

## ABSTRACTS

Conference on the Music of South, Central and West Asia  
Harvard University, March 4-6, 2016

**Margarethe Adams, SUNY Stony Brook**

***In a State of Belief: Korean Church Performance in Kazakhstan***

The postsecular may be less a new phase of cultural development than it is a working through of the problems and contradictions in the secularization process itself (Dunn 2010:92). Critical theorist, Allen Dunn describes the skepticism of the enlightenment and the disenchantment of modern society as inherently negative. But for those who lived during the Soviet era, the negative aspects of secularization (the closing of mosques, synagogues, and churches; the persecution of religious leaders, and more) were accompanied by a powerfully optimistic ideology with a strong social message promising widespread social change. The Soviet State may not have swept all its citizens along in its optimism, but its departure, after seventy years, left a palpable ideological void. This paper will examine one of the many imported religious institutions that flooded into Central Asia after the fall of the Soviet Union Korean evangelical worship. In this study, based on ethnographic research conducted between 2004 and 2015, I examine Korean church-going practices over the past decade in Almaty, Kazakhstan, particularly focusing on dance, gesture, and musical performance during worship and in holiday celebrations. I seek to clarify how transnational networks are implicated in religious institutions in postsecular Central Asia. Transnationalist discourse figures prominently in interviews with congregation members, both in discussion of family ties to Korea, and in the ways they link the aesthetic choices of gesture to imported styles of worship. Work Cited: Dunn, Allen. 2010. The Precarious Integrity of the Postsecular. *boundary 2* (3):91-99.

**Joseph Alpar, The Graduate Center, CUNY**

***Singing Pirkei Avot in Istanbul: Contemporary Modes of Performance and Transmission of a Para-Liturgical Synagogue Repertoire***

On Saturday afternoons during the six weeks between the Jewish holidays of Passover and Shavuot, a small group of cantors, hazzanim, gathers with congregants at the Şişli synagogue in Istanbul to sing a musical setting of Pirkei Avot, a collection of ethical and moral rabbinic teachings from the Talmud containing six chapters. According to Jewish tradition, one chapter should be studied each Shabbat during this inter-holiday period. The musical setting which precedes the lesson is unique to the Turkish Jewish community. Much like the para-liturgical maftirim tradition, Pirkei Avot includes Hebrew texts set to Ottoman vocal and instrumental works by both Jewish and non-Jewish composers. However, its compositional design, range of repertoire, rhythmically flexible solo vocal passages, and overall organization are highly distinctive. My paper is based on observations of the six-week cycle of Pirkei Avot at the Şişli synagogue in 2013 and 2015, multiple interviews with hazzanim, and the important, handwritten transcription of the complete work in western notation. The afternoon singing of Pirkei Avot has also become an important site for multiple processes of musical transmission and Jewish education between master hazzanim, their pupils, and members of the synagogue congregation. This previously unstudied musical practice raises new and significant questions regarding the scope and eclecticism of Turkish Jewish para-liturgical traditions as well as their varied methods of performance.

**Carol Babiracki, Syracuse University**

***Making it in Modernity: Sustainability and Vernacular Music Professionals***

Indian modernity has favored vernacular, regional musicians in India selectively and unevenly. This paper considers factors contributing to successful transitions from traditional professionals to modern commercial agents across regions and vernacular genres in India. Such a comparative evaluation of success stories, such as Bauls and Manganiars, and more disappointing cases, such as Ghasis, Doms, and “Mirasis,” may offer insights and strategies for those navigating today’s unrelenting dynamics of change. This paper analyzes issues such as caste status, regional identity movements, religion, capital value and resources, historical patronage patterns, scholarship, and musical aesthetics in the contexts of shifting modernities to identify broad patterns and pathways to success. It considers what skill-sets are needed today to sell regional music and what role scholars might play moving forward.

**Jayson Beaster-Jones, University of California, Merced**

***Themes of Violence and Reconciliation: A.R. Rahman’s “Bombay Theme”***

Orchestral scores in Hindi cinema have been virtually ignored both by fans and scholars, perhaps because of the spectacular nature of Indian film songs and their social importance in/through circulation in the Indian music industry. Likely for similar reasons, background scores get little attention from music and film critics. Indeed, the award for “Best Background Score” was not even a category for the Filmfare Awards (India’s analog to the Academy Awards) until 1998.

It is quite rare for film music from background scores to be distributed on film soundtracks, although there are a few exceptions. This paper will analyze the use and circulation of A.R. Rahman’s “Bombay Theme” from the film *Bombay* (Mani Ratnam 1995). The paper argues that the theme is used strategically in the film to draw attention to the causes and consequences of communal violence—and its reconciliation—in ways that augment the quasi-documentary aesthetic of the film. The paper concludes by suggesting that this theme, along with Rahman’s other scores of the 1990s, was instrumental in drawing critical attention to importance of background music in Hindi films and provided one way for music

**Debanjali Biswas, King’s College, London**

***On the heels of musicians: congregational practices in the Manipuri Nat –Sankirtan***

*Nat-Sankirtan* has gained prominence as a vital expressive tradition of the Northeast Indian Meitei community of Manipur and was inscribed as an 'intangible heritage' by UNESCO in 2013. From 18th century, Sankirtan has been an imperative component of Vaishnavite rituals and presently it is the most observable cultural contact of Meitei and Bengali traditions in performative music and ceremonial terminology among the Manipuri Hindu communities of India and Bangladesh. Deeply meditative in nature, Nat-Sankirtan in a ritual space encompasses percussive, music, dance traditions and congregational chanting. However as a part of Manipuri classical dance and music repertoire, Nat-Sankirtan or *cholom* is a performance of percussion, syncopation and acrobatics. This paper discusses three components of the Sankirtan tradition, the first being how dance is used to enhance the impact of music in a ritual and how dance came to belong in a predominantly musical tradition thus making an aural tradition more visual. Secondly, the use of Bengali language in song texts is deliberated as Meitei revival movements steadily censor the use of Bengali in everyday and social contexts. Thirdly, this paper aims to project how Nat-Sankirtan has enabled a Meitei Vaishnavite congregational tradition to be recognised as a

major performative tradition of post-colonial India and why did Nat-Sankirtan become a metonym for a homogenous Manipuri culture. This paper takes a close look at one of Manipur's expressive traditions via history and multi-sited ethnography.

**Brian Bond, The Graduate Center, CUNY**

***Lives of a Fatwā: Sufism, Islamic Reform, and Ethical Audition in Kachchh, Gujarat***

In the early 1970s, a prominent Sunni Muslim muftī (jurisconsult) and preacher in Kachchh, Gujarat pronounced a fatwā (nonbinding legal opinion) stating that music is “impermissible” in Islam. This paper examines the responses of two of Kachchh's most eminent Muslim musicians to the fatwā, which had unexpected consequences for musical life in the region. I analyze their responses in tandem with the moral pronouncements of the muftī's younger relative, a preacher representing the Ahl-e Sunnat wa Jamā'at reformist movement. I examine how the concerns and assumptions underlying the three men's viewpoints on the ethics of audition converge with, and diverge from, those expressed in older Islamic discourses, specifically the writings of Lahore's Ali ibn Usmān al-Hujwārī (d. 1077 CE). The paper's aim is not to simply present contrasting viewpoints in the tireless “debate” about music's “status” within Islam. Rather, my analysis suggests that the claims of both musicians and reformists—regardless of their views on music's permissibility—express concerns and doubts about the ethical capacities of the listening self within modern spaces, perceived to be beset by sexual and material desire. By contextualizing my interlocutors' views on music in light of Islamic reformism in Kachchh, I demonstrate how performance is a critical site around which visions of Sufi practice, and Islam more broadly, are articulated and enacted. In particular, I explore how the responses of Muslim musicians voice a commitment to locally embedded Islam, to which sung Sindhi Sufi poetry with musical accompaniment has been, and remains, an integral component.

