

MUSIC IN WORLD CULTURES

Understanding Multiculturalism Through the Arts



JAMES P. O'BRIEN

Cover photos (top to bottom) by

James P. O'Brien

David Burckhalter. Courtesy of the University of Arizona Southwest Folklore Center

David Burckhalter

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PREFACE

Today's university student is often subjected to a course of study, particularly in general education courses, that attempts to embrace all the past and present achievements of the Western world, including its art, literature, and music. In the latter, whether termed music appreciation, survey, or history, we usually try to expose the student to the grand sweep of music from Gregorian chant to the most recent innovations, realizing that even then, the course is delimited. Whether such a course is offered for one or more semesters, everything cannot be covered. In music, only perceptual frameworks can be developed for listening to and eventually appreciating much of the music of the European world. Developing an enthusiasm for doing so is perhaps the most important objective in such courses anyway--skills, concepts, and attitudes that will meet fruition much later in each student's life.

Why, then, an inclusion of world music in courses that already have difficulty in covering the achievements of Western culture? At the risk of perpetuating clichés, the answer is twofold: (1) because the world has shrunk and we now live in a global community in which pluralism and diversity are cultural norms, if not political mandates; and (2) because music is music and can be examined by understanding the same structures found in European-based music, melody, harmony, rhythm, timbre, dynamics, and form. There is a wealth of music that goes unsampled if the student is not exposed to it in a general education course and led to realize that although music is probably *not* a universal language, it is, at least, a universal occurrence and response. It consists of similar elements whether it comes from Europe, Asia, or Africa. Much as we begin to know the structure of English better when we study Spanish, Russian, or Arabic, we also begin to understand universalities in music when we listen to an Indonesian mode, Arab maqam, or Indian raga. Perhaps, we will not only learn to speak Spanish, but understand English better as well.

This book is intended for use with either general university students or music majors who have had some exposure to European art music, even if minimally. They should be able to apply the conceptual frameworks learned through the study of Western music to music of other cultures. The text is intended to present avenues which might not be traveled without some formal training in world music. Understanding and appreciating all music, whether European-based or not, should be the end result.

Many writings on music of other cultures explore scales, timbres, and tunings. This occurs here as well. One can appreciate minor tonality, however, in a Mozart symphony without knowing whether the scale is natural, harmonic, or melodic. Similarly, one can appreciate a raga in Indian music without specific awareness of its name and theoretical constraints. Such complexities are better left to the specialist, not the general university student anyway. The development of broad concepts of world music, with some understanding of its utility, structure, and effect, is more of a priority than learning facts. Pursuing the music itself through selections from the discography will

make these theoretical concepts come alive. Thoughtful users should not only understand the structure of each culture's music but recognize it by sound as well. The author sincerely hopes this occurs through use of this text.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first textbook, *Non-Western Music and the Western Listener*, was published in 1977. It was an early experiment in incorporating world music into general education and music appreciation. Although never a best seller, the book filled a need for many music departments in universities throughout the country and even the world. It attracted some favorable attention among professors who had similar commitments to world music in the curriculum. This book also involved me in the College Music Society's Wingspread Conference and Summer Institutes in the early 1980's as well as the International Society for Music Education's annual meetings. It provided a network of professional friends, many of whom continue to use *Non-Western Music and the Western Listener* to this day.

Music in World Cultures: Developing Multiculturalism through the Arts, my tenth book, replaces the earlier book. For seventeen years, I have wanted to do a second edition. By the time I finished the research, expanded the topics, and wrote the new manuscript, I felt it was sufficiently different to warrant being titled a new book. It is less scholarly, more user-friendly, more global, and, hopefully, better written.

In the seventeen years between the two books, many people have encouraged me to write again. Among these have been Tom Wysz, Jonathan Baile, and Paul Zagnoni, regional representatives of Kendall/Hunt. Bruce Kaufman, Senior Managing Editor, was the person who finally contracted and accepted the final manuscript.

I have also been encouraged by my department heads during the past seventeen years to continue the mission of world music. I thus owe thanks to Robert Werner, David Woods, Maurice Skones, and Dorothy Payne for their administrative support and encouragement as well as to my college deans, Robert Hull, Donald Irving, Pat van Metre, and Maurice Sevigny. The University of Arizona provided grant support to assist me with writing the manuscript and purchasing photographs. Special appreciation goes to Provost Jack Cole and Vice President Celestino Fernandez who awarded a teaching improvement grant to support this project as well as to William A. Welsh and Sue Keeth of the Office of International Programs who awarded two grants for travel to libraries to conduct photo research.

The archives and libraries in which I conducted research were helpful in accessing and obtaining necessary data, particularly the rich photo display contained throughout. I would like to thank the entire staff who gave me free access to recordings in The University of Arizona Music Library; Ken Moore, Associate Curator, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Mary Ison, Prints and Photographs Division, The Library of Congress; Jeff Place and Lori Elaine Taylor, Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies, Smithsonian Institution; Lily Keiskies and Laveta Emory of the Freer and Arthur M. Sackler Galleries, Smithsonian Institution; Robert Lifson of the Field

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Finally, my resident spouse, Shirley, and resident miniature pinscher, Peppin, helped me see the importance of "smelling the roses" often throughout the process, not allowing me to become too professorial, didactic, or obsessed by the project.

RECORDINGS FOR *MUSIC IN WORLD CULTURES*

Although there are no specific recordings to accompany this text, a discography follows each chapter. It is the intent that several examples from these lists be included in classroom presentation. In addition, one single compact disc is useful for individual student use:

The Lyrichord World Music Sampler
LYRCD 7414

This disc is available from:

Lyrichord Discs Inc.
141 Perry Street
New York, NY 10014
Phone (212) 929-8234
Fax (212) 929-8245

Selections are:

Music from Bolivia
Rhythms of Life (Zimbabwe)
Ancient Egypt
Calypsos (Costa Rica)
"Far from the Land of Eagles" (Albania/Italy)
"Soh Daiko" (Japanese Taiko Drums)
Music of the Incas (Peru)
Tibetan Ritual Music
Ancient Art Music of China
Australia
Persian Love Songs (Iran)
Japanese Masterpieces for the Shakuhachi
The Kora and the Xylophone (West Africa)
Korean Court Music
Music of Bali—Gamelan Semar Pegulingan
Solo Bansuri (India)
Gypsy Passions: The Flamenco Guitar (Spain)

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CHAPTER ONE

MUSIC OF ALL THE WORLD



Jazz, which is indigenous to American culture, is one type of world music. Miles Davis (1926-1991), jazz trumpeter. Courtesy of CBS Records.

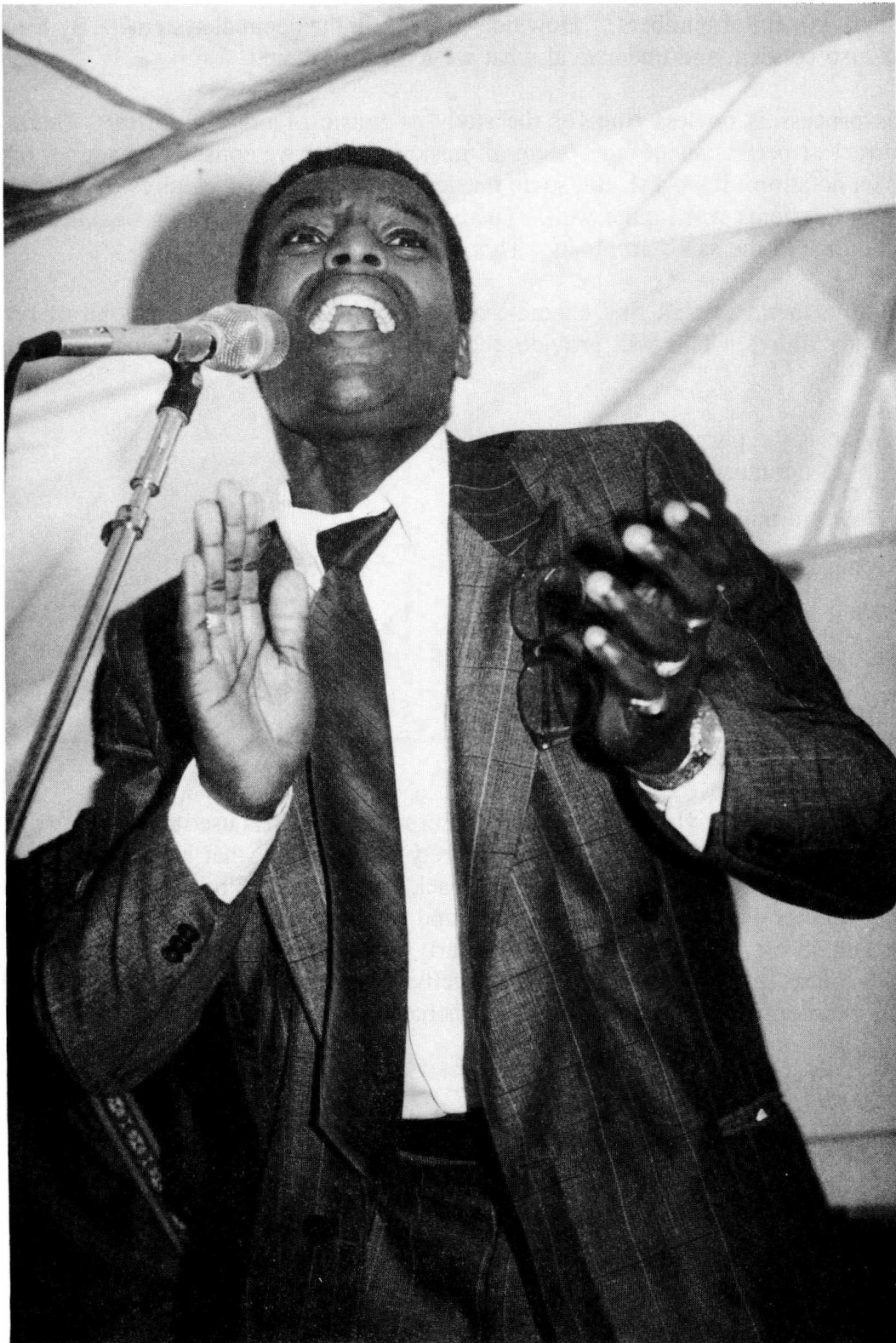
Music of all the world is a large topic. It won't be covered here. This text will examine the music of several major cultures around the world, presenting structures and practices inherent in each. It will also highlight a few related cultures and suggest some readings and recordings that might be useful to gain an understanding of similarities and differences in all music the reader might encounter.



