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Ethnomusicology Ireland 6
Editor's Preface

The world into which this sixth edition emerges is fundamentally altered from that of the last edition. The status quo, such as it was, has been radically disrupted, and there is little we can take for granted in 2020, including how we think about, engage with, and experience music. Human beings are in the middle of, or just emerging from, the most large-scale and extreme period of social isolation that we have ever experienced. We are only just able to speculate about the long-term effects that this will have on the way we understand and negotiate our everyday lives. We are also in the midst of an urgent confrontation with systemic racism and the social inequalities that exist across class, race, and gender, a confrontation that leaves me both hopeful about the opportunity for profound change and despondent over the risk of a return to complacency and silence. It is clear that there is a lot of work ahead, and that ethnomusicology in particular occupies an incredibly ambiguous position with regard to how this work might be done. We can only figure out how by listening to each other (and to marginalised voices MORE than other voices) and by making concrete plans, and I know that both ICTM Ireland and *Ethnomusicology Ireland* are committed to providing a space for those plans to be laid and realised.

The performances, stories, and ideas examined in the six articles and six reviews that comprise this edition are in a sense of a different era, an era before before the act of live music-making, not to mention the livelihoods of musicians, became endangered, and before we were rightly and finally challenging the basic structures of our discipine and the legacy of colonialism that continues to shape it. While the articles cannot speak directly to the important questions that will emerge over the coming years, they do attend to other relevant questions regarding music's role in our experience of humanity, from ethnicity and identity to natural disasters, from gender and genre to tradition and change.

We begin with a trenchant examination of music, sound and catastrophe in **Britta Sweers**'s wide-ranging exploration of the sonorities (both natural and human-made) of storm tides in Northern Germany. Beginning with vivid descriptions of the soundscapes of these disastrous storms, Sweers articulates the strong connections between sound, memory, and trauma that persist in the minds of those who experienced them. Investigating the ties and discrepancies between these soundscapes and the musical and literary treatment of storms, she moves on to analyse the ways in which sound is used in the oral literary narrations that recount historic storm tides. The final section considers 20th- and 21st-century responses to storm tides in popular music, examining quite different responses to storms. Sweers's combined analysis of soundscape, narration, and music demonstrates a nuanced and compelling approach to a topic that cannot be ignored.

We are also excited to include an article based on the excellent keynote given by **Lillis Ó Laoire** at the annual ICTM Ireland meeting in 2018, which asserts an important series of revisions to our understanding of gender in Irish traditional song. Following a brief account of the dominant strands of discourse surrouding gender in traditional music over the last twenty-five years, Ó Laoire steps back into the past and considers transgressive and divergent examples from a history that has long been boxed-in by heteronormative narratives. Using the practice of keening as a focal point, Ó Laoire asks us to reconsider and recontextualise traditional song in order to locate stronger ties between the past and a present in which rigid binaries are no longer desirable or sufficient. The article is a powerful reminder of music's transformative capacity, and of the necessity for thinking about musical history in a dynamic and critical way.

The next two articles speak to and with each other, exploring Irish traditional music scenes outside of the island of Ireland, and preoccupied by issues of circulation, identity, and authenticity. **Caetano Maschio Santos** provides a richly detailed ethnographic portrait of the Irish-Celtic music scene in Brazil, tracing its spread from the Celtic Tiger period up through more recent times. Relying on his own insider knowledge of the scene as well as interviews with key interlocutors, Santos looks at the scene in a number of virtual and physical sites. By tracing individuals and groups across cities in Brazil, Santos is able to demonstrate the diversity of motivations, influences, and practices that different musicians bring to the performance of Irish traditional music, and the varied meanings it is therefore capable of producing. In addition to calling attention to issues of authenticity and romanticism in a globalised borrowing such as this, this article is also a fascinating portrait of grassroots music-making from the ground.

Felix Morgenstern takes a more historical approach to his exploration of Irish traditional music in Germany as he examines the ways in which music both articulates and challenges constructions of ethnicity, nationalism, and identity. He begins by teasing apart the complex and problematic categories of German folk music and Irish traditional music, highlighting in particular their ties to nationalist ideologies of the 20th century. He then explores the ways in which the affinities between the two were mobilised by German musicians in a post-war context in order to forge a replacement for the German folk that was so associated with Nazi-era connotations of racial superiority. Moving through the lens of Celticity, Morgenstern ultimately asserts the ways in which Irish music in Germany today has shed many of its ties to nationality altogether, operating through 'sonic' rather than 'ethnic' Irishness.

The next article is another consideration of an imported musical genre, but this time the topic is a genre brought *into* the Irish context, as **John Millar** considers some of the reasons beind the sustained popularity of country music in Ireland, particulary in the West and Northwest. He makes a strong argument for understanding social dances as a primary site of continuity for 'country and Irish' music, from the heighth of its popularity in the 1970s and 80s through a period of relative decline, and into its current resurgence. Using three ethnographic vignettes as a focal point, Millar describes the ways in which social dances today create and affirm the country music scene in a palpable and embodied sense which cannot be removed from the music itself. Here, he is less concerned with issues of authenticity and appropriation in terms of genre; instead, he paints a vivid picture of the integral role that dance plays in forging both musical and social realities.

We end with yet another varation on the theme of circulation – in this case the far-reaching effects caused by the cross-cultural movement of instruments. **Anaïs Verhulst** examines the impact of the adapatation of the Western violin to Karnatak music in South India through the close musical analysis of two specific contrasting performances of the same *krti*, or vocal composition. Her first example examines adapation by focusing on how and why the violin was already well-suited for accompanying Karnatak vocal performance. The second example shifts its focus to the ways in which the instrument has pushed this classical tradition to transform, having impacted not only performance practice (through the introduction of purely instrumental performance), but also the formal and musical characteristics of the genre. Based on interview, fieldwork, and her own study of Karnatak playing, Verhulst offers a new perspective on our understaning of both the violin and South Indian classical music.

Jaime Jones July 2020

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I'd like to give my heartfelt thanks to Aileen, Méabh, and John, who have been incredibly supportive and patient during this extended process. JJ

“Trutz, Blanke Hans” – Musical and Sound Recollections of North Sea Storm Tides in Northern Germany

Britta Sweers

Abstract

Similar to other North Sea regions, the flat North German coastal areas have been shaped by severe storm tides and floods. Until present day, these extreme environmental phenomena have been playing a significant role in private and public memory. This article explores how these experiences are reflected in local cultural practices, particularly in traditional and popular music. As becomes apparent from a historical perspective, written and musical works that dealt directly the storm floods became only more clearly evident in the 19th century, such as Detlev von Liliencrons poem ballad “Trutz, Blanke Hans“ (1882/83). Songs dealing directly with storm floods only appeared more frequently in the 20th century. As is evident with German pop musician Achim Reichel and sea shanty band Santiano, von Liliencron’s ballad in particular became a central reference point. This article likewise explores perceptions of the actual sound of these events, which have been described as extremely or even physically loud, and which have been mostly responded by silence until present day. Analyzing the relationship between the actual threat, the sound environment, and musical practices, this article reflects on the localization of extreme environmental topics in human music making and the role of music within these extreme nature-related experiences.

Keywords: Soundscape, environmental disaster, storm tides, Achim Reichel, Detlev von Liliencron, Santiano, Northern Germany, “Trutz, Blanke Hans”, North Sea.

Heute bin ich über Rungholt gefahren,
die Stadt ging unter vor sechshundert Jahren.
Noch schlagen die Wellen da wild und empört
wie damals, als sie die Marschen zerstört.
Die Maschine des Dampfers schütterte, stöhnte,
aus den Wassern rief es unheimlich und höhnte:
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

I have sailed over Rungholt town today,
five hundred years ago it was washed away
The waves still pound there, wild and arsh,
just as before, when they destroyed the marsh.
The steamship’s engines shake and creak,
From the sea comes a weird and mocking shriek:
Trutz, blanke Hans!

This first verse of Detlev von Liliencron’s poem “Trutz, Blanke Hans” (1882-83) introduces one of the most significant literary re-narrations of a devastating storm tide in the German North Frisian North Sea region. Describing the destruction of the settlement Rungholt that presumably occurred in the 14th century, the poem is still interrelated with local environmental memory in the 20th and 21st centuries. Up to the

present day, storm tides, most specifically those of 1962 and 1976, have been playing a major role in private and public memory in Northern Germany that has been shaped, similar to the Netherlands, by the impact of severe storms and flooding.

Many music traditions, as well as modern folk bands, have been addressing the natural phenomenon of storms, also within an oceanic context, often as a means of describing inner emotional experiences. A good example is the Irish band Clannad that integrated depictions of storms at the Irish Atlantic coast as a central part of their songwriting, as evident on the album *Macalla* (1985) with songs like "Almost Seems (Too Late to Turn)", "In a Lifetime", and "Northern Skyline". Similarly, destructive storm events, particularly hurricanes, have inspired contemporary music making.

Recordings such as the interpretations of the German rock singer Achim Reichel (1978) and shanty band Santiano (2015) illustrate that Liliencron's poem has repeatedly been set to music. At yet, in contrast to hurricanes, the topic of North Sea storm tides was mostly avoided in North German music making until the late 20th century.[i] At this point, related debates became increasingly interconnected with environmental discourses addressing global climate changes, including the rising sea level that will affect the coastal regions of these areas.

Focusing on North Sea storm tides, this article explores the experience of extreme environmental phenomena in music and sound. The sound-related analysis addresses the actual soundscape that is interrelated with the physical experience of storm, which still requires traditional acoustic warning devices such as fireworks and church bells. Moreover, in analyzing the relationship between the actual threat, the sound environment, and musical practices, this article also reflects on the localisation of extreme environmental topics in human music making. This includes the role of music in the context of extreme nature experiences, but also the usage of sound references and onomatopoetic devices in literary works. At the same time, my analysis relates to trauma experience within the actual events and memory transmission through sound experience. As is argued here, the combined analysis of sound and music practices provides insights into a deep, cultural (shared) subconscious. In the case of North Sea storm tides, this has been shaped by factors such as avoidance and respect and superstition, which provide further understanding of how humans deal with environmental threats in the 21st century.

Destructive Natural Forces and Soundscape in Research

Natural disasters have been repeatedly addressed in ethnomusicology; yet often in relation with conflict management, as in the case of the Tsunami disasters (Haskell 2015), or, with regard to the broader complex of oceanic storm phenomena, such as hurricanes, mostly in relation with Hurricane Katrina. In the case of Katrina, most studies have been discussing the impact on local musical infrastructure and music-related aid/ relief projects (Sakakeeny 2013; Haskell 2015:461), but less the actual sound-related experience of the event. This article explores how humans have been dealing with an extreme natural phenomenon sound-wise in real-life-situations and in musical works. Also in reflecting on how sound, such as bell ringing, was symbolically interpreted, it hereby addresses the broader question of how sound experiences have been permeating culture and shared memory.

A further gap within the complex of ethnomusicology and extreme natural phenomena relates to the analysis of the actual storm soundscape, which has been mostly undertaken as part of practical (e.g. compositional) exercises, less so within ethnomusicological research, aside from music historical studies of musical scores depicting storms.[ii] The article thus also endeavours to look at and listen to the soundscape of storm and storm tides. Following Ingold's (2007) critical approach towards soundscape studies, the article likewise argues that the experience of soundscape cannot be separated from other environmental perceptions. Such an approach not only includes the *visual*, but also, in particular, the *haptic* (touch)

perception that is interconnected with the experience of physical violence in this context. Yet, this interrelation of extreme soundscapes with a physical-haptic side (the storms described here make it unable to stand upright, are painful on the skin or likewise interconnected with sharp rainfall and hail storms) has mostly been overlooked in music studies to date. This points to a third element, the *affective* side of soundscape experience (cf Ahmed 2004), particularly with regard to long-term memorisation in which sound-related recollections play a central role.

Descriptions of the major storm tides are evident in a variety of historical accounts and narrations. Given their central of role with regard to modern musical interpretations, I explore the usage of sound-related terminology to describe and evoke fictive images of storm tides acoustically. Besides selected mythological narratives, I will specifically focus on two central literary works by 19th century German authors Detlev von Liliencron and Theodor Storm in which acoustic literary descriptions play a significant atmospheric and psychological role. With regard to the contemporary situation, especially concerning the 1962 and 1976 events, I not only rely on informal interviews: I also draw on a large range of local newspaper, radio, and TV accounts, especially from the *Norddeutsche Rundfunk* (NDR). These, as well as informal research,[iii] have also constituted the major resource of public knowledge. On the one hand, as is evident from these modern accounts, storm tides are part of local (as in the case of Hamburg) long-term memory. On the other hand, retrospective journalistic accounts have likewise contributed to a deeper embedding of this long-term cultural memory during the re-narrations at anniversary dates and thus require a careful reading.

Since the first decade of the new millennium, soundscape studies have undergone a major growth in ethnomusicology and cultural studies. However, this area has likewise been a growing focus of other disciplines, such as technical studies interested in the improvement of the relationship between the aural space and living environment. As is, for example, pointed out by technical acousticians Schulte-Fortkamp and Lecher (2003:1), “The sonic environment is seen here as mediator between humans, their activities and the environment.“ The authors hereby point to the same core reference as ethnomusicological studies, specifically Raymond Murray Schafer’s works, most prominently *The Tuning of the World* (1977). In his seminal publication Schafer postulated the foundations of soundscape studies or “acoustic ecology” which analyzes the relationship between sound, humans, and the environment. Within this context, human-made sound, particularly since the Industrial Revolution, has been depicted negatively as acoustic pollution by Schafer. Yet, Schulte-Fortkam and Lecher also criticize Schafer’s philosophically grounded approach for a phenomenological and elitist perspective, apparent in a clear “aesthetic moralism” (ibid.:2). Rather, as they continue, more profound answers could be found in technical studies that set their core interest on psychoacoustics due to the focus on annoyance-related empirical research. Yet, this is likewise debated. For example, clearly acknowledging the emergence of soundscape studies in ecological studies, Matsinos et al. (2012:16,19) criticize the marginal and often isolated, decontextualised treatment, often within an urban context, by natural sciences, such as noise studies.

Despite interdisciplinary overlaps, ethnomusicological research methods have been largely absent in these studies – along with the analysis of the role and sociocultural context of acoustic perception. The situation thus raises the question as to whether ethnomusicology needs to interrelate music (performance), the sociocultural context, and soundscape analysis even more strongly in order to gain more attention within the interdisciplinary context, particularly with regard to natural sciences. Yet, as will also be explored in this article, the ethnomusicological study of extreme natural phenomena likewise calls for a deeper contextualisation not only at a sociocultural level, but also from a geographical and meteorological perspective. Before getting to the analysis of sound- and music-related issues, I first sketch the

broader environmental context of storm tides, while simultaneously offering some cultural perspective.

North Sea Storm Tides: The Physical and Geographic Framework

Storm tides can be defined as an elevated tidal ocean flooding caused by an onshore storm that can be further intensified by factors such as wind direction, coastal form, and moon position.[iv] Due to the interconnection with tidal rhythms, this phenomenon is called “storm tide”, rather than “storm flood” or “surge”.[v] In contrast to other natural disasters, such as earthquakes, storm tides can partly be calculated several hours up to 1-2 days in advance, which facilitates early preparation.[vi] While storm tides therefore appear like minor versions of comparably larger phenomena known as hurricanes, typhoons, and monsoons, the North Sea, located in the Westwind Zone and North Atlantic low-pressure systems, nevertheless counts as an area that is strongly threatened by storm-inflicted flooding disasters (Sündermann et al. 2000:15–24).

This article particularly focuses on the human interaction with extreme weather-inflicted conditions on the continent, and, more specifically, on the German coast of the North Sea. Geologically, the continental North Sea shore (from Belgium, the Netherlands, along the East Frisian and North Frisian shores up to Denmark) is mainly marshland. Consisting of washed-up sediments, the marsh regions are extremely fertile. This explains the continuing human settlement, despite the naturally unprotected location at sea level or (as in the Netherlands) even below.

Figure 1: Map of Schleswig-Holstein, Hamburg and the Elbe Estuary, with the central locations mentioned in the text.[vii]

Meteorologically and geographically speaking, storm tides (see also the overview in Table 1 below) are the result of an interplay between four specific elements that also play a central role in the acoustic perception:

a) A specific weather condition in Northern Germany resulting from low-pressure systems that cause long-lasting northwest wind conditions.
b) Funnel-like estuaries, such as the river Elbe, resulting in northwesterly winds pressuring North Sea water deeply inland to Hamburg (which is about 142 km

away from the actual estuary region around Cuxhaven and Brunsbüttel – see Figure 1).

c) The extremely low land elevation.
d) A further impact of the tidal waves, which can additionally be severed by the bi-monthly spring and neap tides.[viii]

As has been evident on the whole continental North Sea coast, North Sea storm tides, documented since Roman times, have been exerting a strong impact on the land formation and constant transformation of the whole region. Table 1, below, helps demonstrate this point.

Table 1: Major storm tides in the continental North Sea region [Jensen 2012].

- January 16, 1219: Erste Marcellusflut (First Marcellus Flood)
- January 15–17, 1362: Zweite Marcellusflut (Second Marcellus Flood)
- October 9, 1374: Erste Dionysiusflut (First Dionysius Flood)
- October 8–10, 1374: Zweite Dionysiusflut (Second Dionysius Flood)
- November 1, 1436: Allerheiligenflut 1436 (All Saint's Flood 1436)
- November 1–2, 1570: Allerheiligenflut 1570 (All Saint's Flood 1570)
- February 3–5, 1825: Februarflut 1825/ Halligflut (February Flood 1825/ Hallig Flood)
- Januay 1–2, 1855: Neujahrsflut 1855/ Januarsturmflut (New Year's Flood 1855/ January Storm Tide)
- December 31/ January 1, 1953: Hollandsturmflut /Great North Sea Flood
- February 16–17, 1962: Februarsturmflut 1962/ Zweite Julianenflut (Febuary Storm Tide 1962/ Second St. Juliana's Flood)
- January 3-4, 1976: Erste Januarflut 1976/ Capella Orkan (First January Flood 1962/ Capella Storm)
- January 21, 1976: Zweite Januarflut 1976 (Second January Flood 1976)
- December 5–6, 2013: Sturm/Storm Xavier

For example, the shallow Dutch bay known as the Zuiderzee came into existence resulting from the storm tides of 1164 (*Julianenflut* or "St. Juliana's Flood"), of 1170 (*Allerheiligenflut* or "All Saint's Flood"), and, most significantly, of 1219 (*Erste Marcellusflut* or "First Marcellus Flood"), while the striking forms of the Dollart and Jade Bays were shaped by the storm tides that occurred between the 12th and 15th-16th centuries. Similarly, the coastal line and islands of the North Frisian Schleswig Holstein region took the shape as depicted in modern atlases only in the 17th century. The retardation of this process, which has been partly interconnected with artificial land reclamation, was the result of increasingly sophisticated techniques of dyke building that emerged in the Netherlands in the 15th century (for more details see Buisman 1995–2015, Essing 2009, Bantelmann et al. 1995).

Mostly occurring between autumn and spring, the storm tides have often been, as exemplified in Table 1, named after the saint or patron(ess) of the day. Until 1800, this was sometimes interconnected with specific locations or events (e.g. *Grote Mandränke* ("Big Human Drowning")). Only from 1800 did the naming start to be connected with specific seasons or months (e.g. "February Flood"), and since the 20th century, storm tides have been interconnected with the actual storm names (Nübling et al. 2015: 327–336). The most significant and remembered storm tides of the last century, with regard to collective memory, have been the following:

- 31 January – 1 February, 1953: In Dutch: *De Ramp* ("The Catastrophe"), *Watersnood*" ("Water Misery"); in German: *Hollandsturmflut* ("Dutch Storm Tide"); in English "Great North Sea Flood" (storm names were not yet introduced).
- 16-17 February, 1962: in German: *Sturmflut von 1962* ("Storm Tide of 1962"), *Februarflut 1962* ("February Flood 1962") or *Zweite Julianenflut* ("Second St.

Juliana's Flood"); the storm's name "Vincinette" is not yet interrelated with the event.

- 3-4 January, 1976: *Sturmflut von 1976* ("Storm Tide of 1976"); *Erste Januarflut 1976* ("First January Flood 1976").[ix] It was partly also described as the First January Flood, caused by the so-called "Capella" storm.[x]

Historical data indicates that the land-destruction was not only the result of natural disaster or an alterered North Sea level, but also of human-made transformation (Behre 2003). This became likewise apparent in the narrative of the drowning of the city of Rungholdt that might have been located close to what is now known as the island of Nordstrand and was thematised in von Lilienron's poem quoted in the introduction (see Duerr 2005 for further details on the following).

During the 13th century, North Frisia had been a relatively rich and, while associated with Denmark, politically independent region. While in part dependant on sea trade, whaling, and fishing, the region's main wealth had nevertheless been based on salt trade. Geographically speaking, the original island Strand (see figures 2 and 3) – the most likely location of Rungholt – had been a mixture of marshland, elevated *Geest* areas (sandy heathland that had emerged as a result of the glacial melting after the last Ice Age) with high moors that also provided the precious salt turf for heating. Extensive turf cutting, as well as the rising of the sea level during the Medieval Warming Period (ca. 950–1200) strongly contributed to subsequent disaster. Already heavily affected by the first *Grote Mandränke* or so-called *Zweite Marcellusflut* ("Second Marcellus Flood") in 1362 (Figure 4), the region saw the emergence of so-called tidal streams in the Wadden Sea, with the largest one being the *Heverstrom*, that remain a threat to the islands and *Halligen* (unprotected marsh islands, singular *Hallig*) in the present day. The *Heverstrom* devastated the island of Strand completely during the so-called *Burchardiflut* ("St. Burkhard's[xi] Flood") on October 11, 1634, when the island was cut into smaller pieces. Islands, such as Pellworm and Nordstrand, as well as the *Halligen* Hamburger Hallig and Nordstrandischmoor are remains of the former island of Strand. The region was economically ruined, while suvivors either fled to the remaining higher areas or the mainland.

Figure 2: North Frisian coastline before 1362 with the presumed location of Rungholt.[xii]

Figure 3: Map detail of Alt-Nordstrand (Strand after the destruction) with the presumed location of Rungholt. The island is encircled by the Heverstrom. [Map by Johannes Blaeu (1662)].

Figure 4: *Die erschreckliche Wasser-Fluth* ("The terrible water flood"). Historical depiction of the Buchardiflut (1634). [Copperplate, Henssberg aus Happel, Historische Kernchronik, 1682].

A central means of environmental survival on the *Halligen* have been so-called *Warfthäuser* ("terp houses") that have become modern touristic and cultural icons of North Frisia. Located on an artifical hill consisting of bran (a material similar to that of the dykes) that function like little elevated islands in dyke-less areas, particularly during "Landunter" ("land under", the flooding of the lower areas during storm tides), the houses are built with extremely strong wooden pillars. While the water might destroy the basement walls, humans and animals can survive on the upper floor,

which is further supported by the reet (thatched) roof that is more wind-safe than tiled roofs. Clearly, this broader environmental context has also been shaping the local sound-related experience.

The Sound Experience of Storm

Storm is audible – it howls and growls. Yet, at closer listening, the sound specifics of a storm also reveal many details about the actual forces at work. While especially high storm forces create a constant deep drone, the overall sound is not completely regular due to multiple gusts, i.e. a sudden, relatively brief increasing wind speed followed by a lull, due to pressure differences. The effects are similar to a physical push and often cause the strongest damage during a storm.

The perception of storm is an interconnected sound experience. Sound is the result of mechanical vibrations in an elastric medium, such as air or water. However, in this case, the air particles return to their original position after the physical impact. As is evident with the fluctiating sound of church bells during a stormy day, wind can influence the expansion of the sound waves. However, wind itself, as the result of air movement due to the air pressure differences, cannot be heard. It needs to interact with other – resonating – material to create sound. We thus do not directly hear the wind or storm, but perceive the storm force through the stirring of boat cables or flagpost cords, as well as through the banging of falling items. I specifically recall a major gale in the Hamburg area on 26 December 2016, where the wind gusts on the west front of my parents' house became particularly audible and physically experienceable due to the banging sound of the balcony sheathing. As is evident with many storm reports, this was, sound-wise, also interconnected with falling tiles and other objects, and, in this case, parts of our tin roof that hit a parking lot and nearby railway tracks.

Yet storm is also a haptic and physical experience; it is painful on the skin, especially when manifest with cold rain, and it can make it impossible to stand upright. This likewise relates to the indoor experience, as the storm often shakes and rattles less sturdy buildings. At the same time, the experience of wind and storm is interrelated with smell – especially at the ocean, but also with regard to the often-interconnected rain (ranging from ozone-like to "muddy" scents).

Both sound and sensory experience is strongly shaped by the specific environment, such as the tree vegetation. For example, the woods around Hamburg are a mixture of heavy beech and oak trees, while conifers are less frequent. On that December 26, 2016, the atmospheric disturbance first started in the higher levels. This actually enabled me to record the delicate, almost ocean- or wave-like sound of the ocassional fir trees that was set against a dark roaring sound of the oaks with their much heavier trunks and the silvery sound of the dry winter leaves on the hedges. As I can observe in my residential area in Bern (Switzerland), the storm sound is much lighter here, due to the stronger presence of conifers, mixed with birch trees, cypress trees and sycamores.

As storm tides can be described as an interrelation of forceful air and water impact, the turbulent sea likewise strongly contributes to the soundscape: For instance, during periods of moderate wind speed, waves on the shore can be individually distinguished on a sound level as a sequence of the hissing sound of the rising water that retreats over the sand, which is followed by a bang of the crashing water and the rushing sound of the water moving inland over the sand. During a major storm, these individual events become a continuum, resulting in constant, partly very deep drone or sound wall. Again, the specifics of the ocean sound also reveal much of the nature of the storm. This is clearly evident in the description of the approaching Galveston Hurricane (1900) in Eric Larson's popular non-fictional novel *Isaak's Storm* (2000:4). Here, Larson speaks of a thrudding sound caused by the deep-ocean swell

preceeding the hurricane, which is clearly different from the comparably lighter sound of wind-caused waves that only disturb the water's surface.

As is particularly evident in the case of the delicate sound of the fir trees, the recording of a storm and a sound-related representation through sound events provides a challenge. Even with microphone protection, it is difficult to record. Many storm tide-related documentaries have thus been adding overdubbed recordings that were not taken from the actual event (see below), often intertwined with sound of thick, heavy raindrops. The latter sound is also often not taken from the actual event, as, due to the likewise occurring wind, resulting in the interrelated rainfall becoming an almost horizontal movement. This all needs to be taken into account when re-analysing the documentaries with regard to actual representation.

The Soundscape of Storm Tides in 20th Century Descriptions

Conducting informal interviews about the sound- and music-related memorisation of the storm times in Northern Germany,[xiii] I noticed that the dates of 1962 and 1976 were immediately mentioned. One of the most devastating events was the storm tide of February 16–17, 1962, when about 340 people drowned after the dykes had broken in Hamburg. While the water level of the storm tide from January 2–3, 1976 (followed by a second one between January 20–21, 1976), was significantly higher than the 1962 event, the effects were less devastating. After the 1962 catastrophe, the dykes had been heightened and the security system had been expanded, although several dykes still broke in the Elbe marshes, which likewise resulted in severe flooding in 1976. I myself had experienced the storm tides of 1976. While quite young and more or less safely located ten kilometres away from the Elbe in Pinneberg, I nevertheless still recall the power with which the wind pounded against our west front windows to the extent of nearly breaking. And I sensed the concern of my parents, particularly of my mother, whose relatives were located directly behind the dyke north of Glückstadt on the estuary of the river Elbe. This, as well as other subsequent storm tides, was clearly evoked in her recollections of 1962.

In 1962, the most dangerous high tide occurred around midnight from a Saturday to a Sunday. Through the present day (2020), media accounts, news, and TV documentaries on this flood have often fallen back on a recurring trope, contrasting the violence of the storm with a protected world in which the citizens of Hamburg are depicted as coming out of the opera or – as it was carnival season – from parties and pub visits.[xiv] Particularly these Northern German reports also reveal the previously indicated problem of the actual recording process. Mostly, the sound in the TV accounts was added after the fact, as it was nearly impossible to be recorded live at the time (the same sound effects were used for the documentaries on the snow catastrophe of 1978/79).[xv] In speaking with those who remember the event, a real-life sound-related issue was evident: the interchangeability of water and storm sounds. As my mother, who spent that night in her family's house located directly behind the dyke of the river Elbe, recalled, she had finally fallen asleep after midnight, only to be woken up again by the intensifying storm and water drops splashing against the window. It was only in the morning that the family realised that the splashing water had not been the rain, as assumed, but the Elbe and the North Sea.

Another recurring recollection in many written accounts has not only been the actual storm and related noises, such as falling tiles or banging fuel canisters,[xvi] but particularly the screaming of humans and animals. The central role of the human voice in immediate danger can easily be forgotten, but is very prominent in many accounts of the rising water.[xvii] The crying of fearful and drowning animals is a likewise recurring theme in documentations. As is evident in contemporary and retrospective newspaper reports, this was reported by nearly all villages around the river Elbe up to Hamburg, as well as at other rivers flowing into the North Sea. As an inhabitant of Elsfleth in the Weser marshes recalled, he had only been woken up due

to the crying animals, having never heard the animals crying in such way. This actually saved his life, but not that of the animals (Zacharias 2012).

At the same time, church bells also played a central role in the warning process, as this account from Finkenwerker, north of Hamburg, indicates: "The pastor hurried to the church in Finkenwarder during the storm tide of 1962 to draw attention to the high tide. This is still gratefully recalled by locals of Finkenwarder" (Adolphsen 2014).[xviii] Something similar occurred in the Netherlands during the devastating 1953 storm tide – people started to ring the bells to warn locals. Retrospective newspaper accounts from Hamburg describe how, on top of the ringing church bells and howling sirens, the police also fired off pistols and smashed in windows (cf Trotier 2018). Yet, as a collection of contemporary witness accounts also indicates, none of that was actually heard by those in danger, mostly due to the noise of the storm.[xix]

Modern stormtide warnings reveal that several sound signals have maintained their significance until present day. The usage of sirens, as well as of fireworks and pistol shots as a means of warning is clearly implemented into several regulations that require a clear knowledge of specific signals, similar to the earlier church bell codes. For example, within the extremely vulnerable Hamburg harbour area, firecrackers are used as warning devices at a water level of 3.5 metres above mid-high tide, after 4.30 metres loundspeaker vans are used, and radio and TV announcements become central at a level over 5 metres. As the authority of the Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg (2012) further points out, sirens are used at a level over 7.30 metres – similar to many other areas. For example, a public information leaflet from Finkenwerder tells us that, once the water transgresses the 7.5 metre above the mid-high tide mark, people are warned by a siren sound of one minute which signals to switch on the radio (Inixmedia 2018). The usage of external signal devices even in the age of mobile phones is a result of the experiences from the 1962 storm tide. During this event, electric devices, including phones, TV, and radio, were interrupted (and this could also apply to 21st century mobile phone connections).

The seemingly anachronistic church bells thus remain a central means of warning in the 21st century, as is, for instance, evident in Cuxhaven, located on the mounting of the river Elbe. As an emergency leaflet points out, "These (siren) signals are repeated several times! The church bells must also ring continuously."[xx] The importance of the church bells in modern public memory became particularly apparent in 1976, when the dykes in the Haseldorfer Marsch, northwest of Hamburg, broke. As a description of the new bells acquired by the small church of Haselau attests: "The fifth and sixth bell sound on A sharp and C. Their special character: they remind us of the storm tide of 1976. Their inscription in German: 'To the memory of the storm tide of Jan. 3, 1976.' (...) Their decoration consists of two friezes depicting water waves."[xxi]

In contrast to sirens, church bells maintain a double function, which becomes particularly evident during memorial services. As can be read on a historical program leaflet from the official Hamburg memorial service from February 26, 1962, the ringing of all church bells of the city introduced the public event. Similarly, the fifty-year memorial service was introduced by a collective bell ringing in the whole region. Regarding the usage of musical works within this context, memorial events were mostly framed by pre-existent repertoires until the late 20th century. For example, the 1962 memorial event included Beethoven's *Third Symphony (Eroica)* and the funeral march of Handel's Oratorio *Saul* – very much in contrast to subsequent events. For instance, the Dutch composer Douwe Eisenga (b. 1961) composed a specific *Requieum Aeterna 1953* for the 50-year memorial service of the storm tide that devasted the Netherlands in 1953.

As is evident in the above-quoted recollections and memorial events, storm tides maintain a strong, often traumatic presence in collective memory. This is further negatively implanted due to the repetition of these accounts (cf Ahmed 2004). The traumatic side is also evident in sound-related recollections of the aftermath. The first

central sound recollection after the disaster was an unusual silence (Pawelko 2012). As my mother recalled, this peaceful weather-related silence was extremely confusing, especially when the family received notice of the previous night's actions, when soldiers already had to fill the dyke with hay bales. She did not dare to look at the river estuary on that day. In other areas, the silence was also the result of the complete flooding of the region and destruction of the infrastructure, followed by a combination of the sounds of the rescuing helicopter and visual images of corpses hanging in the trees in 1962 (Jacobs 2017). A deeper look at musical repertoires addressing storm tides reveals a further indication of the fear- and trauma-related perception of storm tides in a local context.

Musical Responses to Storms

The *Hurricane Rock Festival*, band names such as Hurricane or Typhoon, as well as song titles like "Rock you like a Hurricane" (The Scorpions), "The Hurricane"[xxii] (Bob Dylan), "Like a Hurricane" (Neil Young) – all these examples indicate that related threating natural forces are actually incorporated into songs, song names, or festival sites. This likewise applies to folk song material related to, for example, Atlantic/ Caribbean hurricanes. For example, the song "The Lost Boys of East Bay"[xxiii] that depicts a tragic event on on Sand Island (St. George's Sound, close to Panama City, Florida) was written after a hurricane in 1894 (Cohen 2008:322). The song "West Palm Beach Storm" that was written after the Florida Hurricane of 1928 is, like "Miami Hairikin," a call to return to godly faith and actions (ibid.:324). Similary, "Wasn't that a Mighty Storm," was most likely initially a spiritual relating to the devastating 1900 Galveston Flood. First recorded in 1934 by "Sin-Killer" Griffin for the Library of Congress, the song took on a life of its own in the folk scene. Having been revived and popularised by Eric von Schmidt and Tom Rush in the 1960s, it thus became a household folk song. As is evident here, the composition of these songs directly responded to specific natural disasters, which is also the case with Jim Cliff's "Hurricane Hattie" (1961) or Lightnin' Hopkins' "Hurricane Betsy" (1965) that addressed more contemporary events. Something similar can be observed in the Carribean, be it on Trinidad or Jamaica. For example, Calypsonian Lord Beginner's, "Jamaica Hurricane" relates to the devastating 1951 Hurricane Charlie, Calypsonian Lord Christo's "Hurricane Janet" to a category 5 hurricane that strongly affected the Lesser Antilles in 1955, while Jamaican dancehall DJ Lovindeer was one of serveral artists to address Hurricane Gilbert with his song "Wild Gilbert" (1988).

Similar reactions can be observed with regard to the Great Missisippi flood of 1927 – most likely also because songs of tragedy had been a popular theme of sheet music at that time. This even continues into the 20th century, as Randy Newman's "Louisiana 1927" (1974) demonstrates. There are likewise numerous songs about North Sea storms – such as "North Sea Storm" (1999) by the Swedish black/ dark metal band Amon Amarth – and one also finds a large number of historical written and illustrated descriptions of storm tides. However, musical material addressing the events directly is, especially from a historical perspective, comparably rare on the European continent.[xxiv] As it seems in the case of North Sea storm tides, a kind of unspoken – and unconscious – fear has been and is still partly prevalent in not evoking threatening forces by naming them.[xxv] Musical material dealing directly with the storm floods only became more evident in the 20th century. Major thematic reference points have often been pre-existent literary works, most prominently Detlev von Liliencron's (1844-1909) poetic ballad "Trutz, Blanke Hans" ("Defy, Blanke Hans," 1882/83) and Theodor Storm's (1817-1888) novel *Der Schimmelreiter* (1888; "The Rider on the White Horse" or "The Dykemaster"). Written during the late 19th century/ late Romantic period that was strongly inspired by naturalist movements, both literary works became – as evident with Reichel's song – central reference points for 20th century musical responses to storm tides.

Traditional Musical Reactions Towards the Threatening Elements

Within an earthquake- and volcano-safe region, storm tides remain one of the strongest examples of the limits we have in controlling nature, even in the 21st century. As can be deduced from historical accounts, novels and tales, traditional musical responses were often coded in religious practice. As storm tides have often occurred during the Christmas holidays, approaching storm tides have become connected to, for instance, singing Christmas carols during the communal assembly in the Hallig churches or schools. Within these contexts, the storm itself was not directly addressed in the musical works, but is rather associated with them, as is evident from an account from 1718 (cf Jakubowski-Tiessen 1992: 82–83), which describes a storm tide oratorio by the protestant cantor Johannes Jani (Aurich). Written from an abstract Christian perspective, it describes the final judgement of god and the different states of the soul. This account likewise indicates the importance of subsequent thanksgiving services, which has been continued until the present day.

Furthermore, historical reports stress the importance of the church bells, not only as traditional means of warning and thanksgiving, but also as indicators of sunken human dwellings. As will be illustrated below, this theme has not only been taken up by modern local and German performers (as evident in “The Bells of Rungholt” by Schlager singer Juliane Werding), but has also been a recurring issue in other regions. This is also apparent with Claude Debussy’s “La Catedrale Engloutie” (1910) that relates to the Breton myth of the sunken city of Ys. In the case of North Sea, the iconisation of storm tides as a punishing supernatural force in local mythology and arts is particularly interrelated with the destruction of Rungholt.

Rungholt and Detlev von Liliencron’s Ballad “Trutz, Blanke Hans”

As previously indicated, the destruction of Rungholt was the result of an interaction between global climate changes and human environmental destruction. The first coherent written version of the narration that is explicitly related to Rungholt was published in Anton Heimreich’s (1626-1685) *Nord-Friesische Chronik* [“North Frisian Chronicle”] in 1666. Following a comprehensive account of previous land destruction through storm tides (which also includes Rungholt, p. 166), Heimreich, a North-Frisian Protestant-Lutheran pastor, outlines the Rungholt saga separately (1666:171–181). Pointing to the large number of “wonderous tales” related to Rungholt’s destruction, he frames his account with descriptive titling, such as “superstition” and an “old women’s dream” [“Altweibertraum”] and specifically focuses on sinful behavior and subsequent punishment through natural forces. Clearly told as a Christian moralist narrative, this account points to a potential resurrection of the city and is concluded with the indication that, on wind-quiet days, the bells can still be heard from underneath. This is a further example of the central role of bells not only within local mythology, but also of their central role as markers for local communal life.[xxvi]

The Rungholt saga became particularly popularised in local oral narration through the poem “Trutz, Blanke Hans” [“Defy, Bleak John”] by the North German poet and author Detlev von Liliencron (1844–1909). Working in the Prussian administration,[xxvii] von Liliencron had written the poem between 1882/83 when working as *Hadesvogt* (bailiff) on the North Frisian island Pellworm (also a remnant of the former island of Strand). Von Liliencron’s poem is basically a condensed re-narration of the 1666 account, a symbolic account of human arrogance that is punished by the forces of nature.

Starting out with a contemporary (at that time, 19th-century) journey of the narrator over Rungholt by boat (verse 1, 10), the poem introduces the tale with a broader description of the North Frisian island region (verse 1, 2). This includes an allegory where the tidal changes are described as being caused by the breathing of a monster. Once every century, this monster, whose head close lies to England’s beaches and the tail around Brazil’s beaches,[xxviii] releases huge water masses at

great force (verse 3). Verses 4 and 5 describe the arrogance of Rungholt's rich population against the North Sea, resulting in the drowing of the city caused by one deep breath of the monster (verse 7, 8).

While von Liliencron omits the bell theme, the poem is rich in sound-related descriptions. This includes the ship that journeys over the city with shaking and creaking machines (verse 1), the repeated call "Trutz Blanke Hans" that can be heard from below the sea (e.g. verse 1), the bickering sea gulls (verse 2), and the yell of the dying city (verse 8). Similar to the real-life accounts of the 1962 storm tide, the disaster is followed by a complete silence, with the "mute fish" having replaced the cheerful tish round."[xxix] The sound-related effect of the poem is further enhanced by onomatopoetic stylistic means, such as words with sharp, hissing sounds (e.g. "*sch*ütteln" ("shaking"), "*stöh*nen" ("creaking"), "Tru*tz*, Blanke Ha*ns*") that further evoke an aggressive oceanic atmosphere.

Several expressions of the poem have either been or become local household phrases. For example, the title's "Blanke Hans", meaning "spray" as well as "bare" and "shiny" (here also a relation to the mud flat), can be taken as a personification and widespread synonym of the (raging) North Sea.[xxx] As is evident from Heimreich's *Nordfriesische Chronik* (1666), the expression had already been present in local culture, here in the description of a *Deichvogt* ["dyke reeve"] of Rysum who called out "Trutz, Blanke Hans" at the sea as a means of expressing human power over nature after the building of a new dyke. However, the dyke broke at the Buchardiflood from 1634. Still other phrases like "Nordsee, Mordsee" ["North Sea, murderous sea"] became household expressions, even being used as a title of a 1970s film.[xxxi] These phrases have relevance to the local tourism industry as well; in promotional material the poem's beginning, "Heut bin ich über Rungholt gefahren," ["Today I journeyed over Rungholt"] is often interconnected with images of the *Halligen*, and "Blanke Hans" is a common name for B&Bs.

While the poem is also a clear example of literarisation (i.e. the transfer of oral narration into written literature), it likewise questions the clear distinction between high and traditional art by having been part of many German school curricula for decades. When I interviewed locals in the region called "Bloomesche Wildnis" ["Bloomish Wilderness"] in the Elbe North Sea estuary north of Glückstadt, it became apparent that Liliencron's ballad, composed as a piece of high art, had been memorised at school by many who were born in the 1930s. This memorisation was so strong that many could still recall the poem decades later. While von Liliencron's name had partly disappeared, the poem itself had become part of a local traditional-popular canon. At the same time, the narration, interconnected with von Liliencron's poem, has been taking on further importance within the context of the global warming debate, as newspaper titles, such as "Friesisch Gomorrha" ["Frisian Gomorrha"] (Reichardt 2012) exemplify.