**Utpola Borah, Ohio Arts Council**

***Permeable Borders of Spirit: Hindu/Islamic Syncretism in Assamese Zikir***

Assamese zikir crosses cultural and religious boundaries, blends mysticism and moralizing, and has remained one of Assam's most popular musical genres since its development in the 17th century. Zikir refers to the musical genre and to the occasion of its performance in Sufi assemblies. Zikir took root in Assam during 17th Century within the socio-cultural framework instituted by the Bhakti movement of Saint Srimanta Sankardeva (1449-1568) under the patronage the Ahom dynasties (1300-1800). These songs were primarily composed and popularized by the Sufi Saint and poet Hazrat Shah Miran. Though being couched in the language of Islamic mysticism, Assamese zikir incorporated many elements drawn directly from Hinduism, including celebrating gurus and various deities. This paper will examine how zikir aided in the reorganization of Assamese Muslim society into a harmonious relationship with Hinduism through a complex musical and cultural synthesis that drew on folk music, the didactic tradition of philosophical songs (Deh-bisaror geet), and the re-imagination of culture through performance.

**Francesca Cassio, Sardarni Harbans Kaur Chair in Sikh Musicology, Hofstra Univ., NY**  
**Pre-concert lecture: *Singing at the Guru's court. The dhrupad of the Gurbani kirtan tradition***

The performance of Gurbani kirtan was established by Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, in Northwest India during the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. Since then, kirtan has been a core practice of the Sikh faith, based on the singing of spiritual hymns. Set to ragas and talas, the chants are performed throughout the day at the Sri Darbar Sahib (Lord's court), the holy shrine in Amritsar. More than 5000 hymns have been collected in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy book indexed according to 31 ragas and their 31 varieties. This volume includes compositions by the Sikh Masters, and poems attributed to Hindu and Sufi medieval mystics, such as Bhagat Namdev, Bhagat Kabir and Sheikh Farid. The Sikh tradition flourished at the crossroads of the Hindu and Muslim milieus, while maintaining the integrity of its own critically inclusive but unique vision. This is reflected in the multifaceted, and yet coherent, corpus of ancient compositions passed on by professional temple musicians, called ragis.

The concert will showcase, in particular, the repertoire transmitted by the lineage of Bhai Jwala Singh (1879-1952), a legendary ragi of the Sri Darbar Sahib. As established in 1968, by a special committee of the Punjabi University of Patiala, this repertoire includes original dhrupad and partial compositions from the Sikh Gurus' time (late 15<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries). In comparison with other dhrupad traditions, Gurbani reveals its distinctive identity, not only for its array of rare ragas and talas, but also for being shaped by the sounds of unique instruments, such as the taus and the jori-pakhawaj, whose creation is attributed to the Sikh Gurus.

**Andrew Colwell, Wesleyan University**

***The Birthplace of Mongol Xöömeí or Throat-singing: Claiming Strategies, Cultural Branding, and Proprietary Concepts in Chandman District, Western Mongolia***

Chandman district is a small community in western Mongolia that is renowned for xöömeí or throat-singing. Scholarly publications readily reinforce this narrative by referring to the seminal role that its performers have played in the formation of a national style and the vocal practice's international promotion. However, two recent events have challenged Chandman's position. On one hand, there is China's registration of xöömeí as Intangible Cultural Heritage via Inner Mongolia (2009). And on the other, there are several more recent publications by Mongolian scholars that propose alternative histories in which xöömeí originates elsewhere in Mongolia or even Tuva. In response, Chandman district initiated a series of public relations projects to consolidate its national and international heritage profile. Taking up the techniques and language of product branding, community leaders and officials sought to engage national and international publics by producing a nationally televised program on the district's heritage, organizing an international xöömeí festival, and even transforming a local crevice into a natural theater at which to feature xöömeí as a local brand. These explicit branding strategies, however, contrast sharply with the implicit proprietary conceptions of elder performers who describe how residents took xöömeí from the surrounding world, thereby deferring human ownership within mobile pastoral custom. This paper examines the motivations and modalities of these claiming strategies and proposes that the attempt to brand xöömeí in Chandman district produced a performative intersection between international, national, and communal frameworks for the ownership of music.

**Jeffrey Cupchik, Independent Scholar**

***Sonic Iconography: The Damaru Drum's Rhythmic Complements to Affective Visualizations in Tibetan gCod Rituals***

The Tibetan female ascetic Machik Labdrön (1055-1153) developed the Vajrayana (Tantric) Buddhist ritual music practice and meditation method, known as gCod (chö). Her written liturgical gCod texts, commentaries, and ritual practices were disseminated throughout the Indo-Tibetan and Himalayan regions, Central Asia, Mongolia and Bhutan, and are now found across a transnational Tibetan Buddhist diaspora. The large gCod Damaru, an hourglass-shaped drum, is featured in all Tibetan Buddhist gCod ritual sadhana practices, performances, and iconography, and typically played in tandem with the Tibetan bell (dril bu). When played in traditional performance contexts, the Damaru is not solely a musical instrument, but a ritual implement. Both the material aspects of the Damaru construction and kinesthetic elements of the performance tradition have deep significance to gCod ritual practices. The drum-accompanied liturgical song-poetry includes rhythmic symbolism with affective complements that connect the external musical ritual performance with the internal meditative visualization practice. In traditional contexts, a high valuation is granted to an individual ascetic gCod practitioner's insights and interpretations among an interpretive community. Adepts may contribute to the corpus of explanatory literature through written commentaries and oral discourses after practicing gCod rituals for extended periods on their own. This presentation will consider specific examples of this process; in examining differences between individual Lamas' interpretations of the Damaru symbolism in gCod ritual practices I highlight the ethnographic encounter with this living tradition, and the unique relationships between rhythm and liturgical song-poetry text, melody, and visualization.

**Anaar Desai-Stephens, Cornell University**

***Tensions of Musical Re-animation from Bollywood to Indian Idol***

This paper examines the twin discourses of talent and mehanat (hard work), that which is seen as innate and that which requires effort, as circulated through sites of popular music pedagogy and practice in contemporary North India. Drawing on my research on the popular television show Indian Idol and ethnographic fieldwork in sites of music pedagogy, I trace how these discourses manifest in relation to aspiring popular music singers seeking to develop their vocal abilities. Focusing on interactions between judges and contestants, teachers and students, I examine the tensions and contradictions that emerge between ideas of talent and mehanat as they are used to articulate understandings of musical and personal improvement. I situate these discourses within a broader aspirational economy that promotes individual transformation in line with larger neoliberal and meritocratic ideologies emerging in India today. Beyond simply yielding insight into conceptions of musical potential, I argue that the dialectic between talent and mehanat points to broader ideals regarding the possibilities and limits of the self in liberalizing India. This paper thus offers a musically grounded examination of the question that marks India in the twenty-first century: how much can a person transform? And how much, and in what ways, must they transform in order to transcend the habitus of class and caste given to them at birth?

**Polina Dessiatnitchenko, University of Toronto**

***A Bird Needs Two Wings to Fly: Relationship Between Music and Poetry in Azerbaijani Mugham***

In twentieth-century Azerbaijan, masters Bahram Mansurov, Ahmad Bakikhanov, and Haji Mammadov represented the three main styles of playing mugham on the tar. Using data from two years of fieldwork studying and performing with renowned successors of all three lineages my doctoral project is an endeavor to theorize the development of mugham improvisation on the tar in Soviet and post-Soviet Azerbaijan. As evidence, I examine the terminology and discourses of musicians, specific examples from recordings, archival data, and my own experience of learning and playing mugham. I am interested in the interaction that takes place between instrumentalists and vocalists as they jointly weave their musical journey throughout the genre of mugham dastgah. As such, one major focus of my work is the link between mugham music and poetry and how the latter affects the instrumentalists' improvisatory activity. Firstly, I discuss how structural parameters of ghazal poetry such as aruz meters and large-scale form have influenced creativity of tar musicians. Secondly, I delve into possible meanings of ghazal texts and the related interpretive processes that involve the imagination of the Beyond (Crapanzano 2004) and trigger creative impulse towards the edges of the mugham canon. Importantly, I analyze how sociocultural factors in Soviet and post-Soviet context have changed the relationship between instrumental accompaniment and sung ghazal poetry and as a result determined the fate of the three aforementioned dominant schools of tar playing.

