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# Global Musical Modernisms as Decolonial Method

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**Abstract**

This article argues that through historiography, global musical modernisms decolonize Western musical modernism, expanding and bursting the latter's spatial (geographic), vertical (high–low genres), and temporal boundaries. The unsettling of these various boundaries shows how coloniality is the context of, and thoroughly imbricated with, global musical modernisms – and yet the latter has channelled the self-conscious resistance of global music-makers against the colonial condition that characterizes modernity. Examining global musical modernisms both in the real world and in the inter-disciplines, this article addresses material complexities that are elided in purist dichotomous conceptions of resistance and oppression as inhering in different musics and cultures.

Global musical modernisms decolonize Western musical modernism. This article shows that musical modernism is a global phenomenon that can be fruitfully understood as encompassing multiple centuries and multiple musics. Elaborating on the concept and historiography of global musical modernisms, I show how the latter functions as a decolonial framework. As I envision it, this framework is oriented towards real-world complexity in the form of the exercise of agency within the colonial structures of both modernism and modernity. In this article, I define decoloniality as the targeted dismantling and partial *retreat* of Western musical modernism, differing from the generalized 'decolonization' of 'education', 'schools', and 'curricula' criticized by Tuck and Yang in their article on Indigenous decolonization.[1] We show

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1 The centrality of Indigenous decolonization in the Americas has been emphasized in the widely influential article by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, 'Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor'. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, 'Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor', *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society* 1/1 (2012). However, there are important reasons to preserve a broader definition of decolonization. First, cultural theorists, who are not cited by Tuck and Yang, exist in geographies beyond North America and have called their projects 'decolonial'. See Aníbal Quijano, 'Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality', *Cultural Studies* 21/2–3 (2007). Alfian Sa'at, Faris Joraimi, and Siew Min Sai eds., *Raffles Renounced: Towards a Merdeka History* (Singapore: Ethos Books, 2021); 'merdeka' is a Malay and Indonesian word meaning 'freedom from colonization' (epitaph to the book). Second, it is not only US Indigenous musics which have been stolen; for example, the high school Western music curriculum was decolonized in Singapore only in the twenty-first century, even though the British left in 1959. Tuck and Yang's narrow definition of 'decolonial' was intended to place focus on people who are actually living under colonization. However, the resultant narrow focus on North American settler colonization has served to occlude other forms of colonial and imperial power projection; for example, violent US imperialism as seen in the Iraq war of 2003, as well as US cultural imperialism in East Asia, where South Korean parents elect scientifically baseless biological mutilation of their children's tongues to putatively help with pronouncing the 'r' in English. Barbara Demick, 'Some in S. Korea Opt for a Trim When English Trips the

respect for indigenous decolonization by specifying the precise colonial formation to be taken apart – in this case, Western musical modernism that is a cultural form of European and North American societies, but which occupies a canonical position globally.

At first glance, the concept of global musical modernisms seems to have an obvious referent. Excluding North America, Europe, and Australasia, the International Society for Contemporary Music has branches in mainland China (three branches), Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Vietnam, South Africa, Argentina, Chile, and Venezuela, while the Asian Composers League has branches in Israel, Turkey, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia. This list represents only countries which have branches (which require a critical mass of composers and performers) of international and regional composers' associations, and does not imply the lack of global modernists elsewhere. In recent publications with a broad purview, the vibrance of global musical modernism is examined.[2] Global modernists abound, from experimental Balinese gamelan composer Panda Madé Sukerta,[3] to Lebanese electronic composer Tarek Atoui,[4] to Chinese émigré composers in the United States such as Chou Wenchung and his students.[5] My Global Musical Modernisms website features global composers from outside of Europe and North America, as well as BIPOC composers within the West.[6] From a decolonial perspective, the inclusion of global/BIPOC voices is a positive development: in contextualizing the West within the global, we denude Western music of its hoary universalist connotation.

But from another perspective, the definition of global musical modernisms proffered here represents the acceptance and amplification of an elite musical modernism as it has been defined by the West. In a real sense, global modernists often (though not always) replicate the elitism of Western modernism, attending the same institutions (such as Korean composer Isang Yun at the Darmstadt Ferienkurse, or Singaporean composer Joyce Koh at IRCAM), and benefiting from this privilege throughout their careers. With music studies in the midst of a decolonial and anti-racist reckoning as I pen these words, the ivory tower of Western musical modernism seems unsuitable as the starting point for countering coloniality. It seems unlikely, however, that the anvil of cultural imperialism, as embodied in Western musical modernism, completely flattens global modernists. There are two main arguments

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Tongue', *Los Angeles Times*, 31 March 2002, www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2002-mar-31-mn-35590-story.html?fbclid=IwAR0vrf1DfRGxve5C7us3N-1IjlxGTrVcLaGAeAQ-HlYJuEWHUzPhfjzNZ9M. I would argue for multiple decolonizations rather than a singular and therefore *occlusionary* definition that promotes one set of contingencies above all else.

2 See Tim Rutherford-Johnson, *Music after the Fall: Modern Composition and Culture after 1989* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2017). Christian Utz, *Musical Composition in the Context of Globalization: New Perspectives on Music History of the 20th and 21st Centuries*, trans. Lawrence Willis (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2020). Björn Heile is conducting the research project 'A Global History of Musical Modernism', funded by a Leverhulme Research Fellowship.

3 See Andrew Clay McGraw, 'Radical Tradition: Balinese *Musik Kontemporer*', *Ethnomusicology* 53/1 (2009), 115.

4 See Rutherford-Johnson, *Music after the Fall*, 129.

5 See, e.g., Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau, eds., *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004).

6 Gavin S. K. Lee, ed.,'Global Musical Modernisms', https://globalmusicalmodernisms.hcommons.org/.

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for this. First, global modernists will always deviate by various degrees from their Western counterparts. Panda Madé Sukerta, for instance, was originally a village musician who came to engage in modernist practices primarily through dance – through participation in the projects of dancer and choreographer Sardono W. Kusuma – rather than music; Western music in general, including modernist music, has a negligible presence in these Indonesian composers' circle, even though it is known that Sukerta conducted self-study of the compositions of a student of Messiaen and Dutilleux, Slamet Sjukur.[7] Chou Wenchung, on the other hand, was a professor of composition at Columbia University, even if he is often omitted in higher music curricula. Second, in local contexts, global composers always appropriate Western modernism for their own social and aesthetic purposes. For Sukerta, modernist techniques are used to present a cosmopolitan image that is intended to counter the tourist-driven, exotic image of 'traditional' Bali propagated by the metropolitan Indonesian capital Jakarta.[8] For Chou, the synthesis of Chinese and Western musics symbolizes nothing less than a rapprochement of civilizations.[9] Thus it is appropriate to emphasize composers' agency in addition to pointing out their participation in the global system of cultural imperialism, of which Western musical modernism is a part. And yet, for all the cross-purposes that are attached to the global dissemination and the inevitable differentiation from Western musical modernism, it is clear that status is accrued from one's exposure and proximity to that elite genre. I would argue that global modernists have always exercised their agency in relation to cultural-imperialist structures, in accordance with one of the foundational insights of anthropology.[10] The interrelation of agency and imposed structure means that there is a continual tension between actual historically existing oppressions, on the one hand, and deconstruction and rewritings of the history of Western centre and global peripheries, on the other. We see both the dismantling of the central terms of this history (centre-periphery) and the inevitable circling back to undeniable power structures (see Brigid Cohen's article in this issue).

Because of the imbrication of agency and coloniality, global musical modernists are in a sense an unlikely point of focus for an article making decolonial claims. However, the global does decentre Western music historiography and thus constitutes my overarching frame, even as I recognize the complexity of real-world practices articulated in the preceding paragraphs. In this article, I argue that global musical modernisms decolonize Western music historiography by expanding the geographic, genre, and temporal boundaries of Western musical modernism; it is useful for us to think of the expansion of what has been described as spatial (geographic), vertical (high and low genres), and temporal boundaries.[11] I adopt Walter

7 See Christopher J. Miller, 'A Different Kind of Modernism: The Sound Exploration of Pande Made Sukerta', in *Performing Arts in Postmodern Bali: Changing Interpretations, Founding Traditions*, ed. Kendra Stepputat (Aachen: Shaker Verlag, 2013).

