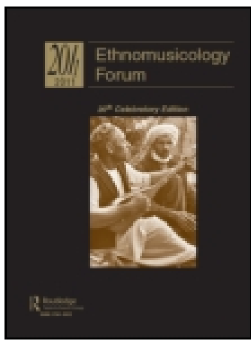

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Introduction to the Special Issue: The Ethnomusicology of Western Art Music

Laudan Nooshin

In her 2001 article on the early music scene in Boston, Kay Kaufman Shelemay offers what she hoped would be 'useful insights into the collapsing musical boundaries in our changing world and the new agendas that might unite musical scholarship through a shared pedagogy and practice of musical ethnography' (2001:1). She goes on to discuss the ways in which historical musicologists have begun to engage with ethnographic method previously seen as the reserve of—and indeed characterising—ethnomusicology. Shelemay notes in particular the work of Gary Tomlinson (for example, 1993), Leo Treitler (1989) and Peter Jeffrey (1992), all of whom have in various ways thematised notions of historical 'Otherness', as well as some of the contributors to the 1995 special issue of the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* on 'Music Anthropologies and Music Histories'. As I discuss below, Shelemay's observation (citing her earlier 1996 article) that 'On the ground, wherever scholars actually practice a musical ethnography, it is becoming increasingly difficult to discern where boundaries conceptualized and named geographically can in fact be drawn' (2001:4) has especial salience for the articles presented in this themed issue of *Ethnomusicology Forum*; this is symptomatic both of the trend towards ethnography within musicology (that is, the musicology of western art music, or 'historical musicology' in the United States; henceforth simply 'musicology'), and more broadly of changes within the discipline since the late 1980s which have led to a growing interest in and engagement with ethnomusicological thought and method.

More or less concomitant with these changes within musicology, ethnomusicologists became increasingly interested in the study of urban traditions, particularly as part of what has been termed 'ethnomusicology at home'. In turn, this engagement with the familiar led to greater attention to what Bruno Nettl—in his study of an exemplar music school in the American mid-west—described as 'the last bastion of unstudied musical culture' (1995:2): western classical music; unstudied, that is, from

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an ethnomusicological perspective. For Nettl, this represented the culmination of many years of writing about 'other' musics, as he describes reaching a point where 'eventually, also having practiced the outsider's view, to look also at the familiar as if it were not, at one's own culture as if one were a foreigner to it' (1995:1). Martin Stokes also sees this trend as an indication of 'Ethnomusicology's coming of age . . . demonstrated in its ability to interrogate the familiar and the similar, not just the exotic and different' (2008:209). Shelemay goes further, arguing that such a move is an important step towards 'de-colonising' ethnomusicology and helping the field to 'emerge from behind a veil of cross-cultural difference' (2001:25).

Two points emerge from these observations, one concerning the apparent convergence of different areas of music study; and the second, following on from this, the question of (sub)disciplinary identities and their continued usefulness or otherwise. These questions have been explored fairly extensively in recent years, most notably in Henry Stobart's (2008) edited volume *The New (Ethno)musicologies*, but also in writings by Shelemay (1996), Jonathan Stock (1997a), Tomlinson (2003, on the relationship between ethnography and historiography), and more recently Georgina Born (2010). In particular, the trends above have prompted anxieties about disciplinary boundaries: if ethnomusicology is no longer characterised (at least in large part) by its engagement with 'other' musics, and if musicologists are starting to draw on ethnography as a central research methodology, what are the implications for the relationship between these two areas of music studies? Before considering this question further, however, it should first be noted that—Nettl's comments notwithstanding—there have in fact been a number of ethnomusicological studies of western art music over the past several decades, admittedly not all strongly ethnographic. Nettl himself, in a landmark article published in 1963, sought to apply the techniques of ethnomusicology to 'western' music by conducting a questionnaire survey of college students examining their classifications of music, and asking what these might reveal about aspects of culture beyond music. More than two decades later, Nettl adopted a similar approach in seeking to understand 'the relationship of the musical system to the rest of culture' (1989:8) through examining how music is studied and what is valued within western music education. In his earlier 1963 piece (a response to an article by Merriam on the purposes of ethnomusicology), Nettl proposes that ethnomusicology's uniqueness, and what it might usefully offer to other areas of music study, lies not in any distinct purpose (as suggested by Merriam) but in its techniques and approaches. Almost 50 years on, this idea is thoroughly borne out by the articles presented in this volume.