**Brian Fairley, Wesleyan University**

***Blackbirds in the Archive: Genealogies of Voice in Georgian Gramophone Records***

In 1907, Gigo Erkomaishvili, 70 years of age, brought his folk choir to Tbilisi to record traditional songs for the UK Gramophone Company, ten years before the cataclysm of the Russian Revolution. A half-century later, his son Artem, the last living representative of an oral chanting tradition, recorded himself singing all three parts of several hundred Orthodox chants on multitrack tape. After another fifty years, Artem's grandson Anzor Erkomaishvili, internationally famous for his recordings with the Rustavi Ensemble, released on CD the century-old gramophone records of his great-grandfather and other master singers of pre-revolutionary Georgia. Thus three generations of Erkomaishvili singers have made crucial interventions in the preservation and dissemination of Georgian folk and sacred music. This paper will investigate the complicated legacy of these recordings in the transmission of repertoire and performance practice, with special focus on the contemporary folkloric revival in Georgia. This revival, inspired by the particularities of tuning and timbre present in the old recordings, places itself in opposition to a mode of presentation popularized by Anzor Erkomaishvili himself. The paradoxes and historical ruptures latent in the Erkomaishvili heritage underscore the challenge of creating cultural continuity in post-Soviet Central Asia and the Caucasus. Drawing on interviews with colleagues of Anzor, as well as the literature on audio format and reproduction (Sterne 2003, 2012), I will analyze these recordings as cultural agents which augment and subvert oral traditions and genealogies of practice, and which reveal themselves to be, no less than the music they capture, intricately polyphonic.

**Garrett Field, Ohio University**

***Veiling the Global: Literary Language and Subjective Nationalism in Sinhala Radio Song of Sri Lanka, 1957***

This paper examines the intratextuality of three Sinhala-language radio songs and the socio-historical and institutional forces behind the production of these songs. Michael Riffaterre uses the term intratextuality to refer to language in which an intertext is partially encoded within a text and conflicts with it because of stylistic or semantic incompatibilities (Riffaterre 1980: 627). The purpose of the article is to reflect on the conception of nationalism as elaborated by historian Manu Goswami. According to Goswami, nationalism is a globally transposable module that social agents since the mid-nineteenth century have used to assert the uniqueness of their nation. In this article, I argue that this conception is illuminating because of its sensitivity to sub-global or global configurations that factor into the celebration of local particularities. Yet I take issue with Goswami's emphasis on the doubled form of nationalism as simultaneously local-and-global and objective-subjective because this argument overlooks the way in which local literary language has the power to veil the global formations, the very formations that have helped set the parameters for celebrating the local. Using three Sinhala radio songs as examples, this article suggests that such veiling through intratextuality can become a crucial feature of subjective nationalism. Subjective nationalism refers to articulations of nationalism made through written and spoken communication and the effects of these discourses on the public consciousness.

**Dave Fossum, Brown University**

***Forensic Folklore: Determining Anonymity and Authorship in Turkey's Folk Music Industry***

A long-standing debate in Turkish musical folklore pits a conservative element that insists folk songs are anonymous against critics who claim that works of known authorship hold or should hold a place in musical folklore. As a point of cultural policy, the question of anonymity and authorship bears a special significance for two different administrative regimes that arbitrate over whether a specific folk song has a known author or not. The first such regime operates on the basis of principles of Turkish musical folklore and is manifest in the form of a committee at the state broadcasting agency, Turkish Radio and Television, which decides the content of an official, ostensibly anonymous broadcast repertoire of folk music. The second regime, which adjudicates on the basis of principles of Turkish copyright law, is housed in intellectual property courts and in technical committees at collective rights organizations. While there is sometimes an overlap between these regimes, with the same actors operating in both, an examination of their discussions and decisions reveals that actors disagree on what it means for something to be anonymous (or conversely, authored). They also rely on a variety of different tests for recognizing anonymity or ascribing authorship. In this paper I show how conceptions of anonymity and authorship, as well as the tests for recognizing them, vary in part according to the uses and entities for which actors in these regimes are claiming folk song.

**Katie Freeze, Brown University**

***The Cry of the Tanbur: Strategic Self-Representation at the Gurminj Museum of Musical Instruments in Dushanbe, Tajikistan***

At the Gurminj Museum of Musical Instruments in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, a small migrant community of musicians from Badakhshan (mountainous, eastern Tajikistan) is sustaining traditional Pamiri musical culture through strategic self-representation. Like many of their compatriots elsewhere in Central Asia who wish to preserve their music in the face of powerful modernizing and globalizing forces specific to the region, the musicians of the Gurminj inflect both their music and musical discourses to address audiences of tourists, researchers, NGO personnel, and Tajik culture officers. Their approach is shaped by the social-political history of Tajikistan and, more broadly, post-Soviet Central Asia. Tajikistan has long been the breeding ground for many national musics, which under the Soviet nationalities policy were used to bind together disparate members of what eventually became a new Tajik nation. Since independence, the post-Soviet state has identified a succession of traditional folk musics and promoted them for political gain. At the same time, non-governmental organizations have funded culture-renewal projects with export-quality results. The Gurminj has evidently eluded this net of intervention and appropriation, priding itself on being an independent and authentic hub of Pamiri culture. This paper will be a case study of one minority community's efforts, through its own brand of folklorization, to vitalize its musical culture, and to project itself into broader domestic and international arenas.

**Eben Graves, Yale University**

***Absorbing Rhythms: Processes of Musical Accompaniment and Emotional Immersion in Bengali Lila-Kirtan***

Part musical and part theatric, a Bengali lila-kirtan performance mixes together song, storytelling, and audience participation as it depicts the divine play (lila) of the Hindu deities of Radha and Krishna. In the course of storytelling, songs become moments of intended reflection upon the larger narrative and central devotional mood (bhakti-rasa) of the performance. One technique central to lila-kirtan is the use of colloquial textual phrases, called akhars, which combine improvised song text and rhythmically dense percussive accompaniment, crescendoing with loud exclamations from audience members. While previous studies have discussed the textual dimension of akhars, there has been a lack of research that studies the musical processes that accompany song texts in performance. In this paper, I focus on the interrelationships between melody, the percussive accompaniment of the double-headed khol drum, and conceptions of how the drum repertoire contributes to a process that lila-kirtan musicians refer to as a state of absorption (matan) in performance. The connection between emotional affect and a specific rhythmic pattern is reinforced through their shared use of the term *matan*, which refers to a state of consciousness and the category of khol repertoire used to accompany the song.

**Rolf Groesbeck, University of Arkansas at Little Rock**

***Tālam/Kālam, Drumming, Emotion and Character in Kathakali, Kerala Dance-Drama***

In *Kathakali*, the primary responsibility for evoking *rasa* and expressing character lies with the actor, as a number of theater scholars (Jones and Jones 1970, Zarrilli 2000 et al.) have stressed. However, I argue here that aspects of rhythm and percussion contribute as well to this goal. Specifically, there often exists a close association between *kālam* (here meaning the number of beats per cycle within a given *tālam*) and *rasa*; thus, *śṛṅgāra* (erotic, delicate)



compositions are often set to cycles of 32 beats, as opposed to 16- or 8-beat cycles within the same *tālam*. These contrast with angry, violent scenes set to *tālams* of 6 and 7 beats per cycle. The *Kathakali* drums themselves also contribute, in the play *Pūtana Mokṣa* among others, to depiction of character; thus, a shift from the *iṭaykka*, a light drum especially associated with temple singing, to the *ceṇṭa*, a louder drum heard in a variety of contexts, including propitiations of the wrathful mother goddess, constructs the transformation of *Pūtana* from nurturing mother to wild, murderous demoness. Also, the *ceṇṭa* drummer's use of both the left, "demonic," and the right, "divine" head of his instrument, in several plays, references these heads' distinct ritual contexts, in which the latter accompanies transportation of the replica of a temple's deity out of and around the temple's inner sanctum, and the former often accompanies worship of fearsome gods and goddesses. Thus, instruments whose semiotic connotations are rooted in ritual contexts and metric schemes have the power to define character and depict codified emotion in a tradition often analyzed largely in terms of theatrical and dance performance.