8 McGraw, 'Radical Tradition', 123.

9 Eric Lai, *The Music of Chou Wen-Chung* (Farnham, UK; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 145.

10 On the interpenetration of agency and structure, see Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984).

11 Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz, 'The New Modernist Studies', *PMLA* 123/3 (2008), 737.

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Mignolo's definition of decoloniality, within academic spaces, as a long-term project of epistemic fine-tuning that allows us to at least partially detach from colonial patterns of thought in Western discourses, which has often focused exclusively on Western music and modernism.[12] In the following historiographic analysis of geographic, genre, and temporal boundaries, the relationality between musical *modernism* and musical *modernity* will emerge as a central problematic.

The term 'global modernisms' is by now common in literary studies. Global modernisms have been defined as the aesthetic expression of periods of rapid development across histories and geographies.[13] This temporal-geographic expansion leads to the inflection or collapse of the distinction between elite modernism and 'low brow' vernacular in global contexts where other contingencies also pertain.[14] But revolution and fragmentation remain as hallmarks of modernism even in its global iteration.[15] From this last, we can see that there are specific continuities between global and Western modernisms, alongside discontinuities. In particular, global modernist fragmentation is aligned with the conception of a transitory modernity marked by constant changes. There are two faces of modernity marked by incessant transformation, according to Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar.[16] First is the socioeconomic reality of advancement in science and technology, material living conditions, urbanization, literacy, mobility, and political freedom (through popular government), accompanied by the encroachment of bureaucratic governmental administration (e.g., management of urban slums) and economic-capitalist rationality (e.g., labour supply, of which slavery was one form). Second, incessant change was absorbed in the arts and transmogrified into a transitory aesthetics of fragmentation and novelty, and an anti-pragmatic and anti-conformist ethos of passion and imagination, countering bureaucratic-economic rationality. Gaonkar further notes, following Foucault, that modernity is also a self-shaping attitude countering the transitory nature of modernity itself and the forces shaping modernity.[17]

Gaonkar goes on to articulate his main thesis that 'alternative' modernities are produced as peoples articulate their own modernities that are distinct from Western modernity (such as the pan-African modernity of Afro-diasporic peoples) in reflexive acts of self-shaping that show an awareness of one's historical condition.[18] Understandably, Gaonkar avoids the term 'modernism', probably because of its association with elite Western practices in the

12 Maori anthropologist and activist Linda Tuhiwai Smith describes how 'decolonization, once viewed as the formal process of handing over of the instruments of government, is now recognized as a long-term process involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic, and psychological divesting of colonial power'. Cited in Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 41.

13 See Susan Stanford Friedman, *Planetary Modernisms: Provocations on Modernity across Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

14 Andreas Huyssen, 'Geographies of Modernism in a Globalizing World', *New German Critique* 100 (2007), 198, 203.

15 Mark Wollaeger, 'Introduction', in Mark Wollaeger and Matt Eatough eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 12.

16 Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar, 'On Alternative Modernities', in *Alternative Modernities* Dilip, ed. Parameshwar Gaonkar (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 1.

17 Gaonkar, 'On Alternative Modernities', 12–13.

18 Gaonkar, 'On Alternative Modernities', 15.

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arts. Yet the key dimensions of modernism as conventionally understood – transitory aesthetics (fragmentation, novelty) and reflexivity – are central to his articulation of both Western and alternative modernities. Parallel to Gaonkar and global modernist scholars, I define global modernism as the aesthetic expression of transitory modernity with its incessant changes. But rather than regarding 'modernism/modernity' as indicating the aesthetic and the sociohistorical respectively, I define modernism as the *sociohistorical condition of the arts*, which encompass both *aesthetics* (experience and expressiveness of an artwork) and *practices* (by which artworks are produced). From a Western perspective, there is in fact nothing particularly innovative about pointing out that modernism comprises both transitory aesthetics and practices that reconfigured artistic conventions (e.g., *4′33″*). It is from the perspective of decolonial theory that the insights afforded by that assertion will come to light. I will proceed now to present a précis of my argument in this article about global musical modernisms.

For decolonial theorist Aníbal Quijano, modernity is the other face of coloniality, defined as the ideological apparatus of colonization. If the West began to awaken to transitory modernity beginning in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, transitory life was present from the beginning of colonization as Spanish invaders banned Indigenous musics in Latin America and taught Indigenous peoples Renaissance polyphony. From the perspective of practices, music in global sites was transitory as soon as it came into contact with Europeans who brought over a barrage of Western genres aside from art music, including missionary, military band, vernacular, and, later in the twentieth century, mass media music. Of course, transitoriness seared across the entirety of colonized societies, from the macro level of government to the micro level of daily lives. From a colonial perspective, *disruption* (initially from an external source) characterized musical practices beginning in the sixteenth century, and twentieth-century Western musical modernism is arguably the intensification and absorption of disruption into individual works. Disruption gave rise to economic and social gains for Western elites, and eventually global elites who collaborated with colonial powers. Musics that were disrupted to varying degrees comprise all traditional, vernacular, and art musics that initially originated outside of Europe, North America, and Australasia, including the musics of BIPOC diasporic communities in the West, and all popular and art musics that flowed from the West to global sites where hybridity occurred. In support of the assertion that even putatively traditional musics were disrupted, I construct an argument for how the colonial assemblage comprises both persisting and varying components – simply put, coloniality is a *universally* present structure with local particulars. In the encounter with Western popular and art musics, global musics came to be seen as 'traditions', but rather than denoting pastness, musical traditions and modernities/modernisms are mutually constitutive and comprise a colonial apparatus.

What if, at least in a global context, modernity is redefined as a mask for coloniality? This would open up space for arguing that experiences of colonial disruptions from the early modern period prepared the way for the social, philosophical, scientific, technological, industrial, economic, and political disruptions of late modernity from the eighteenth century onwards in Europe. At any rate, modernism – defined as the sociohistorical condition of *disruption*,

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encompassing both aesthetics and practices – would, in a colonial framework, commence in the sixteenth century. In this view, musical modernism was already global from the beginning, encompassing far more than modernist music in the narrow sense of the term. If this conception of modernism seems unusual, consider that terms such as 'classicism' and 'Romanticism' (as used in relation to music) conventionally refer to the aesthetic expression of a historical era in music historiography, whether the Enlightenment, or the reaction towards bureaucratized or means-oriented economic rationality in the nineteenth century – why should not 'modernism' be defined as the aesthetics of the entirety of modernity? In its transitory nature, what musical modernism as a disruptive historical *practice* enacted was colonial disruption from the sixteenth century onwards;[19] musical modernism as a disruptive *aesthetic* came to define music of the twentieth century, and is in that sense a delayed manifestation of coloniality. Even though modernity and modernism were not conceptualized in their late modern form at the commencement of European coloniality, it is on par for practices to precede their naming, for the naming signifies the *self-awareness* of a society of its own practices, rather than the commencement of that practice. As can be discerned from the foregoing, what I consider to be musical modernism in this article is much broader in scope than the collection of examples I cited at the outset.

The final paragraphs of this article analyse the bifurcation of the study of global traditional musics in ethnomusicology and Western modernist music in musicology, suggesting that global musical modernisms enact a productive interdisciplinarity that defers dichotomous conceptions of 'resistive traditional music' and 'oppressive modernist music' (in the narrow sense). This simplification occludes BIPOC music-makers across multiple music genres who struggle for survival in inhospitable music circles and societies, and enact protest using any and all musics at hand.