A number of other scholars have similarly sought to apply the techniques and approaches of ethnomusicology to the study and understanding of western art music. Some of this work has focused on institutions such as music schools (Cameron 1982; Kingsbury 1988; Nettl 1995), research centres (Born 1995) and orchestras (Herndon 1988; Small 1987), whilst others examine particular locales or communities (see Bohlman 1991; Brennan 1999; Finnegan 1989; see also Wachsmann 1981). Since the early 2000s, a growing body of literature has emerged, including several monographs

and doctoral dissertations (see, for example, Beckles Willson 2009a, 2009b; Cottrell 2004; El-Ghadban 2009; Etherington 2007—and several other chapters in Kartomi, Dreyfus and Pear 2007; Everett and Lau 2004; Melvin and Cai 2004; Pitts 2005; Pitts and Spencer 2008; Sailer 2004; Shelemay 2001; Usner 2010; Wint 2012; Yoshihari 2007), and this work is by no means the sole preserve of ethnomusicologists, but includes writings by music educators, performers, musicologists, anthropologists and others, arguably attracting a more diverse range of scholars than many other areas of ethnomusicological study. The current issue seeks to contribute to this field of research and is, to my knowledge, the first collection of essays on the topic. The aim of this brief introduction is not to present an exhaustive survey of extant literature on the ethnomusicology of western art music (for a useful overview of such work to the early 2000s, see Cottrell 2004:2–8), but to explore some of the themes and issues which emerge from this area of study.

Several of the chapters in Stobart's volume invoke a somewhat binary characterisation of music studies that focuses on the relationship between musicology on the one hand and ethnomusicology on the other. Clearly, this only captures a particular slice of music studies broadly conceived: where in this binary would one position music psychology, popular music studies, performance studies, music education or music informatics, for instance?[1] Moreover, the correlates with cognate disciplines outside music—media studies, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, linguistics, and so on—can often be as strong as those between different areas of music studies. These comments notwithstanding, and however one conceives the field of music studies and its internal and external relationships, if one retains the musicology/ethnomusicology binary for the moment, there is much to suggest that we are indeed working in an era of methodological, if not disciplinary, *convergence*. Several scholars use the term. Stokes, for instance, notes the recent 'convergence of people working in different disciplines and intellectual traditions on new musical subjects and objects' (2008:207) and Nicholas Cook, in a chapter in the same volume, observes that:

> . . . a major convergence of interests between musicology and ethnomusicology has taken place, and [that] as a result there is as yet untapped potential for the sharing or cross-fertilization of methods for pursuing them. (2008:51)

As evidence for such convergence, Cook cites both the 2000 joint conference of the American Musicological Society, the Society for Ethnomusicology and other North American scholarly music societies, at which it was often difficult to tell which society was sponsoring a particular session; and his experience of reading two doctoral dissertations by authors in distinct fields of music research but whose theoretical approaches and methodologies overlapped significantly. As will be discussed below, the articles in this volume tell a similar story. Tracing some of the more significant changes within musicology, Cook notes the 'shift[ed,] in the closing decades of the twentieth century, towards the understanding of music in its multiple cultural contexts, embracing production, performance, reception, and all other activities by virtue of which music is constructed as a significant cultural practice' (2008:49);

greater scholarly reflexivity; increased attention to performance (away from the notated score); and particularly a move towards understanding 'music as an agent of meaning rather than just a reflection of it', such that 'music's meanings ... [are understood] as something constantly renewed and regenerated through social usage' (2008:56–57). Cook describes this as the 'ethnomusicologization of musicology' (2008:65), although of course not all of these changes necessarily came via ethnomusicology. The extent to which musicology has changed over the last 15 years is made clear by the fact that Stock's (1997a) characterisation of the differences between musicology and ethnomusicology now seems surprisingly (and pleasingly) dated if one looks at current work in the field. There is no doubt that both musicology *and* ethnomusicology have changed, and there has certainly been convergence: but its degree is debateable. The idea expressed by Cook that musicology and ethnomusicology have arrived at the *same* place—but by different routes, which has complicated their relationship—is not shared by all. His now (in)famous conclusion that 'we are all musicologists now' was strongly contested at the 2001 one-day conference of the British Forum for Ethnomusicology at which Cook presented an earlier version of his 2008 article, leading to a re-formulation in the published version to: 'we are all ethnomusicologists now' (bringing him more in line with Frank Harrison's much earlier 1963 statement that 'it is the function of all musicology to be in fact ethnomusicology', cited by Cook from Lieberman 1997:200 [2008:65]). As distinctions of 'insider'/'outsider' and self/other, on which the musicology/ethnomusicology divide was initially founded, become increasingly blurred and perhaps redundant, Cook concludes that 'distinguishing between musicology and ethnomusicology seems to me as hopeless as it is pointless' (2008:64). Amongst those who might concur one could list Nettl, John Blacking, Jim Samson and Shelemay, the latter arguing strongly for a more integrated field of music studies (Shelemay 1996). On the other hand, Kerman (1985) and Stock (1997a) are somewhat more sceptical, the former based on the assertion that 'Western music is just too different from other musics' (Kerman 1985:174)—with the implication that ethnomusicologists only study 'non-western' music—the latter based on differences in approach.