**Brita Renee Heimarck, Boston University**

***Changing Contexts for Indian Music and Ritual: South Asian Music in the American Diaspora***

Following the work of Akhil Gupta (1992, 1997), we know that Asian music is not limited to the geographic region of South, Central, or West Asia, but also transcends these borders to take root in diasporic communities abroad. In the U.S. it is not only the Asian diaspora who participate in Indian music, but also an assortment of American and international students and citizens who are drawn to participate in these traditions. In this research presentation, I will investigate several different American subcultures of Indian music located in the greater Boston area. I will view these musical subcultures through the lens of South Asian traditions and theorizations of ritual. Drawing on recent scholarship on music and ritual (Weller 2008, Bull 2015; Jiménez, Till and Howell 2013), I will contrast the classical Hindustani tradition with research on devotional communities that utilize Sanskrit hymns, prayers, long-text chants (*swadhyaya*), and short text chants (*namasankirtana*) as a mystical-musical ritual. Critical concerns include issues of appropriation and authenticity in this postmodern context. Possible functions for musical rites include regeneration, transition, and creation of the sacred (van Gennep 1960: viii). I consider the role of *communitas* as described by Turner (1969/97/2008) and its relationship to social structure in a musical-devotional group. For the musical process of prayer I draw on Kligman (2009: 11). Finally, the subjunctive world created through ritual (Seligman and Weller 2008: 7) also applies to these musical subcultures, telling us more about the role of Indian music and ritual culture abroad.

References: Bull, Michael and Jon Mitchell. *Ritual, Performance, and the Senses* (Bloomsbury, 2015). Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. 1992. Beyond Culture: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference, *Cultural Anthropology* Vol. 7, No. 1: 6-23. Gupta, Akhil and James Ferguson. In *Culture, Power, Place: Explorations in Critical Anthropology* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997): 1-29, 33-51, 179-199. Kligman, Mark. *Maqam and Liturgy: Ritual, Music, and Aesthetics of Syrian Jews in Brooklyn* (Detroit: Wayne State U. Press, 2009). Pasalodos, Raquel Jiménez, Rupert Till and Mark Howell, eds. *Music and Ritual: Bridging Material & Living Cultures*, Vol. 1 (Ekho Verlag, 2013). Seligman, Adam and Robert Weller, Michael Puett and Bennett Simon. *Ritual and Its Consequences: An Essay on the Limits of Sincerity* (Oxford University Press, 2008). Turner, Victor. *The Ritual Process: Structure and*

*Anti-Structure* (New Brunswick and London: Aldine Transaction 1969/1997/2008). Van Gennep, Arnold. *Rites of Passage* (The University of Chicago Press, 1960).

**Niko Higgins, Sarah Lawrence College**

***Unsounded Music***

Ethnomusicology has asserted the centrality of music as a social practice by embracing a range of interdisciplinary fields that explore both the materiality and sociality of music. But is music always material and social? Many social settings preclude musical performance, such as walking to work, sharing a crowded train car, attending certain religious rituals, and other public gatherings and activities. For many musicians, these social settings are also musically productive. In this presentation, I describe how musicians speak about forms of listening and music making that involve unsounded music, or music that is felt and heard to the musician, but is inaudible to others. I draw from my own research on the sounds of open water swimming, in which swimmers make, hear, and feel music and sound while swimming, and I extend this notion of unsounded music to professional diasporic Indian musicians who perform fusion and Indian classical music in New York City. How, when, and why do these musicians make unsounded music away from their instruments, and how does this influence their musicianship? How might this change an understanding of what a musical practice is, and the role of ethnomusicology for elucidating the ways music, culture, and the individual interrelate? Through interviews and observation, I examine the sources, catalysts, usefulness, and obstacles involved with these musicians' unsounded musical practices.

**Pei-ling Huang**

***Musical rendering of poetic-metrical resources in faqīr performances of Ganj-e-Latīf***

The shrine of Shāh Abdul Latīf Bhitāi (1689-1752) in Bhit Shāh, Sindh, supports around 100 *faqīrs* who form groups to perform the saint's poetry every day and night. The *faqīrs* maintain that they orally preserve the saint's legacy: a repertoire for musically rendering verses from the *Ganj-e-Latīf* (Latīf's treasure, i.e. compilation). Based on preliminary fieldwork and lessons with my *ustād* Mantār Faqīr, I explore the ways *faqīrs* present the verses in the context of the shrine. In particular, I focus on the relationship between the poetic meter and musical rendering of the poetic forms.

*Bait* and *wāī* are the two poetic forms Shāh composed in, which are arranged by *surs* (chapters). A *Sur* is also a unit of performance, in which *faqīrs* take turns to sing *bait*s individually, then end together with a *wāī*. Both forms are composed in the metrical schemes of *dohā* or *sorathā*, but *bait*s are sung with flexible phrasing, while the *wāī* is set to a fixed musical meter. I will demonstrate how within the different improvised instances of *bait*s, my teacher draws on the resources of *mātrā* length in the poetic meter to shape the melodic phrases. Furthermore, certain built-in musical strategies highlight the caesura between the two *charans* of the *dohā* and *sorathā*, which is otherwise masked in the flexible phrasing of *bait*s or fragmentation of words in the *wāī*. These observations can be situated within the wider discussion of musical performances of poetry in South, West, and Central Asia.

**Kanniks Kannikeswaran, University of Cincinnati**

***Regional Approaches to the Indigenization of Colonial Tunes in 19th and 20th Century British India***

The colonization of India by the East India Company witnessed the indigenization and assimilation of Irish/Scottish jigs and reels and country dances into the domain of incidental Indian music. Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) who had traveled to England in his teens used various combinations of Irish and Scottish tunes in his repertoire with lyrics in Bengali. South Indian composer Muthuswami Dikshitar (1775-1835) who also in his teens had heard western music played by the bands of the East India company wrote Sanskrit lyrics to 39 colonial tunes, resulting in a new genre of music, the 'nottusvara sahityas'. These two instances of the creation of an Indo-Colonial repertoire is a part of a larger history of the appropriation of western musical ideas into the context of Indian art music. Some of the colonial tunes that found their way into the ritual music repertoire of nadasvaram players in the British era temples of Madras while some European inspired tunes also found their way into the repertoire of poet composers Tyagaraja and Swati Tirunal and the English Notes composition of Muthaia Bhagavatar. This paper compares Dikshitar's approach with that of the Bengali Poet Tagore; it also contrasts the 19th century appropriation of western tunes into Karnatic music with the creation of western inspired "notes" in the early 20th century and with the appropriation of western orchestral motifs into the popular Bollywood repertoire of post-colonial India.

**Max Katz, The College of William and Mary**

***Muslim Musicians and Music Reform: Visions of an Islamicate Musical Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century North India***

At the heart of India's music reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the trope of the illiterate ustad. Led by English-educated, high-caste Hindus, the reform movement sought to reclaim a national cultural heritage believed to have been hijacked by Muslim musicians, whose alleged ignorance and obstinacy were condemned as the primary obstacles to music's modernity. This paper thwarts the enduring stereotype of the illiterate ustad through a focus on the Urdu writings of two renowned performing artists of the early twentieth century, brothers Karamatullah Khan (1848-1933) and Asadullah Kaukab Khan (c.1850-1919). Drawing on their unpublished and long out-of-print texts, I argue that Karamatullah and Kaukab Khan recognized the threat posed to their legitimacy by the Hindu-centric reform movement and advanced in their own defense oppositional narratives of Hindustani music history and alternative visions for its future. In particular, the brothers embraced technological and social change, supported the anticolonial struggle for national self-determination, and simultaneously asserted the preeminence of the Muslim contribution to Hindustani music. Steeped in the Indo-Persian textual tradition, Karamatullah and Kaukab Khan extended an Islamicate stream of knowledge with roots in antiquity while engaging contemporary debates over the ownership of music and the place of Muslims at the heart of India's emerging national culture. While the brothers' vision for the future of Hindustani music was ultimately overwhelmed by the forces of Hindu nationalism, their writings illuminate a moment in history pregnant with possibilities for the incipient nation.