In concluding this introduction, I refer back to the opening salvo of this article, asserting that global musical modernisms decolonize Western musical modernism. From this, we can discern a second definition of global musical modernisms (aside from being a sociohistorical condition of the arts) – that is, a critique and questioning of Western musical modernisms that is a modality of how global peoples shape their own alternative modernities against oppressive forces. Seen from this angle, criticism stems not necessarily from a spatial conception of power, whereby one needs to occupy one part of modernity/modernism to resist another part, but in the development of a *critical consciousness* that (following Gaonkar and Foucault) is the very signifier of global musical modernisms as a decolonial method of reflexive, resistive self-shaping against one's sociohistorical condition. This meaning of 'modernity' – and following that, 'modernism' – as critique is of course congruent with the work of the entire Frankfurt School (including Adorno's musical writings), which counters the rosy picture of modernity as the realization of Enlightenment ideals of intellectual, social,

19 In parallel, intimate salon concerts in the nineteenth century, for instance, was a historical practice that expresses passionate, imaginative, anti-bureaucratic, and anti-rational musical Romanticism. See Kramer's discussion of interiority in Schubert's Lieder, versus the rational, bureaucratic public sphere. Lawrence Kramer, *Franz Schubert: Sexuality, Subjectivity, Song* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 33.

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political, and economic progress. Adorno's positioning of Schoenberg's music as the ideal form of critique of modernity is by now outdated, particularly in a global context, but it expresses the convergence of the sociohistorical and aesthetic aspects of music, on the one hand, with a critical consciousness founded precisely on the considerations of musical sociality, history, and aesthetics, on the other. My articulation of global musical modernisms is indebted to that specific aspect of Adorno's methodology.

A quick note on terminology. I prefer 'musical modernism' (in the expansionary sense) and its adjectival form 'modernist music' over 'modern' music (as the adjectival form of 'modernity') as I see the rhetorical utility of retaining the *aesthetic* dimension of the conventional meaning of the first two phrases, which emphasize how virtually all global soundings of traditional, popular, art, and modernist musics (in the narrow sense) since 1500 were indeed aesthetic expressions of modernity/coloniality; in contrast, 'modern' usually has an epochal referent even when applied to music. While dealing with terminology, I should also discuss the idea that even Western musical modern*isms* in the plural do not cohere as a unified movement, not to mention (to extrapolate on that line of thinking) global musical modernisms. Even though the term 'modernism' is mostly closely associated with Schoenbergian and later Boulezian circles, composers as different as Satie, Cage, and Debussy share a family resemblance in terms of causing a disruption in the musical fabric of their own times, which is sustained today in varying degrees against the broader contemporary soundscape that is dominated by tonal popular music. There may be some advantage in emphasizing the obvious differences between myriad modernisms, but it is also clear that myriad modernisms share a distinct affinity to disruption, whether in aesthetics or practices. For all the variegation of musical modernisms, they share what Heile (following Adorno) summarized as the features of shock, rupture, and fragmentation.[20]

## Global musical modernisms in the world: European coloniality

'Global musical modernisms' is a term that is very new to music research, and its referent remains contested. In this section, I argue that global musical modernisms is inextricable from European coloniality. I use the analytics of geographic, genre, and temporal expansion to stretch out global musical modernisms, modelling the reach of coloniality across space, time, and musics. As explained in the following sections, geographic expansion entails genre and temporal expansion.

### Genre expansion

At first glance, 'global musical modernisms' might be conceived by many readers in terms of genre, with global modernism identified by its proximity to Western avant-garde, experimental, post-tonal, or atonal music (Satie, Cage, Debussy, Schoenberg, and other composers of the

20 Björn Heile and Charles Wilson, 'Introduction', in *The Routledge Research Companion to Modernism*, ed. Björn Heile and Charles Wilson (New York: Routledge, 2019), 6. Heile's definition of (Western) musical modernism coheres with the central features of global literary modernism as defined in *The Oxford Handbook to Global Modernisms* – revolution, and fragmentation. Wollaeger, 'Introduction', 12.

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same ilk) – that is, the Western modernist canon. (My reasons for including all these Western figures under modernism will become clear later, but the reader could perhaps already glean the expansionary impetus of my argument, and this broadened understanding of musical modernism is evidenced in recent research.[21]) But in key studies of what may be conventionally recognized as 'modernist music' from East Asia, Latin America, and the Arab world, the discourse of modernism is integrated without privileging the term perhaps because of its Western baggage, with various editors and authors preferring 'experimental',[22] 'avant-garde',[23] or 'intercultural' in their book titles.[24] Nevertheless, this latter research does offer insights of relevance to an exploration of what global musical modernisms might be. For example, vernacular forms of musical experimentalisms beyond elite institutions, which may not 'sound' conventionally experimental, effect a genre expansion which is one of the tenets of global musical modernisms as I have defined it.[25]

The expansion of genre in global musical modernisms is contested by Björn Heile, for whom the modernist label should be limited to music that expresses the key features of modernity – essentially the disruption caused by modernization, technology, and industrialization. This argument coheres with the conceptualization of Romantic subjectivity as deliberately retreating from the reality of modernity and industrialization,[26] which was arguably directly confronted only in the musical modernism of the following century. I can see how this definition of modernism could work within the confines of art (including modernist) music within Europe and North America, because within the chronology of successive styles, it could be argued that disruption became fully realized only in the aesthetics of musical modernism. However, from a global perspective, musical disruptions in the soundscape at large commenced with the arrival of Spanish polyphony in sixteenth-century Mexico, when indigenous musics were banned and eventually destroyed, or damaged so severely that they never recovered. What is missing from the conception of disruption in a narrow twentieth-century musical modernism is the *history of colonization*.

Genre expansion is the result if we reconceptualize disruption as not merely aesthetic but as practice. That modernity and coloniality are defined by disruption as a modality can already be seen in that global musical modernisms (in the narrow sense) disrupt traditional musics through hybridity, which entails its own aesthetic. But the specifically musical relation

21 See Erling E. Guldbrandsen and Julian Johnson, eds., *Transformations of Musical Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016). The wide-ranging chapters in this book erode the traditional differentiation between serialism, chance music, minimalism, 'impressionism', and the surrealist avant-garde.

22 Ana R. Alonso-Minutti, Eduardo Herrera, and Alejandro L. Madrid, eds., *Experimentalisms in Practice: Music Perspectives from Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

23 Thomas Burkhalter, Kay Dickinson, and Benjamin J Harbert, eds., *The Arab Avant-Garde: Music, Politics, Modernity* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2013).

24 Yayoi Uno Everett, 'Intercultural Synthesis in Postwar Western Art Music', in *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, Everett and Lau, eds.

25 See Alonso-Minutti et al., eds., *Experimentalisms in Practice.*

26 Lawrence Kramer describes how Romantic subjectivity is characterized by alienation from the modern rationalized world and a retreat to interiority, powerfully symbolized by the home as an inner sanctum. Kramer, *Franz Schubert*, 29.

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between modernity and coloniality, I propose, goes far deeper than that. As encapsulated in Mignolo's formulation 'modernity/coloniality',[27] coloniality and modernity are inextricable from each another, and, I would postulate, so are coloniality and modernism. For Mignolo, who draws on other decolonial theorists such as Aníbal Quijano, modernity is a colonial ideology that restructures the world through developmentalist rationality.[28] The line of argument which I would draw from Mignolo's work rests in the modality of disruption that is clearly illuminated by the British legal opinion of Australia as *terra nullius*, 'nobody's land'. Colonization operated by disregarding and deterritorializing pre-existing peoples, cultures, and musics, opening up the entire globe for reterritorialization, literally altering the land through settlement, agriculture, plantations, and mass migration, including slavery. I can think of only one (conventionally defined) musical era when disruption of this scale is sounded out, and it is in the fundamental deconstruction and reconstruction of musical elements that we see from dodecaphony to chance music, minimalism, surrealist ballet, and modernist hybridity. That is to say, musical modernism may very well be the sound that is the most emblematic of the catastrophic degree of deterritorialization and reterritorialization effected by colonization. The modus operandi of Western musical modernism (encompassing Schoenberg, Cage, Satie, Debussy, Reich) is the treatment of all pre-existing music as *terra nullius*. I argue that modernity's obsession with the production of the new cannot be disentangled from the violent logic of *terra nullius* as the guarantor that something new would arise. The difference of modernity from coloniality is that Western modernity is anchored in *terra nullius* at home, whereas global modernity/coloniality is anchored in *terra nullius* abroad. From this perspective, musical modernism in the narrow sense is sounding out (at last) the modernity/coloniality that informed the invasion of Spanish Renaissance polyphony in sixteenth-century Mexico, and the catastrophic disruption wrought on the global soundscapes beginning from that time. This suggests that global musical modernisms have a legitimate claim to include *all* of the musics of modernity classified variously as traditional, Western, or popular (more on this later).

