

Timothy D. Taylor. 2007. *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World*. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press.

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This book reminds us how the creation, sound, and consumption of music—as well as the ways in which we produce located knowledges about music—are shaped by power relations with long histories. The regimes through which “the West” dominates, represents, and incorporates its “Others” lie at the heart of Timothy D. Taylor’s intellectual project. Taylor is a professor of ethnomusicology and musicology at the University of California, Los Angeles. Positioned within and between two disciplinary formations, *Beyond Exoticism* is the follow-up to the excellent *Strange Sounds* (2001), which focused on the role of technology in the construction of musical imaginaries since World War II. As Taylor showed in that book, analogue and digital technologies have mobilized the tropes of exploration, and generated a host of fascinations with subjects and spaces beyond the physical and psychic borders of an imaginary West. To borrow a term from the philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the West is a “desiring machine” that needs Others in order to define the contours of its own identity and subjectivities. The ordering of that relationship between Self and Other is one of the central threads that runs through the weave of *Beyond Exoticism*. Taylor himself suggests that this new book is more closely aligned with his earlier *Global Pop* (1997), written at the moment that “world music” had secured its place as a market category in the local megastore. Some of that book’s emphasis on globalization discourse through case studies of particular musicians and their recordings informs the approach of *Beyond Exoticism*. But this project has a broader ambit, stretching from the seventeenth century to the present, beginning with the rise of tonality and opera and ending with world music in television advertising. The historical *durée* is periodized in terms of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization, and Taylor stresses continuities as well as cultural and ideological shifts in Western music’s engagement with the rest of the world.

Before addressing the scope of his argument, some of its finer points, and possible limitations, it is important to acknowledge that Taylor deftly combines lucidity and nuance in a work of such breadth. *Beyond Exoticism* is crisply written, mercifully free of jargon, and addresses important concepts and issues in a vocabulary that graduates, undergraduates, and non-academic readers should be able to understand and apply in their own encounters

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with music of many kinds. The book's emphasis on a multitude of musical discourses from scores to Internet chat makes it easily translatable across disciplines. While many academics in popular music studies at the very least pay lip service to interdisciplinarity, they often still fear the alien language of some disciplinary others. As someone located in media and cultural studies who hasn't been schooled in Western classical music and who doesn't read music or play a musical instrument (unless it's a playback device for recordings), this reviewer has to confess some relief that Taylor uses musical notation sparingly, mainly to illustrate broader political questions, rather than to fetishize musical form and style. The book is still concerned with aesthetics, but writing in the context of US imperial expansion on many military fronts, Taylor offers this timely statement of purpose on the last page: "as the slide toward theo-fascism in America continues, it is important to go beyond the text and reclaim the social, the cultural, and the historical" (212).

My first impression of this book was that it seems to be primarily aimed at the kind of musicology that prevails in most US music departments. This point isn't meant as a criticism of Taylor or the value of this book for scholars and students in other disciplines or institutional locations. In fact many musicologists have argued for conceiving of music in more socio-economic-cultural terms—music as it is shaped by and contributes to the formation of social relations. But the fact of this book and the force of Taylor's critique is an indictment of the continuing hegemony of what he calls "the classical music ideology" in most music departments. This intellectual legacy is largely constituted through an emphasis on genius composers and the formal intricacies of works of art, the meanings of which are usually defined by the close readings of skilled musicologists. From the tenor of this book, particularly its first half, the Eurocentrism and formalism of Western art music and classical music appear resilient despite the critical interventions of Marxist, poststructuralist, and postcolonial studies in the humanities and social sciences. Taylor draws on historians and literary scholars influenced by Michel Foucault's work to socially embed musical discourse—*inside* and *outside* the sonic, though that distinction is one that continues to haunt the field of music studies more broadly. But he also cites sociologists and anthropologists, cultural studies researchers, and more populist forms of writing and talk. Though he refers to the work of musicologists, the burden of the book's argument rests on it bringing a wider set of research materials and interpretative methods to chip away at the edifice of a conservative musicology. Taylor remarks that the canon may have become more inclusive because of the "new musicology," but the study of music remains inadequately historicized. While the term "exoticism" has

generated a growing literature in musicology, Taylor believes that it has been too preoccupied with form and style at the expense of larger social forces.

However, this is not only a book directed to musicologists. Taylor points out the shortcomings of other scholarly approaches to Western music's representation and appropriation of the rest of the world. Writers in cultural studies tend to orient their approach through the shorter time-frame and dichotomy of modernity and postmodernity. They can also be too formalist at the expense of ethnographic work. However, ethnography is presentist, and therefore anthropological approaches require a strong historical dimension. To this end, Taylor's research archive includes historians' accounts and cultural theory, documents by composers, press commentary, contemporary accounts of theatrical performances, the images on CD covers and their liner notes, statements from people who work in the music industry, and the talk of listeners and fans on websites.

The tripartite periodization of colonialism, imperialism, and globalization risks the production of a grand(iose) narrative, but there is a more modest methodological logic to Taylor's structure for the book. Apart from emphasizing the sedimentation of various Western ways of conceiving of the Other, it reminds the reader of the fluid lines and common ideological ground in much thinking about classical, popular, and world musics. Like musicologist Robert Fink, Taylor also tries to represent the "afterlife" of Western classical music in popular and world musics. The latter part of the book's emphasis on how genre categorizations recruit ideas of "authenticity" points to the longevity and pervasiveness of these discourses across musical domains that are often considered distinct. Popular music writers and listeners have inherited some of their judgments, hierarchies, and modes of legitimation for popular music from the Western art and classical music system.

Chapter 1 addresses the emergence and institutionalization of tonality and opera in relation to early European colonialism. Taylor is less concerned with technical analysis of the music than with broader shifts in knowledge. He argues that the dominant epistemology of resemblances, due largely to the lack of information about others, began to change after Columbus and the invasion of the New World. Taylor considers the integration of musical versions of others in Western repertoires alongside changing modes of subjectivity/subjectification or "self-fashioning," and new ways of conceptualizing space. For example, the *moresca*, *morisca*, or moor's dance, a parody of the music of slaves in Germany and Italy and a precursor of English morris dancing, had become popular throughout western Europe in the fifteenth century and was used as an interchangeable signifier for racial Otherness. In the sixteenth century it started to move into more elite

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musical forms as the Other appeared in a proliferating range of representations. The more established notions of gendered difference were mapped onto an emergent set of differences around race. The feminization of the New World and less geographically distant non-white Europeans informed the masculine selfhood of the Western subject. The Copernican revolution, colonial exploration, and the concomitant growth of cartography shifted perceptions of space. As colonial projects became more clearly fleshed out, an aggregated view of space was replaced by a perspective on space that sought to unite disparate spaces in a single system, managed from a European center. Taylor argues for structural homologies between these wider ideological developments and discourses of music. Tonality creates centers and margins; the tonic is the home to the Other of the non-tonic. The Other helps to define the expansive power of the Western subject. For Taylor, mechanistic metaphors for describing musical temporality are gradually superseded by spatial metaphors. Taylor then adapts Bakhtin's writing on carnival and the emergence of polyglossia in the form of the novel to describe the incorporation of different voices in the seventeenth-century English masque and early opera in Venice. The case study of William Lawes's *Britannia Triumphans* (1638), one of the last masques, alongside a general discussion of Venetian operas, serves to demonstrate that the music system was passing through a new stage of royal patronage shaped by mercantile endeavours, colonial encounters, and the emergent representation of new social classes at home.

The Other became the source of innovations in opera during the Enlightenment. On the edge of an uncertainly bordered Europe, and with its own empire, Turkey and Turkish elements served as an all-purpose exotic imaginary of fears and fascinations. In chapter 2, Taylor surveys several operas and provides more detailed case studies of Jean-Philippe Rameau's opera-ballet *Les Indes galantes* (1735) and Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782). In the former, sounds associated with Turkey could signify "new world savages." In the latter, Otherness was more variably modulated as parody, a sign of duplicity, and even nobility through particular musical devices and characters. The almost half-century between these two stage presentations witnessed the figure of the noble savage emerging from the shadows of colonial genocide. But the incorporation of the Other was also now part of the shift of martial vernacular languages into nascent nationalist projects. The Austrians had defeated the Turks under Joseph I and foreign elements in fractured form contributed to the formation of German linguistic culture and a national theater. According to Taylor, by the time of Beethoven's Symphony no. 9 (1823), Otherness is central to the formation of musical Westernness. Once alien sonics now denote celebration and reveal the flexibility of selfhood in the West as it absorbs the conquered Other.

In chapter 3, Taylor examines Western classical music in the “age of empire,” as periodized by the historian Eric Hobsbawm. The years 1875–1914 witness the growing influence of social Darwinism and “racial sciences.” These biological determinisms shape a conception of the world of music on an evolutionary scale, with non-Western people and their sonic practices lagging behind the West. Addressing the modern maelstrom that Marx, Freud, and Saussure come to define, Taylor chooses not to tackle their ideas in detail, but embeds them in the broader changes associated with urbanization; in particular, he looks to changing consumption patterns that engender new forms of desire for the Other. The city brings socioeconomic classes into close encounters. New reproduction technologies disseminate sounds and images from disparate sources more widely as mass culture grows rapidly. Spectacles and objects of Otherness are mediated through Worlds Fairs, Trocadero, and the museum system. Vicarious voyaging offered by these technologies and spaces expands the vistas of consumer dreams. Gender and sexual relations are transformed as women increasingly enter the labour force beyond the domestic sphere and homosexuals come into being as subjects of the state. If “all that is solid melts into air,” as Marx famously pronounced, then notions of individuality and selfhood may at least be in flux, if not in “danger of erosion,” as Taylor contends.

Taylor draws our attention to some ideological shifts in the Western elite music system as it responds to this rapidly changing environment in which the use and exchange values of music are transformed. As aristocratic patronage is replaced by an emerging music industry of new performance venues, paymasters, and copyrights, the romantic idea of an autonomous art/music with uniquely alienated artist-composers is institutionalized. The unique value of music and the specialized status of composers are both enhanced. Taylor reads these changes in the music system around the figures of Stravinsky, Schoenberg, and Adorno to refract well-worn debates in studies of musical modernism. The rise of aesthetics as a discipline (in Foucault’s sense as well as an academic one) is seen here as a stage in the commodification of music, conceived increasingly as “exchangeable, aestheticized bits.” The authorial self of the avant garde, alienated from the masses, seeks Others to represent the losses and incoherences of modern, industrialized society. At the same time, Taylor argues that the emergence of the culture concept, and with it cultural relativism, provided new relationships to the Other that register ambivalent and conflicting attitudes to the imperial project and metropolitan capitalism. Taylor looks at bitonality in a series of Ravel’s works as shaped in considerable part by contemporary French debate about the virtues and problems of empire. Seeking some distance from the new order of things, neo-primitivism and flirtations with folk music shore up the idea of the artist’s mobile subjectivity. In the United States, Charles Ives’s editing

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or sampling of sounds from elsewhere is evidence of this authorial drive, while Henry Cowell's *United Quartet* (1936) imagines a universal music emerging from a more plural and anthropological conversation between musical languages and cultures.

This reviewer cannot speak in detail to the specific musical case studies in the first half of this book due to a lack of familiarity with classical and Western art music. But Taylor's claims to the social imbrication of musical forms and practices seem convincing to this reader, given their continuities with the more familiar case studies of the second half of the book, which deals with globalization and world music. The development of consumption and consumerism, the commodification of music, and the subjectivity and authorial identity of the Western musician-artist are issues analyzed in more recent contexts. After a brief précis outlining debates on globalization (main points: the nation is not dead, but diminished; globalization needs to be seen as part of a long process of "worlding" an economic system), chapter 4 focuses on the role of the Western musician who coordinates encounters between musicians and styles from the metropolitan West and other places. In many ways this work follows the considerable post-*Graceland* (1986) scholarship on Western mediators of Other music such as Paul Simon, David Byrne, and Ry Cooder. That critique from ethnomusicologists and popular music scholars was contemporaneous with the establishment of "world music" as a market category.

Here Taylor emphasizes the growing valorization of the musician as producer, a role that now has the high status and cultural capital of the film director-auteur. This producer figure, exemplified here by the bass player Bill Laswell, travels around the world in airplanes or through digital technologies. These technologies blur the distinctions between musical consumption and production as different kinds of music are sampled, collected, and sequenced together by producers who function like tour guides in an art mode of production. Taylor demonstrates that the discourse of "collaboration" is invoked by such mediators, their record labels, and media commentary to distance themselves from unethical "rip-offs" and inauthentic appropriations, even as the precise nature of that collaboration and the roles of collaborators are obscured behind the unifying authorial brand of the Western producer.

Taylor turns from the figure of the producer to questions of musical categorization in chapters 5 and 6. First, he addresses debates about hybridity, one of the key metaphors to describe recent musical fusions engendered by globalization and multiculturalism in the West. He argues that hybridity is a floating signifier that can serve as a prescription for musical "authenticity"; it can also be deployed against older notions of authenticity, and like the term "world music" it threatens to collapse different musics into one category.

Taylor worries a great deal about the reification of genre categories, using the discourse around Panjabi/South Asian diasporic Bhangra Remix music in the USA and UK as ethnographic material to show how the hybrid is deployed as a figure to characterize subjectivities as well as musical styles. Through this figure, subjects in diaspora negotiate relationships between their identities where they live and imaginary homelands, as well as between generations in their families. Taylor argues that the relationship of Bhangra Remix to African diasporic musical styles is not mentioned in discussions of its hybridity. However, this reviewer would argue that such an oversight is one of outside commentators rather than the participants of these music cultures. In trying to trace diasporic lines from the Western nation to an originary homeland, culturalists fail to adequately consider the networks of diasporic and interdiasporic relations inhabited by the producers and consumers of such music. Taylor investigates what John Hutnyk calls the “radical hybridity” of the British (South Asian) group Asian Dub Foundation (ADB), pointing out its debt to hip hop and reggae. However Taylor doesn’t acknowledge the discourse of political blackness and activism from which ADB emerged in the British context, a movement that sought to create anti-racist affiliations between African-Caribbean and Asian workers, united under the term “black.” ADB also identified itself with a new UK genre in the 1990s, namely Jungle, produced by the hybridization of digital reggae, hip hop, and sampling technologies. This genre, however racially problematic or ironic its moniker, is testament to the instability of genres, generic splitting, and zygosis that are increasingly part of popular culture, a point overlooked by Taylor in his efforts to demonstrate the reification of music categories. The fact that Jungle mutated into Drum ’n’ Bass also makes the point that the Other of world music may itself be more of an unstable formation as a market category than Taylor suggests. After all, world music emerged from the postwar “rock formation,” is informed by those baby-boomer ideologies, and so may itself be transformed into something beyond the term “world music.” The discursive moorings of world music owe a great deal to rock music in the Western imagination. Taylor contends that working-class blackness operates as the focal point for authenticity in Western world music discourse, dominating and erasing musical genealogies and the understanding of others. Blackness may be absorbed by rock discourse to hide inheritances from music like reggae and soul music as in the case of Aboriginal- and European-descended Australian group Yothu Yindi, whose aboriginality is framed in terms of rock rebellion.

In chapter 6, Taylor describes how the affinities between incorporated Hawaii and US country music are disavowed because country’s associations make it “uncool.” The case of the documentary soundtrack album *Songs of*

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the Hawaiian Cowboy/Na Mele O Paniolo (1997) demonstrates that for the rock and world music cognoscenti informed by the aesthetic postures of the “white hipster,” country is tainted by associations with the small-town white working class. Middle-class rock and world music listeners prefer their authentic working classes to be urban blacks rather than rural whites. Others from around the world deemed as making political statements with their music are interpreted through the prism of African American radicalism or other projections of rock authenticity. The Other makes “cultural music,” a synonym for deeply rooted music apparently made outside the world of economic exchange. Taylor suggests that, through narcissistic maneuvers around the concept of “world music,” dominant racialized subjectivities in the West continue to shape the production and consumption of music from around the world. These discourses of race and ethnicity are inflected with ideas about socioeconomic class. The last two chapters of the book emphasize that “world music” is also a product of an international bourgeoisie with “global informational capital” and familiar with what “multinational multiculturalism” has to offer the Western consumer. In chapter 7, Taylor shows that the tropes of the feminized or infantile Other from colonial times are replayed in the sounds of new-age world music used in TV commercials for airlines, cruise ships, and cars. Here world music is becoming “classicized,” in part to infuse the latter with the whiff of spirituality that soothes a transnational corporate class, in part for the cultural capital yoked to classical music.

Taylor’s book is a powerful statement about the long history of Western music’s very constitution through its engagement with the Other. These soundings and representations fix and manipulate the Other according to the West’s sonic and visual imaginations. Certain tropes and techniques are reproduced but also modified across the centuries. I have three qualms about Taylor’s overall argument. The first is the simple wish that he had tied together the thematic threads of spatialization, subjectivity, consumption, and the Other from the colonial to the global in a less cursory concluding chapter. The second concern is that any study that posits the “West and the rest” after the fashion of Edward Said’s groundbreaking *Orientalism* (1978) risks constructing social relations in binary terms that leave the Other silent and give her little or no agency. How have subjects—including musicians—from the world dominated by colonial, imperial, and global regimes of truth negotiated and responded to these skewed power relations? Taylor offers a glimpse in arguing that modes of governmentality worked out overseas in the colonies/empire helped to shape Western metropolitan subjectivity, but in this book the Other remains a structuring absence. To be fair to the author, that is precisely his point, but *Beyond Exoticism* also

reproduces that elision. The references to Pacific and Asian diasporic subjects in the West indicate the contestation of these hegemonic discourses, however ineffectual this struggle might be against the greater forces of the global music system. But one feels that Taylor might have let us know a little more about the possibilities and permutations of a “third space” that he claims—after postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha—can imagine non-reified hybridities. Related to this point, another qualm about this otherwise excellent book is that it reads a little like it was written at the height of “world music” as a genre category in the 1990s. Given Taylor’s insights into musical technologies in other publications (only a minor theme in this book), this reviewer was somewhat disappointed that the concluding chapter did not venture more on how digital technologies and translocal musical encounters, collaborations, borrowings, rip-offs, blogosphere mixes, and mash-ups suggest new trajectories of intersubjectivity and affect. These may echo but also comment upon previous power relations, such as recent instances of slum chic, postcolonial kitsch, ironic exotica, and nu-whirled music. But such forms and practices may also enable new ways of engaging with others, as others also incorporate “our” cultural forms and practices. This may happen through the same old metropolitan-peripheral lines of cultural traffic, but also between peripheral locations that are unevenly integrated into a global system: inter-Asian, African-Asian, inter-African, Asian-Caribbean, Latin American–European, Mediterranean–West Asian, and so on. The Rest also sample from many parts of the world, not just the West. Studies like Tejaswini Niranjana’s *Mobilizing India: Women, Music and Migration Between India and Trinidad* (2006) also describe colonial and postcolonial networks that may undermine the confidence that the West or a Western subjectivity has singularly charted the most influential musical coordinates and journeys; or, in fact, that the West has a coherent identity or clear borderlines.

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