**Inderjit N. Kaur, University of California, Berkeley**

***Time vistas: “Awe”-some technologies for ethical orientation in Sikh Sabad Kirtan***

The concept of an awe-inspiring, larger-than-self, divine-entity is widespread in faith traditions around the world. Its productivities include ethical responses relating to a smaller sense of the self that is part of a larger whole. Across faith traditions also, music is enlisted to deepen these experiences. It is this role of music I explore in this paper, in the context of Sikhism. While Sikh sabad kirtan is sung in a variety of genres and styles, including the “classical,” the vast majority of contemporary practice is in the “light” styles particularly that popularized by the most well-known and most listened to Sikh rāgi (musician) of the last many decades, Bhai Harjinder Singh Srinagar Wale. This style uses “modal” melodies, short tāls such as keherwa and dādra, and virtuosic melodic and rhythmic articulations. It was in kirtan occasions in this style that the sensations of awe and related responses among kirtan participants were most palpable during my field participant-observation and ethnography with Sikh listeners in the greater San Francisco Bay Area. In this paper, bringing cognitive studies into productive dialog with socio-cultural anthropology and music studies, I analyze the entwined sensations, in sabad kirtan, of sacred affects, experiences of time, and everyday ethical dispositions. Specifically, focusing on varieties of musical rhythm, I argue how within the Sikh ideational complex, the temporalities of music are elaborated in devotional and ethical directions into what I conceptualize as “time vistas of awe.”

**Lars-Christian Koch, Ethnological Museum/Berlin Phonogram Archive/Cologne University**

***Indian Recordings on Wax Cylinder from the Berlin Phonogram Archive***

The collection of early Indian recordings in Berlin comprises content from the so-called Archive Recordings (17 cylinder) made in Berlin at the beginning of the century in connection with so-called Völkerschau, the Prisoner of War Camp recordings from 1915-1918 mostly made by George Schünemann (32 cylinders) and the Arnold Adriaan Bake recordings (376 recordings) from 1931-1934. The India Archive recordings consists of early recordings from Malabar made in Berlin and recordings from a Parsi who studied in Berlin during the first decade of the 20th century as well as South Indian recordings from Madras. The Prisoner of War Camp recordings consist of mostly Sikh (13 cylinders) material as well as Nepali recordings (19 cylinders). These collections have completely different backgrounds considering the recording situation and more important the underlying research-questions. I argue that central research questions were depending on so-called pristine recordings. It was expected that this recordings did not show any western influence otherwise they was simply rejected. Transcription and correspondence between collector and archive seem to proof this. On this background an intended publication project in the Berlin Phonogram Archive series should be discussed.

**Benjamin Krakauer, Temple University**

***Baul-Fakir music in an Islamic context***

Baul-Fakirs are a group of Bengali musicians and spiritual practitioners known for their rejection of caste, orthodoxy, and religious discrimination. Baul-Fakir spiritual tradition combines elements of Vaishnava Hinduism, Sufism, and tantric practices. Baul-Fakir songs utilize coded language to convey esoteric messages to initiates, and are sung both in public spaces and at ritual gatherings. While Baul-Fakir spiritual tradition is highly esoteric, its core philosophical messages are nevertheless conveyed to lay audiences through public presentations

of the songs. In recent decades these songs have become increasingly popular among urban, educated, and affluent audiences. At the same time, however, the songs have attracted condemnation from the growing number of Muslim fundamentalists. This paper explores the implications of Baul-Fakir song serving as a high-profile signifier of an otherwise well-concealed spiritual tradition. On the one hand, the popularity of Baul-Fakir song introduces new audiences to Baul-Fakir spiritual ideas, and potentially helps Baul-Fakirs to earn new disciples, allies, and supporters. On the other hand, the increased association of Baul-Fakir spirituality with music-making can be dangerous and damaging to the reputations of Baul-Fakir practitioners in conservative Muslim areas. In this paper, I shed light on a wide range of attitudes towards music-making among Muslims in Bangladesh, from the intolerance of fundamentalists, to the ambivalence of some Baul-Fakir and Sufi practitioners, to the wholehearted acceptance of villagers and urbanites of varying degrees of religiosity. In doing so, I illustrate the controversial and often precarious position of Baul-Fakir music in an Islamic context.

**Peter Kvetko, Salem State University**

***Antakshari in Maine Pyaar Kiya: Intertextual Pleasures and Musical Medleys at the Dawn of a New Era in Hindi Cinema***

This presentation examines the music of *Maine Pyaar Kiya* (1989) with particular attention to its famous “antakshari” song and dance sequence. As a significant example of the life of the Hindi film song beyond its cinematic context, the singing game antakshari (in which teams take turns singing a song based on the final syllable of the previous song, ultimately competing to exhaust each other’s memory of film songs lyrics) owes much of its mass popularity to the 9-minute sequence in *Maine Pyaar Kiya*. My analysis of this scene, situated in a broader analysis of the film itself, explores the ways in which Bollywood film songs from past eras are recycled and re-contextualized within the emergent context of the neoliberal era, evoking issues of nostalgia, historical revisionism, and cultural authenticity.

**Michael Lindsey, University of California, Santa Cruz**

***Escaping the Violence: Afghan Musical Culture in the Fremont Diaspora***

What happens when music and musical culture come face to face with violence? Can violence shape music and musical practice? For Toryalai Hashimi and his family years of militarized conflict within their hometown of Kabul, Afghanistan caused them to leave the city’s musicians’ neighborhood, the kharabat. In 2001, the Hashimis relocated to Fremont, California, a city that is home to the largest Afghan diaspora in the United States. Toryalai is a tabla player from a well-respected lineage of musicians who trace their musical heritage to the court traditions of Mughal India, a historic link that is a source of great cultural pride and musical authority for professional musicians in Afghanistan. The trauma and stress of this ordeal has taken a profound toll on Toryalai. As a result, the musical craft that has been central to his family’s livelihood has become adversely affected. In this paper I look at the effects that violence and trauma have had on the musical tradition of the Hashimi family. I consider the strategies that the Hashimis have adopted to augment and sustain their musical heritage while living in the diaspora. I discuss further the ways that Toryalai and his son, Eman, have become important agents within the Afghan community in Fremont in disseminating Afghan culture. My paper references my ongoing fieldwork with Afghan musicians in the Fremont area, begun in 2013, which includes conducting interviews, music lessons, and attending public and private musical performances.

**Muhammad Usman Malik, National College of Arts, Lahore, Pakistan**  
***Sufi Musical Heritage and the Case for a Post-9/11 Islamic Modernity***

This article explores transformation of a Pakistani Punjabi Sufi musician Sain Zahoor from a non-hereditary shrine singer to a popular artist. It argues that this has happened due to some certain post-9/11 US policy initiatives to modernize the Islamic world to address the issue of Muslim rage against US. The US policy circles identify Sufism as the modernist stream of Islam, exhibiting a freedom of conscience, a non-existent trait of Islamic societies, but a fundamental aspect of western modernity. They formulated the idea of reviving Sufi heritage in the Islamic world. The third sector organizations, NGOs, helped to revive Sufi musical heritage and spread it across the globe, including Pakistan, acting as an alternative media. This paper demonstrates that the new dimensions of cultural imperialism involve the public sector and the third sector.

**Peter McMurray, Harvard University**  
***Constructing the Saz: The “Stringed Qur’an” and Turkish Modernity***

The prohibition of Sufism and closure of Sufi orders in Turkey in 1925 dealt a significant blow to practices of religious music in the Turkish Republic. While some orders shuttered for good, others, like the Halveti-Cerrahi order, maintained a precarious existence throughout the 20th century, in part by emphasizing their activities as an association devoted to research on and preservation of Sufi music (*tasavvuf musikisi*). Safer Dal, the *shaykh* of the Cerrahi order, played an integral role in those musical activities in a number of capacities, both as a composer and as the order’s head *zakir*, or *zikr*-musician. But his most lasting musical impact on Turkish religious music may well stem from a decades-long project dating back to the 1950s to record and document *ilahi* hymns throughout Anatolia. Over the course of many years, the Cerrahi order, acting as the Sufi music association, amassed an unprecedented archive of audio recordings, which in the 1980s and 90s were then transcribed by Cüneyt Kosal and other musicians affiliated with the order and, to a limited degree, published and even recorded commercially. In this paper, I consider Safer Dal’s musical activities, as well as his writings and discourses on sacred music, within the broader political context of 20th century-Turkey. While other shaykhs of the order (especially Muzaffer Ozak) have been credited with helping the order grow, especially internationally, I argue that Safer Efendi’s musical and musicological efforts were absolutely essential to the order’s survival within Turkey itself.