The expansion of genre in global musical modernisms has a precedent in studies of Western music. As Georgina Born has shown, it is the relationality between musics that allows us to understand how elite modernist institutions such as IRCAM reproduce themselves, by excluding other sounds, showing that musical modernism has always derived its import from its existence within a broader soundscape that is resisted.[29] Through film scores, some modernist idioms may have become integrated and partially normalized (e.g., in horror films), and the modernist aesthetic can be found in popular music as well.[30] In a global context, it is even more important to sustain a broad purview of the contexts of modernism, because of the near

27 The formulation 'modernity/coloniality appears in Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, 17. The conception of entwined modernity–coloniality originates in Quijano, 'Coloniality and Modernity/Rationality'.

28 Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, 14.

29 Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde* (Berkeley, IL: University of California Press, 1995).

30 Christopher Ballatine, 'Modernism and Popular Music', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139/1 (2014); David Metzer, 'Sharing the Stage: The Growing Proximity between Modernism and Popular Music', in *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, ed. Guldbrandsen and Johnson.

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universal practice of modernist hybridity with global traditional musics. The arrival of a multitude of Western-originating sounds around the world, and their appropriation for local purposes, means that multiple musics were simultaneously impacted – through hybridity, traditional musics were changed just as surely as musical modernism was. In Latin America, for instance, traditional musics came to be constructed as a site of purity (identity, ethnicity, nationality) which Latin American composers can draw on and hybridize with modernist sounds, in a bid for cosmopolitan status.[31]

Bearing in mind what Born called the 'relational' point of view,[32] it could be argued that the narrow definition of musical modernism when applied to global contexts may produce a myopic understanding that could perpetuate the elite insularity of modernism, failing to acknowledge the concurrent transformation of multiple musical genres. Global musical modernisms exist within broader musical *modernities* that can only be understood within an all-encompassing framework. In global modernity theory, 'alternative' modernities (mentioned earlier) refer to global articulations of modernity, defined as the cultural system of the longue durée commencing in the mid-eighteenth century. The Age of Modernity, as this period is known, is defined by an ideology of progress that accompanied social and technological changes wrought by the advent of the Enlightenment, the scientific revolution, the industrial revolution, capitalism, and Western state building. The concept of alternative modernities recognize that this was also the Age of Imperialism, and that colonization, racism, and slavery was an essential part of modern apparatuses, providing 'free' capital (land) and 'free' labour for colonial industries (plantations) that enriched the West.

What the expansionary concept of global musical *modernity* proffers is an opportunity to examine the longue durée of colonization, under which disruption was evident virtually everywhere and in every sphere of life, including music. In accordance with this broad definition of global modernity, virtually *all* musics would have been touched by modernity. It may seem to make sense to distinguish between newly emerged genres (e.g., Christian hymns set to Chinese lyrics) that are distinct from musics which existed prior to the arrival of coloniality (e.g., myriad genres of Chinese opera). Yet the re-articulation of, for example, the Chinese *kunqu* opera today is hardly traditional, given the incorporation of the sounds of violin and other Western strings, jazz harmonies, and newly composed instrumental sections. Even the recontextualization of Chinese music in the Western-originating large concert hall has transformed the music, with instrumentalists emphasizing virtuosity over expression, and instrument makers replacing silk strings of the Chinese lute *pipa* with steel ones. Pre-colonial musics are often referred to as 'traditional', but it is important to note that their traditional status derives solely from the colonial encounter with the Western 'modern', and referring to these musics as traditional reinforces the hoary idea that Western-originating sounds are more advanced. In contrast, the framework of 'modern/colonial' conveys the understanding that modernity's veneer of progress is ideological and overlays developmentalist colonial thought, according to which the West

31 See Ana María Ochoa Gautier, 'Sonic Transculturation, Epistemologies of Purification and the Aural Public Sphere in Latin America', *Social Identities* 12 (2006), 817.

32 Georgina Born, 'For a Relational Musicology', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 135/2 (2010).

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represents the apex of human civilization, to which the rest should aspire. I would argue that all music is 'modern/colonial' in the European colonial period commencing 1500. This leads us to the expansion of temporal boundaries.

## Temporal expansion and realignment

Aside from genre expansion, global musical modernisms also entail temporal expansion. Within studies of Western music, the interconnection of the past few centuries has already been recognized, forming a counterpoint to a narrow definition of musical modernism. Modernity as a longue durée is the framework adopted in Adornian critiques of rationality run amok, with the focus placed on musical emancipation from or capitulation to structural necessity. We might see the difference between Adornian and global studies of musical *modernity* (which has a broader scope than modernism) as lying in the modality of resistance. Adornian studies sought freedom from the instrumental rationality of universalized, capitalist modes of thought (e.g., exchange value is expressed in interchangeable popular songs).[33] In contrast, studies in global musical modernities articulated the agency of global peoples who negotiated and appropriated Western-originating apparatuses, which range from the technological to the cultural and musical. Popular and modernist musical formats alike were often put to local uses within contexts of coloniality, whether this was a case of actual colonization or countries that were subjected to colonial influence. For example, Andrew Jones's study of China in the interwar years examines the varied reception of composers who adopted Western popular tonal idioms (e.g., Shanghai jazz) after the May Fourth movement of 1919, which had promoted the idea that China had to learn from the West to become as strong as European colonial powers. Interwar Chinese music was understood within a context of 'colonial modernity'[34] wherein communist fervour was intertwined with decolonial impulses against the unwanted European presence in Chinese ports as well as against Japanese attacks from 1937 onwards. Nie Er, who was inducted into the communist canon, was regarded as a bastion of revolutionary ideals, whereas Li Jinhui, who operated in commercial music, was denigrated, though their music shares the adoption of Western tonality in popular idioms.[35] Unlike the Adornian critique of modern musical instrumentality, studies of global musical modernities often articulate forms of resistance that lean towards countering *coloniality*. In practice, studies in global musical modernities typically focus on the period that coincides with the era of modernism as conventionally defined, that is, commencing in

33 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 99.

34 Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in the Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001). The following are some other examples of global modernity studies in music, selected from a crowded field: Veit Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South Africa and the West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Burkhalter et al., eds., *The Arab Avant-Garde: Music, Politics, Modernity*; Bart Barendregt, ed., *Sonic Modernities in the Malay World: A History of Popular Music, Social Distinction and Novel Lifestyles (1930s–2000s)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Alexander Dent, *River of Tears: Country Music, Memory, and Modernity in Brazil* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

35 Jones, *Yellow Music*, 73.

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the twentieth century. But structuring factors such as coloniality and technology feature largely in such studies, thereby referencing a much longer history, and establishing a distance from narrower studies of musical modernism. For example, Jones's study of China in the interwar years commences in chapter 1 with the introduction of Western missionary and military music to China in the nineteenth century, even though his study is focused on twentieth-century Chinese composers who sounded out Chinese modernity.[36]

The temporal expansion precipitated by global musical modernisms/modernities has precedents within the study of Western music beyond Adornian critiques. Work on the longue durée of Western musical 'modernity' includes studies of temporality[37] and vocality,[38] as well as musical experiences more generally,[39] and Peter Franklin regards musical modernism as the late blooming of Romanticism.[40] There is some variation in terms of when Western musical modernity is thought to commence from or originate in (1600?, 1780?, 1800?), but various studies share the common framework of the longue durée of modernity.

What temporal expansion affords us is an opportunity to rethink conventional Western music historiography, anchored in chronologically arrayed, differentiated styles. Emphasizing the connectivity across eras that constitute the longue durée of modernity opens up an analytical window: if the Classic–Romantic–modernist diachronic progression is to some extent a useful framework for Western music history, other histories are characterized by synchronicity. As can perhaps be gleaned from my discussion of the mutual derivation of modernity and tradition, synchronicity has counterhegemonic potential, in that it insists on the 'coevality'[41] of multiple musics that are often regarded as unrelated musical species. In the synchronic understanding, traditional Chinese music does not simply 'precede' but is also *constitutive* of Chinese musical modernity, *evolving* alongside the invasion of Western sounds and the emergence of new hybrid Chinese genres (mass media popular music, symphonies, modernist works). These sounds range from the enlarged traditional *Jiangnan sizhu* instrumental ensemble at Peking University in the 1920s which became the prototype for the Chinese orchestra (that is modelled after the Western symphony orchestra), Nie Er's protest songs of the 1930s (against Japanese occupation of Northern parts of China beginning in 1932), Xian Xinghai's *Yellow River* Cantata in the style of pentatonic romanticism[42] (1939), the female Chinese pianist Tang

36 Jones, *Yellow Music*, 30.

37 Karol Berger, *Bach's Cycle, Mozart's Arrow: An Essay on the Origins of Musical Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007).

38 Francesca Placanica, '"Unwrapping" the Voice: Cathy Berberian and John Cage's *Aria*', in *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, ed. Guldbrandsen and Johnson.

39 Julian Johnson examines a plethora of musical experiences related to temporality, space, technology, language, and body. Julian Johnson, *Out of Time: Music and the Making of Modernity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

40 Peter Franklin, 'Modernismus and the Philistines', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139/1 (2014), 184.

41 Hyun Kyong Hannah Chang, 'Introduction to Special Issue on Musics of Coeval East Asia', *Twentieth-Century Music* 18/3 (2021). See also Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002 [1983]).

42 Barbara Mittler uses 'pentatonic romanticism' to refer to a Romantic style that is anchored in the pentatonic mode. Barbara Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes: The Politics of Chinese Music in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China since 1949* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 33.

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Liling's performances of Beethoven and Chopin in the 1930s, and *The Splendors of Beijing* (1938) in which pentatonic and post-tonal passages are interspersed – this was composed by Jiang Wenye (Koh Bunya) who was born in Taiwan, lived in Japan, and was eventually appointed to the Teacher's College in Beijing, all of which occurred in the changing territories under interwar Japanese rule. These examples co-existed with one another in the 1920s–30s, sharing as one reference point the plethora of Western art, Romantic, modernist, and popular musics which invaded the Chinese soundscape particularly after May Fourth. Together these Western sounds form a colonial musical 'assemblage' within which musicians exercised their agency. First theorized by Gilles Deleuze and clarified by Manuel DeLanda, an assemblage takes the form of an interconnected multiplicity, and consists both of persisting as well as changing dimensions[43] – in a de/colonial framework, these latter correspond to the persistence of *coloniality* and the differentiation of colonial power across time and space; *and*, to the persistence of *decoloniality* and the differentiation of decolonial resistance across time and space.

Two important points can be drawn from the preceding analysis of the Chinese interwar soundscape. First, pentatonic romanticism and modernist-influenced works by Chinese interwar composers have a temporal relation of *synchronicity*, reflecting the simultaneous entry of tonal and post-tonal Western music into China after the First World War. Second, because of the overarching colonial structure, it makes little sense to compartmentalize the soundscape into pockets of 'resistance' (traditional *Jiangnan sizhu* ensemble), 'colonial oppression' (performances of Beethoven and Chopin), and 'suspicious' hybrid genres (symphonic and modernist works by Chinese composers). Genre boundaries occlude the pervasiveness of coloniality, and an inability to identify and name that coloniality impedes decolonial efforts.

## Global modernisms in the disciplines: comparative literature and music studies

Global musical modernisms is a framework that formed in relation to the inter-disciplines that are outlined in this section. Global *literary* modernism is a field of research that emerged in the 2000s as a response to the influence of postmodern philosophy, which peaked in the 1980s in the United States. Though postmodern philosophy (from Derrida to Foucault, Lyotard, Baudrillard, and others) enabled a broad range of thinkers to articulate the constructedness and contingency of history, media, thought, language, and social categories (including race, gender, and sexuality), the limitations of postmodernist constructedness as a heuristic began to be felt with Fredric Jameson's interpretation of aesthetic postmodernism as a symptom of late capitalism, reflecting the collapse of the critique that was central to modernist studies, wherein art forms could be understood in terms of material realities, as opposed to the depthlessness, lack of historical consciousness, and spatial disorientation of postmodern art.[44] The artifice of postmodern art traps the viewer or reader in a space utterly divorced

43 Manuel DeLanda, *Assemblage Theory* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2016). In Deleuzian terms, persisting and changing elements are 'strata' and 'assemblage'. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

44 Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', *New Left Review* 146 (1984).

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from materiality, paralleling or expressing the same 'logic' of late capitalism, wherein the subject is unable to fathom the new neoliberal configurations of capital, financial technology, speculative boom and bust stock markets, and split-second capital flights that together constitute globalization.[45] Paralleling Jameson's conception of postmodern disorientation, Andreas Huyssen refers to postmodernism as the 'fog'[46] that attempted to counter Western modernity's instrumental reason, but adding that as a result, *global* articulations of modernity have been occluded. It would seem then that postmodern art, music, and philosophy is to be subsumed – as critical, dialectic negation – within broader studies of modernity; this is precisely the approach taken by music scholars such as Alastair Williams.[47] (There are other approaches to musical postmodernism that do not necessarily bracket it in the same way as Williams,[48] but a conceptualization of *global* musical postmodernisms will have to be the subject of a separate article. For now, it will have to suffice for me to suggest that global milieus generally proceed in accordance with the developmentalist impulse of modernity/coloniality, and this in turn suggests that global musical postmodernisms may be a critical negation of that.)

When modernist literary studies returned in the 2000s, it was firmly anchored in a global context that was concurrently being re-articulated in global modernity theories, particularly the theory of alternative modernities. One of the key outcomes of this was a collapse of the high–low distinction, which may be relevant to modernist and vernacular art forms in Europe and North America, but became blurred in global encounters (as we have already seen in the previous section). In China, for instance, modernist and Chinese folk styles were received not just in terms of hierarchy but also in terms of communist revolution – modernism was thought to be too abstruse for the masses, while Chinese folk music was ideal because it was the music of the populace.[49] The verticality of the high–low distinction was pulled in lateral directions in its global re-articulations; in global literary modernist studies, high–low became increasingly obsolete as research broke boundaries of class and genre, expanding into new territories such as cinema.[50] Another effect of the global redirection is the realignment of what was received as innovative. If Western musical modernism defined itself as 'new' in distinction from the tonal music of late Romantic art music and operettas,

45 Jameson memorably elucidated the spatial disorientation of the visitor to the postmodern Bonaventura Hotel. Jameson, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', 80. Following Chela Sandoval, Madrid points out that postmodernity in the West – arising in the wake of neoliberal offshoring and union busting, combined with scepticism about progressive modernist development – is a delayed revelation of the economic and social inequalities that have always existed in the colonies. Alejandro L. Madrid, *Nor-Tec Rifa! Electronic Dance Music from Tijuana to the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 21. Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

46 Huyssen, 'Geographies of Modernism in a Globalizing World', 191.

47 Alastair Williams, *New Music and the Claims of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

48 See, e.g., Judith Lochhead and Joseph Auner, eds., *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

49 The official arts policy of the Chinese Communist Party is social realism, which was implemented from the 1930s onwards. Mittler, *Dangerous Tunes*, 30.

50 E.g., William Gardner, 'Japanese Modernism and "Cine-Text": Fragments and Flows at Empire's Edge in Kitagawa Fuyuhiko and Yokomitsu Riichi', in *The Oxford Handbook of Global Modernisms*, ed. Wollaeger and Eatough.

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both tonal music and modernist dissonance were novel to the Chinese soundscape and were simultaneously appropriated by twentieth-century Chinese composers (as we saw in the earlier discussion of the 1930s Chinese music); this constituted an initial bid for putative musical modernization that the exposure to Western sounds seems to have compelled, with the Chinese struggling to throw off both European and Japanese colonial and imperial yokes. There is a sense in which varied tonal soundings such as Xian Xinghai's Romantic-style *Yellow River* cantata, Nie Er's *March of the Volunteers* (1935; later becoming the national anthem of China), and performances of Beethoven are collectively all new to and seen as politically promising for the twentieth-century Chinese soundscape; the entwinement of aesthetic innovation (perennial in modernisms in the narrow sense) and political purpose defines these forms of *tonal modernisms* (*sic*). The seemingly oxymoronic combination of 'tonal' and 'modernism' reconfigures the conventional notion that modernism is innovative whereas twentieth-century tonal art music is lagging behind the times (e.g., Rachmaninov), aligning both tonality and post-tonality under the banner of the 'new', a word which conveys precisely the innovation that is central both to musical modernism in the narrow sense, which we can now understand with an expanded range of sounds, and to the 'modern' in general (e.g., technology).

Whereas it is with relative ease that global literary modernisms are regarded as a positive, implicitly decolonial movement, the term 'global musical modernisms' struggles with its association with the elite Western modernist canon. This is the case, I suggest, not because Western literary modernisms are inherently more flexible and less entrenched in class status. Global literary modernist studies are not hampered by a disciplinary divide that is largely genre-based, as we see in music studies. For all protestations against the obvious, the hoary divide in music studies is largely anchored in traditional global musics – often participatory (i.e., without performer–audience differentiation) – explored in ethnomusicology, versus Western art (including modernist) music, and mass media popular music, examined in musicology.[51] This division is not absolute, but it is just as relevant as the more common framework of methodological difference (ethnography in ethnomusicology versus history in musicology) that is used to characterize the disciplinary split. Obviously, such summaries of complex disciplines can hardly be comprehensive, but it is clear that, *generally* speaking, traditional global musics have been cast as resistive against Western elite music, generating an at least implicit identitarian dichotomy. This is obvious from examining any music school or music department in which ethnomusicologist(s) (often there is just one ethnomusicologist) are supposed to 'save' the Western musical curriculum through diversity.

Unlike in global literary modernist studies, there is an entrenched music disciplinary divide which tends towards maintenance of geographic-genre boundaries. There are signs that boundaries are weakening, as seen in the existence of the American Musicological Society's Global East Asian Music Research study group, and the Society for Ethnomusicology's European Music special interest group. Yet they are clearly exceptions that prove the rule, and attacking broad generalizations as 'straw men' caricatures does nothing more than

51 An exception is the exploration of the 'vernacular avant-garde' by musicologist Benjamin Piekut. Benjamin Piekut, *Henry Cow: The World Is a Problem* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 387.

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impede our ability to see individual disciplines as a whole. Typically, these straw men accusations stem from an attempt to hold on to some kind of ethical anchor, such as the notion that ethnomusicology is defined by ethnography, as opposed to its global purview, thereby deflecting a whole series of issues, such as asymmetric relations between cosmopolitan, mobile Western ethnomusicologists writing about often impoverished global musicians, a fact which no amount of methodological innovation can erase; or, global colonial relations that enabled the emergence of ethnomusicology in the first place. If ethnomusicology has a de facto global geographic referent, much of musicology has a persisting attachment to the Western canon, as seen in job postings.

The category of *global* musical *modernisms* would seem to productively confuse the music disciplinary divide, and indeed, some ethnomusicologists crossed genre boundaries in taking up this area of study, and some musicologists have crossed geographic boundaries in doing the same.[52] Nevertheless, there is the constant recurrence of the question (raised earlier) of whether global musicians can have agency within a Western-originating modernist practice (in the narrow sense), that, furthermore, continues to accrue privilege from its connections to Western institutions. At first glance, this seems to be a perfectly reasonable question. Why not seek alternatives to global musical modernisms that are already tainted with the stain of a Western modernist elitism that has propagated itself in accordance with a colonial centre-periphery logic? There may be a global desire to be modernist, but this desire is shaped by colonial structures that made modernity a phenomenon 'at large',[53] embraced by global peoples. It is at least in part the desire to be at the perceived forefront of musical development that inspires global musical modernists to cross continents in pursuit of disruptive sounds in elite Western institutions, when they themselves have been subject to colonial disruption for centuries and surely do not lack access to archives of musical disruption. I have to wonder (again) if disruption is itself a key strategy of modernity/coloniality, and whether musical modernism is therefore – at a minimum – congruent with that strategy. If there is one thing which has been musically disruptive for the past five centuries, it is the Western musical colonial assemblage comprising Western art and modernist music, missionary music (e.g., Christian hymns), military band music, and mass media popular music genres. The globalization of this assemblage has definitively disrupted global soundscapes, a fact which is minimized when 'Western impact'[54] is reinterpreted as agential *global* modernities that practice hybridity. Applying the framework of modernity/coloniality allows us to see how agency is exercised within the colonial structure of desire that Appadurai referred to as the 'bottomless appetite . . . for things *Western*' (emphasis added).[55] This affinity for the West is not merely an externally imposed ideology but an internalized desire that is simply erased from history if we cancel terms such as 'Westernization'. The

52 Examples of ethnomusicologists working on global musical modernisms whose work traverse ethnomusicology and musicology include Thomas Burkhalter, Alejandro L. Madrid, and others. Musicologists and music theorists working on global musical modernisms include Peter Chang and Yayoi Uno Everett.

53 Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

54 Bruno Nettl, *The Western Impact on World Music: Change, Adaptation, and Survival* (New York, 1985).

55 Arjun Appadurai, 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy', *Theory, Culture & Society* 7 (1990), 3.

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discursive attribution and re-distribution of agency onto global sites in the shift from 'Westernization' to 'global modernity' is well meant but distortionary.

So, do global musical modernisms constitute a form of Westernization that falls within the perimeters of musicology rather than ethnomusicology? The suspicion is that global musical modernisms (in the narrow sense) are themselves colonial, but I have come to the conclusion that this is a red herring insofar as it presumes that there exist pockets of unsullied, participatory musical traditions that could possibly serve as the anchor of pure resistance. As I suggested earlier, all musics under modernity/coloniality are modernisms in the broader sense that they are 'of the age of modernity'. By simply being conceived of as 'traditions', the latter are functioning as one part of a colonial dichotomy that reinforces the progressivist pretensions of the Western-originating ideologies of modernity and modernism, musical or otherwise. Traditions are co-extensive with ideological forces that continuously exert a colonial pressure to modernize/Westernize, and I find it hard to believe that there is a significant segment of traditions that have completely escaped this. Traditions are continually subject to both broader musical modernizations (Western-originating tonality and instruments; Western-originating acoustics) and narrower Western-originating musical modernisms. The idea that there are pockets of pure resistance is found among certain segments of Western-based music scholars – often, but not always, ethnomusicologists – who rely on this construct in order to maintain their identities as resistive against Western music. For an iconoclastic ethnomusicological position on the discipline's central genre of participatory, traditional musics, we can refer to Charle Keil's pointed statements about the 'disastrous decline' of total music-making since the emergence of other non-participatory (e.g., staged) musics; the 'loss' of 'cultural . . . diversity'; and, how 'further "progress" will deeper alienate and kill us'.[56] While younger generations of ethnomusicologists rarely risk such controversy, the same sentiment is at least implicit in, for example, Harris Berger's statement on resisting Western art music in 2014,[57] an issue which is entangled with the marginal positionality of many ethnomusicologists who work in departments dominated by Western art music.[58] The construct of musical traditions (including community-based popular music-making) as resistive (against Western music) is made even more complex in that their practitioners often are actually subverting particular social forces, justifying descriptions such as 'resistant black femininity',[59] 'more than just resistant – it's revolutionary'.[60]

56 Charles Keil, 'Reviewed Work(s): Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation by Thomas Turino', *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 41 (2009), 221.

57 General meeting at Society for Ethnomusicology 2014 conference, past president's report from Harris Berger.

58 This was pointed out by David Kaminsky in an email to the Society for Ethnomusicology discussion mailing list on 18 June 2020, as a response to Danielle Brown's open letter, in which she pointed out the persisting colonialities in ethnomusicology. Brown's letter was sent to the mailing list and also published on her blog: Danielle Brown, 'An Open Letter on Racism in Music Studies, *My People Tell Stories* (blog), 12 June 2020, www.mypeopletellstories.com/blog/open-letter.

59 Stephan Pennington, 'Willmer Broadnax, Midcentury Gospel, and Black Trans/Masculinities', *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture* 22 (2018), 122.

60 Kyle DeCoste, 'Street Queens: New Orleans Brass Bands and the Problem of Intersectionality', *Ethnomusicology* 61/2 (2017), 191.

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It goes without saying that ethnomusicology conducts invaluable research and plays an important role in the cultural sustainability of musical traditions. But the ethnomusicological resistance towards other kinds of music occludes other forms of decoloniality, a term which has become the central focal point in ethnomusicology in recent years.[61] This music genre-based distribution of resistance is seldom articulated directly, but can be discerned from the percentage of publications dedicated to particular musics. It is especially telling that while books on Latin American and Arabic musical modernism written by ethnomusicologists do exist, these are the exceptions that overwhelmingly prove the rule, and these ethnomusicologists often traverse the field of musicology as well.[62] There is a sense in which the significant segment of ethnomusicologists who ignore (non-participatory, 'staged') global musical modernisms (in the narrow sense) unintentionally erase global/BIPOC peoples and their agency. I find it especially exasperating when ethnomusicologists, who disparage anything other than participatory musics, also happen to be white (e.g., Charles Keil): their (at least implicit) message – that all other musics are compromised and therefore void of decolonial potential – *disposes of vast swathes of global/BIPOC music-makers* who happen to be modernists, a disposal evident from the paucity of related research in ethnomusicology. The denial of global/BIPOC music-makers' agency conform to a vampiric logic wherein they are treated as mere loudspeakers for colonial ideology without a mind of their own. From this perspective, they are 'dead' and, as such, uncomfortably proximal to colonial ideologies that have denied global/BIPOC peoples their humanity and agency, as evidenced in the practices of slavery and genocide. The simplicity of the resistance script is surprising given that the concept has been criticized in both anthropology and ethnomusicology by those who warn against its romanticization[63] and against the assumption that certain musics or music-makers of ethnomusicological study are inherently resistant (e.g., musical hybridity,[64] which is ubiquitous under globalization).

Give the selective association of resistance with only global/BIPOC people who engage in traditional but not modernist musics (in the narrow sense), it seems that the conception of resistance might be anchored in an identitarian form of thinking, whereby the relatively 'pure' other of traditional musics is endowed with resistance, whereas those others entangled with Western and modernist sounds are deemed to be less capable of countering actions, as if sounds 'in themselves' have oppressive or emancipatory properties. Surely, the crux of the matter is not what sounds music-makers work with, but their intentionality towards those

61 'ICTM Dialogues 2021: Towards Decolonization in Music and Dance Studies', www.ictmusic.org/dialogues2021 (accessed 8 April 2022).

62 Alonso-Minutti et al., eds., *Experimentalisms in Practice*; Burkhalter et al., eds., *The Arab Avant-Garde.*

63 Lila Abu-Lughod, 'The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power Through Bedouin Women', *American Ethnologist* 17/1 (1990).

64 See Marwan Kraidy, *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*, 153. Sarah Weiss, 'Listening to the World but Hearing Ourselves: Hybridity and Perceptions of Authenticity in World Music', *Ethnomusicology* 58/3 (2014), 511. Steven Feld, 'A Sweet Lullaby for World Music', *Public Culture* 12/1 (2000), 152. It seems that musical hybridity is generally considered to be resistive only when it occurs within the limits of conventional ethnomusicological research (traditional music, BIPOC popular music that retains its relationship to a particular community), as opposed to musicological research (intercultural modernist hybridity).

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sounds (e.g., is 'resistance' the cultural work actually being done in traditional music performances that fit into the stable tokenist structure of some US music curricula with minimal diversity?). I would argue that what we need to do is to refute the notion of pure resistance (in participatory traditional musics), and displace it with a framework whereby agency is intertwined with coloniality (in all musics, including global musical modernisms, in both the narrow and the broad senses). This conceptual realignment may be one of the keys to addressing prejudicial aspects of the division of the music disciplines. That realignment is necessary because coloniality is a universal structure that pervades all music-making, as I show in the final section of this article.

## De/coloniality of Western sounds

The discourse of decolonial theory in the Anglophone sphere from the 2000s onwards – drawing on earlier Latin American writers, especially Aníbal Quijano – proceeds from the understanding that coloniality is a persisting structure that pervades knowledge, sociality, subjectivity, and materiality.[65] In spite of the wave of decolonization in the post-Second World War period, when the vast majority of former European colonies declared independence, there is an acute sense in which capitalism has held former colonies within exploitative relations that disproportionately benefit Western economies at the top of the capitalist food chain. It is implicit in both decolonial theory and Marxist critiques of neoliberal globalization that our contemporary global formation is an assemblage with universal reach; this assemblage may be infinitely differentiated in myriad material contexts but the underlying economic, military, and political power asymmetry that favours the West (and to a lesser extent, BRIC countries) is universal. Granted, formations such as BRIC blurs the boundaries between colonial and (neo)colonized, but it is perhaps obvious to the reader that colonial power relations are replicated in the post-Second World War period through global capitalism, with many so-called 'Third World' (now often called low-income) countries trapped in cycles of foreign 'aid' and repayment with attached economic conditions (e.g., austerity measures against indebted countries' own population, in order to meet repayment deadlines) – BRIC countries have simply figured out the capitalist game. This game is called 'liquid modernity'[66] by Marxist theorist Zygmunt Bauman, wherein changing configurations of global capital lead to the ephemerality of global economic formations (e.g., capital flight) and social positionalities (e.g., jobs, income level, group affiliations). This stage of liquid modernity is also known as 'neoliberal' globalization, reflecting the rightward shift of traditionally left-leaning political parties during the Tony Blair and Bill Clinton era, to embrace corporate capitalist profits, accompanied by the weakening of unions and social safety networks.

Against the bald fact of neoliberalism's *systemic* oppression of the vast majority of former colonies, music studies' obsession with contextual and cultural difference, to the exclusion of the assemblage view of what are essentially universal colonial structures, appears to be

65 See, especially, Aníbal Quijano and Michael Ennis, 'Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism, and Latin America', *Nepantla: Views from South* 1/3 (2000).

66 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 2000).

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ineffectual.[67] Yet contextual and epistemic *differences* may spark off decoloniality, in spite of the fact that the structural asymmetry between the First and the Third worlds is *universal* in the sense of being nearly ubiquitous; as a case in point, Walter Mignolo's decolonial work proceeds from the conceptualization of the 'Third World' (counterposed against dominant Cold War polarities) as a site of decolonial knowledge.[68] What I am arguing for, then, is not a fixation on pure universality or pure difference, but the *strategic* deployment of the epistemic concept of universality (paralleling the concept of 'strategic essentialism'[69]) to parse coloniality. As an assemblage, coloniality has to be parsed through both persisting and changing dimensions across space and time, that is through both universality and difference. It is of course possible to insist on a radically atomistic view of coloniality that is anchored in the precept of the absolute individuality of particular postcolonial milieus and decolonial projects, in terms of how they intersect with differentiated structures of coloniality. The Chinese and Indonesian soundscapes are surely particularized: China went through a movement of wholesale cultural Westernization (May Fourth) but was never subjected to complete colonial rule, where Indonesia never went through a comprehensive cultural Westernization (in the same extent as China) but was subject to Dutch colonial rule. However, the parsing of coloniality through pure difference may occlude coloniality's systematicity. It is through concepts of connectivity such as transcolonialism[70] – the comparative study of myriad de/colonial contexts – that we can begin to piece together the larger picture of persisting and pervasive relations of contemporary neocoloniality. Neocoloniality is in a broader sense simply coloniality, understood as a form of relationality that originated within the past five centuries, but has persisted after the independence of former colonies.

There is an important sense in which coloniality is (in plain language) *universal*. This means that musicians exercise their agency, including decolonial resistance, *across* myriad differentiated contexts, whether in global traditional, modernist, or other sounds. Within 'global musical modernisms' broadly conceived, in addition to global musicians, I would add myriad BIPOC musicians of multiple modern/colonial genres who reside in the West, ranging from the first known Afro-European composer from the eighteenth century, Joseph Boulogne, to the Japanese-born British pianist Mitsuko Uchida, to oft stereotyped mariachi musicians in the United States, to jazz composers such as Sun Ra, to the controversial figure of Michael Jackson, and to modernists such as Isang Yun (Germany) and Chou Wenchung (United States). It is up to music scholars to articulate how complex global and BIPOC figures function within modern/colonial musical structures (e.g., how do we interpret Jackson's cosmetic skin whitening?), instead of relying on the construct of pure resistance in so-called traditional musics. There is, in an important sense, simply no 'outside' of colonial structure, only the

67 See James Currie, 'Music after All', *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 62/1 (2009).

68 Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity*, xxiii.

69 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography' (1985), in *The Spivak Reader*, ed. Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean (New York: Routledge 1996), 212.

70 Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih, 'Introduction: Thinking Through the Minor, Transnationally', in *Minor Transnationalism*, ed. Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 11.

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imbrication of agency and structure, which (as mentioned earlier) is a fundamental tenet of anthropology.

Since coloniality is universal, resistance cannot be located in only participatory traditional musics and not others. Another way to critique the idea of purely resistive traditional musics lies in an analysis of what resistance is for. Even if global traditional musicians were to resist anything in particular, it would likely be aimed at local conditions of *political*, *economic*, *and social* oppression – rather than Western *music* in Western institutions of higher education. Of course, there have been historical periods when direct resistance against Western music was highly probable (even if this has not entered colonial musical records), such as when it was imposed on indigenous peoples in the sixteenth century in Latin America. However, Western musical genres have become so ubiquitous that in every instance I can think of, contemporary global and BIPOC people self-select and elect to engage with Western sounds. Within musical coloniality, it is important to note the element of volition, and the fact of cultural re-purposing, no matter how ideologically conditioned these may be. Do we deny the decoloniality of 'Plea for Africa', the Christian hymn written by the Black South African composer John Knox Bokwe in *c.* 1894?[71] Or that of the Argentinian modernist composer Ezequiel Menalled, who utilizes the decolonial texts of Eduardo Galeano (author of *Open Veins of Latin America*, which traces European and US imperialism)?[72] By taking an assemblage view of Western-originating sounds from hymns to modernism – that have indeed been appropriated by global musicians, but remain within the colonial structure, we begin to see how the 'bottomless appetite' for Western sounds is the glue that ties decolonial South African hymns to Argentinian musical modernism, and the harmonized Zulu choral genre *isicathamiya* to the Argentine National Symphony Orchestra. Colonial musical desire helps us to map a global soundscape structured by coloniality.

* * *

As I have demonstrated in this article, my conception of global musical modernisms entails the expansion and reconfiguration of geographic, genre, and temporal dimensions of conventional (Western) music historiography, and this should clarify the limited nature of other terms used to denote global musical modernisms, such as 'interculturalism', or 'cosmopolitanism'. These terms have a smaller range of references, typically denoting musical modernism in the narrow sense, and in doing so, implying a historiographic framework that is Western in origin. Interculturalism, often used in studies of East Asian musical modernism, is anchored in the precept of the performance of ethnic identity, embodied in the traditional musics that are hybridized with modernist sounds. Within interculturalism, global composers who – as consistent with their affiliation to Western educational institutions – choose *not* to be intercultural, producing modernist works in the same mould as Western canonical figures – become inaudible; for example, Joyce Koh's *Edenkobener Bagatellen* (2004, for piano solo,

71 Grant Olwage, 'John Knox Bokwe, Colonial Composer: Tales about Race and Music', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131/1 (2006), 22.

72 Yara El-Ghadban, 'Facing the Music: Rituals of Belonging and Recognition in Contemporary Western Art Music', *American Ethnologist* 36/1 (2009), 144.

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co-written with her husband PerMagnus Lindborg) deconstructs Beethoven's *Elf neue Bagatellen*, and has no discernible intercultural element. 'Cosmopolitan' modernism does not carry the same connotation of ethnic performance as interculturalism, but it could apply equally to European composers appropriating exotic global sounds,[73] as to global composers' output, and does not have the same referent as 'global musical modernisms' as I have defined it earlier (i.e., people outside of Europe and the United States, and ethnic minorities within Europe and the United States).

By way of conclusion, I would reiterate that the three genre, temporal, and geographic expansions propelled by global musical modernisms enact precisely decolonization – of the narrow boundaries of Western musical modernism (elitist circles in Europe and the United States in the twentieth century and onwards). First, genre expansion. As I argued earlier, global musical modernisms encompass all musics of modernity that were disrupted by coloniality, including putatively traditional musics as they entered new social and physical spaces (e.g., concert halls). Musical modernism in the narrow sense, especially in its global articulations, has always been entwined with other musics, especially putatively 'low' traditional musics. A narrow definition of global musical modernism, while convenient for denoting certain bodies of music, is thus always already incomplete. The relationality of global modernist and traditional musics, whose meanings are mutually derivative (modern and traditional are relational terms), is indicative of the connection between all modern genres (including so-called traditional musics) under coloniality. All modern genres were sounded out under the ideology of *terra nullius* that anchors disruption in both Western modernity (*terra nullius* at home) and global modernity/coloniality (*terra nullius* abroad).

The second form of expansion, of temporal boundaries, can be seen in colonial framings that extend from the twentieth century (the time frame of a narrow modernism) backwards; this expansion can be understood through the analytic of disruption that commenced with the arrival of the Spanish in the Americas in the sixteenth century and continued through colonial history, ending with global modernist disruptions of traditional musics through hybridity. The reconceptualization of temporality, in addition to expansion, also encompasses a questioning of the diachronic assumption of Western historiographic temporal flow (Classic–Romantic–modernist), which is disrupted by consideration of the temporal synchronicity brought about by the sudden invasion of Western musics in global milieus, as seen in the case of interwar China.

The third and final form of expansion – of geographic boundaries – seems to be obvious, but it is only with this expansion that we can finally begin to see transcolonial connections between myriad modern musical soundings, from the enlarged *Jiangnan suzhu* ensemble to experimental gamelan, from Nie Er's protest songs to the Indonesian popular genre of *kroncong* (that has its colonial roots in the music of seventeenth-century Portuguese sailors), and from Chinese to Indonesian symphony orchestras and piano students.

73 Björn Heile, 'Erik Bergman: Cosmopolitanism and the Transformation of Musical Geography', in *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, ed. Guldbrandsen and Johnson.

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In its horizontal, vertical, and temporal expansion and reconfiguration, the historiography of global musical modernisms directly challenges and *decolonizes* Western music historiography, dismantling the notion that Western musical modernism is the teleological end point of music history – a notion which persists not necessarily as a belief held by individual music scholars, but in the very *structure* of diachronic music historical eras. One way music scholars can counter the teleological conception of Western musical modernism is by turning to expansionary global musical modernisms, tracing out the relational entanglement of myriad Western and global musicians and contexts that have been ignored for far too long. It is undeniable that global musical modernisms are imbricated with coloniality, but it is precisely this relation which highlights the remarkable ways in which music-makers have appropriated the tools available to them for the purposes of resistance within constrained contexts.

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