Theodor Storm's *Der Schimmelreiter* ["The Rider on the White Horse"]

The second example of a 19th-century literary adaptation of the storm tide theme is from the North German lawyer and author Theodor Storm (1817–1888), whose works count as part of German poetic realism. Storm, who wrote several novels and short stories that have strongly shaped the public perception of the North Sea region,[xxxii] was born in the North Frisian town of Husum.[xxxiii] While von Liliencron's Rungholt version is the best-known one, he had predecessors in the 19th century. For instance, the tale was already taken up by the Danish author Hans-Christian Andersen ("De to baronesser") in 1848-49. Almost a decade before von Liliencron, Storm published an account of the Rungholt events in his novel "Eine Halligfahrt" ("A Hallig Journey," 1871).

Storm also fell back on the collection *Sagen, Märchen und Lieder der Herzogthümer Schleswig, Holstein und Lauenburg* (1845), which had been collected

and collated by German mediaevist Karl Victor Müllenhoff (1818–1884). The collection provides a deep insight not only into local mythology that was later covered by the nationalist movements, but also into storm-tide related narrations and the role of sound and music. For example, it contains various accounts of the supernatural power of the bell. In tale 166 ("Die Brunsbüttler Glocke in Balje") a bell is stolen by citizens of Balje, located on the western side of the Elbe estuary, from Brunsbüttel, located on the eastern estuary shore. However, the stolen bell still warns Brunsbüttel of storm tides – until Balje gets destroyed in the storm tide of 1825. Suffering heavy flooding due to a broken dyke, the Balje population is nevertheless saved by Brünsbüttel, resulting in the bell becoming quiet for good.[xxxiv] The narration of Rungholt (tale 192), dated to the year 1300, strongly focuses, similarly to Heimreich (1666), on the detailed descriptions of the sinful behaviours and subsequent curse of the local priest, as well as on the bell that can be heard during quiet weather. Exactly this part was also taken up in Storm's novel "Eine Halligfahrt" that described the bells as "ghost-like" sounds. Within this novel, sound descriptions, particularly of the birds and the main protagonist (a violinist), likewise play a major role in setting the atmosphere.

Sound descriptions also play a central role in one of Storm's most popular novels, *Der Schimmelreiter* ("The Rider on the White Horse" or "The Dyke-Master" – the latter title referring to the major role of the Dyke Master as dyke administrator and, thus, protector of the region). Published in 1888, the novel is based on a local myth of the Rider on the White Horse, whose sighting predicts and indicates the spot where a dyke will break. Having been transferred to a mid-19th century context, Storm's novel is a broader reflection on the battle between modernity and tradition. The novel is centred on the young dyke master Hauke Haien, who tries to introduce new dyke building plans in order to master nature, but is met with local resistance. Riding a horse that had previously been sighted as a skeleton on a nearby Hallig (the animals here represented as possessing a demonic nature), he nevertheless forbids the locals to sacrifice a living being, in this case a dog, on the site, thus raising the wrath of nature. Consequently, his wife and daughter drown in the water that penetrates the old dyke, while he sacrifices himself to the ocean by which he saves the local population. The new dyke holds, while the horse skeleton is subsequently sighted on the Hallig again.

The novel took the storm tide of October 7, 1756, as a framework. This so-called "Markusflut" caused heavy devastation, especially in North Frisia, the novel's main location. In this novel that makes strong use of local terminology and dialect Storm uses sound especially as an expression of inner emotion. This is not only evident in the description of the angry storm tidal water (Storm, 1888/1984: 5), but also of wind and birds whose cries are described as "mocking" (ibid.: 5-6). The description of the actual storm tide is similarly strongly embedded into sound description, be it that the related sound of the approaching storm is first related to thunder (ibid.: 82), followed by a wind-still and momentary silence (ibid.: 96) and a subsequent "angry return" (ibid.: 61). While the novel has become the basis for several musical realisations since the late 20th century (see below), it is, similar to Liliencron's poem, also an indicator of the central role of sound descriptions in literature. As I would argue here, these sound descriptions likewise contributed to the vivid imagery and interrelated popularity of the poem and the novel until present day.

Achim Reichel – "Trutz Blanke Hans" (1978)

Musically speaking, the German pop musician Achim Reichel (b. 1944, close to Hamburg) marked a kind of beginning in modern storm-tide related music writing on the continent. Reichel released his most successful albums between the 1970s and 1990s. After having been drafted in German military service Reichel continued as solo musician. After a stint with experimental music he started to sing sea shanties and increasingly German-speaking songs from 1975 on. Reichel was strongly

inspired by English folk rock groups like Fairport Convention and also produced German folk rock bands like Ougenweide.[xxxv]

The ballad song “Trutz Blanke Hans“ appeared on his album *Regenballade* [“Rain Ballad“] that was released in 1978. Inspired to record old poets who had, as Reichel put it in his retrospective liner notes for the 2008 CD re-relase, “moved the from the ocean to the land,” *Regenballade* was a collection of historical classical poems with a mythological element, including Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s “Zauberlehrling” (“The Sorcerer’s Apprentice“). The record became so popular that it was included in German school curricula, hererby further underscoring the memory of past events, such as the destruction of the island of Strand, not only for modern audiences, but also outside the North German context.[xxxvi]

Reichel re-narrates the complete poem, except for a minor alteration from “the city was drowned a thousand years ago” to the more accurate “six hundred years ago,” in verse 1. As he emphasised (Reichel 2008), his musical revival was clearly connected to the idea of medieval bards. Reichel thus performs the poem in a moritat-like style that clearly sets the narrative into the central focus; he employs a dark, almost speech-like voice with almost moaning-sounding line endings and explicit pronounciation, using a rolling beginning “r,” prolonged “ns” endings, with an emphasis on the “s” (as in “Hans”). This moritat-like impression is also implemented by a partly scratchy sound colour of the speech-like singing, by audible breathing between the verse lines, contributing to the dark atmosphere, and by a clear pronounciation of all syllables. The latter further enhances the sound-focused impression of the angry and dark oceanic atmosphere.

Set in E minor in combination with modal passages, the narration is set in a relatively slow tempo (ca. 82 BPM) that provides enough space for the delivery. The instruments are a classic rock line-up plus mellotron which, together with the sound production, make a clear reference to the rock sound preferences of the late 1970s. The accompaniment is successively built up, e.g. from muted (verse 1, 2) to clear drum sounds and a syncopated driving bass (verse 3, 4) that, further enhanced in verse 5, strongly carries the subsquent drama forward. The musical adaptation to the the textual context is also evident in the sudden switch back to muted drums and string-like synthesizer backing in verse 7, which depicts the silence before the incoming storm. This is followed by the increased presence of drum/bass group that almost drowns the voice describing the water rolling inland. Furthermore, the verses are subdivided by a dramatic narrative instrumental between verse 4 and 5. This is not only a clear reference to English folk rock groups like Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span, but also allows a deeper reflection on the actual story. As is evident here, the poetic delivery and textual understanding remain very much at the core of Reichel’s interpretation.

Storm tides have remained a recurring topic in Reichel’s rich output, as evident in album titles like *Melancholie und Sturmflut* (1991). One of the album’s tracks, “Sturmflut” (“storm tide”) also exemplifies how Reichel has been adapting this topic to the contemporary situation. The track is a criticism of modern media, which he contrasts with the warning devices of 1962, which were so different from the format of the emergency special broadcasts that have been so central for modern TV and radio (“But you are sitting on your sofa/ there is a special report/ you experience it live when the dyke is breaking”).[xxxvii]

Rungholt After Reichel

Other German bands followed to address storm tides with the Rungholt remaining a central topic only after Reichel. A good counterexample to Reichel is the interpretation of von Liliencron’s ballad by Santiano from 2015. Santiano, who recorded their version for the album *Von Liebe, Tod und Freiheit*, can be described as a modern German sea shanty band who became extremely popular beyond genre

division with a mix of traditional songs, shanties, and Schlager (catchy pop). Founded around 2011, the band is also audibly influenced by English-Irish-Scottish folk music, not least because of bandmember Peter David Sage, a violin/ accordion/ bouzouki and tin whistle player, who had accompanied, among others, Mike Oldfield.[xxxviii]

Santiano's "Rungholt" version is audibly oriented towards dancing, which is evident in the high upbeat pulse of the drums (124 BPM) and faster instrumental accompaniment However, the syncopated singing that is set against this beat still allows for a very good textual understanding. The poem itself is reduced to the story's skeleton and mostly the visual and dramatic elements. It is, particularly in the beginning, narrated in a syncopated, solo speech-like singing style, but is then transformed into male shanty-like chorus for the dramatic ending, returning only to the more quiet, solo, sung delivery of verse 8.[xxxix] The mystic references in the song's narrative are introduced by bell sounds and didgeridoo playing, while the song is also framed by a melodic instrumental that likewise functions, together with the as poem's title "Trutz, Blanke Hans," as a refrain. This refrain is later textually expanded into a broader sing-along refrain of "Rungholt calls loudly your name/ Rungholt calls loaudly over the sea/ Rungholt calls since thousand years/ Blanker Hans we defy you."[xl] Due to the more dance-oriented approach, in addition to the framing of male chorus singing, the spookiness of Reichel's version is mainly gone. Rather, the tale has become a narrative of man versus nature that strongly emphasises a male power perspective through the serious, almost pathetic singing style and the resemblance of the raw ensemble-singing style to a (male-connotated) shanty choir.

Several other artists have taken up the theme of Rungholt's bells that likewise appeared in the sound intro of Santiano, yet often abstracted the actual tale into an atmospherical, emotional theme. For instance, in "Die Glocken von Rungholt", Schlager singer Juliane Werding addressed the bells as representing sounds of the past, which can be heard at a quiet day (*Ruhe vor dem Sturm*, DA Records 2008). The melancholic, almost sentimental impression is conveyed through a strong emphasis on melody. While this interpretation is not only an example of the intersection between Schlager and folk revival of North German folk repertoires, it likewise illustrates a continued fascination with the theme of storm beyond the actual historical narration – particularly from a safe, distanced position.

In the case of the band Godewind (Low German: "good wind"), the theme has been abstracted to a more psychological level, through which sound and associations (similarly to Werding, only the bells are mentioned) also reflect an inner state of the narrator. Founded in the late 1970s, Godewind count as one of the major modern North German folk bands, singing in Low German. The song, entitled "De Glocken vun Rungholt" ["The Bells of Rungholt"] appears on the band's 1989 album *Keen beten möód*. Set in a major mode and performed in singer/songwriter style, the song depicts a walk on a dyke after a storm-tide in November. Again, the silence that was evident in Liliencron's ballad, as well as in Theodor Storm's narrations, plays a central role; in an abrupt silence, the narrator suddenly seems to hear something through the noise. Set against an instrumental melody, the narrator recounts, "And then I turned around, and I mean.., one tells."[xli] Remaining extremely vague in terms of content (Rungholt is only hinted at), the song sets a post-storm-tide atmosphere specifically through the choice of words.

Godewind is also an example of the growing interconnection of the Rungholt disaster with global warming. In 2009, the band supported a memorial day for the "Grote Mandränke" on 11th October, 1634, for their band's 30th anniversary. At that time, journalists in particular linked this event, as well as the storm tide, to environmental disasters (Rahn 2009a and 2009b). This emerging topical interrelation of storm tides and global warming became further evident in the special edition, a *Sturmflut-CD*. The CD included further songs on the "oppressing feeling at the beginning of the storm,"[xlii] and was only available on Nordstrand, a remnant of the

destroyed island of Strand, hereby drawing further modern attention to the link between past and present events.

Within art music, Theodor Storm's dykemaster novel in particular became a central reference point, thematised, for instance, in Wilfried Haller's opera *Der Schimmelreiter* from 1998. Yet, again, this musical treatment only occurred during the last three decades. Rungholt likewise remains a central theme in contemporary composition. However, as is apparent here, composers rarely ever address actual events, but fall back on more distanced narrations.

While these themes are emerging more and more in music, maybe also due to the increasing intensity of global warming discourse, a certain degree of caution towards a direct integration of storm tides into musical performance is still evident among younger musicians. For example, North German bands prefer to be named after the dyke (such as the band Deichkind, for festivals like *Musik hinterm Deich*). Band names that are directly related to the act of devastation, such as Sturmflut, are still rare. If modern bands thematise the topic, it is still partly coded, as evident in titles like "Wenn das Wasser kommt" ("When the Water Approaches"), or it has appeared very recently, as is evident with musical depictions of the 1953 flood in the Netherlands. This was not only the case with Douwe Eisenga's oratorio, but likewise with rock and popular music in other regions of the North Sea area. The dark ambient project "1953," a sound collage about the experiences of the victims, by the The [Law Rah] Collective only appeared in 2004, while the UK band British Sea Power released a song "Canvey Island" that related to the 1953 event only in 2008 – at a seemingly safe historical distance. This might be coincidence, yet the parallels are striking and might be further reflected in a brief final counterexample from Northern Germany, this time from the Baltic Sea.

A Counter-Example: The Sunken City Vineta in the Baltic Sea

In contrast to the North Sea events, the tale of the sunken city of Vineta that is strikingly similar to that of Rungholt has received a different reception in music. Having probably been located on the Pomeranian Baltic Sea shore between Barth and Wolin, Vineta was likewise destroyed by a stormflood.[xliii] This example is clearly differentiated from North Sea storm tides, as there are almost no tidal alterations in the Baltic Sea. Consequently, flooding is only caused by storm effects. While the storm force is less strong than in the North Sea (only up to 11 on the Beaufort Scale[xliv]), it can be similarly devastating due to the bath-tub like form of the Baltic Sea.[xlv] One of the major events was the storm flood of November 12th/13th, 1872, that devastated vast areas of the Danish and German coasts.[xlvi] In contrast to the North Sea, recollections are less sound-oriented, which parallels the observation that the Baltic Sea is described as much quieter than the North Sea. Rather, the major sound-related recollection is centred on the previously mentioned snow catastrophe of 1978-79 that was strongly intertwined with storm and was particularly devastating in the areas around the Baltic Sea.

The destruction of Vineta might have been the result of such a storm flood in the 12th century, thus time-wise relatively close to the Rungholt event. The tale of the deluge-like flooding and drowning of Vineta is identical with Rungholt in many passages, yet it is elaborated by further elements, such as a preliminary warning in the sky and a water woman giving out a warning which was ignored due to the arrogance of the citizens. Also in this case, the bells can still be heard.

Referred to as the "Venice of the Baltic Sea," Vineta – which could never be as precisely located as Rungholt – had received more widespread recognition than Rungholt by the 19th century. This is not only evident with a choral composition by Johannes Brahms (1860), a comparably large range of opera compositions (by Heinrich Frankenburger, 1851; Richard Wüest, 1853; Feliks Nowoviesky, 1924) and a Vineta Festival (since 1994). Furthermore, East German bands have been addressing

the theme more frequently than Rungholt. Already in 1979, the band Transit wrote the song “Sturmflut” (1979) that was related to the Baltic Sea, while the Puhdys, another highly popular East German band, released a similar title in 1994. We can only speculate about the reasons, but it seems that Vineta, perhaps due to its abstraction, is much easier to approach than Rungholt, which seems to convey a stronger, and thus more threatening reality, especially at present.

Outlook

While it is still necessary to undertake further research on this topic, it is apparent that the combined analysis of natural disaster, the environmental context, the soundscape, and the adaptation in the arts provides a deep insight into human subconscious responses to extreme environmental events. How far any avoidance of this topic in music is pragmatism in the face of collective trauma, or ignorance of the environmental context, warrants further investigation. This is also apparent in that the danger of environmental changes was, on the one hand, already comprehensively discussed in the 1980s, with the discourses clearly and strikingly resembling current debates, but, as in the case of storm-tides, not implemented in the collective long-term memory (cf. Heßler and Kehrt 2014:12). This becomes clearly evident through a deeper analysis of related musical repertoires.

Given the ongoing environmental challenges and the rising of sea levels, storm-tides remain a serious threat in the 21st century, indeed moreso than ever before, and now increasingly interrelated with discussions on climate change. Just as Achim Reichel clearly challenged an unspoken tradition by bringing the topic into popular music, storm tides are likewise challenging local tradition. As an NDR documentary (Hansen 2014) on the situation on Hallig Hooge indicated in 2014, in order to survive the changing environment caused by the increasingly stronger and higher storm tides, the pragmatic Hallig inhabitants are also considering tearing down their century-old houses in order to raise the hight of the Warften. It is a rebuilding with unclear outcomes. There is just one certainty – the next storm tide will definitely come.

Endnotes

[i] I could already observe a similar phenomen in the Alpine glacial world. The extreme environment had not been addressed in music until the 19th century when glaciers started to get depicted romantically in local repertoires. Previously, the high Alpine world was considered a threatening environment. Many mountains remained unnamed, and glaciers, associated with life-destructing forces, were often addressed by musical and performative silence (cf Sweers 2019).

[ii] One interesting example is Aplin and Williams (2011) who provide a comprehensive overview of classical musical works depicting meteorological phenomena.

[iii] Many interviews were undertaken in informal settings, unstructured formats, partly during phone-calls. Recollections were strongly dependent on the atmosphere, as the topic was partly considered as being something not to be talked about or met with surprise, which also required additional time and talks to allow recollections to surface. Partly, I was also called days after the talks that had apparently stimulated further mostly forgotten recollections.

[iv] For a more detailed background see Deutscher Wetterdienst (2018) and Jensen et al. (2006).

[v] Despite the emphasis on the tidal impact, several historical tides might have also been either further intensified by Atlantic flood waves or might have even been been the result of the breaking Atlantic shelf (as has been speculated with the 1858 storm tide that came without further weather-related pre-warnings).

[vi] See also Freie und Hansestadt Hamburg. *Sturmflutschutz: Hinweise für die Bevölkerung*. http://www.hamburg.de/contentblob/3425452/45daab7ca53950c90e21de9c8bc49400/data/sturmflut-download-sturmflutschutz.pdf. Accessed: 1 October 2018.

[vii] NordNordWest, Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Schleswig-Holstein_relief_location_map.jpg?uselang=de

[viii] A spring tide is an intensified high tide caused by a specific constellation with sun, moon, and earth forming one line. The earth is either between (full moon) or in opposition to (new moon) the sun and the moon. The nipp tide with less distinct high and low water levels is caused by moon, earth, and sun being at a 90-degree position (during half moon). With regard to storm tides, the weaker low water level can have a serious impact.
[ix] The Second January Flood 1976 occurred a few weeks later between January 20–21, 1976. Being only slighly weaker than the first one, it likewise counts as one of the strongest storm tides of the 20th century. This storm was not named.
[x] In contrast to future (alphabetical) naming practices, this storm was named after a ship that sank in Rostock during the storm.
[xi] The name relates to the name day of the saint bishop Burkhard of Würzburg.
[xii] Von Runga - Eigenes Werk, CC0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=25587512
[xiii] Mostly in the areas around Hamburg and Glückstadt between 2016-2018.
[xiv] See, for instance, Christian Deick and Julia Brangs, *ZDF History, Sturmflut in Hamburg – Die wahre Geschichte* (2006).
[xv] Two extreme snowfall and snowstorm events (Dec. 30, 1978–Jan. 3, 1979 and Febr. 13–18, 1979) in Northern Germany. See also NDR/ Studio Hamburg, *Das weiße Chaos: Die Schneekatastrophe in Norddeutschland 1978/79* (2014).
[xvi] Gerhard Z. "Die Nacht als die Deiche brachen." In Bütow (1962: 25–27).
[xvii] A gripping example are the recollections on the warning attempts during the flooding of the river island Hamburg-Waltershof: NDR: *Sturmflut in Waltershof* https://www.ndr.de/kultur/geschichte/chronologie/sturmflutwaltershof133.html (one of several accounts in the NDR series Sturmflut: Zeitzeugen erinnern sich https://www.ndr.de/kultur/geschichte/chronologie/Zeitzeugen-erinnern-sich-an-die-Sturmflut,sturmflutzeitzeugen107.html). (2012). Accessed: 1 October 2018.
[xviii] "Bei der Sturmflut 1962 ist der Pastor in Finkenwerder in die Kirche geeilt, um vor dem Hochwasser zu warnen. Daran erinnern sich Finkenwerder noch heute dankbar." More precisely, Pastor Sannemann started to ring the bells of the St.-Nikolaikirche already at 0:20 for half an hour (Leimbach and Wagner 2012:22).
[xix] Stadtteilschule Stellingen/Ida Ehre Schule (Cläre Bordes, ed.) (2016).
[xx] "Diese Signale werden mehrfach wiederholt! Außerdem sollen anhaltend die Kirchenglocken läuten. Bei Stromausfall werden die Signale über Sirenenanhänger gegeben, die durch die gefährdeten Gebiete fahren!" (Stadt Cuxhaven 2017).
[xxi] "Die fünfte und sechste Glocke klingen auf as und c. Ihre Besonderheit: Sie erinnern an die Sturmflut 1976. Ihre Inschrift auf Deutsch: 'Zur Erinnerung an die Sturmflut am 3. Januar 1976.' (...). Als Bildzier enthalten sie je zwei Friese mit Wasserwellen." Evangelisch-lutherische Kirchengemeinde Haselau (2018).
[xxii] Though a protest song about the racist and wrongful imprisonment of the midweight boxer Rubin 'The Hurricane' Carter, the metaphor of violence is still relevant.
[xxiii] Presumably written by Harry Evans in 1894.
[xxiv] The reason is not the often misquoted Tacitus (56–117) sentence "Frisia non cantat" – ["Frisia does not sing"]. While ascribed to his Germania, the quotation, most likely related to the inhabitants of the Dutch coast, and only later transferred to the northern regions, does not appear there, but it has been frequently used to describe the musicality of the region in an ironic manner, despite the rich local musical variety (see, for example, Keller 2010).
[xxv] This clearly resembles superstitious practices already documented in medieval times. According to this perception negative forces (e.g. the devil, ghosts, demons) would be invited by naming them. This is also reflected in proverbs such as "Den Teufel nicht an die Wand malen" ["Don't draw (i.e. conjure up) the devil on the wall"] that has been attributed to Martin Luther or "Wenn man vom Teufel spricht" ["Speaking of the devil"].
[xxvi] This fact was also emphasised by Theodor Storm, who, together with Detlev von Liliencron, was central for popularizing the tale in the 19th century.
[xxvii] The region had previously been under Danish administration.
[xxviii] "Sein Haupt ruht dicht vor Englands Strand/ die Schwanzflosse spielt bei Brasiliens Sand."
[xxix] "Wo gestern noch Lärm und lustiger Tisch, schwamm andern Tags der stumme Fisch."
[xxx] But not sea or ocean in general; the meaning is restricted to the North Sea.
[xxxi] Nordsee ist Mordsee (dir. Hark Bohm, Germany 1976)
[xxxii] Storm was also highly active on a local musical level. In 1843, at a time, when the male choir movement was at ist peak, he founded and directed the first mixed male/female in Husum. See also Jochen Missfeldt, *Du graue Stadt am Meer: Der Dichter Theodor Storm in seinem Jahrhundert*. Stuttgart: Reclam, 2014. 87.

[xxxiii] Several of Storm's novels and poems are located in Husum, which, until present day, is also called "The Grey City by the Sea", named after his poem "Die Stadt" ["The City"].
[xxxiv] The collection also includes an account of the origin of the storm tides (tale 189, "Woher die großen Fluten kommen") – here as a revenge of an angry English queen after being refused by a Danish king around 600.
[xxxv] The German North Sea areas, as well as the strongly North Sea influenced estuary regions, such as of the river Elbe, share many similarities with other North Sea regions. This applies to linguistic parallels (English shares various similarities with the Frisian and Low German languages), but also to trade networks or cultural relations (the Hamburg patrician's lifestyle is strongly modeled in England, while all regions share some similarities in traditional sea shany repertoires). Reichel indirectly refers to this interrelation in his choise of musical references.
[xxxvi] As Reichel remarked in the liner notes (Reichel 2008), he likewise received strong and positive feedback from school students.
[xxxvii] "*Aber Du sitzt im Sessel / da gibt's ne Sondersendung, da bist Du live dabei, wenn der Deich bricht*."
[xxxviii] The band would also later adapt and rewrite "To France" as "Lieder der Freiheit."
[xxxix] 1st half of verse two, parts of 3, the full verse 5 that describes the market scenes in Rungholt, and the most dramatic parts of verses 7 and 8.
[xl] "Rungholt ruft laut Deinen Namen/ Rungholt ruft laut übers Meer/ Rungholt ruft seit tausend Jahren/ Blanker Hans, wir trutzen Dir."
[xli] "Und dann drei i mik um und ik mean...man vertellt..."
[xlii] "bedrückende Gefühl, wenn der Sturm aufzieht" (Rahn 2009a).
[xliii] For further details see Klaus Goldmann and Günter Wermusch. *Vineta: Die Wiederentdeckung einer versunkenen Stadt*. Bergisch Gladbach: Lübbe, 1999. Also Heimreich (1666:181) points to this parallel between Rungholt and the destruction of a location at the Baltic Sea, here called Julia.
[xliv] The Beaufort Scale or Beaufort Wind Scale measures wind speed by relating wind speed to observable conditions on land or at sea. An empirical value of 11 indicates a violent storm, while 12 indicates a hurricane.
[xlv] Usually also the effect of a specific wind condition with wind from northwest blowing water from the North Sea into the Baltic Sea – and then wind change to northeast that then blows water at the shores; often occurs after North Sea storm tides that are the often interrelated with Northwest storms and related subsequent weather changes.
[xlvi] For more details see Marcus Petersen and Hans Rohde: *Sturmflut. Die großen Fluten an den Küsten Schleswig-Holsteins und in der Elbe*. Neumünster: Wachholtz, 1981 (3rd edition).

Appendix

Detlev von Liliencron, "Truth Blanke Hans"
Published in *Adjudantenritte und andere Gedichte*. Leipzig: Wilhelm Friedrich, 1883.

Heute bin ich über Rungholt gefahren,
die Stadt ging unter vor sechshundert Jahren.
Noch schlagen die Wellen da wild und empört
wie damals, als sie die Marschen zerstört.
Die Maschine des Dampfers schütterte, stöhnte,
aus den Wassern rief es unheimlich und höhnte:
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Von der Nordsee, der Mordsee, vom Festland geschieden,
liegen die friesischen Inseln im Frieden,
und Zeugen weltenvernichtender Wut,
taucht Hallig auf Hallig aus fliehender Flut.
Die Möwe zankt schon auf wachsenden Watten,
der Seehund sonnt sich auf sandigen Platten.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Mitten im Ozean schläft bis zur Stunde

ein Ungeheuer, tief auf dem Grunde.
Sein Haupt ruht dicht vor Englands Strand,
die Schwanzflosse spielt bei Brasiliens Sand.
Es zieht, sechs Stunden, den Atem nach innen
und treibt ihn, sechs Stunden, wieder von hinnen.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Doch einmal in jedem Jahrhundert entlassen
die Kiemen gewaltige Wassermassen.
Dann holt das Untier tiefer Atem ein
und peitscht die Wellen und schläft wieder ein.
Viel tausend Menschen im Nordland ertrinken,
viel reiche Länder und Städte versinken.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Rungholt ist reich und wird immer reicher,
kein Korn mehr faßt selbst der größeste Speicher.
Wie zur Blütezeit im alten Rom
staut hier alltäglich der Menschenstrom.
Die Sänften tragen Syrer und Mohren,
mit Goldblech und Flitter in Nasen und Ohren.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Auf allen Märkten, auf allen Gassen
lärmende Leute, betrunkene Massen.
Sie ziehn am Abend hinaus auf den Deich:
"Wir trutzen dir, Blanker Hans, Nordseeteich!"
Und wie sie drohend die Fäuste ballen,
zieht leis aus dem Schlamm der Krake die Krallen.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Die Wasser ebben, die Vögel ruhen,
der liebe Gott geht auf leisesten Schuhen,
der Mond zieht am Himmel gelassen die Bahn,
belächelt den protzigen Rungholter Wahn.
Von Brasilien glänzt bis zu Norwegs Riffen
das schlafende Meer wie Stahl, der geschliffen
das Meer wie schlafender Stahl, der geschliffen".
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Und überall Friede, im Meer, in den Landen.
Plötzlich, wie Ruf eines Raubtiers in Banden:
das Scheusal wälzte sich, atmete tief
und schloß die Augen wieder und schlief.
Und rauschende, schwarze, langmähnige Wogen
kommen wie rasende Rosse geflogen.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

Ein einziger Schrei- die Stadt ist versunken,
und Hunderttausende sind ertrunken.
Wo gestern noch Lärm und lustiger Tisch,
schwamm andern Tags der stumme Fisch.--
Heut bin ich über Rungholt gefahren,
die Stadt ging unter vor sechshundert Jahren.
Trutz, Blanke Hans!

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Gender and Culture: Revoicing Traditional Song in Context

Lillis Ó Laoire

Abstract

Music and song remain powerful indicators of socially gendered ideologies in Ireland, revealing both dominant and transgressive trends. The paper briefly outlines the dominant trends of music and song in society before proceeding to unearth and explore dissenting voices, giving a number of notable examples. The concept of intersectionality emerges as a productive approach to understanding the hegemony of heteronormative identities expressed through music and song performance. It also helps to identify challenges and divergent trends. A broad diachronic framework shows how tradition has never been monolithic across time.

Keywords: Social continuity, change, LGBTQ voices, keening, Gaelic song, performance, tradition, intersectionality.

The first *Crossroads* conference on Irish Traditional Music in 1996 (Irish, Crosbhealach an Cheoil) heralded a new era of scholarship on traditional Irish music. The conference acknowledged various approaches to research, celebrating both established historical methodologies and acknowledging more recent styles together. The event impressed attendees because of the great enthusiasm that pervaded the gathering and the mix of younger and more mature scholars in attendance. The subsequent publication gives some sense of this atmosphere and is a worthwhile portrayal of the range of scholarship in traditional music at that time (Vallely et al. 1999). Some thirty papers appear in print, given by a range of scholars both from Ireland and elsewhere. Revisiting the volume gives us a sense of the current issues in traditional music at the time. Ríonach uí Ógáin's paper, the only one published in Irish, indicated a welcome for publication in that language. The volume's back cover statement reminds us that the conference came in the wake of *Riverdance* (1994), now a continuously touring show in a global context. A single contribution by Rina Schiller on gender in Irish music also stands out (Schiller 1996: 200-05). Notable too, is the patronage of the first woman President of Ireland, Mary Robinson. Although previously, some scholars were active in the International Council for Traditional Music, the society had only a limited presence in Ireland at that time. In the intervening period, the promise that could be sensed at *Crossroads* has come to fruition. This includes the development of a strong Irish membership of ICTM and the holding of the International World Conference at the University of Limerick in 2017.

These developments bode well for a cultural discourse in which the discussion of music, song and their place in culture and society can be as important a barometer of the cultural commentary as any other element. Many critics have regarded literature and literary criticism as the main vehicle for such discourse, especially in Ireland (White 1998, 5) but as Leith Davis argues, music has as much right to play a major role in the discussion as any other cultural form (Davis 2006, 5). Reflecting on that moment and considering the ways in which Ireland and traditional music has changed in the period

since the first *Crossroads* event also shows how much research there is yet to be done, and how much there is to say about the place of traditional music and song in the contemporary situation.

The 2018 ICTM Ireland annual conference call for papers was an intriguing and challenging one. The abstract addressed current concerns, framing them in a matrix of enduring questions around the practice and reception of traditional music and song in Ireland, including the "culture bearers, voice and affect, iconic voices, music and memory, and music and belonging, all in the context of LBGTQ+ voices." This was particularly appropriate in the wake of the transformative marriage equality referendum of 2015, and following it, the referendum that repealed the 8th amendment in the Irish constitution that granted mothers and the fetuses they carried an equal right to life. Moreover, in the 2019 context of a government led by a gay man with a biracial Indian-Irish heritage and with an avowed interest in the Irish language, it seems an especially appropriate time to discuss such themes and the concerns that arise from them. My attempt here will be to *queer* the pitch, as it were, and follow what I believe to be a way of opening traditional music and song to new and changing identities. In so doing, I want to begin to address the lack of engagement with issues of gender in Irish music (O'Flynn 2009: 152).

In 1996, at the *Crossroads* conference, a definite tension between supposed "conservative" voices and those styled as "innovators" was apparent. That debate continues, although it seems to me that some of the strain has abated, given the enormous development of traditional music within the academy as well as of new performance groups, in addition to the increasing professionalization of Irish music. There seems to be more of a consensus that there is room for all kinds within the broad confines of traditional music. However, it is as well for us to recall that traditional music is often seen as inherently conservative, given its association with the Irish cultural revival, one produced "by a particular kind of masculinist nationalism," founded on the suppression of counterdiscourses, including feminism, radical socialism, lesbianism and the homoerotic (Walshe 1997: 3). However, it is worth recalling attitudes to the Oscar Wilde scandal (McCormack 1998, Earls, 2012) and speculation over Pádraig Pearse's sexual identity in this context (Edwards 1977). While neither specifically relate to music, both are relevant to the cultural milieu of the revival and its subsequent trajectories.

It is a given that some strands of that movement, and those that came to dominate the discourse after independence were both regressive and repressive, wishing to contain traditional music within a rural-oriented, agrarian model that emphasized traditional heteronormative binary sexual identities. Such conservatism is generally associated with the Irish language and culture and those who reject or disparage traditional music and song seem perhaps especially convinced of those inexorable, inextricable alignments equating rural, conservative worldviews and gender identities with religion, sport, music and language. This raises the concept of intersectionality, an "interpretive orientation" developed by black feminist scholars that attempts to understand the interlacing of identities and their enmeshment in power systems in ways that mutually reinforce one another (May 2015: 3-4). Defined as "how lived identities, structural systems, sites of marginalization, forms of power, and modes of resistance 'intersect' in dynamic, shifting ways" (May 2015: 21-23) intersectionality espouses a commitment to open forms of social justice. Put simply, dominant ideologies coalesce or combine in forming systems that elicit resistance from those who fail to conform. Intersectionality aims to understand such ideologies and strategies of resistance historically and socially in order to unsettle asymettrical power relations and create dialogue, striving to reduce oppression and enhance equality by forging "collective models of social transformation" (May 2015: 4). Although the model has also been subject to critique, it provides a useful way of thinking about identities closely caught up in power systems that control them. Traditional music, for those who challenge binary gender categorization, is both "liberatory and confining" (Slominski, 2018), a claim that

reveals exactly the enmeshment claimed by intersectionality. By drawing on this approach here, the intention is to give insight into the existence of dissident identities over time, revealing music's inherent potential to achieve transformations.

Éamon De Valera (1882-1975), a unique survivor of the Leaders of the 1916 Rising, became one of the most prominent public figures in post-Independence Ireland. He founded the Fianna Fáil party in 1926 and became head of Government in 1932. He remained a leading and influential political figure for over 50 years, shaping public opinion and policy during his heyday. He was the main author of the 1937 Constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, a central document in Irish politics and law. His best-known speech, given on St. Patrick's Day in 1943, to mark the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Gaelic League (Dowling 1997), has become a byword because of its deployment of the tropes of cultural nationalism, calculated to promote himself by seeming to espouse a utopian vision of traditional Irish life (de Valera 1943). A paean to frugal ways of living and the moderate comforts derived from them, the speech naturally referred to the importance of the Irish Language, but did not specifically mention music. However, in this key passage, the telling phrase "dancing at the crossroads" was mistakenly added afterwards to a description of "the laughter of happy maidens" providing a missing musical soundtrack that, though not originally present, seemed necessary.[i] This embellishment reinforces the association between rural living and the traditional crossroads dance in the Irish popular mind. This, however, was also an Ireland where Micheál Mac Liammóir could live openly with his partner Hilton Edwards, indicating the protection that the cultural scene could also provide for those dissenting from heteronormative identities.

This speech is so often cited because it seems to many representative of a dominant strand of public discourse during the formative years of the state, one always more rhetorical ("The Ireland we *dreamed* of..." [my emphasis]) than founded in reality (Ó Crualaoich 1986: 50). Ó Giolláin has pointed out that both a modernizing discourse and a traditionalist one were in conflict at that very period (2000:144). The discourse of modernization and progress prevailed to a large extent in the sociological domain, in the areas of health and housing for example, under the influence of the Labour movement, whereas the traditional view given in De Valera's speech looked towards an idyllic, prelapsarian, golden past and dominated much of the cultural politics of the time. The latter was mainly espoused by artists, writers and those influenced by the Gaelic League and the Literary Revival.

That the socio-cultural landscape in Ireland has a strongly patriarchal orientation can be in no doubt. For music, Fintan Vallely notes a disparity in performance and conceptual spheres in traditional music. While the former has always included females, under the influence of western art music, the latter emerges steadfastly as "a male genre", although evidencing a marked increase in female participation (Vallely 2011, 302). Despite increasing numbers of women performers, the 'conceptual' dominance of men remains clear in the traditional music world. As is well known, the idea of Ireland is closely aligned to traditional music, so that a harp acts as the symbol of the nation, a motif that appears as an emblem of the state on all official documents and coinage. Though Ireland is symbolized as a woman, nevertheless, male voices dominate discourse and this has also been true in traditional music. It is not that there are no female players or that they do not have a voice, but rather that the trope of nationalism, and especially cultural nationalism, has reinforced normative gender models through which participants in musical tradition can be categorized and labelled. De Valera's ideas, though often ridiculed for their old-fashioned Victorian tone, are one representation of what such persistent categories might entail. They draw on well-defined images to evoke idealized types of male and female roles. They reflect majority views of that time, ideas that continued to hold sway for many years. The recent marked rise of GAA[ii] women's sport and the growing media attention it receives, shows how this has changed over time. However, the fact that the coming out of a prominent

GAA player, such as Dónal Óg Cusack, in 2009, created a media stir and some controversy, shows that boundaries have not shifted completely and that quite a few people remain attached to their maintenance. Cusack's ability to capitalize on his identity by publishing a best-selling autobiography (2009), is another interesting development, also indicating palpable change and engagement with new modes of identity formation and branding aided and supported by neo-liberal capitalism. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to think of such gradual, incremental adjustments as a tectonic shift. The picture is more complex and variegated and requires patient and careful study to understand it. Although both recent referendums (Marriage Equality 2015, Repeal the 8th Amendment 2018) passed comfortably (62.04% and 66.07% respectively), a significant no vote indicates a core group who are at best uncomfortable with the changes in Irish legislation.

The continued popularity of the Rose of Tralee Festival [iii] (an annual women's pageant named after the eponymous ballad), for example, shows the continued desire for idealized representations of gender, as attractive young women are interviewed and dressed up to acclaim, accompanied by athletic young men, often also drawn from the ranks of GAA sportsmen. There has been a more recent subversion of these ideal roles; Maria Walsh, who won the pageant in 2014, used the moment to come out as a lesbian. This certainly gave the immortal words of the song a distinctively queer resonance:

> She was lovely and fair as the rose of the summer,
> Yet 'twas not her beauty alone that won me;
> Oh no, 'twas the truth in her eyes ever dawning,
> That made me love Mary, the Rose of Tralee.

It would be interesting to know whether Ms. Walsh would have won the competition or, indeed, been chosen to represent Philadelphia, had her sexual identification been widely known beforehand. In any case, her statement had the effect of authorising a queer desire in an event constructed around traditional norms of attractiveness in women. It is now within the bounds of possibility that one Rose could desire another in a manner similar to the male-oriented gaze of the auditorium or screen audience. Such examples provide concrete realizations of the changes occurring around LGBTQ+ issues in Ireland, revealing both the increasing acceptance of and the continuing resistance to such identities. That she won a seat in the 2019 European elections standing for the Fine Gael party, provides further complexity with regard to perceptions of sexual orientation and identities, that undoubtedly deserved to be explored, but that lie beyond the scope of my enquiry here. It is against this backdrop that I will discuss traditional vocal music especially. This development aside, the pageant continues and remains popular happily reinforcing its message that still carries echoes of de Valera's famous speech.

In relation to The Rose of Tralee pageant, I may also mention the GAA and *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* – a major national and international association for traditional music and musicians. Comhaltas organizes international competitive events known as *Fleadhanna Cheoil* (Feasts of Music), which culminate annually in the All-Ireland Fleadh, a major competitive event with a myriad of other formal and informal activities, held in shifting venues during the month of August. The 2018 Fleadh was held in Drogheda, Co. Louth, for example; the 2017 event in Ennis, Co. Clare. The holding of major GAA finals, the Rose of Tralee pageant as well as many other similar and smaller events, the Fleadh Cheoil during the month of August, indicates that these are developments arising out of old *Lúnasa* rituals – the first fruits harvest festival that was celebrated on the last Sunday of July (MacNeill 1982). Deeply connected with courtship and marriage, the saturated intersectionality of dominant ideology stands revealed when such modern events coincide with primordial quarter day celebrations. These connections deserve more detailed treatment that lies outside the scope of my

present focus. However, Maria Walsh's public coming out in the context of this affects the reception and consumption of all such similar events.

Against this background, it is appropriate to compare examples from traditional song widely separated in time, and to some extent in space. This exercise attempts to recover both earlier and contemporary alternative voices and to show how traditional music can adapt and change to reflect and influence its social and cultural environment. I draw these from the traditional context of keening, perhaps the most archetypical and gendered vocal genre, extending also to song, using both text and context to illustrate my points. Though other issues are important, I will confine myself to the topic of gender. In this discussion, I follow Bourdieu's assertion that discourse is not a peripheral part of the work critiqued, but a stage in its production (Bourdieu 1993: 35/6). The time seems right to add another dimension to the works I will discuss, augmenting them and awakening a debate around them.