Much of the debate around these issues rests on an underlying assumption that convergence is in principle 'a good thing', if not always possible. A somewhat different perspective has recently been put forward by Georgina Born (2010), who characterises the debate as perhaps overly concerned with achieving an affable consensus—and describing Nicholas Cook (in his 2008 article) as acting as a 'marriage broker' (2010:215). Instead, she asks whether, in 'the wished-for rapprochement between the subdisciplines of music scholarship' (209), 'Do we perhaps give up too much of the rich and idiosyncratic patchwork of subdisciplinary histories by suggesting such an integration? Do we suppress the agonistic pleasures of continuing inter-subdisciplinary dialogues?' (2010:206). Instead, she proposes a 'relational musicology' which draws on the productive tension of the 'agonistic–antagonistic' mode of interdisciplinarity in which:

> ... research is conceived neither as a synthesis nor in terms of a disciplinary division of labour, but as driven by an agonistic or antagonistic relation to existing forms of disciplinary knowledge and practice. Here, interdisciplinarity springs from a self-conscious dialogue with, criticism of, or opposition to, the intellectual, aesthetic, ethical or political limits of established disciplines, or the status of academic research in general ... This does not mean that what is produced by such interdisciplinarity can be reduced to these antagonisms; nor does it imply any overtly conflictual relations between emergent interdiscipline and prior disciplinary formation. Rather, with the agonistic-antagonistic mode we highlight how this kind of interdisciplinary practice stems from a commitment or desire to contest or transcend the given epistemological and ontological foundations of historical disciplines—a move that makes the new interdiscipline irreducible to its 'antecedent disciplines' ... What is remarkable about the agonistic-antagonistic mode is that it is often intended to effect more radical shifts in knowledge practices, shifts that are at once epistemic and ontological. (Born 2010:211)

In asking what a truly integrated field of music studies might look like, Born questions whether earlier promises of sub-disciplinary dialogue or integration (for instance in Mark Everist and Nicholas Cook's [1999] volume *Rethinking Music*), have delivered; she suggests that any such field would need to both 'disrupt[ing] the conceptual boundary between music and the social' (221) and engage more fully with 'the sciences of the cultural, social and temporal, which is to say anthropology, sociology and history' (2010:210) (some might argue that they have been doing the latter for many decades).

Notwithstanding these ongoing and healthy debates about the relationship between the various musicologies, work on the ground clearly suggests that the dividing line between musicology and ethnomusicology (if we take that particular binary) is less clear than ever. Scholars may continue to feel a sense of belonging and allegiance to particular disciplinary 'homes', but the work itself becomes increasingly difficult to categorise according to disciplinary boundaries. This will be discussed further in relation to the specific articles in this volume, in the context of which Bohlman's observation almost two decades ago that 'different domains within the study of music ... no longer simply co-exist, but rather interact to change the spatial construction of the field. *No domain is spared from the approaches of its discursive cohabitants—say, historical musicology from analysis, ethnomusicology from history, or music theory from cultural contexts*' (1993:435; emphasis added) seems particularly pertinent.

The Current Volume

The current volume marks an important milestone for *Ethnomusicology Forum* as the journal moves from two to three issues per year. It is also something of a personal watershed as I come to the end of my four-year term as journal co-Editor. When Andrew Killick and I assumed co-editorship of the journal in September 2007, one of our aims was to provide a platform for work which crossed or contested disciplinary boundaries, and we did this in various ways, including through themed issues—for

