Editorial: Musicology in an Era of Response and Responsibility

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Strong ideological positions have historically generated many of the most influential discourses in musicology, shaping the distinctions between local, individual approaches to understanding music and the more universal, collective practices of music scholarship. The rise of modern musicology during the nineteenth century and its globalization in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries have depended no less on the spread of grand theory than on the ability to redeploy musicological method through ideologies that served the few rather than the many. Among the ideologies that most closely accompanied musicology's expansion were those that laid the most passionate claims for ownership and the valuation of self over other: nation and race, particularly in their most extreme ideological expressions, nationalism and racism. At various historical moments, different attributes accrued to nation and race, often making it difficult to view the musics of national and cultural entities positively or negatively.

Nation and race are not only objects of musicological thought, but to a certain extent also its product. In fascist and racist regimes, some musicologists were—and are—willing to embrace research themes consonant with the political agendas of current rulers. However, even in democratic contexts, musicology, as with scientific discourse in general, contributes to the shaping of cultural, political, and racial identities, and is therefore part of the phenomenon it seeks to describe. Histories of Western art music undertaken over the course of the twentieth century took the form of national music histories, and—more often consciously than not—contributed to the construction of their own national cultural identities. Toward the end of the twentieth century, increasing globalization and networking in every area of life led to dissolution of the tenet of national cultures as concepts of hybridity and mobility grew increasingly important for music scholarship. New research foci on cultural transfer, cultural exchanges, and tangled histories were the methodological consequence of this turn. At the same time, critical reflection on the role of academic discourse in the deployment of colonial and post-colonial power changed the attitude and the methods of Western ethnomusicologists when approaching their research fields. New concepts about subjectivity and the social processes shaping subject positions opened new perspectives in musicological research on gender, ethnicity, and race. As a result, entire fields, such as subaltern and disability studies, emerged.

Notwithstanding the long history of studying nation and race as contexts for musical meaning, a more dramatic ideological turn has taken place in recent years,

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notably since ca. 2010, when nationalism and racism converged and together proliferated as a destructive ideological force throughout the world. "Nationalism" is now a dirty word, and racism increasingly, not decreasingly, endangers those forced to migrate through the national and racialized spaces closed to them. These are the spaces referred to as "refugee crises"—populated by Syrians or Rohingya—and as sites of genocide.

These are also the spaces and sites that challenge us to ask questions about musicology and its response and responsibility, especially as these might take shape in the journal that serves the International Musicological Society (IMS). One glance at *Acta Musicologica*'s masthead inside the back cover reveals that the IMS is a scholarly society constituted of representatives from many different nations: national affiliations are clearly affixed to the names of IMS officers and members of the *Acta* editorial board. Historically, the IMS became international by attracting scholars from many nations, and doing so in a spirit of inclusiveness. Many contributions to *The History of the IMS (1927–2017)* (edited by Dorothea Baumann and Dinko Fabris; Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2017) bear witness to the ways in which the spirit of internationalism had to withstand ideological challenges, especially during World War II. It is the embrace of musicological democracy, however, that is equally notable, as well as the ways in which *Acta* has consistently become the forum for that democracy. And yet, undeniably, this is a democracy from which national musicologies cannot be dislodged.

The musical entanglement with race, too, has a long history complicated by the ideologies of individual nationalisms and their implementation in musicological traditions. Already in the earliest forms of musicology, nation and race were bound together, creating categories of repertory and genre, dividing societies into classes of racial difference. Modern musicological thought widely employed race to distinguish the role of language in shaping genre, but even more significantly mapped race on the physical body. As European empire spread globally, also paralleling the rise of modern musicology, race became a determinant of genre internationally, allowing missionaries, colonial officials, travelers, and music scholars alike to appropriate music at sites of colonialism and slavery. The Middle Passage—the Atlantic Ocean routes along which Europeans, and North and South Americans trafficked slaves from Africa—would also become an international space for the formation of genre, the musics borne with the bodies of African slaves sold into the nation-building projects of the New World. Once again, we witness the ways nation and race, nationalism and racism, were codependent and foundational in the formation of one of the most international domains of modern musicology.

In the musicology of the twenty-first century, there is no longer a question about whether nationalism and racism are separable from the field as a whole, relegated only to the music of distant others and preserved in the purview of scholars working within specific ideological traditions. There is no sharp line between musical repertories that are affected by nationalism and those that are not. Understanding race

and confronting racism in music is not something that can be left simply to other scholars more commonly disposed to do so. We are all implicated in the response and responsibility that an engaged musicology asks of us. Such response might become explicit when musicological canons would also include more fully the music of composers silenced by genocide, for example, when Salamone Rossi would be taught alongside his early modern contemporary, Claudio Monteverdi, or Viktor Ullmann's contributions to the twentieth century would be examined together with those of Paul Hindemith. Does measured response carry with it the responsibility to include the music of colonized and racialized others in our music history books? How does research into darker sides of music history transform responsibility?

We believe strongly that the answers to such questions posed by response and responsibility are critical to the challenge and achievement of *Acta.* The journal of an international scholarly society, because it embraces the responses of the many rather than the few, opens a space for concerted responsibility, which itself leads us to identify three areas of action. First, *Acta* makes possible the collective consideration of musical ontology, the more capacious and critical understanding of what music is. Second, through the fullness of its representation of scholarly traditions no less than nations, *Acta* grows from and inspires collaboration. Third, while gathering the voices of the diverse membership of the IMS, *Acta* challenges the canon, calling ideologies of all kinds into question. The music scholarship that *Acta* makes possible, therefore, is inclusive, not exclusive, and it becomes so precisely because of its capacity to transform response into responsibility.