**Anna Morcom, Royal Holloway, University of London**  
***Performance, songs and (melo)drama in Hindi films***

Building on previous scholarship that explores the presence of song sequences in commercial Hindi films as purposeful and meaningful, I focus on the performed and performative nature of film song sequences. What makes the musical format distinctive is not the present of songs or music, which can exist in the background, but rather that they are performed to some degree diegetically in the narrative. Given the social constitutive nature of performance, repetition and stylisation, as illustrated most powerfully by Judith Butler, the acting out of songs in films cannot be seen as neutral or benign, or just dismissed as an interruption to the main narrative. I explore the links of performance, excess, melo/drama and narrative agency in Hindi films, looking at ways in which the declamatory and highly patterned and codified song sequences reference stable structures and forms of authority and constitute forms of address that are public in character. I then look at the retreat into the background and/or the heavy curtailment

of performed songs in Hindi films since around 2010. I analyse this as evidence of the emergence of a stable and hegemonic bourgeois public in India, where love is less inevitably involved with social conflict, and thus rarely the dramatic engine or catalyst of a film. In such a context, full blown, viscerally enacted, hyperbolic love songs, may only be enjoyed as kitsch, a form of albeit decorative but empty excess, rather than the meaningful excess of melodrama.

**Sarah Morelli, University of Denver**

***Sonic Storytelling: Percussive Footwork and Nritya in North Indian Kathak***

In North Indian *kathak*, as in other major classical dances of India, performances are subdivided into non-representational, pure dances (*nritya*), and pieces involving characters and/or storytelling (*nritya*). Most *kathak* performers and scholars conceive of these two categories of dance in similarly discrete ways, focusing on the rhythmically sophisticated footwork and other abstract body movement of *nritya*, and concentrating on facial expression, bodily comportment, and dancers' internal experience when discussing *nritya*. Such a sharp distinction ignores the role that sonic and kinesthetic aspects of *kathak* footwork play in mimetic (*nritya*) performances. When *kathak* dancers depict a specific character—male or female, demon/ess, god/dess, or human—they utilize footwork and other percussive means in context specific ways to heighten to the character's plausibility and affective potency. Drawing on over fifteen years of *kathak* study, ethnographic fieldwork, and interviews with other *kathak* dancers, this paper will analyze select *nritya* performances, focusing on the role of percussive patterns created by the dancer in generating rich, multi-sensory performance.

**George Mürer, The Graduate Center, CUNY**

***Baloch Dammāl in South Asian Relief (as articulated in Muscat)***

Despite possessing a distinctive local culture, aesthetics, and identity, Baloch in Makran and the Eastern Arabian Peninsula participate vigorously in a fluid interregional sphere of musical and ritual techniques in which an array of African, Arab, Iranian, and South Asian vernaculars and methods are triangulated. The resulting complex of idioms—pointing to a rich landscape of intersecting human and spirit geographies—includes Bantu and Habshi ceremonies (*zār*, *mīkwara*, *leywah*); Qaderi-Rifai *zēkr/dhīkr*; and the South Asian—specifically Qalandari—*dammāl/dhamāl*.

Drawing on extant scholarship on *dammāl/dhamāl* as practiced in Sindhi, Punjabi, Sidi-Gujarati, and Baloch ritual context, I explore its manifestations as a repertoire among Makrani Baloch and Omanis of Makrani Baloch heritage in Muscat, and their role in extending the concept of *dammāl* from shrine-oriented practice in Sindh and Punjab to a) a Makrani Baloch idiom; b) a framework for African (broadly Bantu and Habshi) practices in South Asia; c) a current within contemporary South Asian popular music that finds its way into the musical repertoire of Baloch in Muscat; and d) a ceremonial genre strategically juxtaposed with African and Qaderi ritual sequences as an available means for seeking interface with spirit forces.

Theorizing the scope of *dammāl* as an expansive domain of performance and performativity in Muscat, I offer analyses of rhythmic and accentual cycles, poetic texts and utterance (verbalized and implied), repertoires and groupings of iconic themes and motifs, approaches to choreography and spectacle, and the way *dammāl* is talked about, explained, and specified with respect to its diverse articulations.

**Joseph Palackal, Christian Musicological Society of India**

***Reviving the Sound, Sentiments, and Melodies of the Aramaic chants in India (Film, 45 min.)***

Pre-screening lecture, film presentation, and discussion.

The generation that lived through the transition of liturgy from Syriac (Aramaic) to the vernacular in the 1960s in the Syro Malabar Church in India, continues to own an extensive memory base of sounds, melodies, and meanings of the Syriac chants; these were once significant markers of identity of the St. Thomas Christians, also known as Syriac Christians. While many of the chant texts are available in books and manuscripts, the melodies and their specific sonorities, which were mostly transmitted orally, are gradually fading from the memories of the transitional generation. This generation is the last link to a unique legacy of the linguistic and musical traditions that came about through cultural interaction between India and West Asia, starting from the early Christian era. The interactions between the St. Thomas Christians and the Portuguese missionaries in the sixteenth century led to the creation of a vast repertoire of Syriac translation of Latin chants. The film presents excerpts from the recent attempts to revive the memories and melodies and transfer them to the younger generation of the Syro Malabar Catholics in India, and the USA. The current political upheavals in the Middle East, which is the primary source of the Syriac heritage, are adversely affecting the preservation of these cultural treasures of humanity. Hence the relevance of the Aramaic Project in India. The film will also draw attention to the endangered linguistic and musical treasures that deserve immediate scholarly attention.

**Eshantha Joseph Peiris, University of British Columbia**

***Theorists, Theories, and Ideologies: Contrasting Analytic Approaches to Sri Lankan Up-country Music by Four Postcolonial Sri Lankan Scholars***

Theories of music can not only reveal the governing principles of musical genres, but also tell us a lot about the motivations of the people who use them. Music theory has often been employed to legitimize national traditions, preserve repertoires, prescribe normative practices, promote cultural values, and much else. These aims have in turn influenced the theories themselves, which often mirror theorists' ideologies. Following the gentrification of the up-country dance tradition in postcolonial Sri Lanka, many Sri Lankan scholars have theorized the associated musical tradition in ways that reflect a variety of ideological biases. In this paper, I survey the work of four scholars from the latter half of the 20th century, and present their theories in reference to the up-country pieces *Gahaka Vannama* and *Mangalam*, demonstrating the application of these theories as well as critiquing the rationales behind them. I conclude by arguing for the continued relevance of a historically self-aware analytic approach to understanding Sri Lankan up-country music, and by offering my own framework for analyzing these two pieces.

**Mathieu Poitras, University of Ottawa**

***The Strings of Identity: Dambura, Hazaras and Transnational Ethnic Awareness***

This paper will discuss the articulation between dambura and contemporary Hazara identity, in the wake of a renewed and ongoing ethnic awakening among Hazaras. The dambura is a traditional musical instrument of the two-stringed lute family found mainly in Northern and Central Afghanistan. The Hazaras, an ethnic and religious minority in Afghanistan, have historically been the target of various forms of discrimination and persecution since the advent of the modern Afghan State. Today they form a transnational community with multiple diasporas,



mainly in Iran and Pakistan, but also in Australia, Europe and North America. As dambura was traditionally a medium for the expression of joys and woes, and as it later became a tool for political mobilization in the wake of the last 30 years in Afghanistan, it seems to have contributed to the consolidation of a Hazara ethno-national awareness, thus making it the mark of Hazara musical identity. As Hazaras face inequality in Iran, violent persecution in Pakistan and as they become yet again victims of resurgent sectarian killings in Afghanistan, Hazara ethnic awareness is reinforced. Stemming from my research among Hazaras both in Afghanistan and Canada, this paper will present how, through practices, discourses, and the poetical content of the instrument's repertoire, dambura became a symbol of Hazara identity and a medium for the Hazara reinterpretation of their own culture.

**Jennifer Post, University of Arizona**

***Ecology, Economy and Musical Instrument Making in Late and Post-Soviet Inner Asia***

This paper links biological and other geophysical knowledge with social and cultural production. The focus is on the impact of a changing biological landscape on materials for musical instruments used by artisans in specific Inner Asian communities, and references related South and West Asian practices. Musical instrument makers play a significant role in the chain of musical production and many hold a key link to biological and cultural systems through their knowledge and use of local resources. They engage in daily practices that help them maintain up-to-date knowledge about the biological sustainability of a tract of forestland (and the availability of valued woods) or the health of grasslands (and the quality of livestock skin and hair). I consider specific classes of resources: wood, reed, skin, hair, bone, and shell, and their acoustic and aesthetic value for local instruments in specific communities and regions, and ecological, economic and social changes in late and post-Soviet Asia that have affected makers' production practices. My research is supported by my own fieldwork in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, China and Mongolia along with research by other ethnographers who have documented musical instrument production and use in this region during the last fifty years (especially Slobin, During, Baily, and Sakata). Providing a link to knowledge about vulnerable local biological systems while also engaged in supportive social systems, Inner Asian artisans adapt their resource collection and instrument construction to maintain economic viability and continue their contribution to the chain of musical production.

**Rumya Putchu, Texas A&M University**

***In Search of the Mythical Courtesan: Modernity, Beauty, and Affective Labor in South India***

I describe the movement of performers from local patronage systems into cities such as Madras to work in these new industries and in doing so uncover the social and cultural forces that ultimately obscured these women from history. I focus on early films (1935-1945), which feature women who are understood today as courtesans (hereditary female performers) and the paradoxically iconic yet transgressive roles these women established through their affective labor. Over the course of the presentation and the decade of media history it covers, I examine the emergence of now standard patriarchal and nationalist narratives surrounding dance and music within a nascent Indian modernity. I argue that despite their anonymity in historical accounts, the women who performed in early twentieth-century cinema forged a crucial link between beauty as labor and modernity, and ultimately to the now ubiquitous and globalized significance of an Indian female dancing body.

**Evan Rapport, The New School**

***South, Central, and West Asian Connections, Viewed through a Jewish Lens***

The experiences of Jewish populations in South, Central, and West Asia provide an excellent lens through which to view the exchanges and connections of this broad region. The Jewish community of Mumbai, for example, consisted of migrants from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, and Bukhara. This paper emphasizes the Persian-speaking Jews of the region, who for centuries travelled between cities including Tehran, Mashhad, Bukhara, Samarqand, Herat, and Kabul. After discussing the vast networks and shared heritage of these Jews, I focus on the case of Bukharian (Central Asian) Jewish musicians, through historical and contemporary examples from Central Asia, New York, and Israel. Beyond a shared Persianate heritage, Bukharian musicians have long been interested in expressly South Asian resources, from poems written in the *sabki hindi* style to the sitar and Bollywood songs and dances. Bukharian Jews in New York and Israel are also increasingly drawing on the Arab and Turkish styles that have become dominant among all non-Ashkenazic Jews. Bukharian Jewish repertoires often embody South, Central, and West Asian connections simultaneously, as in Muhabbat Shamayeva's feature, "O Khonum," an Indian-style composition from an Iranian film (*Dozd-e Shahr*, 1964) performed widely in Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. The Jews of South, Central, and West Asia, with their connections that have long extended across national and political distinctions, offer important and perhaps unusual ways to consider the breadth and extensive impact of the music and poetry of the region.

**Natalie Sarrazin, The College at Brockport, SUNY**

***Magic, Destruction, and Redemption in the Soundtracks of Aashiqui 2, RockStar, Rock On!!***

In Hindi cinema, music is often used as a transformative medium accompanying moments when the protagonists achieve illumination and enlightenment, particularly during traumatic events or turning points in their lives. For decades, these moments were complemented by *filmi* music, a style of music composed for and ubiquitous in the Indian film industry. In films such as *Aashiqui 2* (2013), *RockStar* (2011) and *Rock On!!* (2008), however, it is rock music rather than more pop-sounding *filmi* music that provides the conduit for the conversion – music that is powerfully and thoughtfully infused throughout the narrative and characterizations. In this chapter, I discuss the use of rock in both background and foreground music as a distinctive force in terms of the narrative and character development. I'll examine rock's unique application in the films *Aashiqui 2*, *RockStar*, and *RockOn!!*, and analyze examples that show rock as an almost magical film element that expresses the characters' emotional and existential struggles with relationships, addiction, life goals, identity and personal redemption.

**Marianne-Sarah Saulnier, University of Montreal**

***Women And Power In North India: A perspective on social performativity***

This paper presents the concept of artistic expression as a means of contestation and transformation of gender roles. I discuss the dance of the Gypsy women in North India, in particular the cobra dance of Rajasthan. As the profession of cobra-charmer is now illegal in India, the female dancer's body has transformed to personify the snake. In the North of India, access to the public sphere has been the prerogative of men for a long time, thus limiting the emergence of women in the artistic fields and confining them to one-dimensional roles often associated with sexuality. Using ethnomusicological analysis based on recent fieldwork in India (2011-2013), this presentation sheds light on the transgression of social taboos through this

dance and points to the constantly mutating process of identity construction among Kalbeliya women. Based on systematic dance analysis and various interviews, this perspective allows us to understand how the dancer Kalbeliya not only gave birth to a new image of women, but also allowed the emergence of a new role hitherto inexistent among the Gypsies: that of the provider. In this lecture, I will address the following questions: what challenges do women face in the development of their artistic careers? What strategies do they use to carve out a place in the public space? Finally, how may the individual paths of these women act as sources of inspiration for other women and lead to political, social and economic changes in society?

**Brigita Sebald, California State University**  
***Musical Mobilities in the Post-Soviet World***

In many parts of the world a taste for European art music has long been an index of high social status or an aspiration for upward social mobility. The post-Soviet world of the Republic of Georgia provides two remarkable alternatives to this well-known pattern. First, specific genres of Anglo-American popular music, including grunge and classic rock, have the same kind of symbolic status and effect on status mobility as classical music. Second, in an environment where the accumulation of wealth is effectively blocked for most people, “good taste” in a selected number of musical genres is not so much an accouterment of high economic status as it is an alternative method for achieving improved social standing. In Georgia one might try to become a *k'ai t'ip'i* (lit., good sort) by living in the best neighborhoods, wearing modish clothes, vacationing at expensive Western European hotels and, crucially, documenting these experiences on social media so that everyone may admire one's consumption of luxury goods. Alternatively, those who do not have the requisite cash can fake a higher economic status by displaying education and superior taste in music, especially in the musical genres Georgians associate with sophistication and taste and posting on social media carefully curated music collections. My field research suggests that two distinct value systems are currently competing in the long transitional period from socialism to capitalism: the Soviet-era class system, which privileged the well-educated above all others; and the relatively new idea of status based upon material advantage. Within this highly charged environment, those economically disadvantaged by the new system are able to manipulate an older aesthetic system to their advantage. This particular Georgian case illustrates the way musical aesthetics, by exploiting cracks in the social system, can transcend its roots in idealism and have material economic and social benefits.

**Sonia Seeman, University of Texas, Austin**  
***Music in the Intersections between Communal Belonging and the Nation-state***

What happens when musical production as labor is erased in official discourses? One result has been clearly evident in Turkish national musical production. With the formation of a new ethno-national entity of Turkey out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, state officials and musicologists fashioned a new Turkish national identity through the re-categorization of musical repertoires, instruments and performance practices. Ironically, a large portion of this Turkish ethnic-national music was transmitted by Romani musicians who were recent immigrants to the new Turkish state. While providing musical services to local communities who struggled to negotiate group identities within this new national framework, these same musicians were also the anonymous transmitters of works and musical styles that became part of Turkey's sonic national fingerprint. At the same time these items were collected, transcribed and inscribed into the state repertoire for performance by radio musicians, Romani musicians continued to perform

and mark these items as locally and ethnically-specific, as well as indicators of their own individual skills. The study of Romani musical production within emergent national identity delineates on-the-ground struggles over musical ownership and senses of belonging.

**Zoe Sherinian, University of Oklahoma**

***Sakthi Vibrations (Film, 80 min.)***

The Sakthi Folk Cultural Centre, located in Dindigul, Tamil Nadu uses the Tamil folk arts to develop self-esteem and economic skills in young Dalit women dropouts. This documentary film seeks to reveal and analyze Sakthi's model for Dalit women's development that integrates folk arts performance with social analysis, academics, micro-economic sustainability, leadership and community development. The Sakthi Centre reclaims the devalued *parai* frame drum (associated with pollution and untouchability) to re-humanize and empower these young women through the physical embodiment of confidence in performance and renewed cultural identity in a complex campaign against gender, class, and caste subjugation. The film editing experimentally weaves together interviews, performance, and development activities such as tailoring and basket making along with footage shot by the students themselves as they actively define their process of growth and contribute to this participatory documentary. The women narrate the film looking directly into the camera to confront the audience with the reality of their oppressed lives. Paralleling the representation of community in their circle dance formations and syncretic rituals, we tell their collective story of transformation from their first day struggling to walk and clap in time, to their first performance for their parents, and their final public festival and academic graduation. This film engages applied ethnomusicology through participatory filmmaking, filmmaking as fieldwork methodology, and the intersectionality of caste, class and gender. Finally, it demonstrates the agency and strategies of Dalit women as they create social justice for themselves through personal, community, and economic development.

**Eva-Maria Alexandra Van Straaten, Georg August University Göttingen**

***"The sun never sets on the Maihar gharānā": Dynamics of Power and Knowledge in Hindustani Classical Instrumental Music***

Within both ethnomusicology and contemporary musical practices, we find a long history of mapping musics onto geographic regions. Often linked to notions of authenticity, identity, and ethnicity, such assumed innate relations between music and place have been instrumental in the exclusion and inclusion of musical practices, not only from concert stages but also from academic research. Hindustani classical music is a classical example of this leveraging of relations between identity (politically defined), geographical regions and music. As American sarod player Ken Zuckerman has suggested: to be a non-Indian performer of Indian music means to be either ignored or even ridiculed (1996). Exploring musical practices of Hindustani classical instrumental musicians currently moving around the planet for concerts, teaching and learning, I critically ask about the hidden (and hence always already political) assumptions, norms, and naturalized (knowledge) categorizations that might lurk behind a declaration of a music as pertinent for the region (CFP)? I do so via Spivak's notion of planet thought (2003), which takes an undivided natural [musical] space rather than a differentiated political [musical] space (Ibid.: 72) as an intellectual starting point. Explicitly not arguing for a new paradigm or alternative system of musical categorization, I propose that planet thought might stimulate a critical questioning of taken-for-granted knowledge categories within (ethno)musicology. Interested in a

sensitizing of the ways in which (academic) relating to music might contribute to dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, I ask to take serious this responsibility.

**Nathan Tabor, Western Michigan University**

***The Prophet David's Second Miracle: Verse Singing in Mughal and Safavid Literary Salons***

The salon in 17th- and 18th-century Mughal India and Safavid Iran was a socio-aesthetic space for the development of public taste and meaningfulness. Interestingly, the salon also marks an important context in which regional musical practices and Persian lyric conventions overlap. Using literary diaries and poets' collected works, this paper examines how salon participants viewed nexuses of musical and poetic knowledge in verse recitation in which particular modes and melodic contours referenced programmatic lyrical motifs. For instance, poetry singers sang in musical modes that alluded to David's psalms and emotions surrounding erotic or spiritual separation. Additionally, David's psalm melodies themselves were often understood as a thematic trope in Persian poetry. Poets' and diarists' documentation of these salon-based conventions on verse singing reveals how professional singers and salon attendees sang in the very psalm melodies referenced in the same lyrics they were singing, recording a unique instance in which poetry and music overdetermine each other. These anecdotes reveal a striking historical context as textual and musical practices constituted an aesthetic continuum in the pan-regional salon culture of the time, illustrating a public expectation of what certain melodies meant for pre-colonial Persian literary culture in South and Central Asia.

**Miriam Tripaldi, University of Chicago**

***Politics, of course: Nationalism, Appropriation, and the Crafting New Identities***

The referendum held in the Crimean city of Sevastopol on 16 March 2014 reignited the dispute between Russia and Ukraine, dating from the ninth century, over control of the Black Sea and thus strategic access to the Balkans, Mediterranean Sea and the Middle East. This paper, as part of a larger project, posits that the Soviet practice of reorganizing its territories, especially in Central Asia from the 1920s to 1950s, is an extension of a strategy that Russians have been using for centuries. By drawing on archival material gathered for a dissertation on the development of Russian opera prior to Mikhail Glinka as well as by using examples ranging from the cultural ferment of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the opening ceremony of the 2014 Sochi Olympics, I show how Stalinist mapping strategies continued long-standing approaches to controlling the communities of other ethnicities, which constituted, and still constitute, the majority populations in Russian territories. Understanding the centrality of Black Sea access to Russian external politics provides a frame for asking why Crimea matters and has always been mattered so much to Russia.

**Hans Utter, Ohio Arts Council**

***Poetics and Performance: The Intersection of Text and Music in Thumri***

The North Indian semi-classical genre of *thumri* gained prominence in Lucknow during the reign of Wajid Ali Shah (1822-87), but has roots in earlier musical forms. The song text of *thumri* is important both thematically and as a palate for improvisation; the tonal and semantic content of the lyrics are equally important. Unlike genres such as *dhrupad* and *khyal*, *thumri*'s song texts are intimate and generally in the first-person. The overall mood of a performance is designated by the song-text, which is then amplified and personalized by the performer. The semantic content of *thumri* expresses the themes of love and longing, often double-coded as both

erotic and spiritual. This textual ambiguity is a by-product of thumri's long association with courtesans, which has been a source of controversy. This paper will examine the relationship between poetry and musical expression in thumri, wherein the textual content becomes a fluid signifier depending on the context created by the vocalist's emotional expression. During thumri improvisations, various techniques of embellishment are employed to change the expressive resonance of the text. These techniques include *bol-bant*, which situates the words in various rhythmic frameworks, and *bol-banav*, which employs differing melodic interpretations of phrases and words to evoke subtle emotional nuances. A range of embellishments, including *zamzama*, *khatka*, *murki*, and *meend* are essential in bringing forth the multiplex layers of meaning implicit or explicit within the song text. The interaction of text and musical expressions are the ground of thumri's expressive potentiality.

**Vivek Virani, UCLA**

***A Voice without Singer: Sant Bhajan Musical Structure and Adaptability in Malwa, North India***

*Sant bhajans*, or devotional songs associated with vernacular poet-saints, are an inextricable part of India's religious landscape. Since the middle ages, performance of sant bhajans has been an important form of spiritual teaching, dissemination of ideology, social identity formation, and entertainment. Over the centuries, sant bhajan traditions have emerged in diverse regional languages and styles throughout North India. These traditions rarely rely on codified or authenticated bodies of poetic text. They are continually updated and revised; new songs are incorporated into the repertoire, or existing songs are altered or reinterpreted in response to contemporary social concerns. In many such traditions, musical structures that have emerged organically facilitate accessibility and mutability within the poetic repertoire. This paper explores the sant bhajan tradition of the Malwa region of Central North India, which has primarily been maintained by lower-caste non-professional singers. I will describe key musical structures and distinguishing features of Malwa bhajans, emphasizing how these structures enable singers to easily learn, memorize, alter, and present devotional poetry. This project is part of an effort to facilitate increased dialogue between scholars of South Asia's regional devotional music traditions, to more closely examine shared and unique musical features of these traditions and investigate possible connections between these musical structures and differing social structures and contexts.