Keening – Dynamics and Adaptations

In the past, keening came to represent an undomesticated, barbarous Ireland, especially by pre-Famine travel writers, for whom it remained one of their top ten items to see on their tours (Lloyd 2011: 53). In an early description of keening, the genre is said to have been performed by both men and women, and a description of one performance indicates that men were adept at such displays. Referring to the caoineadh W.K. Sullivan observes:

> The *Mná Caoínte,* or professional mourning women, who used to attend the wakes and funerals in the Irish-speaking districts of Ireland up to the period of the famine of 1848, and perhaps still do in some of the remoter districts of the west and south, preserve, I have no doubt, a true tradition of the ancient *Cepóg* or *Guba* [forms of lament]. The usual number was at least four; one stood near the head of the bed or table on which the corpse was laid, one at the feet, who was charged with the care of the candles, aone or more at each side; the family and immediate friends of the deceased sat around near the table....Sometimes one or more or even all the principal singers, were men. I once heard in West Muskerry, in the county of Cork, a dirge of this kind, excellent in point of both music and words, improvised over the body of a man who had been killed by a fall from a horse, by a young man, the brother of the deceased. He first recounted his genealogy, eulogised the spotless honour of his family, described in the tones of a sweet lullaby his childhood and boyhood, then changing the air suddenly, he spoke of his wrestling and hurling, his skill at ploughing, his horsemanship, his prowess at a fight in a fair, his wooing and marriage, and ended by suddenly bursting into a loud piercing, but exquisitely beautiful wail, which was again and again taken up by the bystanders. (1873: 324/5).[iv]

This oft-quoted passage is of interest for its portrayal of music and gender. Importantly, it is clear that men could lead the keening as well as women. The young man, however, is the *brother* of the deceased, and the *mná caoínte* , the keening women, are conversely described as professionals. Ostensibly in Ireland, then, keening, although also practiced by men*,* belongs, as a *profession,* mainly to women. The genre has been the focus of much discussion, by Patricia Lysaght for example (1995) with Angela Bourke adopting a feminist framework in her insightful work on the topic (2000, 2002). The interpretation of the keening tradition has itself been a battleground for gendered views of vocal traditions. Conversely to Bourke's portrayal of keening women as eloquent, articulate performers, as grief therapists who expertly channeled the sorrow and loss experienced by relatives and community to provide relief and comfort, Breandán Ó Buachalla viewed *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire,* or the "Lament for Art O'Leary", as the expression of a single literate, educated voice, expressed through the mode of writing (1998).Written for an Irish officer in the Austrian army, this lament is the longest poem and best-known keening text, and is attributed to his wife, Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill (dark-haired Eileen O'Connell). The construction of Eileen O'Leary, or Eibhlín Dubh Ní Chonaill, as either oral performer or desk oriented writer itself clearly

throws polarized views of gender roles within tradition into relief. Orality and performance are perceived as less important, more feminine, more transsubjective, while the solitary literary voice, transmitted through writing, implies a definite resonance with a male identity and the individual subject.

Méadhbh Nic An Airchinnigh has unravelled various arguments in a 2012 Ph.D. thesis that was the first to include a serious consideration of the music of lament in Ireland. Her work challenges Ó Buachalla, who dismissed consideration of musical performance and the recorded examples that are found in archives as conjecture, stating firmly that, far from representing the culmination of generations of lamenters' voices, *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire* represented the voice of a poet. He acknowledged a link between oral tradition and Eibhlín Dubh's poem, but claimed that the literary development it had experienced had transformed it beyond anything any oral text could possibly match in individual excellence. Nic an Airchinnigh managed to show, by including a musical dimension and by identifying the similarities between the various tunes that have come down to us that there was, very definitely, a preferred musical configuration for keening. Her research shows that in both metrical and performative approach, a milking or herding song collected from Elizabeth Cronin (Ó Cróinín 2000: 186-187) closely resembled the characteristics identified by Ó Madagáin (1981 311-332) as those most salient in keening melodies. This included a loose structure with a repetitive element and irregular numbers of lines. Nic An Airchinnigh pointed out, for example, that the air of the great Connacht love song "*Cuaichín Ghleann Néifin*" contained exactly the characteristics she had identified as salient in keening airs. This provides a direction for future musicological analysis of song tunes, in order to compare their structure to those that contain elements linked to keen airs, to help us better apprehend the connections between them.

The authoritative text of the "Lament for Art O'Leary" was recovered in two versions from a woman name Nóra Ní Shindile, from Inse Mhór near Millstreet in County Cork in the 19th century (Ó Tuama 1960, Bourke 2002). The fact that the keen only began to be thought worthy of written record around that time shows the influence of written manuscript tradition and more formal genres of poetry, usually composed by men. As new material became difficult to acquire, attention turned to keening, assisted no doubt by Croker's publications on the topic (1844). As Sullivan's account shows, although men also performed the keen, women certainly predominated to the extent that we can say that it was chiefly a woman's role, especially in a professional capacity.

As a part of the revoicing of the song tradition and indeed of its language, Irish, I turn to a passage from nineteenth-century Kilkenny/Waterford. This describes not just a male keener, but a male *professional* keener, an individual who earned his living, apparently meagre and precarious, from lamenting over corpses in the environs of where he lived. For this account, we are indebted to John George Augustus Prim (1821-75), an antiquarian, and another scholar, John Dunne or Seán Ó Doinn, whom Prim employed to collect song in South Kilkenny and the neighbouring areas of Tipperary and Waterford (Ó hÓgáin 1980 13-15). Nioclás Breathnach, or in anglicized form, Nicholas Walsh, appears to have been active in the second half of the eighteenth century. Also known as Nioclás an Chaointeacháin or Nick the Keener, we have only one short poem from him, with a possible second attributed to him by the collector. However, I am drawn to the description of him as the only *professional* male keener known to Dunne. Nicholas Walsh was, therefore, an exceptional individual. In Dunne's account, worth citing at length, we can understand that his personal attributes were also exceptional:

> This Nicholas was an extraordinary man for his powers of keening. He was a living chronicle of all the family pedigrees in the adjoining districts of the 'three counties' [Kilkenny, Tipperary, Waterford], throughout which districts he was universally recognized as a professional keener. It was usual to dispatch a messenger for him 'with horse bridle and saddle' for his conveyance and an 'old guinea' as his fee. On his arriving

> at the wakehouse there was a great stir and excitement among the people. He respectfully uncovered on entering said a prayer of the Latin psalm for the dead, and then took his seat among the females who surrounded the corpse and who in the dresses of the period had an imposing appearance and the profusion of lights. Strangers standing without invariably mistook Nicholas's voice for a woman of great oreal [sic] powers, so mellifluous and pathetic was it in all the modulations of the song of sorrow – especially in leading the loud wail, in which all the females at either side took part at the concluding words of each stanza. On one occasion at Poulacapple two men were despatched on horseback, one towards the Walsh Mountains for Nick The Keener, the other to Kilcash for a famous female-keener. Both keened the deceased (Mr. John Laurence) at great length in alternate verses, bringing down the tears in hot streams from the hundreds within and without… I doubt whether Nick the Keener had any fixed place of residence. On one occasion here it was at Dún Feart he was found, on another at Gleannta near Bennettsbridge and at another time somewhere in the vicinity of the Walsh Mountains, but of which I am informed he was a native. (Ó hÓgáin 1980:20).

This passage is noteworthy for many reasons. First, it confirms that the keen was a performed genre, agreeing closely with the description given by Sullivan earlier with regard to its solo and communal call and response nature. It also gives the reason for lament performance: to 'bring down tears in hot streams' from the abundant numbers of assembled mourners, directly because of the recitation of the genealogies and deeds of the deceased, again resembling Sullivan's description from West Muskerry. We can see that the professionals fulfilled exactly the role that Angela Bourke argues they played, acting as "grief therapists" (2002: 1366), managing expectations and channeling the sorrow of those who were gathered, so that it was expressed in appropriate ways. Apparent also is the competitive edge that would inform the presence of two consummate professionals from different areas and their concern to acquit themselves well in the presence of such a large gathering, thereby safeguarding their reputations and ensuring opportunities for future employment.

From the perspective of voice and gender, Nick the Keener's occupation as a man in a largely female profession is of intense interest. The facts that he took his place among the females, and that the sound of his voice was mistaken for that of a woman by those who did not know him, suggest strongly that he took on the outward aspects of a female identity when engaged in the practice of that profession. Without exaggeration, it could be argued that this individual had adopted aspects of a transgendered identity. Perhaps this was the result of a medical condition such as puberphonia, a term that indicates an individual's voice failing to change in the normal way due to pituitary malfunction (http://entcolumbia.org/health-library-0/puberphonia). The cause of the phenomenon is, however, not really at issue. What is significant is that the feminine character of Nick the Keener's voice may well have been the factor that influenced his adoption of a female identity. He was accepted among the women keeners as one of their own, and his extraordinary voice, his musical and performative ability accounted for that acceptance. The term transgender is, of course, a modern construct adopted to indicate individuals who do not identify with their biological sex or assigned birth gender. My point here is not, therefore, to argue whether we can really identify a figure from the past as transgender. Rather, I wish to suggest that, given the discursive history of the cultural revival, "Tradition" with a capital T, briefly referred to above, is often presented to us as something fixed and unvarying, accepting only binary gender roles, a concept that interlaces and enmeshes, activities and identities, according to ideas of intersectionality. By looking at Nicholas Walsh's identity as described by a near contemporary, we see that this is not necessarily the case. Because of its dominance, this apparent fixity can be challenging, and difficult to interrogate. It can serve to hinder our engagement with tradition as a fluid inheritance that responded to real life conditions. Far from being a dead weight or a prescriptive unchanging monolith, however, when we look at this example we can see that a phenomenon such as a man who performed like a woman, and who was, in fact, accepted as an honorary woman in

a professional capacity, could be accommodated, and even celebrated, during his lifetime in the late eighteenth century.

We do not know many of the details of Nicholas Walsh's life, except the few meagre facts we have in Dunne's account. Nevertheless, we may be sure that his difference marked him as an outsider, someone with prestige certainly, sought after especially for his ability to keen over the corpse, but who had no home and belonged to no fixed abode. In addition to a lament for a priest named Risteard Ó Sé, a couple of short verses attributed to him were said to have been made when he spent the night in a draughty space between two doors, neither fully in one room nor another:

Dá mbeinn i gCeannanas dom, nó scaitheamh taobh thíos de,
Nó i nGarraí na mBan i bhfochair mo mhuintir',
Chuirfidís a chodladh in olainn is i líon mé
Nó in leaba clúmh na n-éan más é is daoire –
Ní chuirfidís idir dhá dhoras mé ag stopadh na gaoithe!

Fad a bheidh grian ar spéir nó féar ar thalamh
Beidh trácht choíche ar Lionard Ó Nadaigh –
I nGarraí na mBan os cionn na Gaise
Mar do bhíonn fuaim abhann agus cling mharbh,
Agus ceiliúr na n-éan gach aon mhaidin.

("If I were in Ceanannas, or a bit further north,
Or in Garraí na mBan in the company of my family
They would send to me to sleep in wool and in linen
Or in a feather bed, since that is the most expensive
They wouldn't put me between two doors to block the wind.

As long as the sun shines or the grass grows
The name of Lionard Ó Nadaigh will never be forgotten
In Garraí na mBan above the Gais
Where there river sounds and tinkles faintly
And the birds sing each and every morning.")
(Ó hÓgáin 1980: 64, 118).

Dunne speculated that this space had been deliberately given to the lamenter in the hopes of eliciting just such a witty and acerbic response in verse. The story emphasizes Nicholas's liminal status, neither fully in nor fully out of society. It also underlines the musical and performative skills that enabled him to compensate for this estrangement, by becoming partially, in some senses, the greatest keening woman of all (Ó hÓgáin 1980). This is, therefore, no rose-coloured portrayal of Nicholas Walsh's life. Not everyone accepted his difference, and his impoverished state left him vulnerable to ridicule and practical jokes. Despite his fee of an "old guinea", mentioned above, he was apparently a nomad. His skill in Latin, prayer, genealogy, song, however, and above all his combination of those abilities at a high and deeply appreciated level of lament performance, meant that Nicholas had a position in society and that he was sought after for those skills. He conforms almost exactly to Alan Merriam's observation that musicians seem, across a number of societies, to enjoy simultaneously both high importance and low status (1964: 137).

Traditional song and music today have come through the cultural nationalism of the late nighteenth-century. As such, they have been subject to an agenda where "culture cannot be seen as disinterested and autonomous, but is openly subordinated to the political projects of the nationalist movement" (Lloyd 2011: 92). Postcolonial anxiety about gender, and especially a resistance to the trope of the feminized colonial male subject, contributed to a movement in which "the project of remasculinization" (Lloyd 2011: 100) became central, one extremely doctrinaire regarding heteronormative gender identity. Stiofán Ó Cadhla has also argued that the picture we often get of folklore and folk tradition is a colonial category conditioned by the myriad range of –

isms imposed on it by academic discourse, to the extent that only certain aspects of it are highlighted and that these are often seen through a conservative cultural nationalistic lens (2007, 2011: 12).

By highlighting Nicholas Walsh's case, I intend to bring the topic into focus and to point out that such identities existed and could be accommodated, providing us with precedents for our own engagement as traditional singers and musicians with similar identities in our current lives.

Queering Song: Some Notable Examples

Staying with the theme of keening, I want to turn now to a contemporary example of what I regard as the persistence, or repurposing, of keening in a modern vein. This concerns the celebrated writer Nuala O'Faolain (1940-2008), academic, filmmaker, journalist, biographer, memoir and novel writer. A significant presence in Irish public life, her two memoirs *Are You Somebody? The Accidental Memoir of a Dublin Woman* (1996) and *Almost There* (2003) became internationally acclaimed bestsellers. While not a woman who is regarded as a traditional singer or musician in the ordinary sense, nevertheless, O'Faolain did engage with singing in her own way. In the sense that she was an Irishwoman who was culturally competent in the culture of the Island, and who more than once declared her interest in traditional Irish language song especially, I regard her as a representative of tradition in the Gadamerian sense that everyone belongs to tradition and that the old always reappears in the new in unexpected ways (1989:295). Like professional keening women of the eighteenth century, Nuala O'Faolain, also, in some senses, occupied the role of a professional grief therapist in a completely modern vein. Through the influence of her friend, Seán Mac Réamoinn, she followed the Merriman School gatherings, which strongly featured traditional song and wrote eloquently about how the singing affected her. [v]

Her identity challenges neat binary divisions between a traditional organic past and a modern dislocated present. Despite her modernity, or perhaps because of it, her interventions in the open expression of private and personal grief are important. Moreover, her engagement with song, as a means to animate and ease the venting of grief, resonates interestingly with he passages quoted above describing the young man's lament for his brother and Nicholas Walsh's professional skill as a keener. In other ways, O'Faolain resembles Walsh in that she was an openly bisexual woman, whose life and experience did not fit comfortably with societally imposed binary, heteronormative categories. Like Walsh, too, she was a liminal figure who chose the margins rather than conformity.

As a powerful and emotive writer, however, she managed to touch a collective nerve that made her a household name. I am not concerned with her celebrity here, but again, with another's description of a performance she gave, in which, very much like an eighteenth-century professional mourner, I argue, she channeled the grief of people who had come to see and hear her specifically for that purpose. Her performance is well observed in Hugo Hamilton's novel, *Every Single Minute* (2015), a fictionalized account of an actual trip the author took with O'Faolain after her terminal cancer diagnosis in early 2008. The narrator, Liam, accompanies Úna to Berlin for the specific purpose of seeing a production of Verdi's opera *Don Carlo.* The novel describes Liam's friendship with Úna and how, in her public speaking engagements, she worked through the grief and unhappiness of her childhood. In describing one of her appearances in Aspen, Colorado, Liam notes how those present were gripped by her compelling narrative:

> You could hear the audience listening. You could feel them getting angry on her behalf, crying with her. You could sense them leaning forward and agreeing with her, that a person, has to have love inside them to receive it, otherwise love would have no reason to come looking for you. You could feel every mother in the place wondering if they had

> something to answer for, for some moment that they had withheld love from a child. Everything they had done or not done, without knowing what they had done. Fathers too like myself. That fear of looking back and wondering what could have been done differently, even when it's already too late. She thanked the audience for listening to her life and bowed her head. And then, the big surprise came at the end, she sang a song. As she said herself afterwards, she murdered the song. It was all breathy and full of laughing, full of inhaling and coughing and lifting her voice up, as if she had to stand on a chair to get the notes down. It was a song about emigration. Everybody loved it. She forgot the words halfway through. All you could hear was her breathing up and down, like she was keeping the beat going. Then she remembered the words again and carried on all the way to the end, until her lungs were completely empty. (Hamilton 2015: 34/5).

I want to connect the above passage with the earlier passage about Walsh as a performer. In both, the actors are liminal, marginal characters who, nevertheless, possess great performative abilities to channel people's anxieties and fears, their guilt and their grief in ways that can achieve a fully satisfying catharsis. Walsh seems to provide comfort, whereas Úna, alias Nuala O'Faolain, elicits more contradictory reactions. These responses are, however, consistent with the range of emotions explored in keening (Bourke 2002). Of course, O'Faolain was not poor, nor did she live a hand-to-mouth existence, like Walsh. The modern benefits of advanced education provided this highly gifted individual with a fairly remunerated means of self-support. For all that, however, as her writing clearly shows, she remained an outsider, living away from Ireland for many years. Her performances began through her autobiographical writing, detailing the ways in which she felt excluded and the steps she took to re-engage with Irish culture (1996, 2003). Obsessively circling around family relationships especially, she grieved especially for a younger brother whom she believed had been lost through sufficient lack of parental care. This accounted for her fascination with *Don Carlo,* a story she thought of as similar to the narrative of her own family.

It is important also to note, however, that O'Faolain's modern "keening" is a radically different act to Walsh's in significant ways, not least because of the wide temporal interval that separates both. In the intervening period, as Sullivan points out in the excerpt above, the Great Famine of 1845-50 led directly to the demise of much of traditional culture as mortality, emigration and other factors took their toll, changes documented and regretted by William Wilde for example (1979 [1852]: 10-20). It also cemented a language shift from Irish to English that had been gathering pace even before the catastrophe. Keening was actively suppressed and eventually went underground, part of a colonial project that "required", according to David Lloyd, "the reorganization of Irish space and the disciplining of their mouths" (2011: 59). If I am correct in viewing the description of Úna's performance above as testimony of the revoicing of Irish lament, the account reveals the *bean chaointe* or keening woman as an uncanny revenant, educated and English-speaking, reminding listeners of something that has been suppressed and almost forgotten but that manifests itself as immediately familiar when it reappears (Freud 1953: 219-252).

Nuala O'Faolain, after the publication of her first volume of autobiography, enjoyed a new status which might be characterised as Ireland's celebrity grief therapist. She received volumes of fan mail with tales of harrowing grief that had been borne until then in the cold silence of isolation that modernity seemed to impose. When in 2008, at 68, she was diagnosed with cancer, she appeared live on *The Marion Finucane Show* to tell her story yet again. She spoke emotionally about her life and her late success as a writer, the tears welling up on occasion. Although she did not sing on that occasion she referred to a song, revealing again her reliance on vocal music to capture strong and sometimes unspeakable emotion. She referenced the Irish language song, "Thíos i lár an Ghleanna" (Down in the Middle of the Glen), quoting, actually slightly misquoting, the words of the last line of the refrain, lines that frequently doubled as a title for the song as well, "A Rí na Glóire Gile, tabhair ar ais an oíche aréir". In saying that the

song's lyrics summed up where she stood in relation to her mortality, O'Faolain revoiced this song, adding a new dimension to it for the listeners and for those who subsequently read the published transcript in *The Irish Independent* (O'Faolain 2008). Like her performance in Aspen, Colorado, where her singing helped to release all the tension gathered by her searching and emotional narrative, quoting these lyrics helped to sum up a situation succinctly that, in some ways, defied words alone. The musical and poetic dimension of the song lyrics helped to augment her speech, to add artistic power to a searing, harrowing narrative, that held out no real hope and that still, nevertheless, paradoxically clung to it.

Although this love song, made in the mid-twenties by the well-known Irish language writer, Séamus Ó Grianna (1889-1968) belongs to post-independence Ireland (Ó Laoire 2016), the tropes cleverly deployed in it can be traced back eventually to Moorish Spain, through traditions of courtly and country love poetry widespread in Europe. A male speaker celebrates a single tryst with a miraculous, almost otherworldly, woman of incredible beauty, longing for a second meeting but knowing that it will not happen. It combines traits of several love song types as detailed by Seán Ó Tuama. The fact that a woman, Nuala O'Faolain, appropriates the song for her plea of hope against hope is also significant. Because she loved women as well as men, and because the longest and most public relationship she had was with a woman, the song could, credibly, be read as a plea from a female speaker to another female, in effect an expression of lesbian love. There is even a sense in which the beloved female in the song could be a divine manifestation. The ambiguous vagueness of such songs aids and abets such meanings. Conservative critics, eager to emphasize heteronormative aspects of the song corpus, rarely countenance such alternate interpretations. However, her appropriation of it, as a woman who had relationships with women, validates such a reading. The transgressive nature of O'Faolain's written work and its implications for meaning in context must be acknowledged.

This brings me to another song, this time, a love song for a young slender, dark haired man. Called in Irish "An Buachaill Caol Dubh" or "The Dark Slender Boy", there is some debate about its meaning. In the most accepted reading, the individual named in the song is not a human being at all, but the spirit of drink which possesses the poet to such an extent that he is useless for any other purpose. However, another more transgressive reading also exists, as the late Brian Earls has noted:

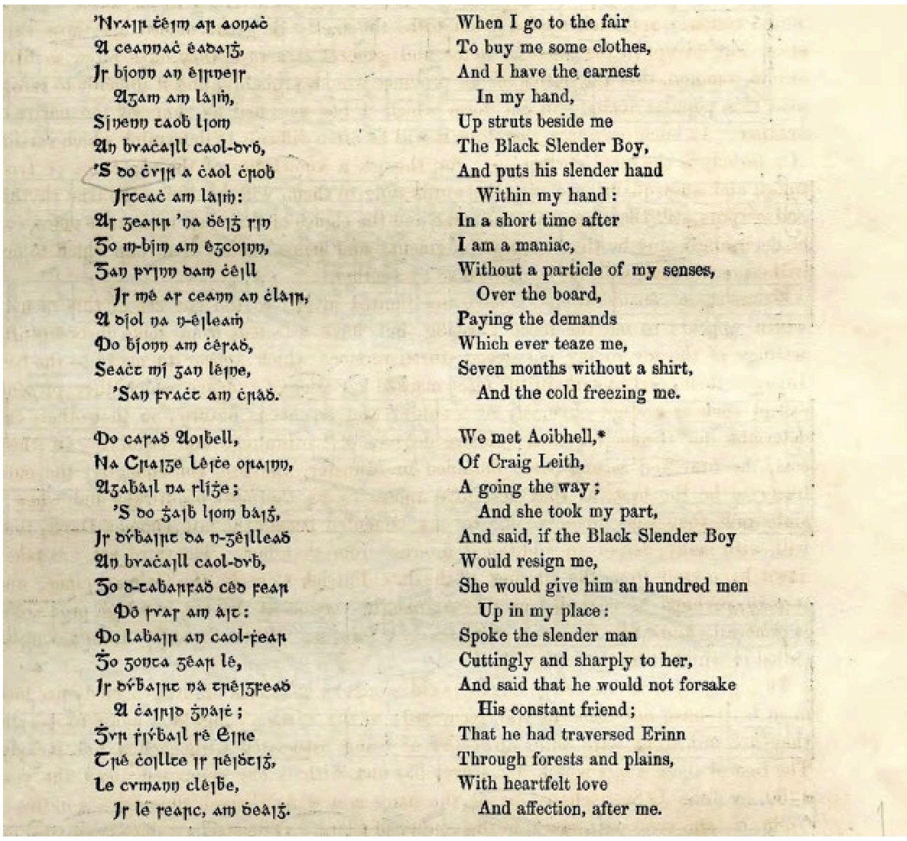
> The present writer recalls, sometime in the 1960s, attending a concert by Seán Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Chualann in the Great Hall of UCD. At one point Ó Riada introduced a piece called if I remember correctly, An Buachaill Caol Dubh (the slim, dark youth), explaining to nervous laughter that, appearances to the contrary, this was not a gay song and that the young man addressed so tenderly was a metaphor for the beer in the drinker's glass. This, of course, was an accurate gloss; An Buachaill Caol Dubh is a drinking and not a love song. Metaphor, however, reveals what is conceivable, in this case that the pleasurable object which is to be consumed can be conceived of as the body of an attractive youth. The setting itself had an erotic dimension, as the male voices we hear in Irish love songs are frequently intent on persuading the girl to accompany them either to the green wood or the ale house. The transformation of beer into a young man's body thus took place in a setting appropriate to such imaginings. (Earls 2009).

Earls sums up the point well. It is sufficient to know that there is a reading of the song that accepts an interpretation expressing homoerotic desire, even if this is a disputed claim. Such a possibility creates an opportunity to explore the song and to acknowledge that there is in the "tradition," however rare and exceptional, a potential recognition of same sex desire. As further evidence, Earls also quotes from a version found in Pádraigín Ní Uallacháin's collection where a visitor is allowed to sleep with "mac fhear an tí" – the son of the man of the house (2003: 17). It may be relevant to point out that, in the thinking of many nationalists, drinking was also a problem of intemperance leading to (Lloyd 2011: 101) "the improper confusion of spaces and practices" (Lloyd 2011: 108). To counter this, these activists refigured drinking from a

form of feminized dependency to a masculinized resistance to hegemonic modes of behaviour, a way to defy colonial stereotypes by revaluing them as marks of difference. In “An Buachaill Caol Dubh” then, the supposedly effeminate weakling in thrall to drink can possibly be repurposed as a masculine figure through the reifiguring of drinking to stand for a robust heteronormative, male activity.

Clearly, however, if this was so, the anxiety remained strong enough to warrant a continuing denial.[vi]

Figure 1: An Buachaill Caol Dubh/The Dark Slender Boy (Petrie 1855: 21).



'Nuair ṫéim ar aonaċ	When I go to the fair
A ceannaċ éadaiġ,	To buy me some clothes,
Is bíonn an éirneis	And I have the earnest
Agam am láiṁ,	In my hand,
Sínenn taoḃ liom	Up struts beside me
An buaċaill caol-duḃ,	The Black Slender Boy,
'S do ċuir a ċaol ċroḃ	And puts his slender hand
Isteaċ am láiṁ:	Within my hand:
Ar ġearr 'na ḋéiġ sin	In a short time after
Go m-bím am égcoinn,	I am a maniac,
Gan puinn dam ċéill	Without a particle of my senses,
Is mé ar ceann an ċláir,	Over the board,
A díol na n-éileaṁ	Paying the demands
Do bíonn am ċéasaḋ,	Which ever teaze me,
Seaċt mí gan léine,	Seven months without a shirt,
'San fuaċt am ċráḋ.	And the cold freezing me.
Do casaḋ Aoiḃell,	We met Aoibhell,*
Na Craige Léiṫe orainn,	Of Craig Leith,
Agabail na sliġe;	A going the way;
'S do ġaiḃ liom báiġ,	And she took my part,
Is dúḃairt da n-géilleaḋ	And said, if the Black Slender Boy
An buaċaill caol-duḃ,	Would resign me,
Go d-taḃarfaḋ céd fear	She would give him an hundred men
Dó suas am áit:	Up in my place:
Do laḃair an caol-ḟear	Spoke the slender man
Go ġonta ġéar lé,	Cuttingly and sharply to her,
Is dúḃairt na tréigfeaḋ	And said that he would not forsake
A ċaraid ġnáiṫ;	His constant friend;
Gur ṡiuḃail sé Eire	That he had traversed Erinn
Tré ċoillte is réiḋtiġ,	Through forests and plains,
Le cumann cléiḃe,	With heartfelt love
Is le searc, am ḋéiġ.	And affection, after me.

The opaque variability of many Irish love songs means that they are susceptible to endless contextualized reinterpretation. As a further addendum to the discussion of “An Buachaill Caol Dubh”, another song, “Dónall Óg” [Young Donal], provides additional evidence of being queered. In Micheál Ó Conghaile’s *Sna Fir* (Amongst Men), a gay *bildungsroman,* written in Irish, this archetypical text and its music, representing a jilted female in a prescriptive heteronormative reading, are pressed into service by the main character as a way to grieve for the permanent. departure of his own male lover (Ó Siadhail 2010: 150).

The comparisons I have made above are exceptional, a feature that may be used against them. This is an entirely valid objection. It can be justifiably said that I am making too much of these small slivers and that they really do not amount to anything much. However, on the other hand, these scraps of evidence shine a light, however dimly, on other potential narratives, not just of the past but of the future. Referring to Ciarán Carson’s *Last Night’s Fun* (1996)*,* Steve Coleman has claimed that the “model of history that Carson discovers in Irish traditional music is deeply contextual, endlessly flawed, and constantly being patched together from newly discovered fragments” (2012: 170). It is just this model that can open up discussion at the entangled, intersectional nexus of nation, politics, culture, gender and identity. Certainly, because of recent and

ongoing societal change, it is likely such stories will become more acceptable as time goes on. It is useful to remember exceptions in the past that show that these new stories do not constitute a break or the very beginning, and that historical precedents exist that can help validate them. The Ireland we have dreamed of need not only be one that presents rigid binarising models of living, and a look at our musical and song history can help us to accept that reality and even to celebrate it.

Endnotes

[i] The phrase 'comely maidens dancing at the crossroads' is widely attributed to De Valera in this oft-quoted speech, although he never actually said these words on that occasion. The phrase symbolises a rather ironic and mocking attitude to the Gaelic Revival's concerns with rural life and puritan morality.

[ii] The GAA or Gaelic Athletic Association, was founded in 1884 to develop and promote Gaelic games. It has been from the outset a prominent national organization, with multiple branches at local level. Its emphasis has primarily been on male sports run at county, provincial and national levels. Recently, there has been a marked surge in women's sports, drawing large spectator numbers and garnering more media attention than previously.

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[v] Cumann Merriman (The Merriman Society), named for the eighteenth century author of the long poem 'Cúirt an Mheán Oíche'/'The Midnight Court,' Brian Merriman. The founders of the society wished to commemorate the Irish language in its culture in the non-puritan spirit that pervades this poem. For further information see: http://www.merriman.ie/en/an-cumann/.

[vi] The homoerotic interpretation depends largely on the two verses printed with the music in Petrie and is probably an unintended consequence of not publishing the rest of the song. When (see Figure 1). I have examined a number of other texts with additional stanzas. these are added, it becomes more challenging to sustain a clearly homoerotic reading. A discussion of those texts would provide material for another article and lies outside the scope of this paper.

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(Hy-)Brazil, Celtic land? An Ethnomusicological Study of the Formation and Characteristics of the Irish-Celtic Music Scene in Brazil

Caetano Maschio Santos

Abstract

This paper presents an ethnomusicological study of the formation and characteristics of a relatively new Irish-Celtic music scene in Brazil. Clustered in major urban centers, a musical community devoted to Irish-Celtic music has developed during the last fifteen years, assisted by the power of the internet and social networks, and supported by the effort of engaged Brazilian culture brokers that maintain a virtual Atlantic bridge between Brazil and Ireland. The Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene portrays a significant level of diversity in the practices and discourses of its participants, largely sprung about by the culture industry that boomed surrounding all things Irish during the Celtic Tiger period [mid-1990s to late-2000s], particularly Irish traditional music and Irish pubs. This diversity provides the foundation for my own analysis of issues of "authenticity" and tradition involved in the adoption of a non-native musical culture in a nation with meager historic ties to Ireland.

Keywords: Irish Traditional Music; Brazil; globalisation; Celtic music, music scenes.

Introduction: "*Irish music – this is still going to be big in Brazil*"

In the year 2009, Topper, a Brazilian sports clothing company famous for producing uniforms for various football clubs in the country launched a TV advertising campaign with the intention of promoting what was then a largely unknown sport in Brazil: rugby. With the marketing motto: "Rubgy – this is still going to be big in Brazil", it aimed to publicise the English sport throughout the country and to market its sponsorship of the Brazilian national rugby team. The witty sense of humor displayed in the advertisement piece thrived on issues such as the geographical region of origin of the sport and its diminutive magnitude in Brazil. These factors most likely explain why, years later, Brazilian uilleann piper Alex Navar, a central figure of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene, would humorously embrace the slogan, adapting it to a musical context: "Irish music – this is still going to be big in Brazil".

Although probably still less successful in its expansion than the aforementioned British sport, "Irish music" has indeed grown in the country over the past ten years. The emergence of such an interest for Irish traditional music (ITM) in Brazil can certainly be acknowledged as a consequence of the worldwide dissemination of Irish cultural traits that marked the Celtic Tiger period, a process in which the island's traditional music held a distinguished place, becoming the most prominent symbol of Irish national identity globally (Rapuano 2001). As noted by Rapuano, ITM has since become a global phenomenon enjoyed and practiced by people of different ethnic, national, class and heritage backgrounds; the possibility of "becoming Irish music" is, at least in theory, open for all (ibid. 103). A variety of agents have contributed to the current state of affairs of ITM in Brazil: the grassroots work of dedicated aficionados (musicians, dancers, fans), the financial interests of the drink and entertainment industries, and the political and economic interests of the Irish government in fostering

productive bilateral relations with Brazil – all of which have played a part in launching the country in the flowing tides of the (global) soundscape of ITM (ÓhAllmhuráin, 2016).

My personal involvement with ITM began as a musician with a professional performance interest, which later developed into academic research activity, instigating historical and ethnomusicological glances towards the milieu in which I occupied the twofold condition of enthusiast and scholar. In this paper, I will examine the formation of a nationwide community of Brazilian musicians devoted to ITM, from the first lonely pioneers up to the recent institutional crowning point, the creation of the first Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann branch in the country: Comhaltas *Brasil* (CCÉBR). Such development spans a period of more than two decades [1994-2018] and is geographically centered in Brazil's largest urban centers: Rio de Janeiro (RJ) and São Paulo (SP). The findings hereafter discussed result from a tripod that encompasses different research methodologies: ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with musicians involved with ITM in RJ and SP, participation at Irish sessions and professional musical performances of ITM in multiple cities in Brazil, and netnographic observation in social networks.

This research trajectory and the support of ethnomusicological literature led me to describe this socio-musical phenomenon as the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene. The concept of scene has been increasingly used in academic discourse since its first appearance in the work of cultural theorist Will Straw (1991). Its usage in the study of popular music commonly focuses on the way musicians, institutions and audiences "come together to collectively create music for their own enjoyment", frequently in an effort to "distinguish themselves from others" (Bennet and Peterson 2004: 1, 3). Through a comparative analysis of fieldwork data and Bennet and Peterson's tripartite classification of music scenes (local, translocal and virtual) I suggest the characterisation of the Brazilian ITM musical community as a translocal scene, where "widely scattered local scenes drawn into regular communication around a distinctive form of music and lifestyle" (ibid. 6). I will also try to highlight this translocal music scene's dual nature: the combination of face-to-face interaction (in sessions, shows, etc) with the translocal properties of music facilitated by communication technology in producing this affective community (ibid. 9).

One of the ways local music scenes become enmeshed in global cultural flows is when individuals or institutions use music as way of enhancing national or regional attractiveness to tourist audiences (ibid. 2). Such has been the case with Ireland: Kneafsey (2002: 123) has shown how Board Fáite's advertisement has frequently reinforced ITM as an essential component of a visit to Ireland (and an "authentic" asset of Irish identity), an association which has had impact within the setting in question. As I'll try to demonstrate, the context studied was impacted by such policies, and also serves as evidence to how "[c]ultural representation of the local Irish product within the global typically promotes geographical location and/or Celtic ethnicity" (Motherway, 2013: 177). In the Brazilian context, even participants who may be described as having a traditional orientation towards Irish music and a critical view of the Celtic tag (certainly a minority) do become enmeshed in such ambivalences - mainly when trying to develop professional activity with ITM. Finally, the adoption of the term Irish-Celtic in describing this music scene is an attempt at portraying a diversity of practices and relating it to "contemporary forms and practices of Irish music that are marketed, or otherwise considered as Celtic" (O'Flynn 2014: 233). In this analysis of the scene, the use of this concept aims to signal the coexistence of more clear-cut allegiances to ITM (as something distinct from Celtic music) and more open perspectives about the idea of Celtic music.

The article starts by examining some of the effects of the Celtic Tiger period in Brazil, and then proceeds to the introduction of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene, gradually evolving into a brief characterisation of its main features and historical development. As it consists of a very dispersed musical community in a country of continental dimensions, this research does not aim to speak for every participant of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene, it being certainly a more varied and complex phenomenon than the portrait hereby offered.

The Celtic Tiger's (musical) grip on Brazil and relations between Ireland and Brazil at the closing of the millennium

As many authors recall, the years close to the turn of the millennium saw an unprecedented rise in the popularity of Irish-Celtic music, a phenomenon related to the period of economic prosperity that earned Ireland the well-known epithet of Celtic Tiger [mid 1990s-late 2000s], intensifying the somewhat problematic conflation between ITM and Celtic music at the same time it reached new audiences (Motherway, 2013: 6-7; Reiss, 2003: 145; Williams, 2010: 124; Wilson and Hastings, 2006: 91-94). In Brazil, the main perceivable axes of this Irish cultural expansion were a significant surge in the number of Irish pubs, the ever-growing St. Patrick's Day celebrations, and the ascending position of Ireland as a travel, study and migration destination for Brazilians, a situation mostly common to the whole continent of Latin America (Murray, 2009: 239). One can safely affirm that most medium to large cities in Brazil have now at least one (so-called) Irish pub, a fact one easily associates with the diffusion of Irish pubs worldwide, the industrial reproduction of which was ironically described as the "pub in a box" phenomenon by Vallely (2011: 363). While I have heard complaints about a lack of interest in "real" ITM in local pubs by members of the scene, this type of venue is nonetheless an important setting for both its professional and social activities. Pubs are frequently the main promoters of St. Patrick's Day events. Luis de la Cerda Fitzpatrick, a Chilean-born uilleann piper of Irish and Spanish ancestry (a rare case in the Brazilian scenario), was himself for some years the owner of a pub in the city of Curitiba (Fitzpatrick's Pub), hosting many shows of Irish-Celtic music (including of his own pan-Celtic band, *Gaiteiros de Lume*, Galician for "Pipers of the Light"). In his view, most of the so-called Irish pubs lack in "authenticity" and true commitment to the tradition, being "party places, they play rock". He reinforced his personal dedication in creating a "real Irish pub" with sessions, Irish-Celtic music shows and cultural events: "we played Irish music every day" (Luis Fitzpatrick, interview).

In the last two decades, St. Patrick's Day celebrations in Brazil have been steadily growing in importance and scale, and for Brazilian Irish-Celtic musical groups it is the first and foremost gig of the year. Crowded pubs and bars, street parades and music festivals have been constantly employing, at an increasing rate, live Irish-Celtic music produced by Brazilian groups, with the occasional addition of diasporic Irish, Irish-American or other foreign musicians[i]. While dependent on this gig, some in the scene voice criticisms and confess ambivalent feelings towards the commercial character attached to the occasion by pubs and beer companies. The stereotyping and commodification of Irish culture as well as its reflections on repertoire and performance demands by contractors and audience are sometimes resented by those musicians most devoted to "authentic" representations of ITM. Commenting on St. Patrick's Day festivities, medieval reenactment events and the expectations surrounding Irish music in those events, Alex Navar lamented the common requests of a "lay" audience for Irish drinking songs, and the need for "catchy", well-known melodies such as the 'Kesh jig': "I see St. Patrick's Day and medieval festivals [in Brazil] almost like Celtic carnivals" (Alex Navar, interview).

One must also account for an institutional viewpoint, examining the direct involvement of the Irish government and bi-lateral relations between Ireland and Brazil and its possible effects in promoting ITM in the country. Diplomatic relations were inaugurated with the opening of the Irish Embassy in Brasília in 2001, ten years after its Brazilian counterpart in Ireland. Mary McAleese's 2004 state visit to Brazil, included a delegation included of high profile traditional musicians such as Martin O'Connor, Tommy Hayes and Cathal Hayden, providing an Irish soundscape at official occasions. Such an event points to the importance of the state as a cultural broker and to the role of ITM as national symbol and cultural product (O'Flynn, 2007: 37). Current president Michael D. Higgins continued to expand such policies, perpetuating cultural flows between Ireland and Brazil with the renovation of the W. B. Yeats Cathedra of Irish Studies at University of São Paulo in 2012. In 2013, a worldwide St.

Patrick's Day celebration action coordinated by Ireland's Foreign Affairs Ministry and Tourism Ireland, known as Global Greening initiative, used green light to illuminate several of the world's greatest monuments. This initiative was accompanied by diplomatic meetings: in Brazil, a green Christ the Redemptor was the main sight during a state visit by Northern Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister Martin McGuinness.[ii] Brazilian piper Alex Navar was hired to arrange two groups of Brazilian musicians to perform ITM at the PM's reception, providing Irish tunes and songs to a somewhat baffled audience of Irish and Brazilian authorities.

One cannot ignore Ireland's growing popularity as a destination for Brazilian tourists, students and migrants during the beginning of the millennium, a fact statistics endorse: the country's 2011 census showed an increase from 1,087 Brazilians living in Ireland in 2002, to 8,704 in 2011.[iii] Although this paper focuses on a vector of cultural flows originating in Ireland and affecting Brazil, it is in fact a two-way highway, as highlighted by Ó hAllmhuráin:

> At the height of the Celtic Tiger, Gort in south Galway welcomed a sizable immigrant community from Brazil, who staged an annual samba festival. In a heartland where the draíocht of Joe Cooley still lingered in the air, the Brazilians and their exotic sambas slowly edged the local toward the global, shrinking the soundscapes of the Atlantic rim in the process. (2016: 230-231).

While such movement has decreased due mainly to the demise of the Celtic Tiger period of prosperity and the current political and economic crisis in Brazil, a recent news article in *The Irish Times* further confirmed the continuing expansion of student interchange policies settled by both nations at the beginning of the 21st century.[iv] So have the links between Brazil and Ireland been nurtured by the growing of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene.

Música Irlandesa no Brasil ("Irish Music in Brazil") and the Brazilian Celtic-cyber diaspora: connecting with the Irish-Celtic music scene in Brazil

My personal involvement with ITM began in 2010, as a musician making an effort to distinguish himself in what was perceived as a music scene of little diversity in the city of Porto Alegre, capital of the southernmost state of Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul. The proliferation of Irish pubs in town and the absence of groups playing Irish music added up to what seemed like a unique professional opportunity, a vacant musical niche in which I could indulge my desire to musically distinguish myself and perhaps lapse into an unwitting exoticism that has been noted in other performances and representations of Irishness (Motherway 2013: 10; Ó hAllmhuráin, 2016: 218, 220; Scahill, 2009: 75). The need to learn more about ITM and seek people playing it in Brazil drove me to the Internet, where I encountered the Facebook group *Música Irlandesa no Brasil* ("Irish Music in Brazil," hereafter IMB).[v] In it were hundreds of Brazilians, amateur and professional musicians as well as fans of ITM, some of whom would later become research collaborators, musical partners and even friends. As of August 2018, its membership exceeds one thousand members, and its description (written by Danny Litwin, an Irish-American musician resident in SP and one of the few diasporic musicians participating in the scene) translates as follows: "A place where people with interests on Irish music, dance and culture may meet. You may share news, doubts and videos as well as opinions and jokes. Music is the best thing in life, let's share and have fun!" This online gathering place revealed itself to be a major site for the exchange and sharing of tunes, videos, information and discourses surrounding ITM, besides constituting a significant virtual space for the building of a sentiment of community – something that reinforces widespread arguments about the impact of the Internet on the diffusion and transmission of ITM, as underscored by Ó hAllmhuráin:

> While this virtual milieu often seems at odds with the physical or lived reality of the music, it has impacted the manner in which the music is collected and transmitted, as well as the morphology of norms and meanings within the traditional soundscape. […] Despite its clamorous and at times Babelian welter of discourse — from opinionated neophytes to passionate opinion leaders — the Internet has now become a ubiquitous forum for Irish musical discourse, as well as a potent marketing tool. (2016: 237).