example, the special volumes on 'Screened Music: Global Perspectives' (in 2009) and 'Ethnomusicology and the Music Industries' (in 2010); by inviting guest editors from outside ethnomusicology, such as film music composer and musicologist Miguel Mera; by including interviews with music industry figures such as Ben Mandelson (in 2010); and by publishing work by scholars from outside ethnomusicology such as popular musicologist Nicola Dibben (in 2009), music psychologists Ian Cross (in 2010) and Ruth Herbert (in 2011), and music archaeologist Graeme Lawson (in 2010). For myself in particular, seeking to break down what, since the earliest days of my ethnomusicological training, I have regarded as the somewhat artificial boundaries between musicology and ethnomusicology was something of a mission. Even before my editorial term started, I was exploring the idea of a special issue that would examine the intersection of ethnomusicology and musicology by publishing current research by both musicologists and ethnomusicologists on some aspect of western art music. Quite fortuitously, my appointment coincided with the 2007 biennial conference of the International Council for Traditional Music, held in Vienna, where I heard a particularly inspiring presentation by Eric Usner on the politics of the 2006 Mozart Year, which had ended just six months before the conference.[2] The paper is published in extended form here. From this time, I knew that this was a topic with great potential, and I even toyed briefly with the idea of a special issue on the ethnomusicology of Mozart. As I started to plan the current issue, I became increasingly alerted both to musicologists undertaking work which could be described as broadly ethnomusicological, particularly in their use of ethnographic method, and of ethnomusicologists working on western art music. This issue has had a long gestation but it gives me the greatest pleasure that my final task as co-Editor of a journal that I played a small role in helping to establish 20 years ago should be to produce a volume which resonates with some of my deepest held scholarly convictions—as someone who came to ethnomusicology as a classically-trained musician and for whom the study of ethnomusicology changed forever how I would experience 'my' music. Continuing in self-reflexive mode for a moment, I also wonder whether the urge to seek out commonalities and to challenge binary constructions such as East/West and musicology/ethnomusicology—a challenge which is, incidentally, precisely what the ethnomusicology of western art music does—arises partly from my own experiences as a post-colonial 'other' living in one of the metropolitan power centres of the global 'north'.

This volume comprises five main articles, followed by a short reflective item by (ethnomusicologist) Pirkko Moisala on the process of writing a (largely musicological) book about contemporary Finnnish composer Kaija Saariaho. The main articles begin with Rachel Beckles Willson's study of European and North American music teachers working on Palestine's West Bank as part of international aid investment in the region. The article examines some of the issues around teachers' motivations for taking up work in the West Bank, their expectations and the realities—political and social—once they arrive, as well as considering what such western musical intervention in the region means, whether framed in terms of the

supposed civilising effects of western classical music or offering children an alternative to everyday violence. In particular, Beckles Willson points to some interesting resonances between the role that such teachers see themselves as playing and that of European mission in nineteenth-century Palestine. The next article, by Tina K. Ramnarine, explores the symphony orchestra as an agent of civil society. Beginning with a consideration of the metaphor of 'orchestra as society', Ramnarine focuses on three case studies of projects through which UK-based orchestras have sought to attract new audiences through various initiatives and outreach programmes, partly in response to an ageing and diminishing listenership. Ramnarine examines the potential of such programmes to effect lasting social change, and asks what role the orchestra can play in relation to issues of race equality, economic poverty, environmentalism, and so on. The next article, by Melissa C. Dobson and Stephanie Pitts, also focuses on new audiences, reporting on a project with 'first-time attenders' at western classical music concerts. Project participants in London and Sheffield attended a number of concerts, followed by both focus group discussions and one-to-one interviews. Dobson and Pitts present the results of the project, quoting extensively from participants on their experiences of concert attendance, experiences that were shaped by both musical and social factors. Dobson and Pitts' conclusions have significant potential practical application in terms of understanding the needs and expectations of newcomers to classical music concerts. The authors also reflect on the interface between the social psychology of music (in which their work is rooted) and ethnomusicology, considering what the latter can bring to such a study, particularly in terms of 'balancing the desire to generalise findings to populations with recognition of the benefits of focusing on individual listening experiences to gain deeper insights into this multifarious phenomenon'. In 'Ethnographic Research into Contemporary String Quartet Rehearsal', Amanda Bayley traces a single work—Michael Finnnisy's Second String Quartet—'from composition, through rehearsal and performance, to reflections on performance', as performed by the Kreutzer Quartet, focusing primarily on the only rehearsal of the piece, which was also attended by the composer. Asking how 'methodologies from ethnomusicology can advance our understanding of rehearsal and performance in the string quartet tradition', Bayley uses quantitative and qualitative methods (observation, interviews, questionnaires, recording of the rehearsal) to examine various aspects of the rehearsal process, including the structuring of time, the kinds of language used and interactions between the performers and between performers and composer, and the role of negotiation and collaboration in shaping the musical work. The result is a 'rehearsal model' which offers the possibility of comparison with rehearsals of other pieces, by other ensembles or in the context of other performer–composer collaborations. The final article, by Eric Usner, explores the events marking the Mozart Year 2006, the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth—focusing on events in Vienna—during which 'Mozart' became mobilised as a cultural signifier, variously presented and received as 'tradition', as a folklore spectacle for tourists, as national heritage, as commercial brand or commodity, and as oppositional popular culture.