The symphony orchestra has been an important ensemble in European art music since the eighteenth century. Pictured are the woodwind section and violins of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Music Director-Daniel Barenboim. Photo by Jim Steere (1991). Courtesy of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

It is common for us to assume our music *is* the music of the world, that is, the art, folk, and popular music we hear, practice, and perform around us on the radio, cable TV, concert hall, or arena must also be the music heard in Japan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Lesotho. Although this music has spread to all regions of the earth as a type of cultural imperialism, it is not music of all the world. It is simply omnipresent. Long before European music left Lisbon, Paris, London, and Genoa, each region had its own music. Sometimes this music was a highly developed art form, standardized throughout a culture. Other times, it was folk-like, subject to change like much of society. In all cases, it represented certain ways of dealing with the structure and utility of organized sound, commonly defined as music, within a culture or region.

Before we begin to talk about structure and utility of music in China, Egypt, or Azerbaijan, it is well to re-examine the music of our own culture to review what we often take for granted. Any student who has begun the study of a foreign language ultimately asks the question: "How do we do it in English?" We know our native language so well, having mastered its syntax by rote at an early age, that we seldom think about its structure and utility. The way we speak and write often is intuitive. We don't think much about conjugations, declensions, idioms, and subject-verb agreement. We simply communicate. Only when faced with another system do we check out the validity and logic of our own. This also happens when students in a math class are suddenly faced



The gospel motivator is an important musician in African-American culture.
Courtesy of the American Folklife Center, Smithsonian Institution,
Photo No. 88-15071-25.

with the binary system of numbers. "How does it work in the decimal system?" By learning a new system, we also confirm and understand what we took for granted.

This process is no less true for the study of music of other cultures. There is nothing innately correct or perfect about our system of music, whether we consider its sound, organization, logic, or even notation. It works! But so do musical systems of other cultures. And the fascinating thing is that all systems work quite well. There is no inherent strength or weakness in any, only different solutions to the same problems. This is what this text is about.

Fittingly, then, we will first examine our own musical system as a point of reference for studying other cultures. This will provide questions which will be relevant throughout this text, including:

- What is the purpose or general cultural context of the music?
- How are musicians trained?
- What is the melodic structure?
- What is the rhythmic structure?
- What is the formal structure?
- What instruments are used? How?
- What is the role of singing?

In our own culture, whether American or European, music is used in a variety of ways. Let us consider several. Music is sometimes used purely for listening, that is, we turn the radio on or put a compact disk in our machine and then sit back and listen. What do we hear? Perhaps the music simply relaxes us because we enjoy the sound of the instruments, the vocal line, the words, the texture, and so on. Many listeners, particularly of popular music and jazz, simply enjoy the interpretation of a given performer. Such activity creates an ambience within our living environment that confirms us and improves our perceived quality of life.)

Zubin Mehta, conductor,
acknowledges Placido
Domingo, tenor, following
a moving performance.
Courtesy of the New York
Philharmonic.



Organized listening is the sole activity involved in going to a concert. In America and Europe, there are a variety of concerts we can attend. We go to opera, where a drama is played out in front of us with singing, acting, costuming, and staging. This usually occurs in a large theatre designed to stage such a production and includes the accompanying orchestra. Hundreds of people might attend, dressed somewhat formally to bring dignity and propriety to the perceived loftiness of the event. We can also attend a performance of a symphony orchestra, which presents more abstract music that relies less on story and drama, more on musical effect. Those who love opera because of its drama might not be attracted to purely orchestral music. To further enumerate similar experiences, we can attend solo voice or piano recitals, concerts of chamber music, or band concerts. Most all of these performances are regarded as peak musical experiences, requiring set dress, etiquette, and response to the music.



Opera requires listeners to accept certain conventions and customs. A performance of *The Impresario*, one-act opera by Mozart (1756-1791).

Courtesy of Professor Larry Day, Western Ways Photo, and the University of Arizona Opera Workshop.

But concerts can also include jazz performances, whether in recital hall, night club, shopping mall, or street fair. Here, the atmosphere and attire are informal. The musicians might be dressed down and even talk or joke with their audience.) There probably won't be a printed program delineating composer, composition, and opus number, but, rather, the pieces will be announced. People will respond more casually to the music, applauding after a good solo or clapping along with the beat of the music.) At a rock concert, the involvement of the audience will reflect the nature of the music as well as the personality of the artists performing. People won't sit in their chairs, but will move around the auditorium (which is often an outdoor stadium), shouting, singing, waving, dancing, and generally interacting with the music in some hands-on manner. The audience doesn't need to have the pieces announced. They know all of these from cuts on the artists' albums.