Numerous other Portuguese-language communities exist on Facebook (membership numbers indicated in brackets): *Músicas Celtas* (“Celtic musics”) [11,798], *Cultura e Música Celta* (“Celtic Culture and Music”) [27,538], *Música New Age, Celta, Instrumental...* (“New Age, Celtic and Instrumental music...”) [11,929], *Eu amo gaita-de-fole* (“I love bagpipes”) [701]. This rise of a Brazilian section of the great Celtic-cyber diaspora (McCoy 2014) is suggestive of the growing popularity of what is generally perceived as Irish-Celtic music and culture among sectors of the Brazilian society. These online groups have been an important space for the development of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene. As debated by Sommers-Smith (2001: 123), it can be argued that online groups centered on ITM function as virtual music communities, providing some of the needs of its participants, such as setting up an audience base and harboring discussions over the boundaries of tradition in Irish music – features that netnographic observation has shown to be the case for IMB. What must be stressed, however, is that despite the importance of these online communities as facilitators to the dispersed population of Brazilian Irish-Celtic music enthusiasts, participants have been steadily strengthening real bonds and expanding social networks by engaging increasingly in “offline” activities such as sessions and performances.

With the intent of drawing a general profile of its membership, I conducted a small-scale online survey of IMB in 2015. The data gathered showed great similarity with my previous experience as a participating musician and also with subsequent fieldwork in the cities of RJ and SP, pointing to the average participant in the scene as a young, white, middle class and well-educated male from the economically developed southeastern region of the country. The profile of an urban middle class at the core of the scene (some of which can afford to travel abroad to festivals, camps and workshops) presents a similar picture to many contemporary Irish sessions around the world, evidencing how in spite of still carrying strong associations with a rural and working classes, ITM has been increasingly practiced in these contexts (Hillhouse 2013: 42-43). A notable difference with regard to sessions in Ireland (and countries of the Irish diaspora) would be the absence of older musicians, a fact easily explained by the very recent development of the scene - still very much a single-generation phenomenon. In terms of gender, women are a minority (although increasing in recent years), except when considering Irish dance practitioners, a province where Brazilians have recently achieved significant notoriety (see below). This aspect calls to the fore some of O'Shea's (2008: 59) considerations about the continuity of established "discourses that construct Irish music as a 'male genre'", with commonly expected female participation mainly as singers and dancers. While this is certainly not an utter reality nowadays - O'Shea reminds us of the female majority among young people learning ITM - disseminated ideas about the suitability of certain instruments still influence female musical performers in Ireland (ibid. 56). In Brazil, however, besides dancers and singers, the female body of practitioners displays a significant number of bódhran players, fiddlers and flutists, in proportion to the totality of women in the scene.

A meaningful percentage of fifty-percent claimed to study Irish-Celtic music and develop some sort of professional musical activity within the style. When asked to describe the musical profile of their musical groups (more than thirty were cited), participant answers disclosed an interesting variety of practices: Scottish pipe bands, Irish punk combos, “Irish trad” ensembles, folk metal groups, new age, medieval, etc. In an open question that asked for general descriptors of what participants associated with the notion of “Celtic Music,” a wide range of views about Celticity manifested itself, ranging from a technical and fairly tradition-oriented perspective to the pagan and mystical end of the spectrum: tradition; ornamentation; bagpipes; Irish; reels; pubs; St. Patrick; session; beer; dance; folklore; poetry; roots; happiness; nature; forest; myths; medieval; harp; peace of mind; magic; paganism. Rejection and dispute over the suitability of the “Celtic” tag is also part of members’ discourses:

> There is a confusion between the Celtic tribes, pagans nearly exterminated by the Romans, which survived only in Ireland, converting to Christianity centuries later. So-called ‘Celtic’ music

> is Irish music, developed from the Middle Ages and onwards. In this sense, it is not Celtic in the strict sense of the word, neither pagan. (Carlos Crestana, IMB survey).

As previously mentioned, the conflating of the terms Celtic and Irish has proven to be an important feature of participants discourses within the Irish music scene in Brazil - defended by some and firmly eschewed by others. The development of what may be described as a purist view (concerned with issues of "authenticity" and tradition) inside the scene can be thought of as a bit of a paradox in a context characterised by an absence of noteworthy historical ties or a significant Irish diaspora, yet it is a nodal point of the scene. It was mainly within the boundaries of this more "tradition-centered" environment that I conducted fieldwork and interviews, and this reflects to an extent my inclinations as a musician studying ITM. In the following sections, brief chronicles of the cases of RJ and SP will be outlined, and insights into the views and histories of some of its main characters presented.

Uilleann pipes in the land of Carnival: Alex Navar and the "carioca" Irish Session Rio

"*Where do you come from?* From Brazil, I answered. Very surprised, he replied: *Oh, you've come a long way. And why have you come?* To learn the uilleann pipes. *I see…and what other instruments you play?* Not one, I said. Looking completely astonished, his comeback was: *Well you must be out of your mind!*" This is the typical ending of an account I have heard many times since I met Alexandre Gracindo Marques de Assis Bentes, better known in the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene as Alex Navar, one of the few uilleann pipers in the country and the first Brazilian to study ITM in Ireland. But how does a Rio de Janeiro-born surfer, graphic designer and former trash metal vocalist end up in Cork, enrolled at uilleann piping classes at the Cumann na bPiobairí Corcaigh?

Alex's narrative about his trajectory is a source for understanding not only his own peculiar encounter with Irish-Celtic music but also a perspective from which it is possible to understand the formation and characteristics of the current Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene. As a young man in his twenties at the beginning of the 1990s, Alex began a journey of self-discovery through the religious philosophy of Kardecist Spiritism. While searching for his true spiritual self, Alex sought out soothing and calming music, no longer feeling attracted to heavy metal. At a record store, he eventually bought a CD entitled *Celtic graces: Best of Ireland*, one of the many collections of Irish and Celtic musics that inhabited "World Music" counters during those days. As soon as the first track began, Alex found himself at a turning point in his life: "Midnight Walker", by Irish piper Davy Spillanne's, triggered an unprecedented sonic and spiritual connection – "It was a shock, I was completely snatched" (Alex Navar, interview).

From there on, Alex undertook a lengthy and difficult search to learn more about the instrument. In pre-Internet times, thousands of miles away from Ireland, his salvation turned out to be the small Irish and Scottish expatriate communities in the city. Frequenting ceilidh dance lessons promoted by the Scottish St. Andrew Society of Rio de Janeiro, Alex met Peter O'Neill, an Irish immigrant long established in Brazil. Seen retrospectively, Peter's help to a very inquisitive Alex was of paramount importance in the development of an Irish-Celtic music scene in Brazil. Through Peter, Alex met Padráig Flavin, another Irishman expatriate from Rio de Janeiro (henceforth RJ), who opened the first Irish pub in the city, called Shamrock, and later on Paddy Fla. When the time came that Alex decided he could no longer postpone learning to play the pipes, he asked for Flavin's help. Activating his networks and connections to Ireland, Padráig got Alex in touch with the Cork Pipers Club and uilleann piper John Mitchell, who would later become his teacher.

In April 2000, he departed for Ireland, where he studied the pipes and worked for a year in Cork and Dublin. Alex's descriptions of this period are filled with joy and the wonders of learning ITM "from the wellspring of the tradition", accounts of the endurance needed for learning such a difficult instrument, and memories of the great fun he had playing at sessions, dancing at ceilidhs and frequenting the Willie Clancy Week. Alex's conception of

ITM was profoundly influenced by the traditional atmosphere he experienced and sensed in Cork: learning from a teacher from a family with piping tradition (Mitchell's father and sister were also pipers), having lessons in the kitchen, learning about Irish customs, and frequenting the oldest pipers club in the world [Figure 1]. Coming back to Brazil, he committed himself to preserving and passing on that tradition with a keen consideration regarding "authenticity". However, at that time in RJ he had no one to play with, and for years Alex played by himself or in the odd opportunity of a foreign musician's visit to RJ.

Figure 1 - Session at the Cork Pipers Club (2000). From left to right: Johnny Mitchell, Alex Navar, John Murphy, two unidentified pipers and accordionist Pat Moynihan. [Source: Alex Navar's personal archive]

Things really began to change after the appearance of social networks. Through his profile on Orkut, Alex created a community named "Tin whistle *Brasil*", soon to be followed by another collective entitled "Irish Jam Session RJ" created by engineering student and musician Daniel Sinivirta, also from RJ. The conversations enabled by those online communities began to engender real-life connections among people from RJ who were searching for an opportunity to play, exchange and learn Irish-Celtic music. According to most testimonies, they came from a variety of musical taste backgrounds: folk/Celtic metal fans, Irish punk fans, new age and medieval music enthusiasts. Alex's small apartment in the famous Copacabana neighborhood in Rio de Janeiro became a local ITM hub, where he hosted sessions and helped beginners to learn the music. Alex sought to replicate in Brazil the manner he had learned in Ireland, through aural transmission, and even decided to pass on the same tunes (ex.: 'The Blarney Pilgrim', 'Britches Full of Stitches', and 'John Ryan's Polka'). Led by Daniel Sinivirta, a handful of these young enthusiasts then started the group *Café Irlanda* (approximately "Irish Coffee") in 2009, a musical project which also aimed to inflect a distinct Brazilian accent in the Irish repertoire. Still one of main bands in the RJ Irish-Celtic scene, its members also take an active role in promoting ITM in the city: from 2012 onwards, guitarist, bouzouki and tenor banjoist Kevin Shortall (a Dublin-born Irish-Brazilian musician) acts as host for Irish Session Rio (ISR), the main monthly session in the city - one of the three Irish sessions currently happening in RJ.

Since 2012, the ISR has migrated from venue to venue, with Irish pubs being the most common setting, but also taking place in typically-Brazilian bars (called *botecos*) and even pool bars. It constitutes a significant and thriving example of a grassroots pathway that engenders sociability through music-making in a collective environment centered on a non-native musical culture. Since it harbors an expressive contingent of beginner and amateur musicians, for Kevin the ISR must have a slightly different character than sessions in Ireland

(which he has experienced many times, one of which in occasion of Café Irlanda's participation in the Brazil Celtic Festival, Dublin, 2011). As a session in Brazil, it should be more flexible and inclusive, open to different levels of musicians (with different understandings of Irish-Celtic music) and a neutral space not associated with specific local Irish-Celtic bands. Its goal is not the display of high levels of mastery of ITM. As Kevin said in interview: “we’re not in the Cobblestone”, referring to Dublin’s most well-known ITM venue.

> The goal of the session is to create a meeting point for the people who play Irish music, or that want to start playing Irish music. So, the aim is to bring these people and put them all in the same place. And it should be a social event too, that people can come to watch as well. And the session cannot be owned by Café Irlanda. The session is a neutral space. (Kevin Shortall, interview).

However prominent the leadership parts played by more experienced musicians such as Alex and Kevin are, my ethnographic experience at ISR has indeed confirmed it as a welcoming space for Irish-Celtic enthusiasts of all levels. Usually formed in a circle, it frequently starts with a slow session where group leaders or more experienced musicians attend to musical or melodic doubts and teach new tunes – which may be suggested by anyone on the session’s Facebook group. An increasingly growing number of Irish pub songs and tunes constitute the local repertoire (and shows some relation to the local bands’ repertoires), played by an ensemble of instruments that usually includes tin whistles, mandolins, fiddles, banjos, guitars, bouzouki, uilleann pipes, flutes, bódhrans and spoons. Audience size varies, from a handful of friends to a few dozen people. At various occasions, I witnessed people wearing items that related to Irish music and culture, such as bands jerseys (The Dropkick Murphys, The Pogues, and even of local bands such as Café Irlanda and Tailten), shamrock pins, instrument cases loaded with Irish flag stickers, etc. In the more exciting musical moments the audience would frequently engage in singing, dancing and even boisterous behavior (usually the ones drinking beer). Overall, the musicians and the music were respected, and although rare, solo performances of more calm and introspective music (such as a slow air on the uilleann pipes) did occur from time to time.[vi]

Figure 2 - Irish Session Rio (2014-2015): (from left to right, top line) Alex Navar, Kevin Shortall, Rique Meirelles, Davi Paladini and Karl Georges; (bottom line) Christine Doher, Daniel Sinivirta and unidentified guitarist. [Source: Alex Navar’s personal archive]

A final noteworthy aspect of the Irish-Celtic scene in RJ (which can be extrapolated to the Brazilian case as a whole) is its relationship with medieval and Celtic reenactment events.

This fact draws attention to a widespread perception among some participants (musicians and non-musicians) that links Celticity to spirituality, ancestry, magic, and nature, a connection that Kneafsey has shown to be also promoted by official government tourism instances in Ireland and Brittany (Kneafsey, 2002). Musically, it undergoes a process of adaptation of local traditions (mainly of those countries associated with the idea of Celtic nations but mostly from Ireland) into more globalised sonic aesthetics (Celtic music), further confirming Reiss' indication of the simultaneous separation and overlapping of ITM and Celtic music (Reiss, 2003: 146). Beyond St. Patrick's Day, medieval and Celtic reenactment festivals throughout the country constitute one of the main arenas where this imaginary soundscape is performed, negotiated and lived. Tailten, another Irish-Celtic band from Rio, is a fine example of the agency of participants of this music scene in maintaining and promoting the aforementioned association. The band is a reunion of the people involved with the "Oenach na Tailtiu" Celtic reenactment event, which takes place in a rural area in the nearby city of Magé (RJ). Described as a "Celtic-themed party" with intentions to reenact the old costumes of the Lughnasadh fair in Ireland, it draws on ITM as an authentic soundscape for the celebration of Celtic ancestry, mythology and traditions: the group's website highlights the fact that many of its members had the opportunity to play Irish music in distinguished "strongholds of tradition" in Ireland, such as Doolin, Co. Clare.[vii]

On the other side of the coin, despite also participating in reenactment events as hired musicians, some members of the local scene also demonstrate some degree of disagreement with the use of ITM in the context of such events. Alex Navar, for instance, recognizes a type of "authentic" dimension in local reenactment events, which he interprets not only as a "fashion" but as a search for an inner true self, according to his beliefs a spiritist. As a musician with a significant knowledge about ITM, however, he sees a harmful side to these "Celtic carnivals:" playing in such occasions one must frequently let go of ideal musicianship standards and proper consideration and respect to the roots of ITM - falling short of the musical "authenticity" of the tradition. Repertoire must be adapted to "catchy" and widely known tunes, TV series themes (ex.: HBO's Game of Thrones), or famous songs such as "Whisky in the Jar": common references which are connected to the influence of the entertainment industry, and connect with the musical expectation of the audience.

Even though this brief description seems to agree with most scholars' (slightly romantic, one might say) view about the enacting of an ideal community through the performance of ITM (O'Shea 2006-7), differences and tensions do make part of the experience, suggesting how also in Brazil the practice of ITM is as much about engaging with difference (through acceptance or rejection) as it is about the pursuit of sameness (ibid: 17). As briefly presented in the context of RJ, the next section will describe how in the experience of my interviewees from SP, the same tensions (regarding "authenticity" and tradition on one side, and commercial interests and commodification in the other) are intertwined within local musical practices and discourses.

Session at Olivo and step-dancing: Irish-Celtic connections at the São Paulo hub

Fiddler and mandolinist Ricardo Dias (a.k.a. Rik Dias), woke up with a telephone call in the middle of the night in July 2001. His friend Rodrigo, a bluegrass banjoist, had an urgent message: "Turn on the TV, there's a guy from Rio playing Irish music on the bagpipes!". Rik turned on the TV and saw Alex Navar for the first time. Still a beginner with a practice set of pipes and having just recently returned from Ireland, Alex appeared on television thanks to the effort of an honorary Irish councilman in RJ, Brian McComish, surprised that a Brazilian was playing the uilleann pipes. Rik eventually got in touch with Alex through the social network of Orkut, where a few Brazilian communities dedicated to Irish-Celtic music existed, fostering a musical partnership and friendship that still thrives and strengthens contact between RJ and SP.

As in RJ, at the beginning of the twenty-first century Irish-Celtic musicians and enthusiasts in SP – the country's biggest city and financial center – were not aware of each other, with the occasional exception. One of the first people to start creating the networks that would later open the way for the formation of a local scene was Ricardo (a.k.a. Rik) Dias. In his early teens, he was an electric guitar student who favored heavy metal and instrumental rock music. Rik's first contact with ITM was through a record store that specialised in world music, called Waterloo, where he heard first heard The Chieftains. Through the same record shop, Rik developed a taste for bluegrass and the five-string banjo – a musical genre association that marks Rik's musical identity to the present day and that would assert its mark on the first years of the city's Irish-Celtic scene. While impressed by the energy and technical dexterity evident in the group's music, it took two trips to England (1995 and 1998) to become completely hooked by ITM, due to the experience of attending sessions in various London pubs, including the famous one held in The Swan, on Stockwell Road.

Back in Brazil, Rik engaged in the formation of various musical groups, experimenting with ITM and bluegrass on the mandolin, fiddle, banjo and occasionally the tin whistle. In 2005, missing the "craic" of London sessions, Rik decided it was time to start one in SP. According to his testimony, he had the intent of gathering the largest crowd possible, and, as a host, he felt that the session should be open enough to include both bluegrass and ITM, two genres he feels share much in common: tunes, instruments, and not-so-distant historical connections (although acknowledging important differences as well). The session found welcoming quarters at Olivo, a *boteco*: "it really didn't look like a pub, but the owners and audience were really welcoming" (Ricardo Dias, interview). From 2006 to 2013, the regular sessions at Olivo gathered many enthusiasts and musicians, both Brazilians and foreigners [Figure 3]. Gradually building up, the session reached a pinnacle in 2010, rising to an average of twenty musicians per session, bringing together many of the participants of the SP Irish-Celtic music scene. It also worked as a national hub, for it was there that many musicians from other parts of Brazil met for the first time (including Alex Navar and Elcio Oliveira, a member of the Brazilian Celtic rock band, Terra Celta). Rik feels proud of the part he played in the formation of this social network through music-making – and the important friendships and bonds he developed – perhaps his main contribution to the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene.

The Olivo session was of utmost importance for the creation of Irish-Celtic bands in the local scenario, such as Tunas and Oran. In the present, with the management of members of the group Oran, a monthly session takes place at Deep Bar, a pub in the Barra Funda neighborhood.[viii] In spite of the fact that bluegrass tunes are not heard anymore and that Oran's repertoire constitutes to a degree the cornerstone of the session, it continues to attract old figures and newcomers in a friendly atmosphere, helping the local scene grow by gathering listeners, enthusiasts and professional and amateur musicians alike.

Figure 3 - Session at Olivo, (late-2000s). From left to right: Rik Dias (mandolin), Arrigo "Terra Celta" (accordion) and Elcio Oliveira (fiddle). [Source: Ricardo Dias' personal archive]

Oran has been actively performing since its creation in 2012 with various formations, alternating mostly between members of the local Irish-Celtic music scene. The band represented Brazil in the Lorient Interceltique Festival in 2013, and since 2014 has been closely involved with another significant feature of the local scene: a strong presence of Irish dancers. Although not exclusive to this state, Irish step-dancing has a considerably strong following in SP, and many Brazilian dancers have had the opportunity to study in Ireland. *Cia Celta Brasil* ("Celtic Brazil Company"), a branch of dance studio Banana Broadway based on the nearby city of Campinas, has even achieved national and international recognition – it was hired to perform in Rock in Rio 2013 and was the runner-up at "Mixed figure dance" at the World Irish Dancing Championships 2017 edition in Dublin (the first instance in the history of the competition that a South American delegation won a prize) [Figure 4].[ix]

Group leader and choreographer Fernanda Faez, who holds a Bachelor's degree in Dance from the University of Campinas, is an important agent in the promotion of Irish dance (and culture) in Brazil. Initially a professional American tap-dancer and researcher of traditional Brazilian dances, Fernanda encountered Irish dance in 1998. Following a thirst for knowledge about the Irish immigrants' influence on American tap dancing, as well as the human and cultural aspects of Irish dance after seeing a "Lord of the Dance" DVD, she went to Ireland for the first of many times in 2003. Fernanda studied for a year in Dublin, winning local prizes and earning TCRG certification as Irish dance instructor from Án Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha (CLRG). In Brazil, Fernanda has propagated Irish dancing in multiple ways: she has trained a great number of dancers (some of whom have also become certified teachers), organised Riverdance-inspired dance spectacles with local Irish-Celtic groups such as Oran, engineered and co-founded the South American Irish Dance Association (with teachers from other South American countries such as Argentina) and sponsored its first official competition, besides participating in many events related to Irish culture in Brazil (some promoted by the Irish Consulate-General in SP). At the moment, Fernanda initiates the pursuit of an old dream: to find a common ground between the dancing cultures of Ireland and Brazil, and to bring together the two cultures she loves through dance.

Figure 4 - The Brazilian national team and Fernanda Faez (with trophy) on the 2017 World Irish Dance Championships, Dublin. [Source: Fernanda Faez's personal archive]

From Rock in Rio to Comhaltas Brazil (a.k.a. "it's a long way from Clare to Rio"): the institutionalisation of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene

In 2013, Rio de Janeiro was to host again the most famous Brazilian musical festival internationally: Rock in Rio. Its seventh edition on Brazilian soil had the peculiarity of selecting the British Isles and Ireland as the theme for Rock Street, the smallest of the festival's stages. Contacted by its musical producer, who was seeking local Irish music groups, Alex Navar decided to assemble friends and musical partners from all over the country and create a special musical project, which he called Sensessional [Figure 5]. With the intent to present ITM as faithfully as possible and in a "session atmosphere", his choices were based on musical affinities with the more "trad-oriented" participants of the Irish-Celtic musical scene in Brazil.[x] Musicians from five states formed the ensemble (including the author), which was scheduled to play tunes and pub songs thrice a day for a frequently bewildered audience who in its majority had never heard ITM before. Activities also included a Riverdance-inspired Irish dance act with live music at Rock Street's main stage, with the participation of Cia Celta Brasil.[xi]

Figure 5 - Sensessional at Rock Street, Rock in Rio (2013). [Source: Sensessional Facebook page]

The Sensessional group represented the first and main attempt to unite musicians who played Irish-Celtic music from all over the country. Whilst Alex's idea was to continue the project after Rock in Rio, financial and logistical obstacles involved in assembling its members brought an end to the group. A few years later in 2016, with the help of other musicians such as Rik, Alex would go a step further: he envisioned a session with the objective of gathering a nationwide scope of participants, to be held in SP at the end of the year. Called *Session Brasil* it was organised mainly through the IMB Facebook group, where the event's description, written by Alex himself, read:

> Who would have thought that the interest for Irish Traditional Music would grow to the stage of having talented musicians in the style spread throughout many cities in the country? Who could imagine that St. Patrick's could harbor the shows of so many bands in the countless pubs in this country and with parties that don't stop getting bigger?! Well! I think it's time we cheer to that! The good music, the friendships and the unique opportunity to gather in this epic meeting, where we'll celebrate the music we all learned to love!

Starting with a slow session for beginners, it also featured step-dancing. The session went until the wee hours of the morning, and testimonies of participants on the event's page in Facebook abounded with the joy of the feeling of (musical) community. Fiddler Elcio Oliveira expressed his feelings in the following manner: "The amalgamation of all that happened yesterday was LOVE…everyone's love for music, for dance, for art, for culture" (testimony at the event's Facebook page). As can be attested, the increasing connections between musicians devoted to Irish-Celtic music from various parts of Brazil was growing steadily into a concrete reality (importantly mediated through communication technology), and nurturing a sentiment of camaraderie and community that was the result of the social activity of group music-making.[xii] The event had a second edition in 2017, with an equally significant degree of success in connecting Brazilian ITM enthusiasts.

As the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene became increasingly a veritable socio-musical phenomenon, another individual turning point took place which would affect its status, and, according to this author's view, inaugurate a new stage in the development of this scene: Alex Navar's return to Ireland in 2017, a dream long-postponed. After seventeen years studying the uilleann pipes, struggling with the challenges of learning the instrument while progressing from practice set to the half and three-quarter set, Alex had reached a final stage in the instrument's learning curve, and ordered the construction of a full set of pipes.[xiii] This return to Ireland acquired the unique contours of a sacred (musical) pilgrimage: the beginner that had left in 2001 with a practice set now returned to enter the final stage in the

road to become a piper, playing a full set of pipes. Alex was starving for new tunes, lessons, and the kind of atmosphere that only the "wellspring of tradition" could offer. While in Ireland, Alex dedicated himself to attend multiple sessions, shows and ITM festivals such as the Willie Kennedy Piping Festival at Armagh, Co. Armagh and the Ennis Trad Festival at Ennis, Co. Clare. Alex's discourse about the return to Clare continuously reinforced the link between tradition, "authenticity" and music-making in the locality: to be in Clare was, for Alex, to "drink from the source", something to which he identified as an active defensor of ITM in Brazil (Alex Navar, interview). Ethnomusicologist Gearóid ÓhAllmhuráin has elegantly described the entanglement of this local soundscape with global cultural flows, a scenario that echoes Alex's experience and many others':

> The packaging and dissemination of Clare's traditional soundscape by the music industry, media, tourists, and emigrants has created another Clare for musicians across the globe, most of whom have no ethnic connection with the region. For some, Clare is a virtual place, a mediascape they identify with and access on Facebook and a plethora of other digital sites, from YouTube to thesession.org. For others, it is a vicarious or prosthetic place, constantly present and constantly absent, that they claim as their own musical topography. Generating chronotopes and lifeworlds outside of "real" time and place, these virtual, vicarious, and prosthetic intertextualities have created vast heterotopias of musical belonging to Clare. (2016: 235).

Besides its immense importance on an individual level, Alex's return to Ireland had further implications that regard the institutionalisation of ITM in Brazil. While visiting Dublin, Alex arranged a meeting with CCÉ's project manager Bernard O'Sullivan, at the institution's headquarters in Monkstown [Figure 6]. His goal was to create the first branch of CCÉ in Brazil. Alex had already engaged in efforts of the institutionalisation of Irish-Celtic music in Brazil before, creating the annual pan-Celtic piping event "Rionium" and the "Hy-Brazil" piping club, which in 2014 entered Brazil for the first time in the International Uilleann Piping Day celebrations promoted by Na Píobairí Uilleann. Counting on CCÉ's official support and also with the assistance of the Irish Consulate-General in SP, in April 2018, Comhaltas *Brasil* was launched. Its inauguration at the Consulate-General's quarters was marked by the participation of Irish diplomatic officials, whose speeches emphasised the strengthening of the bonds between the two nations (remembering the Brazilian immigrant communities in Górt and Bray), and stressed the significance of the creation of such a prominent institution related to the preservation and promotion of Irish culture. As most rituals entail, CCÉBR's creation was marked by two musical events: a masterclass with Irish uilleann piper and flutist James Mahon (a member from band Kíla) and a "Grand opening session" at Deep Bar. In virtue of James Mahon's affiliation with the Comhaltas branch in Bray, Co. Wicklow (Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Bhré, BRAYCCÉ), he not only helped the newly-appointed board members with administrative tasks, but also engineered the twinning of the two branches. In virtue of his part in the creation of CCÉBR, James was granted the role of honorary president of the newborn branch.

Figure 6 - "It's a new dawn, it's a new day, it's a new life for Irish traditional music in Brazil:" Alex and O'Sullivan shake hands for the creation of the first Comhaltas branch in Brazil (2017). [Source: screencapture of Alex Navar's post on Facebook]

Apart from the honorary president, the board composition of CCÉBR was formed from musicians of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene and other important individuals with links to Irish culture in Brazil, according to the judgment of president Alex Navar: Peter O'Neill (Vice-president), Kevin Shortall (Secretary), Daniel Sinivirta (Treasurer), myself (Auditor), Thadeu Farias (Youth officer), Rik Dias (Public relations officer), Jill Henneberry (Public relations officer), Fernanda Faez (Board member) and Luis de la Cerda Fitzpatrick (Board member). As he made public in his invitation to take part in the organisation, Alex aimed at musical partners and friends in which he sensed true interest in and commitment to ITM and culture, recognising representativeness in a local dimension and efforts in "carrying the tradition" (Alex Navar, Comhaltas board member invitation). Some of the initial objectives set up by the board included the promotion of sessions in the home cities of board members, the setting-up of virtual interactive events between BRAYCCÉ and CCÉBR, and the creation of a Céilí Band. The ensuing "grand opening session" at Deep Bar provided a singular moment to celebrate the achievement in a "typical" Irish socio-musical frolic, gathering a couple dozen musicians from various Brazilian states.[xiv]

The May 2018 edition of CCÉ's quarterly journal, Treoir, issues an article by CCÉBR's Hononary president James Mahon, documenting the foundation of CCÉ's newest international branch (*From Bray to Brazil: a dream come true*). After narrating the beginning of his relationship with Alex through the internet and the peculiar development of what seemed like an unforeseeable future trip to Brazil into the concrete achievement of establishing CCÉBR, Mahon acknowledges his surprise and fulfillment with the dedication of Brazilian ITM enthusiasts, and hints at CCÉ's plans for the future of the Brazilian branch:

> Meeting the musicians in Brazil on my first visit showed me that a branch of Comhaltas is exactly what was needed for the community of Irish musicians, singers, dancers and enthusiasts in Brazil. There were about thirty people at the launch of Comhaltas Brasil and afterwards we had the master class followed by a session. I was amazed to see their progress

> over the last two years. They were playing more tunes and having vibrant sessions. The future dream for Comhaltas Brasil is to develop to a point when beginner lessons can be provided for young enthusiasts and that events can be held promoting and facilitating for the playing and learning of traditional music, song and dance. We hope to bring musicians back and forwards between Brazil and Ireland on exchanges to build on the traditional music community there. (Mahon 2018: 53).

The establishment of CCÉBR brings up a series of issues regarding the transplantation of ITM to new contexts through an institution whose history is bound up in a nationalist agenda (Kearney 2007). Kearney, a former member of Comhaltas, has analysed a few of the paradoxes of this institution. Founded out of the desire to preserve and promote ITM in the mid-twentieth century, it played a crucial part in its institutionalisation, and was from its inception strongly influenced by nationalist and republican agendas, promoting a vision of national culture firmly based in rural Ireland (ibid. 2007: 5; Kearney 2013: 75, 91). As Stoebel points out, however, the years after the turn of the millennium saw an addition to the institution's official mission, the objective of globally promoting Irish music, dance and culture (2015: 161-162). Its expansion in a globalized world offers the possibility to examine its role and effects in the complex and different realities of global practices of ITM, and its importance in the promotion of Irish music and culture abroad. It remains to be seen how the Brazilian division will develop its activities in an environment with a diverse range of conceptions about ITM.

Figure 7 - Comhaltas Brasil inauguration at the Irish Consulate-General in São Paulo, (April 2018): (top row, left to right) Jill Henneberry, Luis de la Cerda Fitzpatrick, Fernanda Faez, Thadeu Farias, Peter O'Neill; (middle row, left to right) Rik Dias, Daniel Sinivirta, Kevin Shortall and the author; (bottom row, left to right) Alex Navar and James Mahon. [Source: Comhaltas Brasil Facebook page]

The creation of CCÉBR marked a distinct moment for the Brazilian Irish-Celtic community, and like many Irish branches it represented "a ground-up phenomenon based on local activity and not a structure that is imposed by the organisation" (Kearney, 2013: 79). While still largely getting on its feet, for those directly involved and for other Brazilian ITM enthusiasts, the organisation represents a possibility by which to continue to broaden the scope of the scene, to learn and develop musical and dancing skills through an official and institutionalised mediation, not unlike the feeling reported by Stoebel among North-American Irish traditional musicians when of the establishment of the country's first branches (2015: 166). Though largely a vision and undertaking of Alex Navar, through participant observation and netnographic observation conducted within different segments of the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene I was able to verify an interest in intensifying these musical connections

between Brazil and Ireland through the construction of an institutionalised official pathway - one in which participants may satiate a desire of learning ITM in a “traditional” and “authentic” way.

Conclusions

Hy-Brasail, I Brhresail, Ó-Brasil are the Gaelic names of a mythical island to the west of Ireland, present in many world maps up to the 19th century. According to Hurtley et al, a possibly apocryphal legend recounts that explorers, when faced with the American continent’s coast, believed to have encountered the legendary island and named it Brazil. (1996: 148-149). If historically one sees no vital ties between Ireland and Brazil besides such tales, the end of the twentieth century saw the forging of new links between the two nations. Notwithstanding the enormous importance of structural factors such as the global cultural economy, progress in communication technology and in bi-lateral political relations, I have tried to demonstrate the grassroots musical dimension and the details of the formation of this music scene that connects Brazil to Ireland. Its effectiveness, maintenance and multiplication are no doubt the product of both the individual and collective agency of local social actors, who dedicate considerable time, finances and efforts to the construction of this virtual Atlantic bridge. As Slobin elegantly described the evolution of folk music itself, “it wells up from internal needs and desires as much as from external pressures and possibilities” (2000: 86). The Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene is scattered in major urban clusters throughout the national territory, and its existence and formation is, to a large extent, tied to the power of the Internet and social networks. However, it moves from the virtual space to the actual daily living of its participants, who engage in the creation of sociability and community awareness through music-making. This music scene simultaneously broadens and fills the demand of a small niche in the national musical market, manifested in St. Patrick’s Day celebrations, in the musical activities of local Irish pubs (attending pub owners who seek an “authentic” soundscape) and Celtic or medieval reenactment events.

Locally and nationally, sessions continue to be the main musical event through which this music scene materialises, at least in the sense that they provide a path that engenders real life sociability, something participants deem proper and "authentic" of ITM and important to its development in Brazil. Similar to what Reiss suggests in a general remark, in the Brazilian case it is also “a ritual of sharing in which the values of the community are enacted” (Reiss, 2003: 148). Compared with descriptions of the environment of rigidity in some sessions in the USA (Williams 2010: 125), Brazilian sessions most definitely differ, cultivating a climate of inclusiveness, something desirable if one is to consider the significant presence of neophytes. Even so, ideas about "authenticity" and musical identity also inform its functioning and musical practices through participants’ agency and discourse, showing how language, concrete actions and aural symbols may define the boundaries of the community (Reiss, 2003: 148). Beyond the sessions, it also materialises in diverse activities: music and dance workshops, gigs, theater shows, CD and DVD production, video clips, podcasts, webpages, individual and collective trips to Ireland (and other countries closely related with Irish-Celtic music), the collecting of memorabilia, attire and a general involvement with Irish (or Celtic) cultural tropes.

My research has also led to the verification, to a degree, of a polarisation between a tradition-oriented ethos and a more open Celtic perspective, influenced by the promotion of Celticism and Irish-Celtic music as commodities in world markets, a status which may be affected by the ongoing process of institutionalisation through CCÉBR. Central figures such as Alex Navar acknowledge a responsibility to the preservation, promotion and rightful representation of ITM informed by aesthetic, cultural and ideological judgments. The promotion of local sessions by many of the most dedicated participants of the scene also attests to this general observance of central tenets of the “tradition”, as it has been practiced since mid-twentieth century. As a way to fulfill a self-imposed duty, Alex turned to an institution that, although entwined with modern Irish nationalism and globalisation, promotes

“authentic Irish Music, straight from the source”, and inaugurated Comhaltas’ first Brazilian branch with the help of representatives of the Irish professional traditional music scene and Irish government officials. Though this may appear to be a local manifestation of the recurrent “tradition versus innovation” debate (which may in some ways be true), when examined closely the case in Brazil reveals an amalgamation of innovative effects of modernity and ideologies of tradition, since even the more traditional participants often incorporate newly composed tunes, experiment with the crossing of musical boundaries, and in most cases began their discovery of Irish-Celtic music under the influence of the globalisation of Celtic music in the end of the twentieth century.

The CCÉBR initiative received a very exciting response from participants within the scene, gathering musicians, dancers and enthusiasts from multiple Brazilian states in the event of its foundation. Concomitantly, amateur and professional musicians who perform Irish-Celtic music in groups or solo in Brazil have to deal with the commodification of Irish culture and music. St. Patrick’s Day, reenactment events and pub audiences provide for most of the professional engagements of local groups, and in these events public expectation usually revolves around items widely associated with the music and entertainment industry representation of Irish-Celtic music. For these “Celtic carnivals,”, one must keep it simple and keep it rowdy. That being so, one may interpret the warm reception of CCÉBR between the Brazilian Irish-Celtic music scene as evidence of a desire to develop a more roots-oriented apprenticeship, to immerse oneself even further in ITM through a validated institutional pathway.

As a final (unresolved) query, a personal anxiety-laden issue: what are the duties of a (native) ethnomusicologist in this context? Alex’s invitation to be a part of CCÉBR triggered in me many doubts as a scholar: does ITM in Brazil need “preserving”? Is the benefit of its promotion of wider interest to the Brazilian society? Will it be possible to maintain an independent ethnomusicological stance or will Comhaltas’ strict guidelines become a source of conflict with (mine or others') participation in the scene? My musical inclination as a performer and scholar of ITM has always leaned more to the "tradition-centered" ethos, and as a researcher and musician with an academic affiliation, participants’ perceptions always seemed to stress those elements as a source of authenticity and even authority. But as an ethnomusicologist I must consider the tropes of tradition and authenticity (and its associated discourses) in a critical light, and be open to the diversity of opinions and the social and historical conditions of this translocal music scene and its formation. While still engaging in the reflection of these issues, I wholeheartedly accept the challenge, and consider it a unique chance to exercise an ethnomusicological mediation within a grassroots initiative of Brazilian musicians and enthusiasts, with the intent of including the discipline’s tradition of critical and ethical reflection about music to the Irish-Celtic music scene in Brazil.

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[viii] A session hosted by Oran in a different venue can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRBx8kbgklg>. Last accessed: 11 April 18.
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[x] A performance of Sensessional can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=poX2mMEPeV8>. Last accessed: 11 April 18.
[xi] An excerpt from such presentations can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tRMZTBH37m8>. Last accessed: 11 April 18.
[xii] Videos and photos from *Session Brasil* are available at the event's page on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1005906469447148/>. Last accessed: 11 April 18.
[xiii] Uilleann pipes is the name for the bellows-blown bagpipe most used and associated within the realm Irish traditional music. Considered the most complex bagpipe in the world, it is composed by a bag, bellows, chanter, three drones and three regulators, being capable of providing harmony simultaneous with the melody. By and large, the learning process usually involves three distinct phases, defined by a progressive complexity in the instrument's configuration: 1) the practice set, consisting of bag, bellows and chanter; 2) half set, with the addition of the three drones; 3) full set, completed with the addition of the three regulators. It is the craftwork of *luthiers* usually known as pipemakers, and it is a considerably expensive instrument, due to the complexity of its construction and to the cost of its material components.
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From Ethnic to Sonic Irishness: The Reception of Irish Traditional Music in Germany

Felix Morgenstern

Abstract

This article explores factors that inform the perception and performance of Irish traditional music by German practitioners, for whom transcultural exchange and post-ethnic configurations of musical practice appear to have reshaped historically rooted notions of ethnic-national identity, expressed through European folk music genres in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Tracing historical transcultural musical affinities between Germany and Ireland, as amplified in late 20th century German folk music revival movements, the article also uncovers modern identity politics among German Irish traditional musicians. For these individuals, the idea of 'Irishness' in Irish music has become re-contextualised in post-ethnic configurations of 'Irish' sonic markers, in references to locality, and the possibility of musical relocation. These discursive changes recursively shape the participatory frame of German Irish music sessions. Here, transitions from ethnic to musical and sonic identity markers appear to entail shifts in the gatekeeping regulations of musical prowess, inclusivity, and session etiquette.

Keywords: Irish traditional music, folk music, Germany, identity, ethnicity, authenticity, session

Introduction

In *Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West*, Mark Slobin (1993) has provided a seminal ethnomusicological framework for comprehending the numerous complexities of cross-cultural musical interrelations in the modern, 'de-territorialised' and increasingly fragmented world we live in. Extending an established anthropological and ethnomusicological preoccupation with more disparate sites of ethnographic field research, Slobin analyses music as a fluid and affectively meaningful expressive medium along local, national and intercultural planes of lived musical experience. It is Slobin's discussion of transnational musics, and in particular his concept of "affinity interculture", that frames this article on Irish music making in Germany. Slobin defines affinity interculture as a "transnational performer-audience interest group" (Slobin 1993: 68), comprising individuals that are attracted to musics by choice and often without possessing any ethnic ties to the source domains of the music cultures they identify with. Slobin's model serves as a particularly useful tool for tracing how folk music genres like Irish traditional music have transcended their once ethnically constructed source domain and have become globally received among artists and audiences that do not have any ethnic or diasporic connections to the land of the music's origin. My article draws out Irish music's agency in creating such intercultural affinities among German-born practitioners and extends Slobin's preoccupation with music's mobility across geographical locales (Rice 2003: 156) through an increased focus on how German-Irish musical affinity dynamics have shifted over time.

Existing discourses in Irish music studies and ethnomusicology, which deal with the global mobility of Ireland's vernacular music, have been chiefly focused on the genre's significance for artists and audiences in English-speaking cultural spheres, most

prominently, the Irish diaspora in America (Dillane 2016; O'Shea 2008; Williams 2009). In fact, there appears to be a critical gap in the research conducted on its reception in the continental European context more broadly, and in particular, on Germany's community of Irish traditional music practitioners.

This is rather surprising, since Germany has long represented a prominent site for the marketing of Irish culture and a lucrative touring circuit for Irish artists. Most significantly, it has itself brought a thriving scene of Irish traditional musicians to the fore. In the 1970s many German folk music revivalists avidly identified with performance styles borrowed from the idiom of Irish traditional music. This historically validated German-Irish musical affinity continues to resonate in the form of professional German touring bands performing Irish music and manifests particularly vividly in Germany's highly interconnected Irish music session community. Focusing on Irish music making in Germany can add to new understandings of the routes Irish music practices have taken globally, which moves ethnomusicologists studying Ireland's vernacular music away from simply considering ethnic and diasporic politics of identity construction and negotiation. In fact, this prizes open new modes of musically-mediated relocation and allows us to uncover transformations in the very labels of 'Irishness' and 'Germanness' attached to the folk music genres that were instrumental in consolidating a sense of ethnic identity in the narrative of 19th and 20th century European nationalism. After all, what exactly does the 'Irishness' in Irish music connote and affectively mobilise for practitioners that have no ethnic ties to the country of its origin? This question is situated at the very heart of this article.

At this point, I should acknowledge that politics of musical identity negotiation discussed in my article form part of my own experience as a practitioner of Irish music. This particular outlook also informed fieldwork that I conducted process of completing my undergraduate and postgraduate theses at the University of Limerick. In the next section I briefly outline the ramifications of my ethnographic research among German-born Irish traditional and former GDR folk musicians, to give the reader a sense of the lived musical experiences that underpin my research findings and how I have decided to mediate them.

Notes on Methodology: Conducting Fieldwork in Germany

Having studied Irish traditional music at the University of Limerick for four years at undergraduate level, I am indeed not ethnically Irish. In fact, I am an ethnomusicologist and traditional musician from Germany and came into contact with Irish music in my home town of Berlin. In my teens, I learned how to play the bodhrán and the uilleann pipes, travelled to festivals in Ireland and subsequently decided to move to Limerick to expand on my expertise. As a scholar, I have developed research interests in Irish music studies and became aware of discourses surrounding ethnicity, identity, authenticity and globalisation, which continue to inform the practice of Irish traditional music. Having engaged in these issues, I began to ask myself what is really at stake for German artists playing Irish music and investigated this topic in my senior undergraduate thesis, entitled *The Experience of Irish Traditional Musicians in Germany* (Morgenstern 2016). As part of fieldwork for this research project, I travelled to Germany in the summer months of 2015 to conduct interviews with practitioners from the Berlin, Hanover and Bavaria regions that have engaged with Irish traditional music on both amateur and professional levels. To convey the outcomes of my research to an English-speaking audience, I have presented interview quotations both in the original German version and their English translation. Translated excerpts from my encounters in the field provide the ethnographic foundation of my arguments in the second section of this article. This part of my paper focuses on current experiences of Irish traditional musicians in Germany. In the context of my postgraduate research in ethnomusicology, I extended my inquiry into historical terrain, writing my M.A. thesis on the GDR folk music revival movement (Morgenstern 2017). Quotations taken from my

interviews with former members of the Leipzig-based East German folk music scene in April 2017 should provide the reader with a more in-depth understanding of the popularity of Irish music in the GDR revival. This theme is discussed towards the end of the first section of this article. Framing my ethnographic research on Irish music making in Germany through discursive analysis has necessarily involved the consultation of German-language scholarship in the domain of folk music studies and has required me to mediate contents and idiomatic German expressions in German-language literature into English. This should allow the reader to follow my line of argumentation more clearly.

Combining outcomes from my ethnographic research and discursive analysis I proceed by exploring both the historical and contemporary reception of Irish traditional music in Germany, against the backdrop of folk music and its place in the complex web of nationalism and post-war transcultural exchange between Ireland and Germany. First, I focus on the historically validated fluidity between German and Irish musical traditions, which becomes apparent in terms of the attraction of German romantics to the music of Europe's Celtic fringe and in relation to the co-option of folk music for political nationalist agendas in both Irish and German cultural contexts. In post-war Germany, a 'Celtic' inspiration resurfaced and profoundly underpinned the avid reception of Irish traditional music by German folk music revivalists. Following the ideological corruption of German folk songs by the Nazi regime, Irish music provided a suitable performative alternative for German practitioners who were confronted with the extreme marginalisation of their own vernacular music. In this fragile post-war context, Irish music already took on the post-ethnically-configured[i] quality that appears to structure current encounters of Irish traditional musicians in Germany. Historical evidence of the German-Irish musical affinity interculture, unpacked alongside the lived, modern-day experience of German Irish traditional musicians aptly illustrates how, for non-native practitioners of Irish music, a once ethnically configured sense of 'authentic' Irishness has been re-contextualised on a musically and socially constructed level. In this new context, music, and what I title 'sonic authenticity', takes agency in recursively shaping both the performance practice itself and the discourses unfolding around it. The final part of my article uncovers how this shift from ethnic to sonic markers of authenticity changes the participatory boundaries of Irish music sessions in Germany, a popular social setting for Irish music making in this particular cultural context.

Given that ethnicity, the negotiation of Irishness, and its reception in a climate of globalisation are central concerns in the fields of Irish music studies and ethnomusicology, this article sets out to contribute to our understanding of how music functions as a profound vehicle to both assert and subvert notions of (Irish) national identity. This has wide-reaching implications for the music makers in question and for the claim that Irish music has become a post-ethnically configured and globally received musical practice. To clarify the process in which Irish music can be uncoupled from ethnic ties and becomes meaningful for a global community of practitioners, I now move towards deconstructing the historical relationship between Irish and German folk musics and the political agendas of cultural nationalism.

Historical Entanglements between Folk Music, Ethnicity, and Nationalism in Ireland

My critique of music and its relationship with national identity emerges out of a twofold argument in ethnomusicologist Martin Stokes's (1994: 1-28) introduction to the volume *Ethnicity, Identity, and Music: The Musical Construction of Place*. As Stokes has it, music functions as a means to build, maintain and negotiate the permeability of boundaries erected by social groups to clarify their distinctiveness from others. Thus, emphasizing the 'ethnic' in music poses obvious limitations for non-members of these social groups. On the contrary, Stokes (ibid.: 3-4) acknowledges that music acts as a

profound vehicle for individual relocation to places and memories, allowing practitioners to assert multiple identities and transcending musical and indeed national boundaries. An inevitable tension emerges between music's historically validated capacity to confirm an exclusive sense of ethnic Irishness and strategies that performers employ to access the post-ethnically configured realm of Irish musical practice. To understand the latter, it is necessary to trace the historical axis along which folk music in both Ireland and Germany was put into the service of nationalism. This comparison sheds light on multiple resonances between the two locations, their respective musical traditions and the course of musical practice for present day practitioners.

At the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries in Ireland, antiquarian and Romantic cultural nationalist movements embedded Irish folk music deeply within anti-colonial discourse and the struggle to rid oneself of colonial domination by the British Empire (White 2005: 51-67). Irish Romantic cultural nationalists began to refer to the pre-colonial West of Ireland as an authentic representation of 'Irishness'. In this regard, musicologist Harry White (ibid.: 17-18) argues that Irish folk music gained extraordinary integrity as a marker of national identity, even more so than the Irish language at that point. This trend was intensified by antiquarian endeavours to preserve the old folk music repertoire and to compile canons of Irish music, which would serve as a romantic, individualistic political expression (White 1998: 36).

At the Belfast Harp Festival in 1792, Edward Bunting, an antiquarian and musician, was commissioned with the task of transcribing the melodies of the last exponents of the old Gaelic harping tradition, to 'rescue them from oblivion' (White 1998: 40). He published his work in 1797, before Thomas Moore adapted several of Bunting's melodies and set them to his own verses in *Irish Melodies* of 1807. While the sentiment inherent in Moore's songs was a primarily melancholic and nostalgic mourning over the loss of a glorious Irish-Celtic past, his enterprise was equally informed by political events that occurred in Ireland at that time, most prominently, the failed United Irishmen Uprising of 1798 and the Act of Union of 1801. The sentimental body of Moore's *Irish Melodies* thus also embodied a romanticised political longing for nationalist self-determination (White 2008: 38), which was stimulated by the experience of loss and dispossession. Leading into 19th century cultural nationalism in Ireland, one notices the continuous framing of Irish music as the endangered remains of the past, especially in the face of the devastation of the Great Famine. Unlike Bunting's compilation of melodies deriving from the old Gaelic aristocracy, George Petrie's collection of Irish music from 1855 features material gathered from the rural peasantry. This resonated with Central European movements at the time (O'Shea 2008: 5-22). Perhaps the most influential collection of Irish folk music was *The Dance Music of Ireland-1001 Gems*, published by the chief of the Chicago Police Force, Francis O'Neill, in 1907. O'Neill's collection captured a sense of the oral tradition of Irish music and its ethnic quality. Drawing upon his own repertoire and collecting tunes played by other Irish emigrants in Chicago, O'Neill produced a canon of Irish music that was unprecedented in its agency of connecting the Irish nation with its diasporic hinterland (Bohlman 2004: 110).

Prior to the successful reception of O'Neill's publications in Ireland, Douglas Hyde founded *Conradh na Gaeilge*, the Gaelic League, in 1893. Hyde's primary agenda was to de-Anglicise Ireland, by reviving the Irish language and by actively encouraging Irish cultural practices, which became rapidly institutionalised and served the establishment of an independent Irish state. In this context, Irish music scholar Helen O'Shea (2008: 21) contends that the racialised discourse, based on affirming an ethnic Irish national identity and playing out in the struggle for an independent Ireland, was enforced. For example, Celtic myths were employed as a means of stylising a purely Irish past. Relying primarily on religious and political divisions, the Irish were constituted as the Catholic Gael, who stood in opposition to the Protestant coloniser. Crucially, music was

placed at the very heart of this sharpening of the contrast between the colonised Self and the colonising Other.

Much of the theorising that informed this distinction circulated among intellectuals across Europe and derived from German philosopher and theologian Johann Gottfried von Herder's late 18th century theses on folk song and language as integral mediators of cultural specificity and national identity (O'Shea 2008: 8-9). Late 19th century Irish cultural nationalists like Thomas Davis and Douglas Hyde "adopted many of Herder's precepts and applied them to the insular context" (Williams and Ó Laoire 2011: 28). Recognising the Trans-European reception of Herder's theses now leads me to clarify the problematic entanglement of his romantic folk song concept with political agendas of extreme German nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries. A more thorough outline of German folk music's misuse for propaganda purposed during the Third Reich allows me to show how Irish music provided an alternative expressive medium for post-war German folk musicians whose own folk songs had been abused by the Nazis. This key historical development contributed to the naissance of a German draw towards the idiom of Irish music which persists in the present.

A Problematic Romantic-Nationalistic Legacy of German Folk Songs

At a time when German identity was not yet politically delineated in the form of a unified nation state, Herder composed his essay on *Alte Volkslieder* ("Old Folk Songs") in 1774. Stating that the *Volk*, the German equivalent of "folk", were *unpolicirt* ("politically unorganised") and thus lacked political organisation in their highly individual and most 'natural' state, Herder first expressed the urge to consolidate a unified German national spirit through the collection of a shared, yet highly distinct folk song repertoire, using the German language as a common denominator in its publication (Bohlman 2017: 21-5). It was here and in Herder's 1778 and 1779 volumes of *Volkslieder*[ii] that the term *Volkslied* ("folk song") first became coined and was specifically tied to the prospect of channelling cultural distinctiveness and the *Volk's* individuality into a cohesive German national identity (Bohlman 2004: 42-3).

Already in 1773, Herder had grounded his fascination with the politically-unorganised, 'free' and 'wild' folk, and had argued for the reflection of these attributes in folk song in his writings on Ossian[iii], James Macpherson's Scottish myth hero, who also served as a prominent model for the Gaelic Revival in Ireland. As West German folklorists Jürgen Frey and Kaarel Siniveer (1987: 116) point out, it was through his essay on Ossian that Herder expressed a romantic, though undoubtedly idealised longing for an unblemished, exotic Celtic past, which fulfilled his vision of folk song as the quintessentially natural expression of the spirit of the folk and their sensitivity. Herder writes:

> *Wissen Sie, daß, je wilder…je lebendiger, je freiwirkender ein Volk ist…desto wilder… lebendiger, freier, sinnlicher, lyrisch handelnder müssen auch…seine Lieder seyn!*
>
> ("You know, the wilder…livelier, freer-acting the folk…the wilder…livelier, freer, more sensual, lyrical…its songs have to be!")
> (Herder 1828: 15).

Herder's writing allows us to trace historically documented affinities between Ireland and Scotland, two regions located at Europe's 'Celtic fringe', and Germany through the lens of folk song. Crucially, this occurred at a time when the territory nowadays referred to as 'Germany' was no more than a cluster of independently-ruled kingdoms and principalities and Herder's thesis on the possibility of putting the songs of the people into the service of the nation surfaced long before a unified German Empire came to fruition in 1871. Nevertheless, it is clear that endeavours to identify a German music culture, at least partly inspired by folk music practices in other European countries at the time, contributed to the establishment of a German nation.

Inspired by Herder's theories on language and song, 19th century German romantics gained an interest in local folk songs which, according to ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman (2004: 46), gradually became elevated to the level of a national German repertoire. But what constituted the national for a nation that was yet to be politically defined? In this case, it was the common cultural denominator – the German language. Arguably, the most prominent collection in this regard was Ludwig Achim von Arnim and Clemens Brentano's *Des Knaben Wunderhorn: Alte deutsche Lieder* ("The Youth's Magic Horn: Old German Songs"). This work, two volumes of which were published in 1806 and 1808, included an abundance of old German songs. However, the editors decided to augment their accessibility by transferring regional dialects into the High German language. A canon of orally transmitted, local German folk songs was compiled as a unique representation of 'Germanness', as Bohlman astutely points out: "Songs classified as German demonstrated the qualities of a common culture, a nation still in the process of achieving unity." (Bohlman 2004: 86).

In the period between the two World Wars, Germany had lost a considerable number of settlement areas. At that time, folk song anthologies, such as *Landschaftliche Volkslieder* ("Folk Songs from Their Landscapes"), published by the German Folk-Song Archive in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1924, served not only as means of promoting German sonic authenticity. In fact, they were also used to justify German military expansion to reclaim territories lost during World War I (Bohlman 2004: 65). This development was particularly problematic, as it soon underpinned the Nazi regime's misuse of German folk music to "represent the nation to the aggrandizement of self and the denigration of other" (ibid.: 67).

During the Third Reich (1933-45), the Nazi-regime exploited German folk music's popular appeal, by systematically implementing the genre in their ideology to educate, mobilise and control the masses. The co-option of folk music by the Nazis led to an intense, racially motivated underscoring of Germanic national identity. A move from folk music as individual expression, as Herder had once put it, to an anti-individualistic, popular appeal (Sweers 2005: 72) is particularly apparent in terms of Nazi endeavours to expand upon the then popular folk music repertoire of ballads, carols and dances. The Nazi folk music concept now included newly composed and politically loaded marching and propaganda songs that were employed to educate the German youth in the context of the *Hitlerjugend* ("Hitler Youth") and the *Bund Deutscher Mädel* ("League of German Girls"), two centralised youth organisations. The new political connotations of folk music repertoire and the performance context of marching drills and propaganda events profoundly altered this generation's understanding of what German folk music signified, as ethnomusicologist Britta Sweers (ibid.: 75) asserts. Furthermore, extreme views emerged, which stipulated that German folk music was part of a "biologically determined Germanic national identity" (Sweers 2019: 2).

The previous comparison between folk music and nationalism in both German and Irish contexts reveals numerous parallels. In both scenarios, music underwent a journey from an expressive medium of cultural distinctiveness to a marker of ethnic exclusivity and was subsequently put into the service of nationalist agendas. At the transition between the 18th and 19th centuries, in both countries individuals emerged who canonised a national repertoire. Furthermore, Romantic cultural nationalism in the two locations was informed by Herder's theory that each nation is culturally specific, which manifests in language and folk culture. In Germany, language and folk song were instrumental in unifying the nation, whereas Ireland's ethnic language was slowly vanishing and thus supplanted by the valorisation of other components of the ancient Gaelic heritage, with music at the heart of this.

Although similarities are apparent between the two countries and their folk movements, perhaps the most important distinction to be made in relation to Nazi Germany is that folk music became co-opted in political agendas which led to some of one of the most horrific crimes of modern Europe, the genocide of European Jews and

Roma (Bohlman 2004: 20). Crucially, it is the trauma and devastation of the Holocaust that provides a starting point for the examination of a post-war identity crisis, in which the idiom of Irish music provided a sonic alternative for a German folk music repertoire that had become intensely intertwined with the label of Nazi abuse. Such analysis leads us to comprehend, in Martin Stokes's framework, the shift from ethnic concepts of 'Irishness' and 'Germanness', markers and boundaries that distinguish one ethnic group from another, to the post-ethnic process of relocation across these erected boundaries. In this process, the idea of 'ethnic music' takes on a new, trans-cultural role, as becomes particularly prevalent when considering the reception of Irish music in post-war Germany.

Post-War Revival, Escapism, and *Ersatz* Nostalgia

After 1945, the arrival of the Allied forces in Germany caused widespread demographic changes that left regional German folk music traditions highly marginalised. At the same time, politically charged marching songs were forbidden. A resulting break in the transmission of folk songs, now intertwined with the tag of Nazi propaganda, led to the alienation of traditional material from its original performance context. In the 1950s, this marginalisation of performance traditions stimulated what Sweers (2005: 79) calls "post-war escapism", characterised by the public's need to seek refuge from folk music's nationalistic connotations in nostalgic and idyllic representations of the German landscape. This need was to be satisfied and displayed visually in form of the *Heimatfilm* ("film with a regional background"), a film genre which projected a *Heile Welt* ("idyllic world") image, the hope that the harsh post-war reality would soon turn into an intact world. The *Heimatfilm* found its textual and sonic adjunct in the form of highly popular, newly composed *volkstümliche Musik* ("folk-style music"), a genre replete with associations of kitsch and artificiality, that was conceived to cleanse folk music of its nationalistic connotations by portraying an idealised, clichéd image of the German cultural heritage.

It is in this fragile post-war context that the need for an *Ersatz* folk music tradition emerged. In 20th century anthropological scholarship, *Ersatz,* the German equivalent for "replacement", has become intrinsically interwoven with the concept of nostalgia, as outlined by Arjun Appadurai (1996: 76). A compound of the Greek *nostos* ("return home") and *algia* ("longing"), the etymology of nostalgia indicates the romantic yearning to revisit a specific setting of time and space, coupled with the need to reconfigure (cultural) identity and the homeland. Writing on *Ersatz* nostalgia, Appadurai (1996: 77-8) critiques the way that mass merchandising draws upon nostalgia as a means to promote a way of life that is either lost forever or that has never been lost at all. As Appadurai has it, *Ersatz* nostalgia, so readily co-opted for mass-merchandising purposes, cannot satisfy the real longings of those that have actually lost the means of cultural and indeed musical expression, as is the case in the German experience. In the late 20th century folk music revivals that existed as counter-movements to *volkstümliche Musik* in both post-war German states, we witness how the *Ersatz* nostalgia projected by folk-style music is limited and has to give way to music that could address revivalists' real longings for musical and cultural identity. Wolfgang Leyn, member of the seminal Leipzig-based GDR folk band *Folkländer*, describes a shared disdain for *Ersatz* nostalgic folk-style music among members of the revival scene:

> *Damals…konnte man deutsche Volkslieder gar nicht mehr singen, weil alles entweder verkunstet oder verkitscht war…Dann gab es auch die volkstümliche Musik, die als Volkslied bezeichnet wurde. Das wollten wir nicht und das waren eigentlich unsere ärgsten Feinde.*

> ("Back then…one could not sing German folk songs anymore, because they were either kitsch or too artificial…Then there was *volkstümliche Musik*, which was framed as folk song. We didn't want that and those were our most vicious enemies.")
>
> (Leyn, 12 April 2017, personal communication).

The need to identify an alternative medium of creative expression was eventually satisfied by other European folk music traditions, most prominently, Irish and Scottish traditional music. These genres gradually shifted into the focus of artists and became more popular in the reassessment of German post-war identity (Sweers 2005: 80). As Sweers later clarifies, Anglo-Irish traditional music served as a novel sonic model and performative platform to revive German folk music traditions that had become widely extinct since the Nazi Era:

> …the encounter with international, especially then-popular Scottish-Irish artists not only stimulated new research in local traditions. It also provided a musical basis in the face of the extreme marginalization of performance traditions. Many German folk bands thus started as "Irish folk bands" in the 1970s and often adapted related instruments, arrangements and performance styles to newly composed and traditional material. (Sweers 2019: 4).

In terms of textual elements of folk songs that were conveyed sonically through an Irish and Scottish-inspired performance style, David Robb (2007), in *Protest Song in East and West Germany Since the 1960s*, suggests that members of the West German protest song movement set out to reframe German folk music in terms of its democratic, oppositional attributes. They re-appropriated song repertoire associated with the 1848 Revolution, an uprising against repressions exerted by rulers in the various German principalities existing in 19th century, in order to critique political issues in the present. For example, West German artists like Hannes Wader, *Liederjan* or *Zupfgeigenhansel* performed 1848 revolutionary material to address the prevailing social conformity in face of the apparent Nazi background of their parents' generation and that of many state employees at the time (Sweers 2005: 79).

Focusing on the shift towards an Anglo-Irish sonic inspiration, which West German artists drew upon, is equally significant in relation to the folk music scene that developed in the in the German Democratic Republic from 1976 onwards. In fact, this leitmotif not only unveils parallels between the folk music movements in the two German states, but it also forms an important reference point for historical analysis of the popularity of Irish and Scottish music in modern day Germany. While an Irish-Scottish soundscape also accompanied the songs of East German folk musicians, their identification with the oppositional messages communicated in folk songs about Ireland's post-colonialist struggles of emancipation from the British Empire was equally significant. When interviewed on the textual and sonic ramifications of his music making, Jürgen B. Wolff, lead singer with *Folkländer* (Wolff, 12 April 2017, personal communication), comments that Irish rebel songs like "Roddy McCorley" and "The Foggy Dew", emigration songs like "Mursheen Durkin", and recruitment songs like "McAlpine's Fusiliers" were particularly topical from a socio-political stance in the East German context. In fact, these songs mirrored then widespread concerns among GDR artists and audiences, resonating with desires to emigrate to the Federal Republic of Germany and the encounters of many with the compulsory military service in a state that outlawed the expression of pacifism (Robb 2007: 20).

The growing need to communicate the protest messages inherent in Irish songs to a broader German-speaking target audience meant that GDR folk musicians had to reconnect with their own democratic German-language protest song heritage that had been banned by the Nazis. In this context, it is fruitful to consider Svetlana Boym's extension of Appadurai's *Ersatz* nostalgia. In her work *The Future of Nostalgia*, Boym (2001: 41) argues for the multiplicity of nostalgia, a sentiment that may dwell intensely on the frictions between present and past experiences ('reflective nostalgia') or actively seek to re-establish continuity with a lost past. It is this latter meaning, and Boym's

typology of 'restorative nostalgia', which is most useful in understanding the thematic agency of Irish protest songs in bridging a rupture in the transmission and performance of similarly oppositional German-language folk songs. Wolfgang Leyn (2016: 22) outlines how thematic overlaps between Irish songs and 19th century German protest songs[iv] led to a performed resurfacing of 1848 revolutionary songs in the GDR. The topicality of 19th century German folk songs in the GDR context meant that they could be used, on a historically subversive level, to voice critique of the state's organisational structures. Yet, East German folk musicians had to carefully mediate lyrics surrounding themes of communist regime critique in a climate of state-imposed censorship. It is important to comprehend the complexities of this mechanism and to unpack it in greater detail.

The naissance of the GDR folk music scene can be traced back to the formation of the East Berlin *Hootenanny Klub* in 1966, initiated by Berlin-resident Canadian folk singer Perry Friedman. The *Hootenanny Klub* provided a platform for spontaneous singing sessions that students and other aspiring folk musicians could engage in (Leyn 2016: 11). These artists re-interpreted workers' songs, usually framed as a 'sacred' repertoire of the socialist state and the working class, in a setting that creatively borrowed sonic elements from other music genres, such as jazz and popular music.

In 1967, however, the *Hootenanny Klub* was taken over by the GDR youth organisation *FJD* ("Free German Youth") and, in reference to the 1917 October Revolution in Russia, renamed *Oktoberklub*. This strategic move asserted the ideological control of the *SED* Party ("Socialist Unity Party of Germany") over artistic expression, by promoting a *DDR-konkret* ("GDR-concrete") repertoire as a canon for its *Singebewegung* ("Youth Song Movement"). The label *DDR-konkret* signified that artists could only compose and perform song material which served the interests of socialist progression and the proletariat and fostered a strong sense of GDR identity. In this context, Robb (ibid.: 230-33) clarifies that the growing dissatisfaction with the movement's objectives was rooted in folk singers' realisation that freedom of speech was in fact limited and that the *Singebewegung* represented a vehicle for the indoctrination of Communist Party objectives. Notably, the state-conforming *Singebewegung* itself also provided fertile ground for the rapidly emerging state-critical *Liedermacher* ("balladeers") like Wolf Biermann, who was expatriated from the GDR in 1976 for voicing open regime critique in his songs.

In this regard, Robb (ibid.: 227) critiques the discourse on GDR folk music as being caught up in the predicament that artistic expression was exclusively sacrificed to the imperatives of state-imposed censorship. He reveals a more nuanced perspective on the issue by referring to those performers that firmly identified with the agenda of the *Singebewegung* on the one hand, and, on the contrary, by acknowledging musicians that had to carefully navigate between intermittent state conformity and dissidence, since their livelihoods relied on state institutions that provided a performance platform and the necessary funding. By balancing between state conformity and subversion, GDR folk singers exploited a primary contradiction in the state's cultural policy. The GDR government cherished the 1848 song material as an intrinsic part of the state's revolutionary *Erbe* ("heritage") (ibid.: 18). For example, musicologist Inge Lammel's collection of 1848 songs, *Lieder der Revolution von 1884* ("Songs of the 1848 Revolution"), published in 1957, was intended to be performed specifically in the context of the *Singebewegung*, framed as a historical legitimation for the ongoing struggle of the proletariat in the 'workers' and peasants' state' (Lammel 1957: 3), and employed to underscore the progressive spirit of the *Aufbau* ("construction") years after 1950, the period in which the GDR state was formed.

In contrast, folk musicians, who began to dissociate themselves from the state-conforming youth song movement, shifted their focus towards song material in Lammel's collection and ethnologist Wolfgang Steinitz' (1954) democratic folk song canon *Deutsche Volkslieder demokratischen Charakters aus sechs Jahrhunderten*

("German Folk Songs of Democratic Character from Six Centuries"), that referred to defeat and the failure of the Revolution in 1848. The texts of the GDR's revolutionary heritage allowed both the metaphorical association with the failure of the socialist utopian dream and the reframing of the historical theme of *Deutsche Misere* ("German misery"), or German society's inability to achieve lasting democratic changes from the bottom up. Furthermore, Robb (2007: 18) suggests that 1848 *Auswandererlieder* ("émigrés' songs"), mirrored the growing desire of many GDR citizens to leave the country, a subtext that was clearly understood by audience members on a highly intellectual level. Moreover, these songs could not be readily censored, due to their association with the state's revolutionary heritage and their dissemination in folk song collections. In his recently published chronicle of the GDR folk music scene, entitled *Volkes Lied und Vater Staat* ("Folk Song and Father State"), Wolfgang Leyn refers to Jürgen B. Wolff and his comment on the performance of ambiguous song texts:

> *Die Folkbands wurden Meister im Jonglieren mit Anspielungen, Witzen und Parabeln. Es entwickelte sich in ihren Liedern eine zweite Bedeutungsebene, die sich fast automatisch herstellte, wenn ein Stück erklang.*
>
> ("The folk music bands were masters in the juggling of hidden references, jokes and parables. The inherent subtext in their songs installed itself almost automatically, as soon as a piece resounded.")
>
> (Wolff in Leyn 2016: 14).

Leyn (ibid.: 12) asserts that the culturally representative function of the state-controlled *Singebewegung* was overemphasized at the expense of individual artistic expression, leading performers to discover alternative creative niches, particularly the sonic models of Irish and Scottish traditional music which members of the newly emerging GDR folk music scene encountered in the context of the annual *Festival des politischen Liedes* ("Festival of Political Songs"), the state-funded international political song festival held annually in East Berlin. This event, an unprecedented window to the cultural sphere beyond the Wall, allowed East German artists to witness touring acts, such as Scottish folk singer Dick Gaughan and the Sands Family from Northern Ireland (Robb 2007: 232-33). Irish and Scottish performers exerted a profound impact on the soundscape, repertoire and performance style pursued by GDR folk musicians, even before they turned their attention to their own democratic folk song heritage.

Leyn's account of Irish and Scottish repertoires and soundscapes that served as expressive models for GDR folk musicians reveals that Anglo-Irish artists taught young performers a lesson in *"erdverbundenem Gruppenmusizieren"* (Leyn 2016: 20), which translates as "earthbound group musicking" and reflects and Jürgen B. Wolff's (in Leyn 2016: 36) point that predominantly the participatory characteristics of Irish traditional music appealed. Referring to the circulation of illegally imported records of Irish folk bands from West Germany in the GDR, Wolfgang Leyn adds that many folk musicians were drawn to a romanticised exotic otherness inherent in Irish forms of instrumentation and an omnipresent feeling of belonging that Irish melodies conveyed. Moreover, he claims that songs performed by seminal Irish ballad bands like The Dubliners evoked an affinity with the vivid history of Irish rebellion against the British coloniser:

> *Zum einen ist die irische Musik einfach eine sehr schöne Musik. Sie ist in gewisser Weise von ihren Instrumenten und Melodien her exotisch…Dieses Irische war irgendwie immer präsent und es lag uns nahe, weil wir uns da gut eingefühlt haben…Es hat uns irgendwie gereizt…Die Dubliners kamen damals auf und das hat uns irgendwie imponiert. Dazu kam noch, dass es ganz gut in dieses anti-imperialistische Weltbild hineinpasste…Irland war ja die erste Kolonie Englands…Das stand in dieser Tradition der Aufstände.*
>
> ("Firstly, Irish music is an aesthetic kind of music. Its instrumentation and melodies are exotic…The Irish element was omnipresent and it was particularly close to us, because we could adopt its feeling…That somehow appealed to us…The Dubliners emerged at that time and we were somehow impressed. In fact, it fitted in with our anti-imperialistic world view.

For example, Ireland was England's first colony…It was a tradition of rebellion.")

(Leyn, 12 April 2017, personal communication).

Crucially, after decades of political-nationalist abuse of folk song in Nazi Germany, post-war escapism, and censorship of folk song material by the East German government, practitioners expressed a renewed longing for this romantic element, to the exotic, 'natural' character of other folk music genres that Herder had already articulated in his elaborations on Ossian in the late 18th century. Writing from the West German perspective three years prior to the fall of the Berlin Wall, Frey and Siniveer conclude their book on folk music history with the claim that the German draw to other European folk music genres, such as Irish and Scottish traditional music, is rooted in a desire to dissociate oneself from the ideologically, nationalist and commercially tainted discourses surrounding Germany's own folk music heritage. This interest in other cultures, in turn, also stimulated a renewed interest in the German folk music repertoire:

Folklore ist bei uns ideologisiert, nationalisiert, kommerzialisiert;…es gibt eine ganze Reihe von Ländern in Europa…in denen Folklore einen ganz anderen Charakter und eine andere Funktion hat…Hier zu lernen heißt, unser oft genug "verflachtes Folklorebewusstsein"…wieder zu vertiefen.

("In our case, folklore has been ideologically co-opted, nationalised, commercialised;…there are a number of countries in Europe…in which folklore is characterised quite differently and serves a different function…In this case, we can learn how to deepen our own 'shallow folklore consciousness'…again.")

(Frey and Siniveer 1987: 307).

This is precisely what occurred when East German folk musicians started to re-assess folk song material in Wolfgang Steinitz' 1954 folk song collection to identify how German songs that were not part of the popular and state-conforming repertoire compared to their Irish counterparts, as ethnomusicologist Axel Hesse (in Leyn 2016: 21) contends. Listening to the few commercial recordings of Scottish and Irish bands that could be purchased in the GDR, many East German musicians became drawn to bagpipes as a sonic icon of Celtic exoticism. The challenge of acquiring these instruments in the sealed-off GDR encouraged the construction of bagpipes by pioneering instrument makers in East Berlin. Soon, different types of bagpipes became part of the local folk music soundscape, a development, which contributed to a renaissance of German medieval music and materialised a once extinct *altdeutsche* ("Old German") identity (Gehler 2014: 6).

What might we conclude about Irish music's significance in the context of East and West German folk music revivals in the post-Nazi Era? Importantly, the Irish idiom became a suitable sonic *Ersatz*, a desired replacement for a German folk music culture that had been abused in the service of mass mobilisation, was employed to articulate racial purity and became subsequently alienated from its original performance context and thus marginalised. Furthermore, this music provided an attractive alternative to the sound of commercial *volkstümliche Musik* and was adopted by members of West German protest song movements and East German artists, who elegantly voiced state criticism in a climate where censorship of artistic expression was widely practiced. To comprehend how Irish traditional music, an ethnic music genre, became post-ethnically configured and attained sonic iconicity for German folk music revivalists, it is fruitful to investigate this affinity dynamic through the paradigm of Celtic music[v].

James Porter (1998: 216) has argued that contemporary conceptions of Celticity and Celtic music are not necessarily based on Celtic language competence or one's identification as ethnically Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Manx, Cornish, or Breton. Once a locally rooted phenomenon and now circulating in global cultural flow, Celtic music has become a much more participatory concept, allowing practitioners to express multi-layered musical affinities. In response to this point, Scott Reiss (in Stokes and

Bohlman 2003: 163) notes that it is primarily music's sonic iconography and mobility that can create imaginary landscapes of relocation. Consequently, classifying music as 'Celtic', sonically and affectively "allows people access to…a domain of 'Celtdom' denied to them by the complexities of, for example, a Celtic language or the theoretical and practical difficulties of maintaining a coherent political identity." (Stokes 1994: 6). How exactly did this play out in the 1970s German folk music revival context? In this scenario, what I tentatively term 'Celtic-inspired' nostalgia, moving from *Ersatz* to restorative attributes, allowed revivalists to rediscover 'organic' characteristics of German folk music that were sacrificed to the imperatives of a fascist political agenda. In light of these historical complexities, it is significant that the close of the Nazi Era heralded a shift from understanding folk music in ethnic and nationalist terms to conceiving of it as globally accessible music. It is this post-ethnically configured realm, the lived experience of non-native practitioners of Irish traditional music, that clarifies how, in reference to historical ramifications of folk music making in Ireland and Germany, the current perspective of practitioners leads us to reassess and shape Irish music discourses. In the following section I draw upon interviews with members of the contemporary German Irish traditional music scene to critically assess how their heightened attention to musical features and ideas around sonic, in contrast with ethnic, 'Irish' authenticity informs the way Irish music is performed in Germany.

From Ethnic to Sonic Markers of Authenticity

Unfortunately, an optimistic perspective on Irish music making in Germany, uncoupled from the genre's ethnically configured source domain, stands in contrast to the opinion of 20th century Irish music scholar Seán Ó Riada and remarks by flute player Seamus Tansey. In *Our Musical Heritage*, Ó Riada (1982: 19-20) argues that Irish music has remained untouched by the influence of European art music streams as its forms, style and standards remain 'purely Irish'. Likewise, he suggests that foreign influences became quickly absorbed and 'Gaelicised' into the 'river' of Irish music. O'Shea (2008: 1-4) critiques this notion of an unchanged tradition, as it emerged from a potential fear of cultural contamination in the context of a real and existing modern, multi-ethnic Irish society. Indeed, this anxiety resurfaces and quite drastically plays out in Tansey's contribution to the 1996 Crossroads Conference, where he states that one cannot sacrifice the pure, authentic qualities of Irish music in the face of the various cross-cultural influences that it might be exposed to.

> Tradition versus Change. If that's change…the mongrelisation, the bastardisation, the cross-pollination, the copulation of our ancient traditional music, with other cultures, then I say we want none of it… (Tansey in Vallely et. al 1999: 213).

The claim of authenticity in relation to Irish traditional music is pertinent in both Ó Riada's and Tansey's accounts and serves as metaphorical gunpowder to affirm their agenda of promoting ethnic purity of Irish music. As 'authenticity' appears so readily accessible for appropriation in value judgements, even outside the realms of ethnicity, and if, as Martin Stokes (1994: 7) writes, authenticity is no more than "a discursive trope of great persuasive power", it nonetheless remains a highly complex linguistic tool employed to account for musical practice. And so I turn to the lived experience of Irish traditional musicians in Germany in order to show how exactly notions of authenticity and ethnicity inform their performance practice. What is at stake for practitioners of a music that is so readily cherished as being globally accessible?

During an interview with Bavarian fiddle player Ralf Mayer (whose name is changed here) in 2015, the theme of music, national identity and ethnicity emerged in relation to his motivation to play Irish traditional music. When I asked him why he became interested in the Irish genre, he promptly explained that personally, he sees no correlation between music and national identity at all:

Meiner Meinung nach ist es ganz generell so, dass irische traditionelle Musik für alle Menschen da ist, und es gibt keinen Deutschen Stil…in erster Linie ist es die Musik…Musik hat nichts mit Nationalität zu tun, das möchte ich nochmal betonen…

("In my opinion, Irish traditional music should generally be accessible to all people and there is no…German style (of fiddle playing)…Most importantly, we are talking about music…Music has absolutely nothing to do with nationality, I just want to emphasize that again…")

(Mayer, 22 July 2015, personal communication).

A striking feature of Ralf's account is the definite disjuncture he draws between music and nationality. For him, it is simply the enjoyment of music making that attracted him to Irish music in the first place. Being German does not have anything to do with that decision. In a later comment on the Germannes or – Irishness of his musical practice, he compares music with language as a mode of communication (Mayer, 22 July 2015, personal communication). Ralf argues that languages are accessible and spread globally, as does (Irish) music. While he acknowledges the origin of Irish music in Ireland, he emphasizes the word 'music' as significant. This contradiction in Ralf's comments reveals that, in spite of rejecting any correlation between music and national identity, he senses a draw of Irish music to the land of its origin. Ralf shows an interest in folk music traditions and underlines their ties to a specific locality. This also manifests in his claim that listening to and playing Irish traditional music enables him to relocate himself musically, which is prevalent when he talks about regional styles in Irish music:

Natürlich habe ich dann auch in die verschiedenen Stile reingeschnuppert. Man hat sich dann zunächst in den Clare-Stil und dann in diese Sligo-Ecke verliebt…natürlich ist es etwas Lokales, und das macht den Reiz aus. (Mayer, 22 July 2015, personal communication).

("Of course, I also delved into the various styles. At first, I fell in love with Clare style and subsequently the style, tunes and sets associated with the Sligo region…Of course, style is bound up with locale. That is what makes it attractive…")

(Mayer, 22 July 2015, personal communication).

The above excerpts validate Stokes's argument that music is a profound vehicle for individual relocation to places and memories, thereby allowing practitioners to construct multiple identities that transcend musical and ethnic boundaries. Although he possesses no ethnic ties to the Sligo region, Ralf relocates himself musically, by playing Irish traditional music from this particular locality. When bringing forward the claim of musical relocation in the lived experience of Irish traditional musicians, it is important to investigate how authenticity, a term historically intertwined with much ethnic-national discourse on the making of Irish music, plays out for musicians who possess no ethnic ties to Ireland. Here, John O'Flynn (2009: 175) posits that authenticity in Irish music is frequently judged on the basis of perceived 'Irish' sonic markers. In an interview, Berlin flute player Tom Reinhardt evidences O'Flynn's point, assessing the characteristics of an authentic Irish sound based on the inclusion of stylistic parameters, such as ornamentation and instrumentation, which differ from European art music:

Ich versuche aber schon, möglichst mit den irischen Verzierungen und im irischen Stil zu spielen…die Rolls, Cuts, Grace Notes, die machen das ja aus.

("Nevertheless…I try to play Irish ornamentation and maintain an Irish style…rolls, cuts, grace notes, they make the music what it is.")

(Reinhardt, 17 August 2015, personal communication).

Classically trained flute player Linda Jansen (17 August 2015, personal communication) describes the rattling of keys on a sliver flute as a non-Irish sound and mentions her encounters at Irish music workshops in Germany, where she was told by her Irish-born teacher to avoid using her tongue for articulation purposes.

Instead of resorting to tongue articulation, a stylistic feature often employed by classically trained flute players, she was urged to use her fingers to play ornaments instead.

Both Tom and Linda understand authenticity in sonic terms and it is in their accounts that one notices a shift from the ethnic claim of authenticity to a heightened engagement with musical features, which characterise what they conceptualise as Irish music. This suggests that for non-native practitioners, the Irishness in Irish music has become uncoupled from a historically constructed ethnic plane and has moved to a sonic, musically and globally accessible level. Yet, this sense of sonic 'Irish' authenticity comes at a prize and can only be attained through continuous practice and immersion in the Irish traditional repertoire, as Linda points out later:

> *Um uns richtig irisch zu fühlen, müssten wir es viel intensiver machen…Authentisch im Sinne von irisch? Das finde ich erstrebenswert, aber ich bin nicht authentisch, weil ich nicht gut genug bin…*
>
> ("To feel more Irish, we would have to immerse ourselves more in the music…Being authentically Irish? That's my goal, but I'm not authentic, because I'm not good enough…")
>
> (Jansen, 17 August 2015, personal communication).

Tom and Linda's comments reveal that, for German practitioners, claims of authenticity in relation to Irish traditional music have shifted from an ethnic to a sonic and globally accessible level. However, their use of the term 'authentic' still erects binary opposites between Western art and Irish music, or Irish and non-Irish sonic markers. In fact, these musicians emphasize that the acquisition of musical skills is integral to attaining sonic authenticity. This complexity mirrors Helen O'Shea's (2008: 2) argument that "authenticity performs a legitimising, hence gatekeeping function in discourses…in which ideas about Irish music are embedded." As popular social contexts for music making, Irish music sessions represent sites where gatekeeping regulations of sonic authenticity and musical prowess are negotiated among practitioners. Indeed, the shift from ethnic to sonic markers inherent in these negotiations also causes a shift in the social, participatory frame of Irish music sessions and determines who gets to join the inner circle of session musicians. The final section of my article explores how ideas around musical capital and sonic authenticity shape the social and participatory characteristics (Turino 2008: 23-65) of Irish music sessions in Germany.

The Stakes of Participation: Encounters at an Irish Music Session in Berlin

> In Rudolstadt, Germany, I…sat in a session and I was amazed by the fact that everybody played together…the feeling of leaving the position of a mere listener and to join…the ranks of the music makers, was fascinating. (Bauer, 24 August 2015, personal communication).

Hanover-based bodhrán player Max Bauer portrays sessions as primary contexts for Irish traditional music performance both in Ireland and in Germany and highlights the inclusivity of these events. His response represents an intensely positive perspective on the session as a setting where participation, inclusion and uncomplicated transitions between the realms of audience members and music makers can occur. On the other hand, Ralf Mayer offers a very different perspective on the issue, openly admitting that selecting a few musicians with equal levels of musical skill makes sessions more enjoyable:

> *Man möchte mit Leuten spielen, mit denen man auf einem Level ist und mit denen das Musikmachen Spaß macht…Die schönsten Sessions sind eh zu dritt, im Privaten, wo man wirklich in die Musik eintauchen kann…*

("I like playing with musicians that are performing at the same level as me. Then the process of music making becomes truly enjoyable…The best sessions involve three people, in private, where one can delve into the music properly…")

(Meyer, 22 July 2017, personal communication).

The role of musical prowess as a requirement for participation at Irish music sessions is also problematized by Linda Jansen. As a novice to the world of Irish music, she feels discouraged by the professional level of musicianship displayed at her local Irish music session and perceives it as exclusion. Linda (17 August 2015, personal communication) states that, "In case of the Berlin Super-Session, I always felt that beginners weren't particularly welcome". In fact, Linda learns that belonging to the 'inner circle' of an Irish music session requires a certain capital of musical skill and knowledge. This encounter stands in contrast to Max Bauer's view, which arguably romanticises the session as a generous, inviting musical community. Taking these conflicting perspectives into account, what initially appears as a romantic idea of involvement actually reveals itself as a patina of inclusion, under which decisions on the terms and conditions of participation are strictly governed by a cluster of session 'leaders'. It is in this situation that the previously examined notion of sonic Irish authenticity is used to regulate boundaries of participation. Peeling away the patina of inclusion that German musicians are confronted with in the session context allows me to unpack other issues at stake when Irish traditional musicians in Germany attempt to assimilate into their local session community.

In terms of critiquing the romantic, participatory session, Helen O'Shea (2008) accounts for the unspoken rules that govern the acceptance into and rejection from the liminal space of the 'inner circle' which session musicians occupy. This argument is reflected by Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, who concludes his *Pocket History of Irish Traditional Music* with a contribution on session etiquette. He argues, that "each session has its own internal logic, social code and sense of time" (Ó hAllmhuráin 1998: 160). According to O'Shea, the fine edge between spontaneous music making and overarching, implicit regulations bears potential for conflict and is situated at the very centre of determining, who gets to participate. Significantly, both O'Shea and Ó hAllmhuráin refer to the governing authority exerted by session leaders, select musicians who are regarded as being 'in charge' of the session. Making a case for the centrality of musical capital, Irish flute player Hammy Hamilton (in Vallely 2011: 611) adds that their control over sessions is informed by factors like instrumentation, reputation, age, and most notably, by ability.

The fact that Linda Jansen calls her local session the 'Berlin Super Session' reveals a veritable aesthetic statement and signals her desire to become assimilated into what she perceives as an 'authentic' session community. For her, the notion of authenticity unfolds on the basis of sonic characteristics of Irishness, the musical capital that is necessary to acquire, and the knowledge of unwritten rules governing the decision on who gets to enter the 'inner' session circle. Linda's experience serves to illustrate how a shift from ethnic to sonic conceptions of the 'Irishness' in traditional Irish music exerts a profound influence on the ramifications of musical practice and communicates a lot about the aspects of Irishness that music transports for practitioners in a globalised society.

While in historical terms, being ethnically Irish and playing Irish music mattered in articulating one's position in post-colonial discourse on Irish independence from the British coloniser, the post-ethnically configured concept of Irishness in Irish music seems to have taken on a new, sonic role that recursively shapes the social, participatory boundaries of the tradition, its associated discourses, and the musical practice itself. Although members of the contemporary German Irish music community reject the prevalence of ethnic markers of authentic Irishness in their performance practice, they nonetheless articulate specific views on the sounds and manners of performance that are desirable to attain and that define what renders Irish music Irish

to them. Deconstructing the romanticised Irish music session discourse and taking the lived experience of German Irish traditional musicians into account leads us to comprehend, on a broader scale, that music is not just an expressive medium of intercultural affinities. In fact, it can itself become an agent for the creation and structuring of affinity cultures (Slobin 1993: 68).

Conclusion: Reassessing Irishness

This article has traced the historical and current reception of Irish traditional music by German practitioners, allowing me to unravel various forms of identity negotiation mediated through Ireland's vernacular music for artists that possess no ethnic ties to Ireland itself. This complexity inevitably calls for a (re)assessment of what 'Irishness' really means for the musicians in question and how it becomes remodelled in a globalised field of musical practices and recursively related discourses.

In the course of historical paths which Ireland and Germany have taken, folk music was employed to consolidate a sense of ethnic identity, whether tethered to Irish anti-colonial rhetoric or endeavours to achieve German unification. The darker aspects of music's capacity to affectively mobilise people on these grounds become apparent when considering the sharp contrasts between Self and Other that were musically underscored in both countries, whereas in Germany, folk music took a particularly devastating agency in serving the regime that initiated the Holocaust. Consequently, understanding the relationship between the post-war shame that Germans felt in relation to their own, ideologically corrupted folk music heritage and the role of Irish music as a sonic model for the reinvigoration of its performative practice reveals why discussing different facets of nostalgia is key to historically trace affinities between German and Irish folk music genres. In post-war Germany, it is striking that elements of Irish music sonically accompanied protest and folk song movements and song texts that, in metaphorical fashion, conveyed regime critique and were frequently subject to state censorship in the GDR. Perhaps, this points us to conclude that in times of heightened, often enforced social organisation and institutionalisation of artistic practice, the yearning to relive Herder's *unpolicirte* folk music imagination resurges.

In the 1970s German folk music revival context, Irish music and its quality of 'Irishness' already took on the kind of post-ethnic role that becomes relevant to current German practitioners of Irish traditional music. It is the level of sonic Irishness, uncoupled from ethnic belonging, that attracts listeners and practitioners to a globally accessible music genre, but in turn exerts an important impact on discourses and the musical practice itself. Alongside gatekeeping rules of session etiquette, sonic Irish authenticity plays out in the construction of unspoken regulations that prescribe, who can and who cannot participate in an Irish music session. Thus, the underlying key argument in this article is that music functions as a profound vehicle for the mobilising of identity. However, it can also alter the meaning of a specific identity layer, such as Irishness. It is precisely music's twofold capacity to affirm and transform identity that tells us why it is highly important in the multifaceted field of musical practices that we, as ethnomusicologists, continue to engage in.

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Endnotes

[i] For a further exploration of the concept of 'post-ethnicity' in musical experience and a critical discussion on various identity politics and creative processes mediated through post-ethnic configurations of musical practice, see Irish ethnomusicologist Aileen Dillane's (2013) article on Chicago-based Irish-American fiddle player Liz Carroll: Dillane, A. (2013). Composing Identity, Fiddling with (Post)Ethnicity: Liz Carroll's "Lake Effect". *MUSICultures* (Canadian Society for Traditional Music), 40(1), 7-34.

[ii] A second edition of Herder's *Volkslieder* was posthumously published in 1807 by Johann von Müller in Tübingen, Germany. This reissue appeared under the now more widely known title *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* ("Voices of the People in Song"). See: Herder, Johann Gottfried von (1828). *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern: gesammelt, geordnet, zum Theil übersetzt durch Johann Gottfried von Herder. Neu herausgegeben durch Johann von Müller*. Stuttgart: Cotta.

[iii] In Herder's *Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder der alten Völker* ("Exchange of Letters on Ossian and the Songs of the Ancient Peoples") (Herder, transl. in Bohlman 2017: 140-167) and in his 1794 essay on *Homer und Ossian* ("Homer and Ossian") (Herder, transl. in Bohlman 2017: 172-185), one can specifically identify his attempt to negotiate correlations between ancient Greek epics and Celtic myth heroes. This equips Herder to legitimize his ideal characterisation of the folk and the expression of its distinctiveness through song as 'wild' and *'unpolicirt'* and indicates a historically rooted Germanic draw to the culture of the European fringe. For a recently published, thorough translation and analysis of Herder's writing on music and nationalism, consult: Bohlman, Philip Vilas (2017). *Song Loves the Masses: Herder on Music and Nationalism.* Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

[iv] German studies scholar David Robb (2009) has unearthed thematic resonances between German and Irish folk songs dating from the time of the 1848 Revolutions in Europe. Initially, Robb delineates important nuances between German and Irish cultural contexts, focusing primarily on Germany's rapid industrialisation and emerging working class consciousness in the 19th century, which contrasted with Ireland's rural societal fabric and the experience of colonial rule at that time. However, he equally clarifies that significant commonalities unfold in relation to 19th century songs dealing with widely experienced issues of hunger, emigration, and, most notably, rebellion. For further details, see: Robb, David (2009). A Common European Song Heritage in the Nineteenth Century Songs of Ireland and Germany. *Traditiones*. 38(1), 141-160.

[v] In his article *Locating Celtic Music (and Song)*, James Porter (1998) problematizes the term 'Celtic music', noting that the concept is largely elusive and "riddled with linguistic, cultural and ideological implications" (Porter 1998: 205). According to Porter, Celticity can attain multiple meanings, whether tied to a particular locality, used to classify language competence, or constructed on the basis of ethnic identification. In terms of my own usage of Celtic music as a framework to make sense of findings which surfaced in the context of my ethnographic research, I draw upon Porter's argument that Celtic music can also evoke broader meanings and can become a site for the flourishing of intercultural affinities (ibid.: 208). This particularly applies when it is employed by people who do not define 'Celtic' in ethnic or linguistic terms.

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[i] For a further exploration of the concept of 'post-ethnicity' in musical experience and a critical discussion on various identity politics and creative processes mediated through post-ethnic configurations of musical practice, see Irish ethnomusicologist Aileen Dillane's (2013) article on Chicago-based Irish-American fiddle player Liz Carroll: Dillane, A. (2013). Composing Identity, Fiddling with (Post)Ethnicity: Liz Carroll's "Lake Effect". *MUSICultures* (Canadian Society for Traditional Music), 40(1), 7-34.

[ii] A second edition of Herder's *Volkslieder* was posthumously published in 1807 by Johann von Müller in Tübingen, Germany. This reissue appeared under the now more widely known title *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* ("Voices of the People in Song"). See: Herder, Johann Gottfried von (1828). *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern: gesammelt, geordnet, zum Theil übersetzt durch Johann Gottfried von Herder. Neu herausgegeben durch Johann von Müller*. Stuttgart: Cotta.

[iii] In Herder's *Briefwechsel über Ossian und die Lieder der alten Völker* ("Exchange of Letters on Ossian and the Songs of the Ancient Peoples") (Herder, transl. in Bohlman 2017: 140-167) and in his 1794 essay on *Homer und Ossian* ("Homer and Ossian") (Herder, transl. in Bohlman 2017: 172-185), one can specifically identify his attempt to negotiate correlations between ancient Greek epics and Celtic myth heroes. This equips Herder to legitimize his ideal characterisation of the folk and the expression of its distinctiveness through song as 'wild' and *'unpolicirt'* and indicates a historically rooted Germanic draw to the culture of the European fringe. For a recently published, thorough translation and analysis of Herder's writing on music and nationalism, consult: Bohlman, Philip Vilas (2017). *Song Loves the Masses: Herder on Music and Nationalism.* Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

[iv] German studies scholar David Robb (2009) has unearthed thematic resonances between German and Irish folk songs dating from the time of the 1848 Revolutions in Europe. Initially, Robb delineates important nuances between German and Irish cultural contexts, focusing primarily on Germany's rapid industrialisation and emerging working class consciousness in the 19th century, which contrasted with Ireland's rural societal fabric and the experience of colonial rule at that time. However, he equally clarifies that significant commonalities unfold in relation to 19th century songs dealing with widely experienced issues of hunger, emigration, and, most notably, rebellion. For further details, see: Robb, David (2009). A Common European Song Heritage in the Nineteenth Century Songs of Ireland and Germany. *Traditiones*. 38(1), 141-160.

[v] In his article *Locating Celtic Music (and Song)*, James Porter (1998) problematizes the term 'Celtic music', noting that the concept is largely elusive and "riddled with linguistic, cultural and ideological implications" (Porter 1998: 205). According to Porter, Celticity can attain multiple meanings, whether tied to a particular locality, used to classify language competence, or constructed on the basis of ethnic identification. In terms of my own usage of Celtic music as a framework to make sense of findings which surfaced in the context of my ethnographic research, I draw upon Porter's argument that Celtic music can also evoke broader meanings and can become a site for the flourishing of intercultural affinities (ibid.: 208). This particularly applies when it is employed by people who do not define 'Celtic' in ethnic or linguistic terms.

‘This is Jiving Country’: Country Music Dancing in the Northwest of Ireland

John Millar

Abstract

An integral part of the country music dance circuit, ‘social dances’ take place in community halls, hotel ballrooms and lounge bars every weekend in the Northwest of Ireland. Throughout country music’s period of relative decline and into its contemporary resurgence in popularity, social dances have played a significant role in both maintaining the fanbase of the music’s older cohort of fans while providing regular employment and performance opportunities for today’s younger artists. With the focus on dance and regular communally-experienced events, these dances have helped shape both the community of which the country music scene is composed, as well as its particular musical and sonic characteristics. This article will look at how this ecosystem operates, both in terms of local community, social events, and as part of the wider country music scene in Ireland. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2017, the article shows how social dances bridge the gap between the ‘country and Irish’ scene of the latter half of the twentieth century and its twenty-first century incarnation. By looking at how economic and functional imperatives have affected the music’s development, I show how social dances of the Northwest have played a signal role in creating the contemporary country music scene.

Keywords: Ethnomusicology, Country Music, Scenes, Dance

Through an ever increasing volume of television, radio, and other media outputs, the country music of Ireland has come to be recognised as something more than the preserve of a rural few, but rather a music and musical culture deeply embedded in the social and cultural worlds of the island. Though often encountered in its recorded form (its near-ubiquitous presence on the airwaves of local Irish radio stations in the Northwest and West is a testament to that fact), it remains a music whose primary focus is on the live, on the social, on the country dance. With a network of ballrooms and dancehalls big and small dotted around the country, it is this dance circuit that is the focal point of the country music scene; that focus shapes both the scene itself and the local communities of which it is composed, as well as the music at the heart of that scene. By looking at the sites of three of these dances, and at the role they play in their respective communities, as well as the manner in which each iteration of the scene is constituted, this paper will show how participants enact and embody the country music scene.

Country music as a genre is one that has long been a site of tension between its historical roots and its contemporary commercial imperatives. As a music that trades in expressions of a supposed authenticity, one that makes use of well-worn tropes of a rural idyll and an idealised past of community music making, country music is shaped by the simultaneous demands of industry. Positioned as a music of ‘the people’, it nonetheless is a genre that operates within, and partakes of, the conventions and trappings of commercial popular music. The country music of Ireland in question is

essentially a localised variant of American country music. Since the era of the showbands, whose popularity peaked during the 1960s, country music has been an essential and continuous presence in the Irish popular music world. By the time the showbands began their decline in the 1970s – driven by a variety of factors, from changes in media consumption and a concurrent shift in musical tastes, to a relaxation of licensing laws and improved offerings of other venues which bled audiences from the aging showband infrastructure – country music was established as one of the most popular modes of popular music on the island, reflected in both the continuing popularity of Irish artists as well as that of American purveyors of the genre. While there was a comparatively limited local industry, there was nonetheless a significant cohort of artists who established both recording and live performance careers. Central to the maintenance of the industry from that time until now has been the continued popularity of dances. As the music's popularity waned in the urban east, it has maintained a more continuous presence in the west and north of the country.

Though country music has long been popular in Ireland, documentation of it has often been undertaken in relation to the showband scene, or as one facet of emerging popular music practices of the twentieth century. Journalistic accounts of the showband era, such as Vincent Power's *Send 'Em Home Sweatin': The Showbands Story* (Power 1990) and autobiographically informed accounts from performers of the time, such as Finbar O'Keeffe's *Goodnight, God Bless and Safe Home* (O'Keeffe 2002), have helped document the showband phenomenon, and in the process given accounts of the genesis of the contemporary country music scene. The scholarship of Rebecca S. Miller (Miller 2014, 2016) in turn provides invaluable context in understanding how those economic, cultural and infrastructural developments – from the engagement with Anglo-American popular music to the spread of dancehalls throughout the island – formed the ground from which the country music scene emerged. The doctoral dissertation of Paul Maguire (Maguire 2012), dealing with the development in the latter half of the twentieth century of the localised variant of country music known as 'country and Irish', has been especially informative in bridging the gap between those earlier aspects and the contemporary scene. In situating country music within larger currents of popular music and culture, studies of popular music in Ireland such as *Noisy Island* (Smyth 2005) are useful in contextualising the music's relative visibility and social significance (though country music rarely makes much of an appearance in histories of popular music in Ireland, its absence is itself telling); while *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Stokes 1997) and *Music and Identity in Ireland and Beyond* (O'Flynn, Fitzgerald 2014) have been useful in examining how questions of social and cultural identity affect the construction and experience of the scene, as has *The Irishness of Irish Music* (O'Flynn 2009).

Geography of the Field

Though country music is popular throughout the island, it is most prevalent in the northern and western parts of the country, with regular dances taking place weekly in a widely dispersed network of venues. This paper draws on fieldwork conducted primarily in three locales, in counties Roscommon, Mayo, and Donegal. County Roscommon is bounded to the east by the river Shannon, Ireland's largest waterway, and one which effectively marks the division of east and west, with County Mayo spreading towards the ocean, its Atlantic coastline spreading from County Galway in the south to county Sligo in the north. Following a brief interposition by County Leitrim, County Donegal, in turn, stretches to Malin Head, the most northerly point of the island of Ireland. Traveling through this region, you pass from the verdant lake country of the midlands, typified by rolling pasture and wetlands with low hills to the wild, rugged wilds of the Atlantic coast, with the topography rising as you pass north into the mountains of Donegal. Making my way through this region in 2017, I met and spoke with performers, dancers and fans, and the people that run the venues in which the

music is encountered. It is these interactions on which this research is based. First I will briefly outline the nature of the musical worlds I encountered, the modes of participation and dance in their historical context. I follow this with a discussion of the scenes I have encountered, and how ideas of 'scene' itself shape both participation in and understandings of the genre and in how I have approached this research. Finally I will present three case studies, each representative of distinct yet related facets of country music practices in Ireland.

Dancing in the Northwest

The term 'social dancing' is one that is encountered with some regularity when you're engaging with the country scene. It's a term that gets at the sometimes complicated identity of the genre as it is encountered in Ireland. That it will be social is one of the most basic expectations we might have when we attend a dance – the use of the phrase here signifies something as much about the demographics and music as it does about the dance format itself. 'Social Dancing' is a phrase that is used to refer to weekly dance events, and one which crops up in many parts of the country. It is often used interchangeably to refer to country music dances, though not always. In some parts of the country it is generally taken to refer to a more specific variant; as Peter McIntyre of the Allingham Arms in Donegal explained the term and the country dance scene of County Donegal to me:

> …well this is jiving country. Country music down the south is social dancing, it's a two piece band, a one piece band, but there are loads of them and its very popular, goes on from 8 to 10 at night; down here it's a band, it's a five, six piece band…social dancing, it's a an older age group like, completely and utterly it's an older age group, it's getting people out of the house, its slower waltzes and here it's all about jiving, so its two different parts of this. (McIntyre, 2017).

For the most part however, the term is used colloquially in a less defined manner; the dances I will discuss in this paper range from those that would meet this strict definition, to larger scale dances that would be closer in both presentational mode and style to commercial popular music events. Though it is often spoken of colloquially as being a relatively homogenous scene, there are in fact several interconnected country music scenes, with commonalities in both artists and dance repertoire, as well as an often shared audience, together constituting what can be understood as the larger scale country music scene.

The repertoire of dances that can be observed at contemporary dance events is one that has remained remarkably constant since the middle years of the 20th century. To walk into a dancehall now is to encounter scenes that would have been familiar forty years ago. As described by Paul Maguire (Maguire 2012, p . 169), in his doctoral dissertation on the rise of Irish country music, it has its roots in the ballroom dance repertoire of the early part of last century, with foxtrots, waltzes, and jives being the most persistently popular. The jive, a derivation of the American jitterbug introduced to Britain in 1943 (Baade 2006), is at this point almost shorthand for country dances more generally. That these dances have maintained this status and popularity can be attributed to several factors. Consisting of easily learned steps, with couple dances being the mainstay, these dances eschewed individualistic displays of technique, their formula allowing for participation even amongst those who might be considered 'dance-averse'. Even when he encountered this repertoire as a performer in the 1970s, Maguire found what he understood to be an outdated, outmoded set of dances. Throughout the rise of the showbands, and during their subsequent boom, a string of new dances had become briefly popularised, with novelty dances becoming fashionable for brief periods. These tended to be more exhibitionistic than was comfortable for some; as Maguire observed of the enduring popularity of the more traditional repertoire in the face of these shirt-lived fashions, "Many of the dancers in the audiences of rural Irish venues in the 60s had only the most basic grasp of that

repertoire but it was considered by many of them to be preferable to having to dance to solo dances such as 'The Twist'. I had therefore rather missed the point: it was not that the ballroom repertoire was particularly liked but that these new dances involved a level of exhibitionism which sat uneasily with the reserve inherent in the majority of rural Irish males at that time." (Maguire 2012, p.169) The longer history of dance in 20th century Irish society is a fascinating one, in which can be seen tensions between modernity and tradition, nationalism and cosmopolitanism. As fruitfully explored by Barbara O'Connor (O'Connor 2003, 2006), developments in Irish dance halls of the first half of the century were freighted with meaning beyond simple social interaction. The practices and habits discussed in this paper can be read as being a continuation in this longer history of dance halls as sites of negotiated identities. The infrastructure and practices thus established were subject to competing claims to national and cultural identities. The centrality and importance of dance spaces, as discussed by Ní Fhuartháin (Ní Fhuartháin 2019), was such that in their history can be read the development of the social and cultural formations outlined here.

The repertoire of dances has remained largely, though not completely, static; line-dancing, for example, became established in the 1990s, a phenomenon that was described to me by several of the older artists. Though its popularity has waned somewhat, it is still regularly to be observed, while a modern variation, the 'slosh', has recently become popular. Jiving, however, is still the mainstay of the dance scene. The recent resurgence in country music popularity has in part been fuelled by the appearance of dance classes, as well as online and DVD tutorials. These include youth dance classes such as the 'Jiving Juniors', run by Sandra Ganley, who has been visible in RTE TV shows such as RTE Junior and 'Stetsons and Stilettos'. Coupled with the prevalence of jiving contests, at both festivals and regular dance events, the standard is generally seen to be improving, a trend observed by the artists and dancers I spoke with; Louisiana-born singer Robert Mizzell, whom I interviewed in 2018, commented that "…with the onset of all these…jiving classes, everyone's pretty much getting onto the same page, because every night we see people who are fantastic dancers" (though he did also go on to observe that "…then you see some people who are just like young gazelles, who were just born thirty seconds ago, and they just can't find their legs"). The increased popularity of dancing as a form of social activity is one that has benefitted the artists, bringing a new cohort of audience members to dance events; that dances have begun to be seen as alternative social spaces for that younger cohort is one factor driving attendances, as Lisa McHugh explained:

> …they began to get a taste of it, and they began the dancing lessons, and [when] they could actually dance, they became even more interested. And it's much more of a social aspect of things for them than going to a nightclub and you can't hear yourself talk… the younger ones, they're drinking a pint of water, and they're dancing, and enjoying the music. (McHugh, 2017).

The dance scene then is more visible than it has been in previous years, with exposure on television programmes such as RTÉ's Stetsons and Stilettos and BBCNI's Keepin' 'er Country bringing an increased prominence and exposure to the scene. Coupled with the increased visibility of artists such as Derek Ryan and Lisa McHugh through social media such as Facebook, it is often assumed that the total numbers of participants has seen a commensurate increase, although this is a view that is disputed by some, with Mizzell telling me that:

> it's actually gotten smaller, it's more concentrated now than it was…look, I've always said that in Ireland there's about fifteen or twenty thousand people who are dedicated to country music…On any given night, there's 7 or 8 bands who are drawing big crowds. The rest of it is bits and pieces here, and bits and pieces there …now, the whole country might listen to country music, but there's only a certain amount of people who travel out, and pay on the door to go into a dancehall. (Mizzell 2018).

This is a view that is supported by others I have encountered in my research, with many telling me that although there has been some increase in attention on the part of national broadcasters, there has been a historic indifference to the music, one that is shaped by what is seen as a generalised emphasis on cultural matters more prominent in Dublin and the east coast, with a corresponding inattention to the culture of the west and north. Though quantifying attendance is not a straightforward task, the more than twenty-year history of hotel dance weekends and the continuing prevalence of other weekly dances would support the view that the contemporary scene is not so changed in scale as is sometimes suggested. One explanation for the perceived increase in scale is the demographic shift that has undoubtedly occurred, with a younger audience now often visible than would have been encountered as recently as a decade ago; the contemporary ubiquity of social media has meant that new participants in the scene, both in terms of artists and audience, have the capability to broadcast that participation in ways that have sidestepped more traditional media outlets.

Though there is some regional variation in the dance repertoire, it is generally manifested in the relative frequency of the dance types, with jiving being more prevalent in the more northern locales and waltzes and foxtrots being more common to the south, and in differentials in relative performance tempi. Rather than a distinct set of dances, it is a variation that follows a north/south divide, with those audiences further north demanding quicker sets, with a preponderance of jives, with performances further south in the country generally calling for more restrained sets incorporating more foxtrots and old-time waltzes. This is observed by with whom I have spoken, who tailor both their sets and their performance intensity to suit these regional variations, with Lisa McHugh observing that while

> …there's dancing lessons all across the country, you would notice the people who are dancing in the north would be dancing totally different to the south…they're still jiving, it's just a different way of doing it, I suppose it's like accents, you're still speaking English, but you have a different twang. (McHugh 2017).

That difference extends to the average skill levels of participants in particular regions; the prevalence of dance events in the north and west compared to other parts of the country, and the higher number of opportunities to dance that this creates, has meant that there has developed a relatively higher standard of dance in this region. These opportunities for regular participation, coupled with the regional clustering of venues and dance events, have in turn fostered the development of a regional scene. In the following section I turn to en examination of how these seemingly disparate events together constitute scenes.

'If it hadn't been for dancing, this scene wouldn't exist'

When we think of a music scene, we tend first to think of a geographically and culturally delimited thing, with the terms regular colloquial employ reinforcing that conception. When Will Straw defined a music scene as "that cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, interacting with each other within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to widely varying trajectories of change and cross-fertilisation" (Straw 1991, p. 373), that conception was opened up to include not just a neatly delimited or bordered thing, but rather allowed for the explication of a cultural space which can exist in both a trans-, or multi-local state, and can account for a variety of perceptual and experiential engagement. Taken in this way, the term can account for the varied ways in which it is most often encountered, as a colloquial descriptor of socio-cultural engagement. As a descriptor that is employed by many of those I encountered and spoke with, it is one that is used in various ways, but is always understood to carry significance, tied to both locale and group identity.

Expanding further on the nature of the physicality of music scenes, their constitution, and modes of participation, Andy Bennett and Christopher Driver emphasised the

significance of the body, describing the "…role of the body as the medium of affective exchange in the co-constitution of self and place." (Driver, Bennett 2014, p. 112) The physicality of dance events is one which enacts the scene through a literal embodied engagement, the spring of the dancefloor and the interactions of the dancers as vital to the constitution of the scene as the musical contributions; as Barry Shank observed in *Dissonant Identities* of the "necessary conditions for the development of a scene: a situated swirling mass of transformative signs and sweating bodies, continually reconstructing the meaning of a communion of individuals in a primary group." (Shank 1994, p. 128) Expression of group belonging is in this case made through the display of common codes of dance etiquette and repertoire. Through the negotiated use of space, the social codes of the scene as a whole are enacted. The physicality by which these scenes are manifested is also tracked in this article through the geography of locale. As Sara Cohen so well explored in *Rock Culture in Liverpool: Popular Music in the Making*, the physical and social geographies in which music-making take place are integral factors in shaping those musical practices.

In thinking about how this music and its practice operates, there are several points of reference that have been useful in contextualising it fully. Christopher Small's reconfiguring of music-making as musicking (Small 1998), allows for a fruitful understanding of not just the artist on stage, but a view that takes into account all the actors in the scene. Opening the field of observation to include the dancers, and all those that facilitate the dance, means that what could at first be seen as a one-sided engagement or transaction, can now be understood as a collaborative engagement with multiple poles. Moving beyond simply consuming the music, or even the act of dancing, there becomes visible a network of relationships, experiences, and expectations which shape the particulars of both genre and individual instantiations of the genre.

The distinction between presentational and participatory music, as outlined by Thomas Turino, is useful in this context. Though it is most often understood as a presentational music – and the nature of performance certainly appears to follow the modes of popular music performance, with a stage, a set of professional musicians, and the other trappings of the commercial popular music industry – the twin focus on both dancer and stage performer means that the scene can be usefully understood as a participatory one. This is true also in how audience members understand their role. Rather than passive consumers of the music, participation through dance is understood as an essential aspect of engagement with the scene. In my own fieldwork, an initial unwillingness to dance was seen as limiting potential understanding – to the point that I was called out from several stages, and ultimately forced to participate (despite my natural reticence as a dancer). Though Turino positions participatory music as one in which "There are no artist-audience distinctions, only participants and potential participants performing different roles" (Turino 2008, p.26)

It is that very nature of the scene, as being constituted of participatory events, that goes some way to explain the coherence of the scene as a whole, despite its relatively wide geographic extension. As the dance repertoire, modes of engagement, and sonic and musical attributes are shared, there is a commonality of experience. Country music in Ireland then is essentially a participatory music; though media representations often highlight the relative fame or 'star' status of performers, it is understood by both artists and fans as being a primarily dance oriented genre. While concert performances do take place, they would constitute a minority of events. The shifting fortunes of the industry as a whole reflects this status; the second part of this paper will look at the role that venues have had in shaping the development of the contemporary scene, drawing on accounts of three distinct venue types.

Three Scenes from the Country

The fieldwork upon which this paper primarily draws was conducted in August, 2017, with follow up interviews taking place on return visits in later months. During that time I undertook a three week trip to the north west of the country. That trip was part of longer series of trips, ones which were undertaken to get a more complete sense of country music as it exists in Ireland. The music is found in all parts of the island, though it is more prevalent in the region west of the river Shannon and in the northern half of the country. This wide geographic region means that there is no one single centre. Dances are held in hotel function rooms and bars, in community centres and parish halls, in regular bars and pubs, and at outdoor festivals throughout the summer months. Though these are widespread, there is a hierarchy in terms of significance, in terms of both audience participation and the concurrent value to the artists. For the artists, there is an established network or infrastructure; those working artists with a full band on the road make a regular circuit of this network. For the audience too, many travel to weekly dances, sometimes covering a good distance, or traveling and staying in hotels for weekend-long events.

To cover so widespread a range of events meant approaching fieldwork with a certain degree of flexibility, so in August of 2017 I strapped a tent to my bike and set out from my home in Dublin city centre with the idea that if I took the roads west, following the warp and weft of the country, through successive parishes and townlands, I might get a little closer to understanding how country music is woven into cultural and social practices. For three weeks I cycled, stopping at dances and festivals wherever I encountered them, camping under bridges and on roadsides, behind pubs and in caravan parks and campgrounds. This mode of transport affords a great deal of flexibility, the opportunity to follow the recommendations of those I spoke with – and traveling in this manner means you are never short of people to speak with, to offer their advice and tips. Conversations started in this way shaped my itinerary; rather than following a plan designed in Dublin, I was allowed the freedom to let my encounters shape my trip, rather than the obverse.

In making sense of the material gathered in this manner, there were several useful starting points. The thick description of Clifford Geertz provided a model for moving beyond bare observation, the accumulation of material bringing to light aspects that at first encounter hide their significance. Though not followed to the full extreme here as it might have been, the narrative structures of Bernard Lortat-Jacob are a reminder that it is in the people, the characters we speak with that the most illuminating insights may be found. His first encounter on that ferry is a reminder to look beyond the most obvious of musical experiences. Though this was fieldwork conducted at home, as it were, there remained nonetheless a process of entering the field; in this case, the literal process of movement from the urban east coast to the more rural west is reflected in the sequential presentation of the case studies. Though taking place in venues dispersed throughout the northwest region, and in the more rural and exurban for the most part, the scene is situated within broader networks of musical practice and exchange; following those pathways, both figurative and literal, allows for a clearer image of the music-making worlds of which this scene is constituted. Ruth Finnegan observed of urban music practices that "…pathways of music-making are not 'natural' ones that cut their own way through the bush, but were opened up and kept trodden by those who worked them", and that for those who do, they do so in order to "…bring them not just value and meaning but one framework for living in space and time." (Finnegan 1989 p.325)

Interviews were conducted both formally and informally. Formal interviews were conducted with artists and venue managers, as well as those in local media, while less formal interviews took place with both artists and audience alike. Music and performances were observed and documented in both video and audio recordings,

selections of which are included here in order to better illustrate the events under discussion.

The following are three case studies drawn from the field trip described above, each one a stop on my progression west and north. Loughlynn lies to the northwest of the midpoint of the country, a land of lakes and rolling hills. The village sits at the edge of the lake from which it takes its name, though the main streets face away from it. It is a small and rural place, one of many similar to be found in the region, on the border between counties Roscommon and Galway. The summer festival I encountered there drew its patrons from surrounding towns and villages.

Westport, the second case study, is on the coast of County Mayo, further again to the west and a little to the north. A thriving tourist town, picturesque and vibrant in summer, it maintains its own character even throughout the high season. Bundoran, the final stop from this trip described here, is again a longstanding tourist destination, though one that has perhaps fallen on slightly harder times, its grandest moments passed.

Loughlynn

Several days into this particular trip, from my Dublin home in the East to the far northwest of the country, as I was cycling through Co. Roscommon, I stopped in Ballinlough to get out of the rain and saw this poster in a shop window – it was only 10km away, and I was told I might find a spot to camp in the woods by the lake, so I went for a look. Creaton's, one of the two pubs as well as the village shop, consists of three rooms. To the front left was the bar, to its right the shop, while the back has a second, larger bar area with a pool table. When I entered, the nine or ten people present pay me little attention – the quarter final replay of the GAA football championship, between Mayo and Roscommon. Sitting as it does near the border with Mayo, this was an event of some significance – all pints were two euro for the duration of the match. I got talking to the bargirl, Katie, about the music that night, and where I might camp. She was busy the whole time, serving drinks, but also periodically taking bets and relaying them by phone – her facility with numbers was impressive; never writing anything down, she passed on complicated bets involving what seemed to be most sporting events taking place that day on the island, from football to horseracing, and everything in between. After some time, and a discussion involving all the patrons present, it was decided that I was to camp in a field behind the pub – Katie, whose family owned the pub, told me that although it wasn't their field, they knew whose it was, and it would surely be no problem. Directing me from the door, she pointed me to a gap between the next two houses, and told me to set it up where I liked, but out of sight of the road. I found a fine spot, set up my tent, and made myself something to eat. Roscommon had lost badly to Mayo, 4-19 to 0-06, but given that the split of patrons was about half from each county, it had not put too much of a dampener on things.

After a rest and a change into my other clothes, I walked back through the long grass, through the gap in the houses, and back to Creatons, at about 8pm. The pub was still fairly quiet – the music was not scheduled to start until midnight, which seemed surprising on a Monday night – so I walked down to the community centre, where Derek Ryan's truck and tour bus were parked, but there was no sign of activity. Back in Creatons, I got talking to Katie again, now finished work, and some of her friends. All were from the area, though many had lived abroad, and some were only visiting from the US and Canada. By 10pm the pub was starting to fill up, as people started to arrive from the surrounding towns. By 11, the place was packed – minibuses and large taxis arriving every few minutes and disgorging groups of people, many young, most already more than a few drinks in. At this point I moved on with a group of

others to the next pub, where a singer by the name of Stuart Moyles, had the packed house dancing to Irish country hits, with the aid of a guitar and a backing track. (I was to meet Moyles again in west Mayo), and from here we joined the move towards the community hall.

Billed as the 'Loughlynn Music Festival', country music and dance make up the focal point of the weekend (alongside the annual crowning of the 'Queen of the Woodlands'). In this example, the event in a sense takes precedence over the music or its genre, evidenced by the non-specific nature of the music festival's title, but in this case we're talking about a community in which country music is deeply embedded. The age profile reflects the fact that this is a community-wide event, with patrons ranging from their late teens right up to those in much more advanced years. The dance is central to proceedings here, but not the primary focus, nor was it a "country music" event as such; rather, they needed music and it didn't feel like what genre might be hired was ever in question. When I had asked Katie if she'd be going to the dancing, her response amounted to 'what else would I do?'; here country music is fully embedded in its rural setting.

Reflecting the function of this event, the standard of dancing on display is variable, but continuous. The hall is a large, rectangular, rather cavernous space, with sports courts marked on the floor – such a space is not well suited to providing good sound. The band, set up on a stage on one end, with a bar fashioned from trestle tables at the other, reverberated around the hall. Although this was held on the Monday night of a bank holiday weekend, the main dance did not get underway until well after midnight – Paul Maguire noted in relation to these late start times how "…many visitors to Ireland find it difficult to understand why dances in Irish dancehalls should start at mid-night" adding that, "American musicologist Rebecca Miller was bemused at the idea that Irish country singer Philomena Begley would travel to start a performance at midnight" (Maguire 2012 p.178) This is often a source of surprise to those unfamiliar with local conventions, with many an unwitting visitor caught off-guard on discovering that their accommodation was to be the site of a late night (and loud) dance.

As the hall filled up, the oldest cohort claiming the tables arrayed around the edge of the hall, dancers filed the floor; a mix of displays of technical ability and general enthusiasm characterised the dance. The community festival nature of the event also meant that there was more alcohol consumed than would usually be seen at a country dance, though as Stuart Moyles observed, "Well, rural like that, it's a big night out." (Moyles 2017) Although most of those present did participate, there were many who danced only for short periods, and of these there were many who were clearly not regular dancers – the smoking area to the rear of the building was as busy as the dancefloor, with conversation filling the warm evening air away from the volume of the music in the hall. The dancefloor was never empty however, as the band played on until well into the night.

The Mill Times Hotel, Westport

I was to meet Stuart two days after this, in the Mill Times Hotel, Westport.Co. Mayo, This was not as well attended a dance, for several reasons. Westport itself is not a particularly strong town for country to begin with, and this was the first of a new weekly dance; the same night Michael English was playing the Siamsa Sraide in Swinford – I'd been directed to Swinford the day before, but the heavy Garda presence meant that camping opportunities were non-existent – and this would have attracted many of the possible dancers from the surrounding areas. Stuart plays all around the country, at all kinds of events; as he told me:

> I've probably never been as busy…all throughout the year you do between four/five nights a week…now for August I have like thirteen gigs in eleven days, August is always a big month with the festivals and all that…but thankfully, mainly due to so much social

> dancing being on…it's really boosted it, you get nights now on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, that probably wouldn't have been there before. (Moyles 2017)

Stuart operates for the most part as a one man band, though as he told me, he performs in multiple settings – often opening and closing bigger dances for more well-known acts – and he has had some success in the Irish iTunes country charts. Social dances, such as the one held in the Mill Times Hotel last August, offer a source of income for those acts that would not necessarily have attained the top tier of performers. His backing tracks are purchased, which he augments with 'little fills or whatever', but essentially the strict rhythm is what's valued here. When these dances are advertised in the local papers, it's the dance itself – i.e., Wednesday night dances at the Mill Times – rather than the specific performer, that is given prominence. The audience here tends to be an over-50 crowd, who come for the social element more than anything else. As I sat with Stuart to talk before his show, the function room began to fill up, but the bar was generally untroubled.

Stuart had started his career as drummer, telling me that he began playing with his brothers at "…weddings…all kinds of events, festivals, parties, but a lot of my work would be in the dance scene alright…you have to be able to cater for everything in this game." (Moyles, 2018) The dance that night was typical of social dances common in this region; though this particular night was a new addition to the calendar, similar dances have a long history in hotel function rooms and parish and community halls. With regular attendees drawn from both long-term dance aficionados and more recent converts to country music, they offer a place where attendees can develop their dance skills and repertoire, while also offering a source of income to performers such as Stuart on midweek evenings. Although the larger weekend dance events are more prestigious, it is these smaller scale events that have allowed for the increase in full time musicians on the scene.

That evening, the dance lasted over two hours; most of those present changed partners for at least the occasional dance, though they tended to stay with the same partner for the majority of the evening. The social aspect was as important, with dancers taking regular breaks to sit and talk at the tables arrayed at the back of the room. These were mostly practiced dancers, in general displaying both familiarity and comfort with the steps required of them. Though this particular dance night was of recent vintage, it was clear that those present were seasoned.

The Allingham Arms, Bundoran

Bundoran sits at the southern tip of the county Donegal coast, its long status as a holiday destination evidenced by the plethora of hotels that stretch the length of its coastal main street. Well-known in the showband years as the site of several large ballrooms, including the Astoria and Marine Hotel, it had entered a period of decline in the later years of the twentieth century. In more recent years it has become known as a destination for country music fans, with regular dances in the Bird's Nest, the Holyrood Hotel, and the Allingham.

The Allingham is perhaps the most recognisable of these three examples, both through its status as one of the more popular dance venues in the country and due to its history in helping to establish the shape of the contemporary scene, with other venues having followed suit in offering dance weekends. If there is a spiritual home to country music in Ireland, a good argument could be made that it is in Bundoran's Allingham Arms. Its name is synonymous with country dances, with a longstanding association with the music, reinforced by both advertising and other media mentions. Manager Peter McIntyre started holding dance weekends here in the mid-90s, as a way to fill the hotel during the shoulder seasons; an innovation that he claims credit for introducing to the scene here. These dance weekends are a mainstay of the country circuit, with the upper echelon of acts performing a regular circuit that takes in the

Allingham, the MacWilliam in Claremorris, and other similar hotels. These draw a diverse crowd – Bundoran's location means that it will bring people for the dance from most of the north west coast, from across in Tyrone and Fermanagh, and as far south as Galway. Heavily advertised in both Ireland and Scotland, the weekend packages also draw many from further afield. As McIntyre described the beginnings of the dance weekends:

> …it started off with 28 people at the first dance, so that was our base crowd, it was locals really, and in 1995/96 it started, I went to Belfast one day and I was chatting to a tourist promoter up there, and he says to me why don't you do show break weekends for the shoulder seasons, January, February and march, so I decided I would try it…I didn't really realise the demand for it…it was just pure luck that I started it…What I done, I done a package with a dance and that, with two B & B, dinner and dance, and I done it fairly competitive, and it really took off from there. (McIntyre 2017).

The Allingham is a large, modern hotel, located on the main street, opposite the harbour, as close to a centre of Bundoran as there exists. Its public areas consist of a restaurant to the front, with a bar inside by the reception. It is here that dancers begin to congregate every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday night; on my first visit, some three hours before the ballroom opens at 10:30pm, the bar had already started to fill up. The dance hall is accessed from the main reception area; a cloakroom, a doorman providing security, and a folding table from which tickets are dispensed appear when the venue opens. The skill level on display is a step above what would be observed in the previous two examples; the further north, the better the general standard, as well as a generally younger demographic. This is a pattern easily observed in venues, and remarked upon by the artists themselves. A conversation with three of the acts on this first night turned to the expectations of, and challenges of catering to, the audience; Sean Cuddy described his set, saying,

> We'd come on and do four quick ones, to start a dance, then you'd go straight into an old time waltz, maybe a couple waltzes, then quick ones again...now it's jive all night, there's no slow songs at all, it's jive all night, it's really intense now. Oh my god, really intense , hard to keep up with it now… we'd be strict now on the few quick ones, and then a few slow ones, and then...giving dancers a chance, where you're catering for everybody, you now that sort of way Ray? But not now, it's all 'quick, quick, quick', the quicker the better. (Cuddy 2017)

The organisation of the set is not the only thing shaped by the functional imperative of the dance setting; so too are other sonic and musical aspects. Tempi, audible sound characteristics including instrumental balance and rhythmic prominence are similarly affected. Common to the scene is a general imperative to maintain the 'beat', to manage and control the ebb and flow of dance intensity. Drums and bass are given prominence in the sound mix, alongside the vocal, with the rhythm generally played in straight time.

The dance venue here is rectangular, bounded by a long bar to one side and a surround of tables along the opposite edge of the dancefloor – on those nights when demand calls for it, a further extension can be opened to the rear of the room, as it does on the second night of my first visit. That first evening the line-up included several of the more longstanding artists on the Irish country scene; the audience was a correspondingly older crowd. The second night saw Lisa McHugh, one of the newer generation of country stars, this time with an audience that tended to the younger end of the age range at these events.

With the secondary dancefloor in the now extended ballroom now open, I stationed myself here at the back, the better to observe the event as a whole (and so that when I did have to dance, there would be less chance of my impeding those more skilled than I). McHugh and her band offer a polished form of country, with a mode of presentation that is as informed by pop music as it is country, though always in support of the dance function. The dancers themselves fill the floor from the start of the evening; though tables are spread around the periphery of the room, they are used mostly as temporary

resting spots. Reflecting the generally younger demographic she attracts, a relatively quick tempo is maintained throughout, with a generally high standard of dance skill on display.

> Dancing's what's kept country music alive in Ireland. If it hadn't been for dancing, this scene wouldn't exist…you go in there tonight, you'll see they're dancing in the front bar, in there in the venue, some of these people will be dancing tomorrow night, and the following night. But if they ever lose their love for dancing, Robert Mizzell is done, and so is all the other country stars, because it's not just the music…It's the experience, it's the dance. (Mizzell 2018)

The shows observed at the Allingham over that weekend represent the most visible side of the Irish country dance world, with polished showmanship, seasoned dancers, and a packed dancefloor demonstrating the commercial successes that continues to draw artists to the Irish country music world.

Conclusion

These three events are snapshots of just one summer, and not exhaustive accounts of the scale of the musical worlds depicted. Together though they offer a representative picture of those worlds, showing some of the ways in which communities are formed through physical engagement and practice.

The country dance scene is one then that is not tangential to the broader country scene in Ireland. Though individual events and venues may seem at first to be somewhat isolated, in reality they form part of an infrastructural network, each in some ways supporting the others. That those involved speak so often of it as being a scene is more than just a colloquial shorthand, but rather a usage that points towards the very real sense of community, one that is "…an intentional interest group that forms around particular activities, a particular style complex, as well as a particular discourse about the style and activity." (Turino 2008, 161). The complex network of infrastructure, both physical and social, in which this scene takes form is one shaped by histories local and national.

Throughout its history on the island, country music has been inextricably tied to dance. The regular circuit of dance events, from weekends in hotels such as the Allingham to the smaller social dances that have expanded in number in recent years, the dancefloors and ballrooms of the north and west of the country are sites of embodied interaction which, in each iteration, constitutes and reconstitutes a scene, one which has its roots in a longstanding repertoire of dance and modes of social engagement. In each instance there are recognisable markers of the scene as it is understood in the broader regional context, while the individual communities of which each event type is composed constitute localised instantiations, each offering a subtly different inflection of the country dance scene as a whole. From the dance repertoire shared amongst locales to the communally experienced regional media landscape, these markers of commonality afford the production of locally grounded modes of participation and perception, simultaneously partaking of the broader scene while localising and individualising each exemplar.

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Interviews

Cuddy, Séan (2017) Conversation with the author. 18th August, 2017. Séan has been a touring musician on the scene since the 1980s.

Lynam, Ray (2017) Conversation with the author. 18th August, 2017. Ray has been a longstanding stalwart of Irish country since the 1970s, first with the Hillbillies and

latterly as a solo artist, as well as a long history of duets with Philomena Begley, amongst others.

McHugh, Lisa (2017) Conversation with the author. 19th August, 2017. Born in Glasgow, Lisa has enjoyed large success in Ireland in the last decade, at the vanguard of the contemporary crop of popular Irish country singers.

McIntyre, Peter (2017) Conversation with the author. 18th August, 2017. Peter has run the country music dances at the Allingham Arms in Bundoran for over two decades.

Mizzell, Robert (2018) Conversation with the author. 2nd April, 2018. Robert is a Louisiana born country singer, active in the Irish country scene since the 1990s

Moyles, Stuart (2017) Conversation with the author. 9th August, 2017. Stuart has been active on the country music circuit for several years, with increasing prominence outside of his regional base.

“It really has pushed the boundaries”: The Role of the Violin in the Transformation of Karnatak Music

Anaïs Verhulst

In memory of Barbara Benary (1946-2019).

Abstract

This article presents two analyses of two contrasting performances of the same Karnatak composition, the *krti* “Manasuloni”. Focusing on the use of the violin in each performance, these analyses will compare the roles violinists may take on in a Karnatak performance ensemble; that of an accompanying and a solo instrument respectively. These different roles impact the ways in which the musicians interpret and perform the music, as will become apparent when examining their musical material and choice of violin techniques. Through comparative analysis, this article will not only demonstrate the evolution of the role of the violin in Karnatak music but also the role that the instrument has had in the transformation of the tradition from an exclusively vocal genre—conceptually speaking—to one with instrumental performances in their own right.

Keywords: Karnatak music, violin, tradition and change, analysis.

Note: To avoid interrupting the text with lengthy definitions, all Karnatak and some violin-specific terminology has been explained in the glossary at the end of this article. In the analyses, the notes are indicated according to the Indian *swarā* system, followed by the Western note names in brackets to indicate the absolute pitch.

Introduction

> The limitations of an instrument sometimes might be misunderstood as a limitation of this system. But that is not so… You bring in one extremely versatile instrument like violin and then you will see how you cannot talk about the limitations of the instrument because the violin has none. Absolutely. So in that sense it has really pushed the boundaries. (Mysore Manjunath, Interview, 5 January 2015).

During my fieldwork in India in 2014-2015, I travelled to Mysore for a couple of days to study with Dr. Mysore Manjunath, a world-renowned Karnatak violinist and scholar. During these days we discussed the history of the violin in Karnatak music and its contemporary playing styles and techniques. His words above captured the importance of the violin in the development of South Indian classical music as it is moved from an imported instrument used for vocal accompaniment to a solo instrument that challenges the traditional boundaries of Karnatak music.

The violin was brought to India by European colonists at the end of the eighteenth century. It was initially used to play Western classical music and marching tunes by and for European musicians and audiences. Various musicians at the Tanjavur court in Tamil Nadu such as Baluswami Dikshitar, Vadivelu, and Varahappayyar learned the instrument and soon discovered the advantages of using it as an accompanying instrument in Karnatak music, the classical music tradition of South India (Verhulst 2017:

55-58).[i] The fretless fingerboard allows violinists to produce *gamaka* and microtonal nuances. With the long and balanced bow, they can produce a continuous tone in order to slur many notes in one bow stroke or to prolong a single note. Across its four strings, the violin reaches a range of over four octaves to accompany any voice or instrument in any register. The violin's absolute pitch is flexible as the strings can easily be retuned or replaced. It can therefore be tuned to any chosen reference pitch[ii] *Sa* by the singer or solo instrumentalist. All these musical features enabled violinists to "match the expression of any other melody instrument as well as any type of voice" (Pesch 2009: 119).

Karnatak music is performed by a small ensemble, consisting of a soloist, melodic accompaniment, rhythmic accompaniment, and a drone. The melodic accompanist is required to echo or double the soloist's melodic ideas throughout the improvisatory and composed sections of the performance. Because the voice is regarded as the most important instrument in Karnatak music, the soloist is often a vocalist. The violin's ability to closely imitate human singing therefore made it the ideal instrument for melodic accompaniment.[iii] Over the past two centuries, Karnatak violinists have adapted their posture[iv], tuning[v], and playing techniques to suit the tradition. The first generations of violinists experimented with their newly acquired instruments to discover the techniques that were best suited to achieve a "vocal" style of playing. They listened to vocalists and imitated them as accurately as possible, using the left hand to imitate melodic details and the bow to convey the vocalist's phrasing and delivery of the text.

Before the violin, the melodic accompaniment was performed on Indian instruments like the flute or *veena*. The following excerpts of an interview with Mysore Manjunath show that replacing these instruments with the violin could, at first, not be taken for granted:

> We had many indigenous instruments, Indian instruments, like flute, bamboo flute, veena, sitar. Many of them were used as accompanying instruments for Indian music. They were very popular. They also had some sort of divine touch, […] some divine connotations, right. In order to grow and in order to replace those instruments, was not an easy task. […] So many people opposed, so many people. And especially, that was the time when anything British was not welcome. […] Haaa, but look at the tremendous versatility of this instrument. Within few years, you know, it grew in leaps and bounds. And then shortly replaced these two instruments, veena and then flute as accompanying instruments. And growing and growing and growing and then so it became solo popular instrument. (Mysore Manjunath, Interview 5 January 2015).

With "divine touch", Manjunath refers to the association of the flute with the god Krishna and the *veena*'s typical portrayal in the hands of the goddess Saraswati. The foreign violin lacked such divine associations. However, these biases were soon forgotten and outweighed by the instrument's musical possibilities. It grew in popularity to become the most favoured accompanying instrument, now indispensable for Karnatak performance, and later also a popular solo instrument.

This shift happened in the early twentieth century. The violin began to be used as a main instrument in Karnatak performances (Subramaniam 2014; Shankar 1974). Since then, violinists have become popular main artists in solo, duo, and trio performances. Main artists lead their ensemble through a concert by choosing the pieces that will be played, initiating and concluding the sections of a piece, and indicating the accompanists' solo moments (Shankaran and Allen 1999). As accompanists, violinists' techniques could not exceed the possibilities of the human voice to avoid upstaging the main artist. In solo performances, violinists became freer to use more experimental techniques. These experiments, nevertheless, are expected to remain within the accepted boundaries of the Karnatak tradition; techniques that are considered too exotic

or sound too unvocal should be avoided (Benary 1971). These boundaries, however, are fluid and change over time. Older sources, such as Barbara Benary's MA dissertation (1971), mention techniques such as off-string bowing and *pizzicato* as being unacceptable—because they resemble *staccato*, a technique that Karnatak vocalists do not use and sound too unvocal—that have since, four decades later, become acceptable in concerts, as will be demonstrated in this article. The freedom of soloists to play according to their own musical and technical abilities has led violinists to continuously experiment with their instruments. They soon discovered that the violin affords a wider range of techniques and sound effects than the human voice. By using the full potential of their instrument in terms of register, speed, and sound effects, violinists move increasingly further away from a vocal playing style. By taking the possibilities of the violin and not the limitations of the voice as a standard for playing, solo violinists push the boundaries of the tradition.

This article investigates the evolution of the violin's use in Karnatak music by analysing two contrasting performances of the *krti*, "Manasuloni". The first example is a vocal performance of "Manasuloni" in *rāgā Hindolam* by Maharaajapuram S. Srinivasan, with accompaniment by violinist Nagai R. Muralidharan and Maharajapuram S. Ganesh Viswanathan as supporting vocalist. The second performance is a violin duet by the Mysore Brothers with rhythmic accompaniment on *mrdangam*, *gatham*, and *mōrsing*. They play the *krti* in a *rāgā* related to *Hindolam*; *Varamu* (see figure 1).

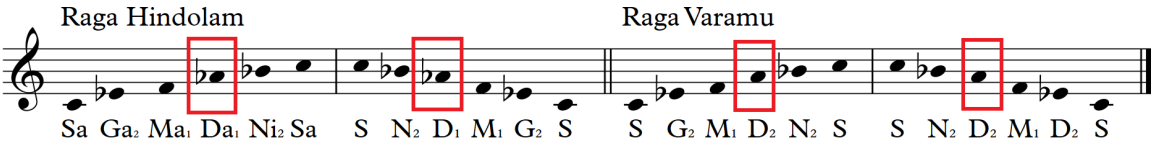

Figure 1 – Comparison of *rāgā Hindolam* and *rāgā Varamu*.

Here I use C as a reference pitch for Sa. The rāgās are closely related; their scales both consist of five swarās (Sa, Ga, Ma, Da, Ni) and differ only in the intonation of Da, the swarā a sixth above Sa.

Both performances follow the same general structure—consisting of a *rāgā alapana*, *krti*, and *swarā kalpana*—and therefore lend themselves to comparison. In the analyses, I will examine aspects of the violinist's role, interaction with other musicians, interpretation of the music, and playing techniques. Rather than analysing these aspects in isolation, I will investigate how they influence and relate to each other by considering how the role of the violinist(s) influences their interaction with the other artists, their interpretation of the composition, the nature of improvisatory sections, and their choice of playing techniques. In this way, I will demonstrate how the violin has played a crucial role in the transformation of Karnatak music from a, conceptually speaking, vocal genre to one with instrumental performances in their own right.

Voice and violin: the violinist as melodic accompanist

The first example shows the original use of the violin in Karnatak music, as melodic accompaniment for the voice. The role of the accompanying violinist is to support the main artist by thematically and stylistically following the soloist's lead, connecting the artist's ideas by repeating or duplicating them, and carefully choosing the timing and register of his accompaniment (Shankar 1974: 26). The type of accompaniment depends on the section of the performance. In the *rāgā alapana*, the violinist connects the soloist's musical ideas as he explores the *rāgā* by repeating them completely, partially, or altered, or by sustaining a note as a drone. During the *krti*, the accompanist is

required to closely follow the composition's melody in unison or in octaves with the vocalist. Finally, the soloist challenges the accompanist with improvisations in the *swarā kalpana*. The accompanist must respond to the challenges by imitating them, creating a dialogue between the two musicians as they exchange musical ideas and inspire each other to produce better improvisations. The performance consists of these three sections, as the table below shows.

Table 1: Overview of the vocal performance of "Manasuloni". The second column shows the time markings of the original YouTube video. The third column shows the time markings of Video 1, shown below.

Section	Time performance	Time video	Description
Alapana	00'07''	00'00''	*Alapana* by main vocalist Accompaniment by violin
	04'18''	(not shown)	*Alapana* by violinist
Krti	06'26''	00'17''	Presentation of *krti* Melodic and rhythmic accompaniment Form: *pallavi, anupallavi, pallavi, charanam, pallavi*
Swarā kalpana	09'56''	00'36''	Call and response between main vocalist, supporting vocalist, and violinist
End	11'54''	(not shown)	Repeat of *pallavi* and end at 12'22''

In this analysis, the three sections will be examined individually, focusing on the interaction between the vocalist and the violinist, his imitation of the voice and vocal techniques, and an overall study of his violin techniques. This performance is available on YouTube and was originally broadcast in December 2010 on DD Podhigai, a regional television channel from Chennai. It features vocalist Srinivasan, violinist Muralidharan, and supporting vocalist Viswanathan, as well as rhythmic accompaniment on *mrdangam* and *gatham*. *Sa* is tuned to c. The violin, typically tuned in octaves to *Sa,-Pa,-Sa-Pa* is therefore tuned to c-g-c'-g'. To facilitate the reading of this analysis, excerpts of the performance have been collated in the video below.

https://youtu.be/isskyHx_yhM

Video Example 1: "Manasuloni" (voice and violin) excerpts[vi]

Rāgā alapana

The *rāgā alapana* is a continuous call and response between the main vocalist and the violinist. Their phrase beginnings and endings slightly overlap with each other to create a continuous flow between the two musicians. Because the *rāgā alapana* is entirely improvised, it would be impossible to provide a simultaneous and exact repetition of the vocalist's phrases. Instead, Muralidharan employs the, according to Shankar (1971: 31), expected response techniques for imitation and variation: complete repetition like an echo, repetition of the main notes, repetition of the ending notes, slight alteration of the phrase, and staying on a drone. The choice of response largely depends on the time available to the violinist in between two vocal phrases.

During one third of the phrases, the violinist has enough time to echo the vocalist's phrases in their entirety. Muralidharan follows Srinivasan's melodic contours and uses

similar *gamaka*, but uses slightly different types of embellishments to achieve the same sound effects as the vocalist, as figures 2 and 3 below show.

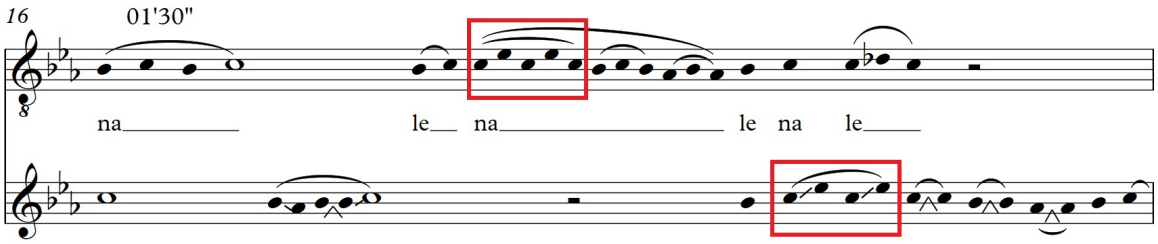

Figure 2 – Vocal vs. violin embellishment

The vocalist (upper staff) uses more "shakes" than the violinist (lower staff), creating a wide vibrato between two distinguishable pitches. A regular violin vibrato would not be wide enough to achieve this effect so the violinist slides between the two pitches or repeats short slides to the main notes of the shakes. This example shows how Srinivasan rapidly alternates between Sa and Ga (c and e) on the syllable "na". Muralidharan imitates this by repeatedly sliding from c' up to e'.

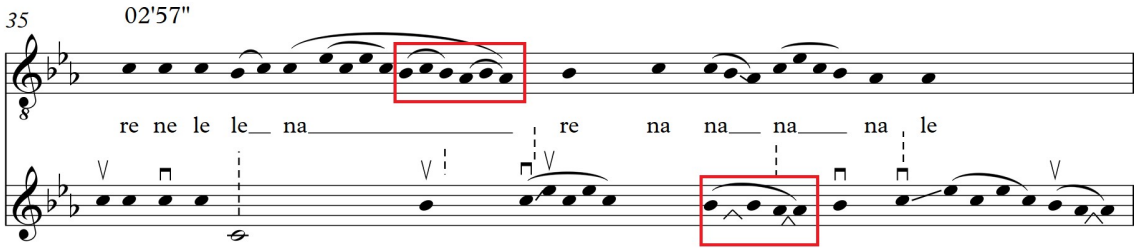

Figure 3 –Vocal vs. violin embellishment

Here, a consistent difference between the vocal and violin line is the way in which they play the so called *janta-swarās*; a *gamaka* whereby two repeated *swarās* are separated from each other by an *anuswara* (auxiliary note). The vocalist often sets the two notes apart by singing the upper adjacent note in between them. The violinist instead uses a lower note. Compare, for example, the repeated *Ni* (b') and *Da* (a') in the vocal and violin lines, showing an upper and lower *anuswarā* (auxiliary note) respectively to distinguish the two pitches. The *anuswara* is distinctly audible in the vocal line whereas it is played so fast on the violin that the actual pitch is indistinguishable. This is reflected in the transcription as the vocalist's notes are notated in full and the violinist's *anuswara* is indicated by the ^ symbol.

When there is not enough time for a full repetition, because the response started late or the original phrase was relatively long, Muralidharan uses one of the other techniques to shorten his repetition. This way, he creates continuity between the vocalist's phrases without disrupting his development of the *rāgā*'s exposition. Apart from imitating the vocalist's overall sound, a closer examination of Muralidharan's right-hand and left-hand techniques will reveal further considerations taken to closely imitate the vocal line.

Muralidharan's bowing largely depends on the vocalist's phrases. These phrases mainly consist of meaningless syllables that are further articulated in separate short melodic segments. The violin's bowing generally corresponds to these shorter melodic segments, each being articulated by alternating bow strokes or, occasionally, rearticulated in the same bow. This technique, whereby bow changes depend on the beginning and ending of melodic phrases, is typically referred to as *alapana-vil* (Lalitha 2004). Drones at the end of a phrase are either sustained by changing the bow direction, when needed, or stopped until the beginning of the next phrase after the initial bow

stroke. *Alapana-vil* does not require more than basic up-and-down bowing, a relatively simple technique. However, to synchronise bow strokes with melodic phrases, the violinist needs a quick analytical ear and an excellent control over the bow. The pressure on the bow, and therefore the volume and tone, is kept constant to imitate Srinivasan's stable and strong tone. His melodic segments vary in length and it therefore requires considerable skill and calculation to keep the speed of the bow stroke constant without running out of bow on longer phrases.

While Karnatak bowing was traditionally limited to relatively straight forward up-and-down bowing, the left hand has always been responsible for a larger range of techniques. This includes the imitation of *gamaka* as well as deliberate string choices to reflect timbral nuances in the music. Slides comprise the broadest group of *gamaka* and left-hand techniques to create smooth transitions between the *swarās*. Small slides are usually played with a finger and/or wrist motion only, while broader slides—of a third, fourth, or fifth—require a position shift.[vii] The second most common type of *gamaka* is the *janta-swarā*, shown in figure 3 above. Two identical *swarās* are almost exclusively played in one bow by inserting a lower *anuswara* to separate the two repeated notes. A third commonly used left-hand technique is Muralidharan's imitation of the vocalist's wide vibrato by rapidly sliding in between the two alternating pitches, as shown in figure 2 above.

Apart from these techniques to produce *gamaka*, the violinist's fingering choices reveal that he pays close attention to a uniformity of tone colour for each of the registers of the *rāgā alapana*. The vocalist presents the *rāgā* first in the low to middle register (*Da,* to *Sa*', sounding like a to c''), followed by the high (*Da* to *Ma'* or a' to f'') and then the low register (gradual descent to *Da,*) before concluding the *alapana* on the fundamental *swarā Sa.* This process encompasses the range of an octave and a sixth. The violinist follows these registers by playing his accompaniment on the Sa' (c'), Pa' (g'), and Pa and Sa' (g and c') strings, respectively for each register. The violin's strings all have a distinct tone colour; by playing each register on one string with position shifts as opposed to changing strings while staying in first position, the registers are clearly differentiated by contrasting tone colours. In his accompaniment of the *rāgā alapana*, Muralidharan thus uses violin techniques to imitate the vocalist's overall sound, his phrasing, *gamaka*, and tone colour.

Krti

The violinist's task during the *krti* is to enhance the soloist's singing by closely following his melody. As can be heard in the video above, Muralidharan duplicates the vocal melody in the higher octave to create a contrasting tone colour between the two musicians. While the duplication is almost exact, there are some slight differences between the two musicians' lines. At times, Muralidharan uses different *gamakas* to embellish the melody and sometimes—especially during the *charanam*, the final section of the *krti*—he mainly follows the general contours of the vocalist's melody while only loosely following other melodic details. Such differences are not uncommon but may be caused by the two artists knowing a different version of "Manasuloni" or be a conscious choice by the violinist to enhance the vocal melody by variation.

The basic bowing techniques are similar to those heard in the *rāgā alapana*; bow strokes are long, fast, and strong, keeping the speed and pressure of the bow relatively constant throughout the *krti* and using no remarkable bowing techniques such as accents or double stops. As during the *rāgā alapana*, the right-hand techniques are subordinate to the vocal line. Shankar writes that "[a] violinist's sense of artistry should

be so perfect that he can 'sing' the krti through his instrument. He should render the songs in such a way that the audience does not feel the absence of the text". (Shankar 1974: 76) Muralidharan follows the text by slurring all the *swarās* of a syllable in a single bow, as shown in the example below. This technique is known as *sāhitya-vil* (Lalitha 2004).

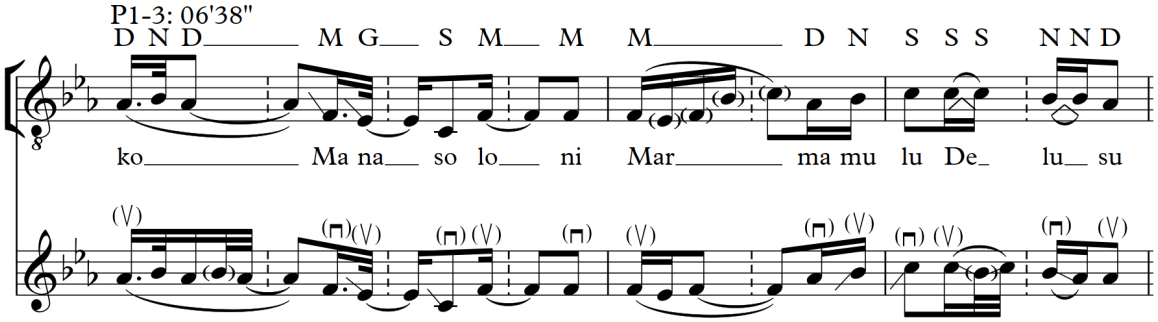

Figure 4: Left-hand technique in *krti* accompaniment

There are some notable differences between the left-hand techniques in the *rāgā alapana* and here in the *krti*. As the example above shows, Muralidharan often plays small slides between two *swarās* to connect them to each other (and here, indications of the bow strokes correspond to each new syllable of the text). These slides—indicated by diagonal lines between the notes—can be straight up or down from the first *swarā* to the next or, less often, move in an indirect, zig-zag movement. Other than that, both the vocalist and the violinist add relatively few *gamaka* to the composed melody.[viii]

Apart from the limited use of *gamaka*, Muralidharan's fingering and position choices differ notably from those in the *alapana*. The different sections of the *krti* are not distinguished by their registers as was the case during the *alapana*, so he is less concerned about clearly demarcating the tonal registers and their corresponding timbres. Consequently, Muralidharan primarily plays in first position and favours string crossings over position shifts. In other words, he favours convenient finger placements over a uniform tone colour. The third position is only used for *Sa'* (c'') and higher *swarās* that cannot be played in the first position.

Swarā kalpana

The *swarā* dialogue in this performance takes place between the main vocalist, the violinist, and the supporting vocalist. Srinivasan's first phrase is one *tāla* cycle (eight beats) long. Each beat is divided into four *swarās* (the equivalent of four semi-quavers per crotchet), establishing the regularly pulsed rhythm that is heard throughout the entire *swarā kalpana*. Muralidharan and Viswanathan each respond with a phrase of the same length that adheres to the soloist's contour and register. In these responses "there should be some imitation, but not wholesale reiteration" (Benary 1971: 35). The accompanists therefore add slight melodic changes to their responses, allowing the *swarā kalpana* to evolve. The call and response between the artists intensifies over the two minutes of this section. As the phrases get longer, the supporting vocalist ceases to respond, while the violinist starts to play increasingly often with the main artist towards their unison ending of the performance.

The right and left hand are both relatively limited in their range of techniques in comparison to the previous sections of this performance. The bowing conforms to *swarā-vil* bowing, typical for *swarā kalpana* passages (Lalitha 2004); generally, all *swarās* are played with a different bow stroke. Given the regular rhythm of the *swarā kalpana*, the right hand executes regular and rapid up-and-down bow strokes which are

easily done on the upper half of the bow. The speed of the bow strokes depends on the note length. Semi-quavers are played with rapid bow strokes while quavers are played at half that speed.[ix] The pressure on the bow remains constant during *swarā-vil* bow strokes but may be reduced when playing a drone as an accompaniment to the vocalist's phrases. Apart from this, he does not use any further right-hand techniques.

The violinist plays the *swarās* by hammering his fingers onto the strings, using mostly the first position and occasionally the third position to reach *Sa'* (c'') or higher notes. These regular, steady bow strokes and the largely unornamented hammered fingering technique closely imitate the sound of the vocalist's voice and singing of individually articulated *swarās*. The *swarā kalpana* requires relatively little ornamentation and the violinist only uses a few *gamaka*, such as occasional *janta swarās*—as described above—and small slides in between two neighbouring *swarās*.

Generally speaking, Muralidharan's violin accompaniment conforms to the expected role of the accompanist during all parts of this performance of "Manasuloni". He responds to the vocalist's improvised phrases during the *rāgā alapana* and *swarā kalpana* and duplicates the composition's melody during the *krti*. All of his violin techniques correspond to Srinivasan's vocal techniques or are aimed at imitating and enhancing the sound of his voice. In his bowing, the violinist copies the vocalist's phrasing, text placement, and *swarā* articulation. The left hand is responsible for producing *swarās* and *gamakas* in which he also closely follows the vocalist's lead. Consequently, the violinist does not use any unexpected techniques that would outshine the vocalist's capabilities by being too "violinistic" and too unvocal. It is therefore not surprising that he does not use any techniques that are not described in detail in earlier literature by Barbara Benary (1971) and Dr M Lalitha (2004).

However, as I indicated in the introduction of this article, this subordination to the vocalist and to the constraints of the voice is not as strictly observed when a violinist performs as the main artist. It is not uncommon for a solo violinist to expand his range and increase his speed of playing beyond that of a voice; this can be seen as an expansion of and not an entire break with the voice's possibilities. Other violin sounds may be "considered too unvocal and can be used only in certain places and with prudence" (Benary 1971, 30). Nevertheless, solo violin techniques have developed in the five decades since Benary's writing and violinists have been emancipated from their vocal constraints, as the following analysis will show.

Towards an instrumental tradition: solo violinists

The second example was recorded during a concert in Bangalore during my fieldtrip to India in 2014-2015. It is a violin duet featuring the Mysore Brothers, Nagaraj and Manjunath. Their two-and-a-half hour concert around midnight was part of an all-night event from 6pm on 25 January 2015 to 6am the following morning. The otherwise warm temperatures of Bangalore's winter drastically dropped during the night; the audience was wrapped in fleece blankets and even the musicians noticed the cold. Manjunath jokingly admitted that the production of *gamaka* 'is not that difficult if you make everybody sit in the cold like this' (Manjunath, 25-26 January 2015).

As a duo, they both take on the role as main artists. They make the important decisions about concert pieces and the sections in a piece together. Because no other instrument used in Karnatak music can match the technical versatility of the violin and "nothing can replace the violin [as accompaniment]" (Nalina Mohan, 19 January 2015), solo violinists tend to have only rhythmic and drone accompaniment, but no melodic accompanists. The same holds true for this performance; the Mysore Brothers are

accompanied by three percussionists on *mrdangam*, *gatham*, and *mōrsing.* This impacts the interaction between the artists in comparison to a performance with a melodic soloist and accompanist. During the *rāgā alapana* and the *krti* the violinists alternate in leading and accompanying each other. The percussionists become more prominent during the *swarā kalpana*, where the interaction takes place between alternating pairs of violinists and percussionists. The table below outlines the structure of the Mysore Brothers' performance:

Table 2: Overview of the Mysore Brothers' performance of "Manasuloni". The second column indicates the time markings of the full performance. The third column indicates the time markings of Video 2, shown below.

Section	Time performance	Time video	Description
Alapana	01'18''	00'00''	Nagaraj and Manjunath perform the *alapana* in different stages, playing together with alternating solo passages.
End *alapana*	19'50''	(not shown)	Short pause: the audience applauds and the *mrdangam* is tuned.
Krti	20'50''	00'15''	Presentation of the composition and improvisations on it.
Swarā kalpana	24'50''	00'30''	Various types of improvisation on "Manasuloni". There are several stages of call and response challenges between pairs of different artists. The piece ends with a virtuosic duet.
End	35'23''	02'17''	End of performance.

The duet is much longer than Srinivasan's performance of "Manasuloni", and each section further consists of different parts in which both soloists take turns performing solo or together, creating a dynamic between the performers in which, as is required for a duet, neither stands above the other and both have a chance at solo display. The analysis will approach this performance in a similar way as the previous example. The three sections will be examined separately and close attention will be given to the role and interaction between soloists and percussionists, and the instrumental techniques used by the violinists.

In this performance, *Sa* is tuned to E ♭ . Consequently, the violins are tuned to e ♭ -b ♭ -e ♭ '-b ♭ '. To facilitate the reading of this analysis, the video below shows excerpts of each section of the performance.

https://youtu.be/a8fl8tHbGqI

Video Example 2: "Manasuloni" (violin duet) Excerpts[x]

Whereas I was able to illustrate the analysis of the vocal performance of "Manasuloni" with notated musical examples, I did not transcribe the Mysore Brothers' recording. Transcribing the speed and virtuosity of their playing proved to be near impossible. The following discussion relies on an aural analysis of the music.

Rāgā alapana

The Mysore Brothers' *rāgā alapana* is structured in a traditional way; the two soloists take turns to explore the low to middle, high, and low registers of *rāgā Varamu* in slow, medium, and fast tempi respectively. Indications of tempo (slow, medium, and fast) and

register (low, medium, and high) are relative to the performance. In comparison to the vocal performance, this *rāgā alapana* is generally faster and each register in itself has a wider range. Each register in the vocal performance has a range of about four to five notes, giving the *alapana* an overall range of just under two octaves (*Da*, to *Ma*' or a to f''). The Mysore Brothers' registers span about an octave each and cover an overall range of three octaves from *Sa,* to *Sa*'' (e♭ to e♭''').

Since both violinists are main artists and because there is no other melodic accompaniment, the *rāgā* is not presented in a typical call and response form. Instead, the brothers collaborate to present the *rāgā* in the traditional *rāgā alapana* format in complementary solo displays. They alternate solo sections of three to five minutes in which they each are responsible for the continuation of the *rāgā alapana*'s development, as they move through the registers of the *rāgā*. Visually, both brothers nod at each other as they conclude their solo moment as a signal to the other to take over. Each violinist assimilates the musical progression made by the previous one into his own solo display and further builds up the *rāgā alapana* from the point where the other one stopped. Towards the end, they alternate increasingly virtuosic phrases, leading to the climax of the *rāgā alapana* on its highest *swarā*, *Sa''* (e♭'''). After this, they slow down and descend to the low register in unison. They each play one last solo phrase, and return to the final *Sa*.

The right hand, which is to say the bow hand, is responsible for sound effects related to volume, articulation, and accentuation. The Mysore Brothers use a—for Karnatak music—relatively wide range of dynamics from soft, hoarse-sounding drones to loud, accentuated notes. Their overall volume evolves with the structure of the *rāgā alapana*, becoming increasingly louder in the faster sections. Other than that, their range of bowing techniques is limited and the bow seems to be used primarily as a tool to let the left hand be heard. Melodic phrases are bowed in three ways; by slurring all the notes in one bow, by rearticulating notes in the same bow, or by using separate bow strokes for individual *swarās*. This seems to be related to *alapana-vil*, whereby bow strokes correspond to a vocalist's short phrase. Occasionally the brothers introduce the "Manasuloni" motif, the melody corresponding to those words in the vocal *krti*, as shown in figure 4. They do this with *sāhitya-vil*, playing each "syllable" with alternating bows, or by rearticulating the syllables with a *portato*-like technique. As is typical for Karnatak violin playing, the Mysore Brothers' right-hand technique does not move beyond basic on-string up-and-down bowing, avoiding advanced bowing techniques or unusual sound effects. As the continuation of this analysis of the *rāgā alapana* will show, however, the left hand is used for more advanced techniques and creates a range of, sometimes unusual, sound effects.

As mentioned before, the Mysore Brothers expand the *rāgā alapana* to a three-octave range from *Sa,* to *Sa''* (e♭ to e♭'''). Manjunath further expands his playing to e♭'''' by playing natural harmonics on the highest *Pa* (b♭') string. Harmonics are an unusual technique for Karnatak music, and both the expanded range and the use of harmonics show that the violinists use their freedom as soloists and their technical ability to explore the full range of their instruments. This wider range, furthermore, requires more and higher position shifts. Although Karnatak musicians do not tend to conceptualise about positions (Manjunath, 5 January 2015), the video reveals some consistencies in terms of position choices. Both Nagaraj and Manjunath only shift between the first and third positions and they never play in second position. Phrases that require no sliding—because its *swarās* and grace note-like *gamakas* are plainly stopped—tend to be played in first position. The third position seems to be used as a "fall-back" position during phrases where *swarās* are produced with continuous slides; the violinists do not settle in

any of the higher positions they might reach during those slides but always return to the third position (shown in Video 2, 00’00’’-00’05’’).

There is, as in the vocal performance, some regard as to uniformity of tone colour in each register. This is especially clear in the lowest register when they play on the *Sa,* (e ♭) and *Pa*, (b ♭) strings only. However, they never completely abandon the low register when expanding their range to the highest register, so they require the first position on these strings when playing in the middle and high register. Shifts and slides mainly happen on the upper strings, highlighting the high register of that passage.

Furthermore, the *rāgā alapana*’s phrases are made up of three types of melodic material and ornaments, each using their own set of left-hand techniques and corresponding string choices. First, passages consisting of slides that obscure individual *swarās* are usually played on one string to facilitate the sliding and to provide a homogeneous tone colour for these phrases. Second, some passages are virtuosic phrases with fast, plainly stopped notes and fingered grace notes. These are often played in first position across the four strings. Third, other passages consist of repeated motifs—such as a particular combination of *gamakas*—that are played in sequence on different pitches across the four strings, thus deliberately contrasting the tone colour with which each motif is played.

The Mysore Brothers’ *rāgā alapana*, in summary, combines traditional Karnatak aspects with the freedom to explore their instruments, unlimited by the constraints of vocal music. The structure adheres to the typical development of an *alapana*, and their right-hand techniques are used to articulate their phrases in a vocal manner. With their left hand, however, they increase the overall range, tempo, and virtuosic speed of *gamakas* beyond that of vocal capabilities

Krti

The Mysore Brothers’ rendition of “Manasuloni” follows the traditional form of a *krti*: *pallavi-anupallavi-pallavi-charanam-pallavi*. They follow the overall structure and melodic contours of the original composition. However, they heavily ornament and improvise upon the melody which removes the *krti* from its original composition and vocal context.

Each *tāla* cycle, corresponding to a line of text in the composition, can be divided in two parts. In the *pallavi*, *anupallavi*, and some lines of the *charanam*, the first two-and-half beats of each text line—corresponding to the first word of the text such as the lyrics “Manasuloni”—closely follow the composition. The melody is played straight; *gamakas* do not obscure the melody and the bowing articulates the syllables of the composition’s text. A listener who is familiar with vocal performances of the *krti* would be able to identify the melody. Compare, for example Video 1 at 00’18’’-00’25’’ and Video 2 at 00’15’’-00’21’’. The remainder of each text line, however, is interpreted more loosely. The violinists adhere to the general range and melodic contours, but heavily ornament and vary the melody so that it becomes less recognisable. Apart from these phrases with a clear beginning and an improvisatory ending, the Mysore Brothers add entirely improvised phrases to all parts of the *krti*. The variations on the phrase endings and improvisatory lines become increasingly more complex and move further away from the original, obscuring the melody and text placement.

The phrase beginnings are played in strict unison, although the two violinists use slightly different finger movements. During the improvisatory parts, the brothers move around the same melodic contours, but do not play them in strict unison as they use different techniques. When playing in unison, they either play in the same octave or in different octaves to create contrasting tone colours. Manjunath then plays in the higher

octave, on the *Sa* and *Pa* strings, and Nagaraj in the lower octave on the *Sa*, and *Pa*, strings. The brothers take turns in playing solo elaboration in the phrases that are seemingly unrelated to the composition.

The bowing technique is, as during the *rāgā alapana*, fairly simple and consists mainly of regular up-and-down bows of various lengths. Their articulation corresponds more or less to the syllables of the composition and the *sāhitya-vil* bowing principle, especially during the phrase beginnings. During the second half of the cycles, the text placement is more obscured and the bowing tends to follow the logic of the improvisations' melodic material. They use additional bowing techniques such as repeated bow stresses, resembling the Western *portato*, to articulate prolonged notes or separately articulated slurred notes. Nagaraj begins to use *tremolos* near the end of the *krti*, a less common bowing technique in Karnatak music.

The two violinists' left-hand techniques differ in terms of position shifts, *vibrato*, and *gamakas*. Nagaraj consciously shifts between first and third position while he reaches higher up the fingerboard during continuous slides. Manjunath, by contrast, performs a lot of passages using only his first finger and is therefore continuously sliding across the fingerboard without settling in any position. Constant slides to, from, and in between notes form an intrinsic part of *swarā* production for both violinists. Towards the end of the *krti*, the amount of slides and other *gamakas* begin to obscure the *swarās*.