Through a detailed examination of the official WienMozart2006 festival, and the associated New Crowned Hope 'festival within a festival', Usner argues that the recent reconfiguring of Vienna as a new site of the cosmopolitan is in fact rooted in a much older cosmopolitanism which marked *fin de siècle* Vienna at the turn of the twentieth century.

As might be expected from a group of authors, most of whom at least partially self-identify as cultural insiders—depending on how the 'inside' is defined—several raise issues around the problematic insider/outsider binary. For instance, Bayley sees her role 'as a cultural insider and simultaneously outsider to the Kreutzer Quartet . . . As an experienced viola player in string quartets, as well as larger chamber music ensembles and orchestras, I write as an outsider with an insider's knowledge'. Such fluid scholarly identities are particularly marked in this kind of ethnography amongst peers, as both Cottrell (in his landmark study of orchestral musicians in London) and Shelemay observe, and bring their own challenges:

> The close and symbiotic relationship between those active in the early music movement and the scholars who were ostensibly studying the scene provided a challenging venture in 'insider' ethnography . . . the borders between the identity of the researcher and subject in the early music study can only be described as blurred . . . as members of the research team became at once musicians, audience members, or occasionally, critics. (Shelemay 2001:7–8)

In an interesting inversion, for Dobson and Pitts it is the research *participants* who are 'outsiders' to the music culture under study, whilst the researchers are the notional 'insiders'. Adopting an ethnomusicological approach to western art music requires scholars to both re-assess their relationship to the music culture and to question some of their most fundamental assumptions, by (to quote again from Nettl) 'look[ing] also at the familiar as if it were not' (Nettl 1995:1). Discussing the advantages and disadvantages of 'insider' ethnography, Cottrell includes amongst the latter the fact that:

> Not having to learn a language might make one think less about exactly what words mean, how they are used and what this might reveal about underlying concepts. Being familiar with certain customs excludes the learning process that comes with *not* being familiar and the insights which may arise from this learning . . . (2004:16–17)

In her contribution to this volume, Moisala describes her attempt to adopt such a position—one 'that does not take prior knowledge for granted'—in relation to an already familiar music:

> My point of departure was that of a 'learner's perspective', in the sense that I approached Saariaho's music as a foreign cultural expression. Even though I have been interested in contemporary art music for decades and had studied the scores

> and other written documents in advance of my interviews in order to prepare questions, I purposely asked questions that did not assume a common ground.

The original aim of this special issue was to present a snapshot of current research on the ethnomusicology of western art music undertaken by *both* musicologists and ethnomusicologists. What I had not anticipated was the extent to which it became almost impossible to distinguish between the work of scholars from different (sub)disciplinary areas. Much of this is due to the adoption of ethnographic methods by those scholars who come from a broadly musicological background. The resulting volume is a collection of essays that reflect on and engage with a range of musical 'actors' and their discourses, the latter garnered through interviews, questionnaires and (participant) observation, and focused variously on performers and a composer in the rehearsal (rather than performance) context (Bayley); audiences who are newcomers to the very particular music culture of western art music (Dobson and Pitts); music educators reflecting on their role as propagators of western art music in an area of heightened political and cultural sensitivity (Beckles Willson); or more generally exploring the cultural work carried out in the context of orchestral outreach programmes (Ramnarine) and the symbolic valency of one particular historical composer-figure in relation to contemporary constructions of music culture (Usner). Asking authors directly about their respective musical/musicological backgrounds and how they define or position themselves in relation to the broad field of music studies elicited responses which revealed a complex of 'pathways', belying the simple musicology/ethnomusicology binary noted above. Contributors to the current issue describe themselves as having a background and working in a range of areas including the social psychology of music, music education ('two areas where the boundaries are already blurred because of their joint concerns about how people learn, use and respond to music' [Pitts, personal communication, 6 January 2012]), empirical musicology, performance studies, analysis, and ethnomusicology; and beyond music studies, in postcolonial studies, anthropology, cultural studies and interdisciplinary critical studies. Two of the authors (Beckles Willson and Ramnarine) began their careers as professional performers, later moving to musicological and then ethnomusicological research, one via a doctorate and later academic positions in anthropology (Ramnarine). Both were hesitant to define themselves in disciplinary terms: 'I don't like to restrict myself to any particular disciplines and I've also done a lot in, for example, postcolonial studies and in cultural studies. Maybe I'm a perfect example of why disciplinary boundaries are becoming blurred!' (Ramnarine, personal communication, 6 January 2012). Given the range of disciplinary allegiances, then, I have been struck by how much the articles share in terms of approach and methodology. Granted, this is only a small sample of contemporary ethno/musicological writing and may perhaps be more indicative of trends within the UK (four of the articles are by UK-based scholars), but my feeling is that these articles

do reveal something about the state of the field and provide tangible evidence of significant changes since Stock's characterisation of it in his 1997(a) article.

A Note on Terminology

Perhaps one of the hardest aspects of preparing this special volume was deciding on an appropriate title, something that involved much discussion and thought. One might argue that almost every word in the current title is problematic in some way. Setting aside for the moment questions of disciplinary definition—which are dealt with extensively elsewhere (in particular the chapters in Stobart 2008), and also briefly above in relation to the challenge posed to disciplinary identities and boundaries by an ethnomusicology of western art music—I would like to focus here on the word 'western'. The terms 'West' and 'western' have come under some scrutiny in recent years,[3] but are still widely and unproblematically used within much music scholarship. Clearly, there are a number of issues at stake. The first is the problem of defining the geographical and cultural scope of these terms; second, they are often deployed within dominant discourses in a totalising and essentialised manner not dissimilar to that described by Stokes in relation to 'a deeply normative idea of Europeanness in music based on the idealization of an extremely narrow selection of musical practices (principally Austro-German and nineteenth century)' (2008:211). Finally, in the specific case under consideration here, the forces of colonialism and, more recently, globalisation, have afforded this music a global reach that can no longer be captured by the term 'western'.[4] Indeed, like all terminologies, 'western art music' is ideologically loaded, since it claims exclusive ownership of a cultural space whilst denying the existence of 'others' who have been and continue to be central to it and who are rendered invisible by the dominant discourses. Whatever its historical legacy, clearly 'western art music' is (solely) western no longer. For instance, the symphony orchestra is probably the most ubiquitous of ensembles globally and composers trained in art music which has roots in the heritage, aesthetics and educational models of Europe and North America are to be found across the world. Indeed, one might argue that with its global reach, this music can be regarded as a form of 'world music'.[5] This 'globality' has prompted the question as to whether western art music has become a cultural 'blank slate', a music that belongs nowhere. As Bohlman suggests: 'So seductive is the encroachment of Western art music worldwide that one is tempted to wonder whether this is a music beyond specific cultural meanings and outside particular historical moments' (1991:254). He goes on to describe how western art music can acquire new meanings in new contexts by considering the case of the *Yekke* (German-speaking Jews in Israel), amongst whom western art music—specifically within domestic chamber music concerts—has become a marker of ethnic identity. In this context, western art music becomes framed as a form of 'ethnic music in Israel' (1991:264). Shelemay (2001) explores similar lines of thought in her ethnography of the early music movement in which she identifies an 'aesthetic of otherness, a present-day value deeply embedded in the

early music movement at large', noting both the interest of many early music musicians in aspects of 'world' music and the tendency to 'exoticise' early music as part of a process of what Laurence Dreyfus has termed 'defamiliarization'. Shelemay suggests that 'one finds a concept of early music performance as collapsing time and space, transcending arbitrary boundaries, and providing a new context in which old musical relationships can be re-evaluated' (2001:18), and she quotes from violinist David Stepner who describes how 'a baroque suite is often a way of evoking other cultures, other countries, other climes, and this is part of the tradition' (Shelemay 2001:18). In this way:

> ... categories of 'Western-music' and 'non-Western music' [which] have disintegrated, if indeed these rubrics ever had the integrity with which they were invested by scholars. The complex of musical activities, traditions, and musicians I will discuss (termed 'early music' by both its practitioners and a wider community internationally) is among those commonly categorized as a subset of Western music. That this categorization once again poses problems is not surprising and will enter in important ways into the discussion below. (2001:4)

The continued use of the 'western' adjectival prefix is testimony both to the tenacity of musical labels and categories, the lack of an obvious alternative (simply removing 'western' would obviously not solve the problem, since this would invoke a whole range of local art musics), and the fact that, despite its shortcomings, the term does signify a particular kind of music culture that still tends to look to Europe (and North America to some extent) for its validation and sustenance. Many 'non-western' performers and composers of 'western' art music have a complicated relationship with this repertoire, as discussed by a number of authors including Yara El-Ghadban, who has examined 'the postcolonial dimension of Western art music' (2009:141) through ethnographic work with a number of composers. In an article published, significantly, in the journal *American Ethnologist*, she examines the 'rituals of Western art music' (2009:157) as exemplified through international composer competitions, focusing on an Argentinian composer based in the Netherlands and a Serb composer living in Germany. In this context, there is a strong tension for composers 'between the urge to contest the hegemony of Western art music and the desire to be part of and recognized within this musical tradition' (2009:140). As El-Ghadban observes, as well as being 'deeply implicated in the colonial encounter' (2009:156), western art music is now transnational and thoroughly globalised in all of its dimensions: performative, composerly and in its reception. Based on extensive fieldwork, she concludes that the:

> ... most problematic of the challenges for young composers today [is]: the reappropriation of Western art music by different groups and individuals across the world. That Western art music has crossed ethnic, cultural, and geopolitical boundaries in the context of colonization inevitably raises issues of 'musical postcoloniality' that need to be addressed. (El-Ghadban 2009:155)

The power relationships embedded within the music tradition are symbolised and perpetuated by the ways in which composers in international competitions are, 'consistently identity tagged by competitions that categorize them by country of origin (thus, underlining dynamics of centre and periphery), even though most live in the cultural metropolises of Western art music' (El-Ghadban 2009:154).[6]

In what sense, then, might it be possible to re-appropriate the term 'western art music', as El-Ghadban describes for the music itself, such that due recognition is accorded its plural histories and transnational nature? From a purely pragmatic perspective, the singular term is useful in that it does at least convey something of what individual instances of musical expression might comprise, whether in its instrumentation, performance contexts, audiences, or intellectual grounding. What needs to be folded into an understanding of the term is how a music that was originally European has taken on a multitude of forms and meanings globally; and this applies both to the performance of the Euro-(North)American 'classical' repertoire outside Europe and North America, and to the compositional work of composers from 'elsewhere'. In asking 'How did European music become global? How did European music become European? This is an excellent instance of ethnomusicology and musicology addressing two questions that almost boil down to one, and hardly an unimportant one' (Samson 2008:25), Jim Samson points to the relational dimension of identity and repertoire formation: European music became European in relation to the music of its (largely colonial) 'others'.

Some readers might wonder at the necessity of this discussion, given that the music and music cultures discussed in the articles which follow are predominantly of European (or North American) provenance.[7] To this extent, the 'western classical music' of the title of this special volume might appear fairly innocuous. However, it seemed both appropriate and important to raise these issues and consider the ramifications beyond the specific articles presented here for an 'ethnomusicology of western art music' in which many of the musics may arguably not be 'western' at all.

Towards an Ethnomusicology of Western Art Music

What, then, can the approaches and methodologies of ethnomusicology offer to the study of western art music? And, conversely, in what ways can ethnomusicology as a discipline benefit from the study of this music? Shelemay (2001), Stock (2004) and Ramnarine (2008) are in little doubt as to the potential of an ethnographically-grounded approach to enrich music studies of *all* kinds; and Shelemay presents perhaps the strongest position statement yet on the importance of ethnographic training for all ethno/musicologists, a statement which is worth quoting at length:

> Ethnographies of living traditions thus provide a rich opportunity to enhance understanding of musical life traditionally only viewed through the lens of written historical sources; as such, they can help guide the music historian, bringing into focus transmission processes and musical meanings as situated among real people in real time. Ethnographies of 'Western musics' may serve to collapse both

> disciplinary and musical boundaries. For historical musicologists, they could provide a venue in which the assumptions of scholarship can be tested and disputed. For ethnomusicologists, ethnographies of 'Western music' provide a lively field in which power relations are largely symmetrical, putting to rest ethical issues of longstanding concern ... For both music historians and ethnomusicologists, many if not most of whom grew up performing historical European repertoires, ethnographies of 'Western music' render the fieldwork process intensely reflexive ... ethnographic study of living traditions could both enhance the historical musicologists' appreciation of the workings of a fully contextualized music culture and expose the interaction between music and musicians. Here music historians would do well to draw upon ethnomusicologists' experience in studying complex urban musical traditions, transnational music movements, and the manner in which music and musicians actively construct their own social, political, and economic worlds. (2001:23–24)

The current issue serves as an endorsement of this view regarding the rich seam of material which can be mined through the kinds of ethnographic methods (including participant observation) hitherto only rarely used within musicology. And, interestingly, notwithstanding the self-definitions above, if one broadly categorises the authors in this volume by means of previous scholarly activity and representation through musicological societies, journal editorships, conference attendance, and so on, it becomes evident that the two '*bona fide*' ethnomusicologists include somewhat less in the way of direct reporting of musicians' and others' discourses than the 'musicologists'. From ethnography, many things follow. Perhaps the most important is the multiplicity of perspectives and voices that emerge. As Cottrell observes, what ethnomusicology can offer to the study of western art music is a methodology that 'makes room for the voices of all those who consider the music to be theirs ... an aggregation of the views of others' (2004:4) by exploring different readings of (a piece of) music which works against any resolution into a single 'truth' and the uncontested 'singular' readings of texts. What is of interest from an ethnomusicological perspective, then, is what music means to different people in different places:

> ... it seems unlikely that a performance of, say, Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance* marches or Wagner's *Siegfried* can mean the same to audiences in London, Dresden, Delhi and Hong Kong, yet the readings of such works provided by musicologists usually assume that they do. (Cottrell 2004:5)

Bohlman has similarly commented on the ways in which, in relation to historical research, ethnomusicology allows for 'a multitude of music histories' (1991:266).

Ethnomusicological approaches may well be enriching to the work of musicologists in the ways outlined above. But I would also argue that ethnomusicology *needs* the study of western art music for the ways in which it definitively disrupts some of the uncomfortable binaries and unequal power relations that have been part of the field since its inception, and for the ways in which it requires us to engage with the familiar 'as if it were not'.[8] I believe that we should wholeheartedly welcome into our midst scholars such as those contributing to this volume for their enriching presence and

the new ideas and approaches that they bring to ethnomusicology. The resulting blurring of (sub)disciplinary boundaries demonstrated so clearly in the articles that follow bodes well for the future of music studies, however configured or conceived.

Notes

[1] There are, of course, ongoing debates about the relationship between different areas of music studies, as discussed in several of the articles in this volume; for instance, see Dobson and Pitts for discussion of the relationship between ethnomusicology and music psychology.

[2] It is interesting to note that the 1989 article by Bruno Nettl—'Mozart and the Ethnomusicological Study of Western Culture (An Essay in Four Movements)', dedicated to his father, Mozart scholar Paul Nettl—was based on a plenary lecture delivered at another International Council for Traditional Music conference, also held in Austria (in Schladming), in 1989.

[3] See, for example, the conference 'Negotiating "the West" Music(ologic)ally', jointly hosted by the Musicology Department at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, and the Music Department at Royal Holloway, University of London, UK, and held at Utrecht University, 11–12 April 2011.

[4] For a useful survey of the spread of western classical music globally from the early periods of missionisation and colonisation, see Cook (forthcoming; Cook also discusses the dissemination of western popular music, but to a lesser extent). As Cook argues, 'the so called "common practice style"' can be regarded as 'in effect the music of hegemony, as an integral part of the machinery of empire, an ideological construct whose very name embodies a claim to universality'. He continues: '"Western music" refers to a classical tradition now most strongly rooted in Asia, and a popular tradition that is in reality a global hybrid . . . a music in the formation of which all continents except Antarctica have played an active role . . . The concept of "the West" was coined only at the beginning of the last century, and [despite] its ostensibly geographical definition . . . is probably best thought of as an implicit claim to socio-economic domination in a world in which power appears to be shifting rapidly to Asia'. For specific case studies of 'western' classical music outside Europe and North America—including East Asia—see El-Ghadban (2009), Everett and Lau (2004), Melvin and Cai (2004), Wint (2012) and Yoshihari (2007).

[5] Again, see Cook (forthcoming). It can be instructive to examine terminologies in use around the world. In Iran, for instance, western art music is often referred to as '*musiqi-e beynolmelali*' (international music) or even sometimes '*musiqi-e jahāni*' (world music).

[6] See also 'Crickets in the Postcolony: A Conversation on Music' for similar issues raised in discussion between El-Ghadban and South African composer Clare Loveday: www.jwtc.org.za/the_salon/volume_2/clare_loveday_yara_el_ghadban.htm (accessed 19 December 2011).

[7] Note that the authors have used their terms of choice within each article, whether 'western art music', 'classical music' or 'western European art music'.

[8] It is of course entirely possible for an ethnomusicologist to write about western art music in a way that does none of these things, and is very 'musicological'. See, for instance, Jonathan Stock's (1997b) study of timbre in a Mozart piano concerto.

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