo, 1988).


Continued from page 2, Beck

Continued from page 5, Babiracki

study of the dynamics of qawwali performance and its central roles in activating ecstatic experience and enabling 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 U.K. Qureeshi's own video projects have not yet been released, but performances on the video Nusrat Live At Mann: A Concert of Qawwali (Arab Film Distribution, Seattle, WA) are effective, though not filmed in a religious context. I like to supplement Qureshi's study with articles by H.ironi 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 Bohlin, "World Musics and World Religions: Whose World?" in Enchanting Powers, 1997) the articles focus on the 'world music' phenomenon and traditional qawwali practitioner, the late Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, he became a force in the global marketplace of popular fusion music without relinquishing his own sense of the sacred purpose of his music. Finally, I highly recommend the recent, award-winning book by Virginia Danielson, The Sacred and the Profane: Qawwali represented in the Performances of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, (Nonesuch, 1994) and Philip Bohlin, "World Musics and World Religions: Whose World?" in Enchanting Powers, 1997. I also recommend is, Japan: Kabuki and Other Traditional M (Dell, 1980), as well as other verses from the Sikh Adi Granth, or Hindu Sacred Raga (UNESCO, 1999) which contains classical compositions and bhajans of the Hinduist (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).
Environmental Activist Music as Community-Building Ritual

Maasen Uliss, M.A., Candidate, University of Colorado

The challenge which closes Ed Abbey’s introduction to Deert 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 institutions, are the stuff of radical 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 they relate to one another. Using the music and texts of activist songwriting, I will see how debates on ‘nature’ play out in American culture and also see how activist music functions as community-building ritual activity.

Central to this discussion are the terms ‘nature’ and ‘religion.’ Catherine Albano has argued that since conceptions of nature and environment have played important roles in how participants in American culture relate to reality, it makes sense to talk about ‘nature religion’ in this context (Albanese, 6). However, as scholars of religion have an orientation to ‘nature’ as it relates to what we study as ‘religion.’ As Ronald Grimes points out, “McInea Eliaide...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 constructed...” 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 at 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. W is the often light-hearted character of these gatherings is reflected in the songs, and rowdiness and joking occur in the context of an assumption that the gatherings are important on both a temporal and spiritual level. Although connected 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 ‘Environmentalism’ Of The Everyday. This first type of song might at first listening seem to be deceptively ordinary and innocuously connecting the timeless, because of its interpolation of seemingly disparate ideas, traditions, and aesthetics, and expression of expressive and religious life in the movement. Through this process of creative juxtaposition, disparate parts of a different activist life are woven 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 mundane. C. Masen Uliss, MA Candidate, University of Colorado

You’re holding a tombstone in your hands. A bloody rock. Don’t step it in your foot - throw it at something big and glasy. What do you have to lose?

-Edward Abbey (Deert 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)

Continued on page 10

Spring 2001 AAR RSN • 9

SPOTLIGHT ON TEACHING
zikr

rhythm and the call-and-response patterns in the singing are particularly attractive to students. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan and the Sabri brothers are particularly useful. The prominence of Sufi traditions in Islamic culture, and the way in which Sufi ideas penetrate into Islamic culture at the popular level through music, exposes students to the music of Islam makes the religion less exotic and forbidding. 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

Discography


----. Just As American As You

Hull, Timothy. Brambleland.

Lyons, Dana. CoesWith Guns

Neeli, Casey. Casey Neeli

----. Siree.

Websites

Cassey Neeli Trio Home page, www.speakersorg-­‐jılıküaay

The Official Danny Dolinger Homestead www.toofiees.com/SunstStrip/lounge3267/danny.html

We're All Travelers Here (Timothy Hull Web page - www.2whi.de/bnet/trinker/

Dana Lyons Web page - http://www.cowshithungs.com/

EarthFirst! Media Center - www.toofiees.com/RainForest/Vines99101

Hadyuke Rodale Eff Media and Action Network - www.affmedia.org/

References


Taylor, Bron. "Resacrilizing Earth" in


Taylor, Bron. "Resacrilizing Earth" in


Taylor, Bron. "Resacrilizing Earth" in

The Importance of Listening to the Heartbeat of Mother Earth

Ina J. Fandrich, Swarthmore College

Teach courses on African American music, Afro-Atlantic or African-based New World Religions like Haitian Vodou or Cuban Santería, and Indigenous Religions such as Traditional Afros-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 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. Music helps maintain harmony in and with both the visible and the invisible world. (Wilson, xi)

It is true that all world religions have their own brands of sacred music. Hence, the integration of music into the curricula 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, music is present as the medium for spiritual communication and experience. Ceremonies and events are co-created in music; the music is both the occasion for and the manifestation of the sacred. Music is a windows into the religious and the spiritual.

All indigenous religious traditions consider the earth sacred; that is why they are sometimes referred to as ‘geocentric’ religions. In their view, the hearthbeat of mother Earth is representative of the physical and spiritual worlds. The intense, often extraordinarily complex rhythms of the musical ritual performances thus become the venue where the drummers 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 drummers 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 drummers and the rhythms they invoke are held sacred.

The heartbeat of mother Earth is represented symbolically in the rhythms of their drums, which ubiquitously accompany the sacred ceremonies. "Drumming" is the act of performing rhythmic patterns on percussion instruments. Rhythm is a powerful tool that can be used to create and maintain a sense of community, to express emotions, and to communicate with the divine. In many cultures, drumming is associated with spiritual practices, such as rituals and ceremonies, and is believed to have a transformative power.

African American music has been an integral part of the religious and cultural traditions of the African Diaspora. It has played a significant role in shaping the spiritual and cultural identity of African Americans and has been an important means of expressing their resilience and resistance against oppression.

The heartbeat of mother Earth is represented symbolically in the rhythms of their drums, which ubiquitously accompany the sacred ceremonies. "Drumming" is the act of performing rhythmic patterns on percussion instruments. Rhythm is a powerful tool that can be used to create and maintain a sense of community, to express emotions, and to communicate with the divine. In many cultures, drumming is associated with spiritual practices, such as rituals and ceremonies, and is believed to have a transformative power.
Spotlight on Teaching

Continued from page 7, Jacobson


***** What is Jewish Music? The Offr Echo, 33:3 (Spring 2001).


Recordings of folksongs and popular music:

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

Israel’s 240 Greatest Songs. (Gadalnu Yachad). Hed Arzi ACUM 35950.


Recordings of chants:


Recordings of artistic works based on Jewish themes:


Bloch, Ernst. Schalom. SVC-11H D.


Reich, Steve. Tehilim. ECM 827411-2.

Schoenberg, Arnold. A Survivor from Warsaw. 30 N Y 52X-44571.


Recordings of sacred music:

Hearken to this reed forlorn, breathing since twas torn
From its rushy bed, a strain of impasioned 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 techniques of teaching them in 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 encourages 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 M. Arini 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 music”? Indeed, is religious music too narrowly construed in religious studies? Uliss M deu argues that the music of environmental activists be considered religious in as much as it expresses reverence for nature and creates communities. At 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.

References:


Beck, Guy. “Listening to Sacred Music: What’s in It for Us?” First Reformed Theological Semi


References:


References:


References:


References:


References:


References:


