



P R E F A C E

An Open Letter to Our Readers

Why another world music textbook? First, the short answer: In spite of modern air travel and the Internet, and even in the face of the latest phase of globalization, our planet's music remains overwhelmingly diverse. Acknowledging a growing library of materials pertaining to the musics of the world's peoples, and the availability of several fine world music textbooks, there is always room for one more book, as no single study can capture the planet's musical essence.

The long answer is more complex.

For Whom Has This Book Been Written?

Despite increasing budgetary restrictions on college campuses, there has been a steady growth in the number of “world music survey” classes taught across North America. Several factors are driving this process. One is the rise of “diversity” as an educational priority. Another is the striking demographic shift occurring in the United States through the growth of immigration from non-European countries. Yet another is the growing realization that our population has always been diverse, and that the curriculum has hitherto failed to take this into account. In spite of the fact that music is not a “universal language”—indeed, each musical system must be studied according to its own merits and principles—it is an excellent means by which students can enter into and experience other cultures. Although many “cultural diversity” courses are expected to include politically loaded discussions of current problems, it is possible to study music without having to take sides. From a relatively neutral space, one can observe how music acts both to reinforce hegemonic power and to challenge or subvert it.

While many of our colleagues in the field of ethnomusicology believe that ethnomusicologists should teach world music survey courses, the reality is that most institutions either cannot or will not spare the money for a new position dedicated to ethnomusicology. As a result, music departments across the land in all sorts of institutions—great and small—

attempt to offer such courses using existing faculty. While few of these teachers have any training in ethnomusicology, many in fact do throw themselves into their teaching with enthusiasm. Unfortunately, their institutional libraries rarely have adequate collections of books, journals, or media materials to support such courses. We have had conversations with colleagues working in small liberal arts colleges, community colleges, and even small state institutions who have expressed a strong desire for a comprehensive world music survey textbook that includes enough resources to make the course effective even when their libraries lack materials. We have attempted to design this book to meet these goals.

Scope

Anyone who attempts a book such as this must first answer the question: Breadth or depth? You cannot have both, unless you want a tome that could hold down your loose papers through a hurricane. We have chosen breadth. While we recognize the impossibility of doing justice to all the world's notable and interesting musics, we also feel that doing what you can is better than doing nothing. The second major question is: Geographical or topical organization? As ethnomusicologists we are tempted to organize our studies topically, in order to explore such issues as identity, gender, representation, meaning, and so on, but we have found that this approach leaves most students in a state of geographical disorientation. While such a plan would make it easier to discuss many of the issues at stake in "cultural diversity" courses, it makes it nearly impossible to communicate a coherent view of the music of a given area. Thus, we have chosen a geographical organization. This we have framed as an imaginary "global journey" of the Earth.

A third question is: Should the concentration be on music as sound or music as culture? Our field has long had a fascination with the anthropological aspects of the musics studied—what we used to call "the context"—but some of our critics have noted a growing reluctance to discuss musical sound at all, complaining that we do "everything but the music." Others have scoffed at ethnomusicology as eth-NO-MUSIC-ology. We have chosen to emphasize music as sound because we suspect that many of the professors who will use this book are situated in music departments and are naturally inclined to focus on music in this way. We believe that what attracts people to world music first is its sound; only later do they become interested in its cultural aspects. In keeping with that idea, we have naturally included the cultural context as well. Teachers using this book can choose which to emphasize.

In constructing such a book, one must choose between using one author or multiple specialist authors. The latter approach has the distinct advantage of bringing the best thinking to bear on each particular area, but also has the disadvantage of inconsistent style and approach. We have chosen a two-author plan. The limitation of this approach is that neither of us has real expertise in a number of the areas covered in this

book. Both of us, however, have had extensive experience teaching world music surveys, have acquired broad knowledge through study and travel, and have availed ourselves of recent research available in both print and audio-video form. For the purposes of a world survey, it is not necessary to know everything about a given area, however desirable that might be.

While ethnomusicology began as the study of “traditional” music and, at least in its early days, viewed popular culture and the beginnings of globalization as threats, it has changed its focus considerably. Today scholars are as likely to study the many stages of musical hybridization as well as urban popular music as they are traditional types of music. We have chosen not to focus on these for several reasons. First and foremost is that the book is written around seventy tracks of music, a tiny number considering the diversity of the world's musics but generous in comparison to many textbooks. With these we only provide minimal coverage for each continent. We know our colleagues, with full justification, will argue that we should have included certain others. We cop the plea that to add a track, we would have also had to delete a track. Second, to include any track, we have to gain permission, usually paying fees to the recording owner. Licensing any kind of commercially viable music (i.e., popular and many hybrid musics) is expensive. Indeed, the complications of copyright and licensing fees on these kinds of music has been a major stumbling block for scholars concentrating in these areas. Therefore, we are forced to work within the bounds of fiscal and practical realities and cannot realize the ideal of representing everything that's out there. We wanted a book that would be affordable for today's working student.

Organization

Our book has been written using travel as its central metaphor. After three introductory chapters in which we discuss the elements of music from a worldwide perspective, we present ten chapters on specific areas, be they continent (e.g., Europe) or subcontinent (e.g., South Asia). As with any major trip, some preparation is necessary before a specific area can be considered in depth. The section called “Background Preparation” seeks to provide the big picture, and should be approached as if you were pouring over books and maps at the kitchen table. We need first to get a handle on the general lay of the land, discuss some of an area's history, and raise certain issues related to music-making in the region. Then we run through some of the “must-see sites”—that is, some of the most significant types of music the area has to offer. As with any trip, one must be selective. After circling around in order to get an overview of the place, we then land in a particular country or area. Here we review the background information pertinent to this particular place, and give the reader some feel for the area's history and culture.

After this, we begin visiting our individual “sites.” These are the music examples and CD tracks we have chosen to represent the area—though you should always bear in mind that we have had to leave out many others of equal significance. As with travel, so with music: we simply cannot visit everything. Hopefully you will come back to some areas later and experience more on your own. Each site is explored in three steps. In the section called “First Impressions” we approach the site as if without prior knowledge, attempting to convey the impressions and associations the music might inspire in a first-time listener from the West. In the next section, “Aural Analysis,” we focus on the site in terms of musical sound, discussing whatever is most relevant. This could include the medium (instruments and/or voices) and any of the prominent musical elements that define an example. Because we recognize that many readers of this book are not going to be students majoring in music, we avoid becoming overly technical. A full musical analysis of each site would increase this book’s size to that of an unabridged dictionary. We also avoid using musical notation, because we feel the added space and expense it would require is not justified for a study at the beginning level. Instructors may wish to bring in some examples, based on their own focus, as a supplement to the materials provided here. In a final section, we offer “Cultural Considerations” in which relevant cultural matters are raised. Here you can find the “contexts” and “issues” that have differentiated ethnomusicology from most other music disciplines.

How to Expand Course Coverage

“Teaching a textbook” is a widely and often effectively used method, but also one that raises thorny issues. The problem with any world survey is that the authors must of necessity choose a certain set of examples and ideas based on their own experience—but course instructors may have had a different set of experiences. We suggest therefore that teachers consider the following ideas when using this book:

1. Be selective. If you find that seventy-odd music examples are too many for your class, then select those that suit your needs. We have attempted to provide reasonably good surveys of each area—considering the limitations of space—but for some this will be too much and for others too little.
2. Use our plan as a model. Just as you can exclude specific sites, you can also add your own. These additions can be accomplished by either professor or student. An excellent assignment would be for the students to write about a music track not selected by us, using the three approaches employed in this book: first impressions, aural analysis, and cultural considerations. Such exercises could become class presentations as well.
3. Go further on your own. Just as easily as further sites can be researched and written about, existing ones can be developed by

students into class presentations that include audio examples, video/DVD clips, and even performances on substitute instruments or on the real ones. Students and teachers can find living representatives of a culture—or even musicians from the tradition under study who can come to class and present the music live.

4. Music teachers who wish to give their students more analysis than we provide can take what is presented here and expand on it through careful classroom listening, transcription, and attempts to apply various analytical tools to specific tracks.

To further your study, we have prepared a website to accompany this book, www.routledge-ny.com/textbooks/worldmusic. On it, you'll find more photos, articles, and listening examples, plus teaching aids. This textbook should be seen as just the beginning of each individual's personal journey. We would be extremely pleased to learn that as a result of this book, our readers pursued further study of sites discussed here. We would be delighted to find that you actually traveled to some of these sites and experienced them for yourselves or that you met someone who represents the tradition living in your end of town.

Our Own Journey (Thus Far)

Neither author, of course, has been everywhere or heard every kind of music the world has to offer. Writing this book has been a humbling experience—only fools think they can cover the world's musics in a single volume. Regardless of our qualms, however, world music courses have become a normal part of the academic environment, and the need for such surveys is not going to go away because of our philosophical reservations. If anything, the demand for them will be growing. We have attempted to play to our strengths while recognizing our limitations. In so doing we hope to have met the expectations of the medical profession's Hippocratic Oath: “first, do no harm.” In the following pages of this preface we engage in a kind of “truth in advertising,” by revealing some of our own personal histories with regard to the musics of the world. Perhaps after having read of our experiences, which we present separately, you will better understand what we have chosen, how we have approached it, and why we wrote what we wrote.

Terry E. Miller

My first experience hearing a non-Western music came during my undergraduate years at the College of Wooster (in Ohio), where I was majoring in organ performance. Ravi Shankar, still India's most famous sitar player, came to the campus as part of the Community Music Series in 1964, several years before he became famous in his own right and as the teacher of George Harrison. After his performance the music majors met with Shankar, but our attempts to understand the concept of raga were mostly unsuccessful. We simply had no conceptual categories with

which to understand modal improvisation. Further, we had never seen a musician perform seated on the floor, or encountered incense at a music event, and we also failed to understand the significance of the tambura lute player and tabla drummer. In those days there were virtually no world music courses anywhere, and recordings other than those on the Folkways label were virtually nonexistent.

My next encounter with an “exotic” music did not come until after I had been drafted into the U.S. Army in 1968 and sent to the Republic of Vietnam in 1969 to help fight the war from a swivel chair in front of a Remington typewriter. As a “chairborne” soldier working at a huge

base about twenty miles from Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City), I could have ignored Vietnam entirely. For some odd reason I decided to find out about Vietnamese music. To do so, however, required trips to Saigon, but having no official business there and no authorization, I had to go illegally on weekends. In Saigon, I attended performances of two kinds of theater, bought instruments and recordings, and visited the Saigon Conservatory of Music, where my language abilities were too limited for effective communication. A one-week leave to Bangkok, Thailand, in January 1970 brought me into contact with Thai music. During a visit to Thailand’s TIMland tourist venue, I purchased a long, bamboo mouth-organ instrument called the *khaen* simply because it resembled a pipe organ. I did not know how significant this instrument would become for me later.

After returning to the United States, I enrolled in a Western historical musicology graduate degree program at Indiana University. Despite the program I was in, however,

I decided to write my doctoral dissertation on the music of northeast Thailand. With a generous grant in hand, I went with my family to northeast Thailand in late 1972, for a fourteen-month stay during which I researched that region’s music. The resulting dissertation completed my Ph.D and luckily I stumbled into a teaching position at Kent State University just as they were starting a graduate program in ethnomusicology. I have been teaching at Kent State since that time.

To make a long story short, I’ve kept up my interest in Thailand during my tenure at Kent, but my interests have also expanded in other directions. With the help of a succession of “native musician” graduate students, I started two ensembles, one to play traditional Thai music, the other to play Chinese music, and I have played in both since 1979 and



Co-author Terry Miller (on right) with fellow soldier while serving in the United States Army in Vietnam (1969)

1987 respectively. In 1998 the Thai Ensemble toured Thailand, performing in six cities and on most television channels. The musics of mainland Southeast Asia—Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma, and Malaysia—remain my core interest, with the greatest emphasis being on Thailand and Laos. Readers of this book may notice a certain inclination to cite examples from this region. I also developed a now long-standing interest in orally transmitted hymnody in the West, which has led to extensive and continuing fieldwork in the United States, Scotland, Jamaica, Trinidad, and St. Vincent, the latter three being part of the English-speaking Caribbean. My third area of interest has been Chinese music, and I have done fieldwork in China itself but much more in the overseas Chinese community of Thailand.

Lastly, I have collected material and experienced live music when possible in each country I've visited. In addition to Vietnam, Thailand, and China, these include the United Kingdom, Ireland, France, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Slovakia, Greece, Israel, Nepal, Japan, Korea, and South Africa. In South Africa my wife and I investigated the music of an America-related church. All of these experiences have contributed to my bank of knowledge. Even so, they have exposed me to only a small percentage of the world's musics. The rest have thus far been experienced, if at all, only vicariously through audio and video recordings. Naturally, knowledge gained through first-hand experience goes deeper than that gained from books and CDs, but even an introductory book like this and carefully listened-to recordings can shed some light on a corner of the world that would otherwise remain totally unfamiliar.

Andrew Shahriari

My first recollection of an interest in “world music” is actually associated with a music that I knew quite well. As an undergraduate, I was fortunate to study abroad and to visit Russia on a two-week tour of Moscow and Leningrad (now St. Petersburg—again) in 1990, during the last days of the Soviet Union. My first revelation was that what I had previously believed about Russians was completely untrue: I had been misled all my life into thinking they were evil, American-hating Communists who would sooner spit on me than shake my hand. To the contrary, I found the people I met in Russia to be the most friendly, helpful people in Europe, with a great respect for Americans. My misconceptions were based on ignorance and on the stereotyping of people I hadn't known.

My second revelation came in a Moscow jazz club, where I realized that music can cross cultural barriers as effectively as speech. While music is not a “universal language,” it nonetheless generally draws more on emotion than intellect. Music has the uncanny power to enable those who speak the same musical language to “connect” on a different level than is possible with the spoken word. Though conversations I had with Russians fluent in English were friendly, they were mostly super-

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ficial exchanges. In contrast, the twenty-minute “jam” my American friends and I played with the jazz club’s Russian house band resulted in genuine laughter, bear hugs, and toasts in our honor for the rest of the night—without our ever even learning the names of our comrades. All of us knew we would never meet again, but for that night we were the best of friends because we spoke through music.

My Russian encounter inspired my interest in ethnomusicology and continues to motivate my core concerns as a scholar, educator, and musician. Cultural ignorance is the source of many stereotypes about other peoples. A primary goal of my own study and certainly of my teaching, as well as of this textbook, is to encourage an awareness of our



Co-author Andrew Shahriari (seated at piano) and friends perform in a jazz club with local university students in Moscow, Russia (1989)

cultural biases. You cannot learn about the world from only the nightly news and cable television. While the United States has “free” media, the stories that get presented are highly selective and strongly biased toward American interests. To think otherwise is naïve. Politics and business influence the content of newspapers, books, television, movies, radio, even the Internet, all of which then shape our attitudes

about others and ourselves. We cannot avoid being culturally biased, but an awareness of this reality is important to keeping an open mind, which encourages understanding of other perspectives and fosters communication rather than conflict.

By studying world music, I learn about people’s passions. I learn what they value, and I learn how they think. Music can reveal the deepest emotions of a people, their philosophies of life, their conceptions of death, their hopes and fears, anger and affections, desires and dreams. Music says what cannot be put into words and often adds to words what cannot be merely spoken. I hope that each person who reads this textbook will approach each site visited with an open mind and appreciate each tradition on its own terms. Remember that appreciation is not necessarily the same thing as enjoyment. Some music is like sugar, sweet to taste and easy to take from the start. Other music is an acquired taste, and may only ever be appreciated at an intellectual level. I myself do not find all music aurally appealing, yet I strive to keep an open mind and accept that all musics (or musical sounds) are worthwhile because they are significant to someone—otherwise they would

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not exist. If you have read this far, I am certain you will do the same.

The writing of a world music survey is a daunting task, so unrealistic that no human (or even two humans) should try it. But that is the “perfect world” syndrome. It is a fact of life that well-meaning professors are teaching such courses all over the United States and elsewhere and they need textbooks. We have read many excellent suggestions for improvement, and more will surely follow publication. Later editions can be improved, but some of the basic philosophical issues simply cannot be solved. World music survey texts have limitations. To the extent that we have succeeded in creating a useful textbook, we are thankful to our own teachers, informants, and experiences.