Nagaraj's *gamakas* during the *pallavi* consists mainly of slides, *janta swarās*, and single grace notes. His techniques become more complex from the *anupallavi* onwards as he adds a range of cuts, rolls, and ornamental figures that are built up of multiple grace notes. The speed of his fingering becomes increasingly faster and, along with the continuous slides, entirely obscures the distinction between *swarās* and *anuswarās.* Manjunath's *gamaka* during the *pallavi* mainly consist of slides and occasional *janta swarās*, cuts, rolls, and *vibrato*. During improvisations on the *anupallavi* lines, he often places similar ornaments in sequential motifs to build up melodic phrases. These motifs are repeated in all registers across his entire three-octave range. The ornaments thus become articulated in their own right, not necessarily related to a distinctive melodic phrase. During the *charanam*, his use of *gamakas* further intensifies. The combination of fast finger movements, slides, and articulated ornaments not only obscure the distinction between *swarās* and *anuswarās* but also make it increasingly difficult to distinguish the different types of ornaments that he uses.

While the Mysore Brothers' rendition of the *krti* "Manasuloni" follows the traditional form of the composition, their extended use of *gamakas* move beyond the possible range and speed of the human singing voice, making this performance a fully instrumental interpretation of the *krti*. Their playing generally follows the contours of the composition, but they expand its range from an octave and a sixth to three octaves. Most techniques and *gamakas* are derived from the traditional range of techniques, such as slides, cuts, rolls, and *janta swarās.* Others, such as *vibrato* or *portato* bowing, are more experimental for Karnatak music. All techniques, including the more traditional ones, are used at a greater speed and frequency in comparison to the vocal performance. The result is a technical display based on the melody of a vocal composition in which the full range of the violin and the virtuosic possibilities of left-hand techniques are used to create an instrumental interpretation of "Manasuloni". This virtuosity increases in the *swarā kalpana*, the closing section of the performance.

Swarā kalpana

The Mysore Brothers' *swarā kalpana* is more elaborate than that of the previous performance, consisting of five distinct sections. The first four are call and response passages between different artists; between Nagaraj and Manjunath (see Video 2, 00'29''-00'50''), Nagaraj and the *gatham* (Video 2, 00'51''-01'13''), Manjunath and the *mōrsing* (Video 2, 01'14''-01'32''), and Manjunath and the *mrdangam* (not shown in the video). During the final section (Video 2, 01'33''-end), the two violinists play in unison towards the climactic closure of the performance. For the first time in the performance, the percussionists become more prominent and their interaction with the violinists is crucial for the analysis.

Since there are no melodic accompanists in this performance, the violinists each present challenging improvisatory phrases for the percussionists to imitate. They are challenged to imitate the violinists' rhythm and, to some extent, try to convey some sense of melody, using the musical possibilities of their instruments. For example, Nagaraj challenges the *gatham* player with *swarā* patterns, *tremolo* passages, slides, and *staccato* playing. The *gatham* player uses his knuckles, fingers, the bottom of his palms, and rubs the side of his instrument to imitate these sounds. Manjunath challenges the *mōrsing* with short *swarā* phrases and one-note calls that present a singular technique, such as an isolated trill. Also the *mōrsing* imitates the rhythm and attempts to convey the melody as much as possible, receiving approving claps and laughs from both the audience and the other musicians. It seems that the challenge for the percussionists is not merely imitating *swarā* patterns but they are also challenged to explore new techniques on their instruments to replicate the violins' sound effects.

In the final section of the *swarā kalpana*, Manjunath moves increasingly further away from the typical pulsed sound of *swarā* patterns by adding increasingly more ornaments and using more complex bowing techniques. Towards the end of the performance, Nagaraj joins Manjunath in unison. Their combination of sequenced patterns intensifies in terms of speed, range, ornamentation, and virtuosic bowing towards the climactic closure of the *swarā kalpana* and of the performance.

During the *rāgā alapana* and the *krti*, the range of bowing techniques remained relatively conservative. In the *swarā kalpana*, by contrast, the brothers use increasingly complex and virtuosic right-hand techniques. In the duet between Nagaraj and Manjunath, the *swarā* patterns are at first played with *swarā-vil* bowing to articulate each *swarā*. The violinists then begin to add some unconventional bowing techniques, slurring rapid scale passages with an unusually large amount of *swarās* in one bow, using dynamic effects, slurring clusters of consecutive *gamakas*, and using a *portato*-like technique during drones. In his duet with the *gatham*, Nagaraj uses on-string *staccato* slurred in the same bow, extremely fast *detaché* bows, long bows in combination with a fast left hand, short *tremolos* to create a kind of triplet effect, long *tremolos*, and bowed accents. His range of bowing techniques creates colouristic—rather than rhythmic—effects.

Manjunath further uses bowed accents, single articulated notes with a *martelé*-like technique, *portato* for repeated notes, frequent string crossings similar to the Western *arpeggiando* and figure-of-eight bowing in which he is constantly crossing strings while only gradually changing the notes of the left hand, holding them like a chord. The bowing of both violinists reaches its virtuosic height in the final section by increasing their use of *tremolo*, bowed accents, and rapid string crossings. Whereas the bow still primarily functioned as the medium to let the left hand be heard in the *rāgā alapana* and the *krti*, the potential of the bow is used the most in the *swarā kalpana*. It becomes an intrinsic part of making music in creating rhythm, colouristic, and dynamic effects.

While there are no new left-hand techniques in the *swarā kalpana*, in comparison to the previous parts of the performance, the way in which they use them indicates the extent in which this performance moves away from the vocal ideal of Karnatak music. Manjunath, for example, expands his range to *Da"* (a♭"'), makes leaps of large intervals in the melody, skips from one octave to the other, plays slides that span an octave or more, and uses a wide *vibrato* that almost sounds like a trill. As the right hand becomes increasingly more important in the call and response between Manjunath and the *mrdangam*, he keeps his left hand fixed on the strings, essentially holding chords while creating rhythm effects with *arpeggiando* and figure-of-eight techniques. The left-hand techniques are remarkable because of the increase in speed, range, and leaps across all registers. The majority of the sound effects, however, come from the extensive use of right-hand techniques that at one time were described as unmusical (Benary 1971).

Summary and comparison of the performances

Both of the performances discussed here follow the same structure, consisting of the three typical sections of a contemporary Karnatak concert performance. Within each section, both ensembles are also comparable, as each section evolves as expected within the conventions of the tradition. The different ranges and speeds of the *rāgā* are explored in the improvised *rāgā alapana*, followed by a presentation of the composed *krti*, and finally the *swarā kalpana* features a challenging call and response between the different artists on stage towards the climactic closure of the performance. The Mysore Brothers' performance, however, is more elaborate. Not only is it longer—taking more than half an hour while Srinivasan's performance lasts only twelve minutes—but also it has more performers that take on a prominent position. This enables the Mysore Brothers' ensemble to stretch out the development of the parts by using different combinations of artists to build up the performance.

In both performances, all musicians behave as expected according to their respective roles in the ensembles. The main artists lead the ensemble through the performance. The melodic accompanist accompanies the vocalist by following his lead and imitating his musical ideas in the vocal performance. The percussionists provide rhythmic accompaniment and, due to the absence of melodic accompanists in the Mysore Brothers' performance, take on the interactive role of accompanists in the *swarā kalpana*. It is, however, the way in which the main artists use their role as leaders of the ensemble that determines the striking differences between the two performances. Despite them being similar in form, they do not sound alike. The violinists in both ensembles use a different range of instrumental techniques, resulting in different melodic material.

The left hand which stops the strings was originally responsible for imitating the melodic nuances of the vocalist, as demonstrated by Muralidharan's playing in the first performance. He adheres to the vocalist's range and, where relevant, reflects the registers in which he is singing in his choice of strings. With slides and grace note-like ornaments, he imitates the vocalist's *gamaka*. The Mysore Brothers' left-hand techniques are clearly derived from this principle; a list of their left-hand techniques would also contain slide and grace note-like ornaments, in addition to the occasional harmonic. Unconstrained by a vocal soloist, however, they are able to use the full potential of the violin. In doing do so, they expand the overall range, speed and frequency of ornaments, and they do not shy away from unusually large leaps in the melody, in comparison to accompanying violinists.

Karnatak bowing tends to be relatively simple, comprising mainly of on-string bow strokes without additional sound effects. The bow changes largely depend on the vocalist's phrasing and lyrics. Muralidharan's bowing does this by using the expected *alapana-vil*, *sāhitya-vil*, and *swarā-vil* techniques for the *rāgā alapana*, *krti*, and *swarā kalpana* respectively. The Mysore Brothers, by contrast, use a larger pallet of bowing techniques, especially towards the end of the performance. These techniques include slurring unusually large amounts of notes or clusters of ornaments in one bow, dynamic effects, bowed accents, rapid string crossings, and effects related to Western bowing techniques such as *portato*, *staccato*, fast *detaché* bowing, *tremolo*, *martelé*, and *arpeggiando.* With this they create both rhythmic and colouristic sound effects that are unheard of in the vocal performance.

Concluding remarks

The analyses of these two performances illustrate what Manjunath meant when he said that the violin "really has pushed the boundaries" of the musical system of Karnatak music, as quoted in the beginning of this article. The violin was initially accepted into the Karnatak tradition for its vocal quality and its suitability to accompany the voice. The bow made it possible to prolong and slur notes, and the fretless fingerboard allowed for the imitation of subtle ornaments. For accompanists, Karnatak violin techniques were restricted to the limitations of the human voice. But, in contrast to most conceptualisations of Karnatak music as a "vocal tradition", Manjunath argues that the tradition does not have to be limited to the physical restrictions of the voice. The violin affords a much wider range of techniques and sound effects than the voice as it is much more versatile in terms of range, speed, ornamentation, timbre, and melodic combinations. With the freedom to experiment with those possibilities, solo violinists are able to test the boundaries of the Karnatak tradition.

The examples reflect two extremes between "traditional and vocal" on the one hand and "experimental and instrumental" on the other. However, the boundary between traditional and untraditional is a fine one and is constantly challenged. Not every solo violinist will move as far away from the vocal ideal; but musicians like the Mysore Brothers who, in their exploration of the musical and technical affordances of the violin, push the boundaries of the tradition to the extent that their performance style can be regarded as purely instrumental without any compromise to the vocal ideal. This transformation was afforded by the versatile possibilities of the violin to create new techniques that enabled new types of interpretation and improvisation within the Karnatak tradition. The violin's versatile possibilities thus not only enabled a "colonial" instrument to be accepted into Karnatak music, but also allowed the instrument to transcend its original use and to become fully recognised as an "Indian instrument", belonging to the Karnatak tradition in its own right.

Endnotes

[i] There are numerous sources and an equal amount of stories as to when and how the violin arrived in India and as to who introduced the instrument to Karnatak music. Popular stories told by interviewees Manjunath (2015) and Mohan (2015) and narrated in secondary sources by Benary (1971) and Weidman (2006) provide similar, although not identical, accounts regarding the early history of the violin in India. Despite these slight differences, which are not mutually exclusive (Verhulst 2017), all trace the adoption of the violin into Karnatak music to the late eighteenth century by Karnatak musicians at the court of Tanjavur.

[ii] In Karnatak music this note is called *Sa*; this is comparable to the moveable "doh" in tonic sol-fa *solfège*.

[iii] With the emergence of the violin into Karnatak music, it replaced indigenous instruments such as bamboo flute and the *veena*, a plucked lute with frets. The frets on the *veena*'s fingerboard and the holes of the flute limit the instruments' intonation, limiting the performance of microtonal inflections and *gamakas*. The flute can prolong notes like a voice or violin, but the plucked *veena* cannot.

[iv] Karnatak violinists sit cross-legged on the floor with the violin's scroll resting against their right ankle. This stabilises the instrument, enabling continuous sliding across the fingerboard, and conforms to the Indian tradition of sitting on the floor when performing.

[v] Karnatak music has no concept of absolute pitch; the note *Sa* is always tuned to the pitch that suits the soloist best. Violinists tune their violins to pairs of fifths in two octaves: *Sa,-Pa,-Sa-Pa*, with *Pa* being a perfect fifth above *Sa*.

[vi] The entire performance is available on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFj1QDB-LQQ, accessed 24 June 2018.

[vii] For a more detailed discussion on hand motions during the production of *gamaka*, see Benary 1971: 71-78.

[viii] A notated version in the Karnatak notation system was used to compare the performance to the composed version of the *krti*. The notation is available on http://www.shivkumar.org/music/manasuloni.htm, accessed 1 July 2018. In the transcribed examples, the letters above the vocal line correspond to the *swarās* in this notated version. The notes notated in between brackets are part of the *gamaka* that embellish the melody.

[ix] Karnatak musicians do not conceptualise about note values in terms of "semi-quavers" and "quavers". I use the Western terminology here to facilitate the reading to refer to notes that are a quarter of a beat and half a beat in length respectively.

[x] The analysis of the Mysore Brothers is based on a field recording made by the author. It was recorded during an all-night event from 6pm on 25 January 2015 to 6am the following morning in the IIMB Open Air Theatre in Bangalore. The recording is used and partly reproduced in this article by the kind permission of Mysore Manjunath.

Glossary

Alapana-vil: A bowing technique used to play the *rāgā alapana*. Bow changes follow the melodic phrases of the *alapana*. This results in a variety of bow strokes such as long or short bows, separate or continuous bowing, and pauses.

Anuswarā: Auxiliary note to a *swarā*. Used to label notes that are part of a *gamaka* but are not the main note around which the *gamaka* is played, such as the grace note between two repeated *swarās* or the notes that turn around the main *swarā.*

Arpeggiando: Notes of a broken chord played over three or four strings at a fast tempo, creating a bouncing bow stroke as the violinist's bow rapidly and repeatedly crosses back and forth over the strings.

Figure-of-eight bowing: A bowing technique whereby the bow rocks back and forth between two adjacent strings. The right hand will create a "figure-of-eight" when performing this technique.

Flute: The bamboo flute is a popular instrument in Karnatak music. The transverse flute has six to eight holes, and has a range of about two octaves and a third.

Gamaka: In its basic definition, the concept refers to any embellishment of melodic material including shakes, articulation, slides, glottal stopping, and auxiliary or grace notes (*anuswarās*). *Gamakas* as ornaments form an integral structural part of a *rāgā* (mode or scale); the *swarās* in a *rāgā* should be performed with their associated embellishments.

Gatham: The *gatham* is an idiophone. It is a large narrow-mouthed water pot made of clay, used as secondary percussion instrument in Karnatak ensembles.

Janta-swarās: A pair of repeated notes that are separated by a lower or higher—often indistinguishable—*anuswarā.* This can be played on the violin by inserting a lower or higher grace note, or by rapidly sliding to and from the *anuswarā*.

Krti: A *krti* is a composed concert piece that is typically constructed in three sections: (A) *pallavi*, (B) *anupallavi*, and (C) *charanam*. The basic form of a *krti* in performance is ABACA, with the *pallavi* repeated after each section.

Martelé: A percussive bow stroke whereby the bow is held with heavy pressure on the string and is then released.

Mōrsing: The *mōrsing* is a kind of mouth harp. Similar to the Jew's harp, it is a long vibrating tongue that is attached to a pear-shaped rim.

Mrdangam: The *mrdangam* is a double-headed, barrel-shaped drum made out of a jackwood belly and multi-layered leather heads.

Portato: Slurring a group of notes in one bow stroke while slightly separating and articulating notes in the same bow stroke.

Rāgā: The tonal framework of Karnatak music. A *rāgā* consists of a scale (a collection of five to seven pitches in ascending and descending order, which may or may not be the same and may or may not move in stepwise order), a tonal hierarchy, characteristic phrases, and characteristic *gamakas* for each *swarā*.

Rāgā alapana: The unmetered and improvised melodic introduction to a composition to present the unique characteristics of a *rāgā*. A *rāgā alapana* starts in a slow tempo, presenting the *rāgā* in the middle and lower registers. Moving up to a medium tempo, the performer brings out the characteristics of the *rāgā* in the medium register and eventually the higher register. In a fast tempo, the performer makes melodic statements in all three registers. The *rāgā alapana* ends with a final descent to the final drone, the fundamental note *Sa*, in a slower tempo.

Sahitya-vil: A bowing technique whereby the bow direction is changed for each new syllable in the composition's text, slurring *swarās* of the same syllable in one bow.

Swarā kalpana: An improvisatory form in Karnatak performances. It is a challenging call and response between the main artists and their accompanists, constructed of improvised phrases based on the *krti* and sung to *swarā* syllables, often in an evenly-pulsed rhythm.

Swarā: Note. There are seven notes or *swarās* in the Karnatak scale system. These are indicated by the syllables *Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da,* and *Ni.*

Swarā-vil: A bowing technique whereby the bow direction is changed for every *swarā*. *Gamakas* and *anuswarās* that belong to that *swarā* are played in the same bow stroke. This bowing is typical for *swarā kalpana*.

Tāla: The concept of *tāla* comprises the metrical framework of Karnatak music. A *tāla* is a specific structure of beats that is cycled throughout the performance of metrical compositions and improvisations. "Manasuloni" is set to *Adi tāla*, an eight-beat rhythmic cycle that is subdivided in 4 + 2 + 2 beats.

Tremolo: A bowing technique where the player rapidly alternates bow strokes at the tip of the bow, creating a fluttering sound.

Veena: A long-necked, fretted, and plucked lute with a thick hollow neck and a large resonator made of jackwood. It has four main melody strings and three drone strings. The strings are plucked with plectra that are attached to the fingertips of the index, middle, and ring fingers of the right hand.

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Review: *Trouble Songs: Music and Conflict in Northern Ireland*

Stuart Baile
Belfast: Bloomfield Press, 2018
ISBN: 978-1527224078 (PB)

Stuart Baile's *Trouble Songs: Music and Conflict in Northern Ireland* was published with limited financial backing by the British Council Northern Ireland, Eastside Arts and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, but interestingly additional funding was also achieved via a successful Kickstarter campaign. With 227 individual backers collectively contributing, in his appeal for Kickstarter backers, Baile writes, "This is a call to my community to help carry a vital story" (Kickstarter 2018), and in a way it is this sense of community that permeates much of this enjoyable and indeed vital book. Baile, as a long-established authority on Northern Ireland's music scenes, based upon decades of music journalism and broadcasting, utilises over sixty interviews with Bono, Christy Moore, the Undertones, Stiff Little Fingers, Terri Hooley, Dolores O'Riordan and the Miami Showband survivors among others, to produce a work that is both a communitive reflection on the part of the musicians involved, but equally on the part of those who experienced the Troubles. Central throughout is the role of songs.

Trouble Songs consists of an introduction and twenty-two chapters which focus on the music and musicians connected with the conflict in Northern Ireland since 1968 in closely chronological order (5). Chapter One, "Take a Look Where You're Living", acts as a framing chapter that explores the rather lofty premise that lives were saved in Northern Ireland as a consequence of music, or as Baile notes, "it's fair to suggest that scores of people in Northern Ireland owe their lives to a bunch of scratchy, shouty tunes" (9). A grand claim, but one that is demonstrated as possibly true as the book progresses. Significantly, Baile juxtaposes such claims by noting that music during and after the conflict was also used "to celebrate killings and endorse sectarian acts" (6).

The second chapter, "We are Not Afraid", looks at particular songs such as "We shall overcome", "I shall not be moved" and "The Internationale" and how they were used by groups like The Derry Housing Action Committee to position the social injustices endemic in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s, alongside other global social injustices. Through illuminating interviews with Bernadette Devlin, Eamonn McCann, Anne Devlin and others, Baile tracks the use of established protest songs by organisations growing increasingly aware of the importance of television to highlight political messages; as noted by Bernadette Devlin "By such seeming osmosis did television help transmit the radical contagion from place to place" (18). The chapter looks also at events such as the Long March of '69 and the establishment of Free Derry Radio offering a fascinating insight into a period McCann notes was transitional with the use of "We Shall Overcome" switching to "Soldier's Song", "Kevin Barry" and other rebel songs (28) indicative of violent elements coming to fore in Northern Ireland. Yet another chapter, "A Million Miles", is primarily focused on the Miami Showband massacre of 31 July 1975, drawing upon interviews with survivors Des Lee and Stephen Travers to examine the tragic events themselves but also the impact on other touring bands of the period. The chapter not only provides a harrowing image of the event itself, and the possible collusion of Captain Robert Nairac, but also importantly raises the impact of attendant trauma on Travers and countless others suffering in post-conflict environments (89-90).

The middle chapters of *Trouble Songs* look at the much-heralded punk rock scene active in Nothern Ireland throughout the conflict with focus on groups such as The Clash, Stiff Little Fingers, The Undertones and The Outcasts. During these well-constructed chapters, Baile's

passion and knowledge comes to the fore with the reader given an insight into the significance of the punk scene, its spiritual home at the Harp Bar and the contribution of Terri Hooley and Good Vibrations. Within these chapters, Baile and his interviewees are forthcoming in indicating the social significance of the punk scene to young people in Northern Ireland. Equally, these contributions seek to challenge what Brian Young of the band Rubi regards as the "homogenised happy-clappy version of Northern Ireland punk music" (125), revealing overtly sectarian groups like Offensive Weapon, whose bass player was prominent Loyalist paramilitary Johnny Adair (179), and the dangers of sexual violence experienced by female punks. This noted, these chapters on Nothern Ireland's punk rock are amongst *Trouble Songs* best, elevating the book as a result.

Christy Moore's relationship with the Northern Ireland conflict is explored in "A Rebel I Came", using interviews with Moore to offer new insights into his perceived "rebel" persona and his association with nationalist political and sectarian groups. In another chapter, "We've got to Carry Each Other", interviews with Bono, the Edge and Quintin Oliver of the Yes campaign for the Good Friday Agreement, looks at the fascinating use of the "Third Sector" removed from political and parliamentary interference to impact the Good Friday Agreement referendum in 1998. Of note is Bono's description of "stage-managing" his encounter with David Trimble and John Hume at the Waterfront Hall, Belfast, on 19 May 1998 (232-234). All in all, this chapter is another highlight, offering a well balanced account of the use of music by the Yes campaign. *Trouble Songs* also include chapters that explore music by Juke Boy Bonner, John Lennon, Paul McCarthy, Sinéad O'Connor, Elvis Costello, and The Cranberries and their respective relationship with the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Stuart Baile's *Trouble Songs* is an well-crafted, enjoyable, well-researched read, and a vital contribution to Popular Music Studies, Irish Studies and most importantly, Northen Irish Studies, that explores and expands our understanding of the role and importance of music in Northern Ireland's most troubling of times.

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Review: *For*

Úna Monaghan
EAN: 5029385845858 CD 2018

Drawing on her interdisciplinary background, Úna Monaghan's practice and research investigates the boundaries between art and science. Therefore it is not surprising that in her debut solo album, *For,* she explores the combination of her creative practice as a harpist, composer, improviser and sound engineer with her research interests in experimental sound art and interactive technologies.

The album syntheses contemporary Irish traditional music and experimental music, and combines live harp performance with interactive and fixed electronic and electro-acoustic sounds. The harp is recorded live (expect for an overdub in the opening track) and therefore the listener is experiencing the artist reacting in the moment to both pre-determined and less predictable moving soundscapes. She also responds with both her own pre-composed tunes and improvisatory harp episodes, and in several tracks manipulates the live electronics through motion sensors, pitch detection and Max/MSP patches. Short solo harp tracks are interspersed throughout the album and provide a welcome focus on the artist solely as a harpist and composer. Recorded by Tim Matthews in Shetland and mastered by Stuart Hamilton, Monaghan impressively assumes the roles of composer, performer and producer.

In her extensive liner notes, which are available in English and also in Irish (translated by Breandán Ó Fiaich), she speaks of the personal influences for each track, nearly all with a dedicatee, hence the album title, *For*. There is a very personal sensitivity throughout, with one track dedicated to herself, others to her parents, grandparents and previous musical collaborators. There are also harder hitting dedications, such as a poignant solo harp composition entitled "For Her" written in response to hearing of a murder of a girl of her own age, and in "The Choice", she effectively utilises harp melodies and live electronics to explore the multiplicity of addiction: the keeping it together, the disintegration and distortion. The sense of people and of place is very evident throughout and particularly in her choice of source material, for example, the street sounds of Belfast in "An Dearcadh" and the evocation of the west Kerry sea in "Ómos do Sheamus", albeit that the sea sounds were recorded in Shetland.

"Réalta", dedicated to herself, is a harp improvisation superimposed on her first electroacoustic tape piece (2006) and based on harp source material, which represents for her the point when her creative practice took priority. In a sense, the album takes us from her early harp compositions (one of her first compositions is heard in the opening track) and her early experiments as a sound artist in "Réalta", through to the expansion of her creative practice more closely integrating her work as a harpist and sounds artist.

Collaboration is also prevalent and two tracks in particular draw on material from larger-scale collaborative projects: "Owenvarragh, a Belfast Circus on The Star Factory" (2012) and "The Bodélé Project" (2016). In "An Dearcadh", written in memory for Belfast traditional singer, Éamonn Ó Faogáin, the recorded sources of her soundscape composed for "Owenvarragh" are reused. For "Owenvarragh" Monaghan collaborates with Martin Dowling, in a new realisation of John Cage's "On Circus" (1979), which is an iconic work in the context of this album as it represents an early example of Irish traditional music being brought within an experimental sound art context. In this case, it is a reimagining of Cage's score with Ciaran

Carson's book *The Star Factor*y that the collaborators set within a very distinctive Belfast framework. The Belfast soundscape that Monaghan recreates in "An Dearcadh" is a poignant tribute to Éamonn Ó Faogáin, who performed as part of "Owenvarragh". For me, this track is the highlight of the album, as Monaghan carefully selects her favourite sounds from an extensive array of her recorded source material, including a whistling kettle, street and community voices, the distinctive cadences of Belfast childrens' voices, the tolling clock, and the wonderful deep sonorous horn sounds of ships in Belfast Lough. These are combined to create a characterful Belfast sound world to which she sensitively layers live harp with three melodies composed specifically for the dedicatee. The power of this track is that it seems to transcend the exclusively aural listening experience.

In the final track of the album, she highlights a more recent collaboration with visual artist, Mark Clare, who she met during her artist residency at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in 2015. "The Bodélé Project" is distinctive in that it moves away from both the harp and Irish traditional music. This is a tape composition derived from the larger-scale work, which she explains is a concert adaption, whereas the work's "natural habitat" is an installation in a gallery. The source material for this track is based on weather systems, adapted radio and morse code sounds, in combination with sounds directly from nature, including bird song. In this work, the artists explore the unseen ecological processes within our natural environment, and indeed the theme of art articulating scientific phenomena.

The album is very much built around the Irish harp, with eleven of the twelve tracks showcasing Monaghan's crisp melodically driven harping skills, and in doing so, she places an instrument with a strong sense of heritage and tradition within a more contemporary aesthetic. However, her Irish traditional music roots are very evident, and within her interactive and fixed sound art investigations, there is still space for a clear focus on her accomplished harping skills and that of a composer and improviser within the Irish traditional music genre. The Irish harp is currently enjoying a vibrant multi-faceted resurgence in practice, transmission, and scholarship and this recording provides scope for a new view and evaluation of the instrument and its repertoire, by embracing both tradition and experimentation.

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Review: *The Masses of Seán and Peadar Ó Riada: Explorations in Vernacular Chant*

John O'Keeffe
Cork, Cork University Press, 2017
ISBN: 9781782052357

The publication of *The Masses of Seán and Peadar Ó Riada: Explorations in Vernacular Chant* represents a landmark achievement, not only with respect to its contribution to liturgical musicology but also in its engagement with and analysis of the Irish song tradition. This book offers a unique insight into the "living oral culture of native traditional song" (1), specifically the song culture of the Cúil Aodha area of the Muscraí Gaeltacht. The ways in which aspects of Irish traditional song and vernacular chant intertwine in the Roman rite mass settings of Seán Ó Riada and that of his son Peadar are explored through this study's focus on the relationship between music and text, drawing on the areas of Gregorian chant, liturgical musicology, ethnomusicology and Irish traditional song culture in the process. Mass settings of the Ó Riada's (father and son) have not been subject to a large-scale study previously, and such a detailed analysis of their contents as provided in this book also represents the charting of new territory within Irish musical scholarship.

The opening chapters provide a historical and cultural backdrop to the study as well as an overview of some main theoretical concepts which will be applied to the analysis of both composers' mass settings in subsequent chapters. Chapter 1, "Tradition and Context", guides the reader through Seán Ó Riada's first interactions with the Vatican II instruction *Musicam sacram* at Glenstal Abbey in 1968, which sought to integrate vernacular languages and native music traditions into the Roman liturgy, particularly through the practice of Gregorian chant. The remainder of the chapter also introduces the cultural context of traditional song specifically from within the Cúil Aodha Gaeltacht, as well as recent definitions of chant and orality, thus paving the way for the subsequent chapter, "Words and Music", in which such topics are discussed in more detail. This next section provides the overall theoretical grounding for the book in its discussion of the relationship between words and music with respect to liturgical composition (in particular modes, models and motifs), Irish traditional and medieval song, and orality.

Two key theoretical standpoints emerge from this interdisciplinary approach to the relationship between words and music. Firstly, this study takes a broader view of traditional song and challenges limited understandings which lend too much weight to "the fixed nature of pre-existing melodic models" (29). It demonstrates, by way of numerous historical examples, traditional melody's "inherent and inherited flexibility and its ability to accommodate itself to various textual requirements" (29) as well as its aptitude, like other orally based folk song and chant traditions, to generate equally flexible formulae/motifs which enable wide ranging variation and creativity within its performance and composition. Secondly, the author asserts that the relationship between words (text) and music is determined by relationships of number, that is to say that the "numerical givenness (e.g syllabic, accentual, linear etc.) of prescribed liturgical and devotional texts" (40) has the capacity to bring words and melody in parallel with each other. While such a concept is difficult to put into words, the author successfully illustrates and grounds this relationship through historical and more recent descriptions provided by musicians and scholars of Irish traditional song, as well as referring extensively to the work of medieval music and literature specialist John Stevens. This idea in particular enables the exploration of the interconnectedness of monophonic traditions of chant and Irish traditional song in vernacular mass settings, without having to address extra-musical issues of meaning (particularly those of a cultural and political nature) associated with the Irish language in a national context. Also notable is the vast range of literature and sources on Irish traditional song engaged with

throughout this chapter and during the course of the book. Such engagement highlights the importance of this study in advancing scholarship on Irish traditional song with respect to formal musical analysis, given that most primary texts on such matters are now at least thirty years old.

Two additional chapters on the content of Seán Ó Riada's mass settings, *Ceol an Aifrinn* (1968) and *Aifreann 2* (1969). Both works are meticulously analysed, and seamlessly blend a knowledge of both Gregorian and vernacular chant with Irish traditional song, demonstrating clearly the theoretical concepts outlined within the previous chapters. However, it is Peadar Ó Riada's *Aifreann Eoin na Croise* (1990) which provides the main focus of the study, with two full chapters devoted to its musical analysis. Similarities in the musical and compositional developments and models employed in all three mass settings are considered from the outset of this section. A case for the progressive nature of *Aifreann Eoin na Croise* is also put forward, and the ways in which Peadar Ó Riada has developed the musical language created by his father within the first two mass settings is demonstrated with a clear use of musical examples. In particular, much of the focus of these chapters surrounds the innovative use of motifs and motivic development within the work, which forges stronger links between the "native cultural tradition of song" (256) and vernacular chant. Throughout the course of Chapter 6, the author discusses how the "characteristic melodic aesthetic of Irish traditional song which governs Ó Riada's compositional approach" (190) and orally based compositional devices commonly used in chant such as centonisation, thrift and textual accent/syntax are interwoven within various sections of the mass, once again highlighting the central importance of the relationship between words and music. The level of detail in relation to the musical analysis of *Aifreann Eoin na Croise* is striking, aided by the author's own updated version of the score based predominantly on a recording of the first performance, in addition to his renderings of the sung solo illustrations of the various mass movements on the accompanying CD.

The final chapter focuses on how the compositional developments uncovered in the Ó Riada masses, and in particular in *Aifreann Eoin na Cróise*, might be mapped onto contemporary vernacular chant within an Irish context, discussing the monophonic settings of other contemporary composers such as Ronan McDonagh, Fintan O'Carroll and Seoirse Bodley in the process. The second part of this section provides an example of the live process of liturgical oral composition, describing a public seminar given by Peadar Ó Riada in Cúil Aodha in 2006 in which he composed music for a liturgical text in English provided from the floor. This live process, according to the author, expressed Peadar Ó Riada's "singular confidence in the ability of the native tradition (through his intimate contact with it) to provide what would be required for a worthy and coherent composition" (254). This sentiment is echoed in the analysis and discussion of the three Ó Riada mass settings throughout the book.

The ethnomusicolgical content of this study and its adept use of interview content (particularly in the final chapter) as well as relevant personal anecdotes is subtly woven into the fabric of its main argument throughout. Such examples facilitate reader engagement and ensure that this theoretically rich and analytically dense study flows effortlessly across its various sections. The real strength of this publication however, lies in its holistic treatment of orally derived monophonic song traditions from both European and Irish cultural contexts through the exploration of the fundamental relationship between music and words. The author's ability to locate the intersections of such a wide range of historical musical developments within the three Ó Riada mass settings is impressive. *The Masses of Seán and Peadar Ó Riada: Explorations in Vernacular Chant* is also remarkable in its progressive reconceptualisation of vernacular chant based on a unique combination of expert knowledge and experience of the author in both the fields of liturgical music and Irish traditional song culture. It is a pioneering and creative work which offers a significant scholarly contribution to the fields of musicology and ethnomusicology in Ireland.

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Review: *Singing the Rite to Belong: Music, Ritual, and the New Irish*

Helen Phelan
Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press, 2017
ISBN: 9780190672232 (PB).

This book explores the use of group singing as a tool for establishing a sense of belonging and communitas amongst migrant and minority groups in Ireland. As a past director of the MA in Ritual Music at the University of Limerick and director of several choirs in the region, Phelan is an authority on ritual music repertoire; including Irish chant and music from the medieval period. Contrary to expectation, this monograph defers from an analysis of ritual chant repertoire amongst migrant communities to one which explores the physiological, emotional and cultural aspects of song performance by Russian and African religious groups in borrowed and shared spaces. Rather than dwelling on the traditional discourse of church music acting as 'the handmaid of the liturgy', Phelan frames the central chapters around five fundamental characteristics of singing: resonance, somatics, performance, temporality and tacitness and explores how these enable participants to achieve a deeper level of engagement in ritual practice and a greater sense of unity through the communal expression of shared meaning. The author is an active agent in this research and consequently this work documents her practical approaches to working with new Irish and Irish Travellers in performance contexts, her ambition to explore and convey the meaning of ritual in academic contexts, and her personal experience of engaging with migrant groups as a music facilitator in community contexts. This rich discourse illuminates the destructive impact of Ireland's immigration policies on migrants and debates the place (and face) of spirituality and ritual in modern Ireland.

Of the key ideas investigated, somatics proves interesting in its attempt to re-unite the mind and body in an expression of faith. Phelan supports the use of movement during performance since music making is a social activity, a point which relaxes the Catholic churches preference for restrained, non-dramatic and non-affective performances. The discussion around the theological appropriateness of repertoire presented during ritual ceremonies at the start of the book leads the way for a profound argument around tacitness (communication without words). This discussion evolves into a call to broaden spiritual expression in ritual contexts beyond set liturgies. In so doing, it advocates a more inclusive approach which personalises the ritual experience and proports an unconditional sense of belonging amongst participants. Throughout the book Phelan provides commentary on the diminished influence of the Catholic church in Ireland due to the recent child abuse scandals, community disengagement and the rise of other faiths. Low participation rates might also be attributed to the low level of music practice in Catholic churches, the perceived outdatedness of the biblical stories by younger congregations and regular church services lacking in spirituality. In this light, Phelan may be apt in proposing an inclusive community approach to spirituality that will enhance people lives in modern Ireland.

This study is situated in Limerick, Ireland at a period of inward migration during the Celtic Tiger (c. 2000). Phelan identifies the period as one of emerging multiculturalism, changing patterns of migration, the fall of the Catholic Church, and synergies between the local and global in ritual contexts. Consequently, issues of belonging and appropriate acoustical and ritual space became pertinent to Congolese, Nigerian and Russian Orthodox communities celebrating rituals in borrowed ritual spaces (Augustinian Church and St. Michael's Church of Ireland). Phelan's work not alone highlights the hospitality of churches in accommodating new faiths but also highlights deficiencies in dealing with migrant groups by the State and the wider Irish community. In particular, the impact statements concerning the isolation and confinement of new mothers are harrowing. Their plight of uncertainty is further discussed in

regards the perceived significance of Catholic baptismal rituals in the context of the Irish citizenship referendum. While Phelan concludes that singing alone cannot assure belonging, she notes that it can signal the possibility.

Section two focusses on the creation of a ritual space within academia. This challenge is not restricted to the provision of a suitable physical space but more an academic space for disciplines which are primarily affectual. In this respect, Phelan sought parity of esteem between affectual, intellectual and practical approaches in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick. This effort was supported by the Academy not alone in regards course provision but also in mythologizing the academic space to reflect the cultural value of Imbas (or knowledge) and the river goddess Sionna. In addition, the Academy adopted the principles of individual creativity and diversity, as well as inclusivity and equality in their mission statement. This enabled a broadening of research towards ritual practice amongst the New Irish and greater engagement with the local community.

Of interest to ethnomusicologists is the issue of undertaking fieldwork in a domain which is deeply personal and where recording and questioning is regarded as intrusive. Fortunately, Phelan's work in the area of singing and social integration has been considerable over the last two decades through her work with church choirs in the Limerick area, ritual music festivals, and University initiatives such as the Sanctuary choir, Nomad and the Sound Out with Strings School programme. These experiences and the dialogue therein have enabled her to discuss the issue of belonging in ritual and multicultural performance through reflection and description. Consequently, this work may be described as autobiographical and autoethnographic with considerable space given to the discussion of ritual song performance from philosophical, pedagogical, religious and cultural perspectives. In this subject area the candidacy and authenticity of the author is both compelling and praiseworthy.

There is a wealth of critical material yet to be mined from this research and in particular, at times, the musical discussions finished too early. For example, a lengthier discussion around the achievements of the Sound Out project and the response of Irish composers to Vatican 2, is warranted for this reader.

However, the breath of this work ensures its significance to ritual studies, ethnography, philosophy, religion, vocal pedagogy and cultural studies. I commend this work for its originality in focus and opening a dialogue for the need for greater inclusion in modern Ireland.

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Review: *The Groove Is Not Trivial*

Tommie Dell Smith
Film. Cleveland, OH: Verite Productions, 2016

The Groove Is Not Trivial does indeed groove. Not only does Alasdair Fraser, noted traditional Scottish fiddler and star of the documentary, expound on his vision of the essential and evanescent nature of the underlying pulse, the groove, of Scottish music, the film flows with the fiddling of Fraser and his music campers. Directed by American documentary filmmaker Tommie Smith, this film combines extensive interviews with Fraser, footage of performances with collaborators such as American cellist Natalie Haas, and extensive documentation of classes at his music camps. Brief interludes of archival images and film combine to chart Fraser's self-articulated commitment to a new idea of Scottish musicality. For instructors, this well-produced documentary offers a range of theoretical questions, topical issues, and identitarian quandaries with which classes can engage, making it a welcome addition to the oeuvre of university classroom resources. In addition, the depth and extent of Smith's filmed interviews with Fraser, his musical collaborators, and his students provide a rich, if necessarily sculpted, ethnographic text with which scholars, fans, and practitioners can engage.

Fraser's skill as a teacher appears in the different approaches he takes with students at his music camps in Northern California, the Isle of Skye, and Spain. Fraser has gradually expanded his pedagogical efforts since 1983, when he opened his Valley of the Moon Fiddling School in Northern California. He has offered classes at Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, the Gaelic college and cultural center on the Isle of Skye, for over 30 years, and in 2008, opened a camp in Spain. At Sabhal Mòr, Fraser focuses the primarily Scottish campers on the Scottish landscape as a primary source of individual musicality. He invites one camper to look out at the hills and play the topography she sees, and after days of struggle, the woman expresses something genuinely hers. In such moments, Fraser seems to argue that, when playing truly Scottish music, authentic musical inspiration emerges only from the Scottish landscape, perhaps a feeling amplified by Fraser's own distanced relationship to this landscape given his permanent resident in California. At his Northern California home, far from the Scottish Highlands and Islands, Fraser focuses his campers' attention on "the groove," on feeling music in the body rather than perceiving it visually through sheet music. Bereft of sheet music, the students stand and bob while playing as they attempt to heal themselves of what Fraser calls the "wounding" of conventional instruction in violin that, as he sees it, curtails joyful, confident, and truly individual performance.

A primary impetus for Fraser's radical approach to reclaiming a Scottish musicality arises from formative experiences in his youth. Born in 1955 in Clackmannan, Scotland, Fraser characterizes the era of his youth as a period of "cultural cringe," an antagonism towards, and retreat from, overt signs of Scottishness like accent and traditional music. His music instruction emphasized western art music and formal methods of instruction, and the oppositions between this style and Scottish traditional music was cemented while he was at university in Edinburgh. He wondered at the relegation of Scottish tunes to local pubs, which he visited following days of playing western art music in his

university orchestra. The contemporaneous ascendancy and commercial dominance of Irish traditional music in Edinburgh prompted Fraser to question the scarcity of Scottish music in Scotland. As he says in the film, he began working on “how to play in a Scottish accent.” Following his move to California, the reverence for Scottish music he found there further encouraged him to define his Scottish musical accent, even as he explored other musical genres. His return to Sabhal Mòr, and especially the section of the documentary closely tying his brand of Scottish musical nationalism to the 2014 referendum on Scottish independence, suggest his determination to create value in Scottish culture and encourage other Scots to reclaim connections to Scotland’s land by using it as a source of unique, genuine musical inspiration.

A brief section in the middle of the film sets out a series of historical events and attitudes that led to the devaluation of Scottish musical culture. Footage of a burning fiddle shown at the beginning of the film, and the story of a fiddle-burning priest on the Isle of Skye reappear as evocative signifiers of cultural destruction that will be familiar to practitioners and scholars of traditional musics on the Atlantic edges. The English colonization of the Highlands and Islands, and the cultural decimation precipitated by the forced outmigration that followed, forms the core of the narrative chosen to support Fraser’s argument for cultural erasure and enduring cultural shame. As he says in the documentary, “There’s an injustice here [in Scotland], taming of a race so they could be controlled. If you want to suppress a people, you hit them in the culture where it hurts.” As someone who grew up in the Lowlands, Fraser’s search for personal musical authenticity and his decision to locate his teaching on the Isle of Skye affirms his personal experience of this suppression, and his views that the Highlands and Islands are sites of cultural integrity and even solace with which he can engage for personal inspiration and promote as a font of musical inspiration for others.

In a tantalizingly brief coda, we see Fraser beginning a third music camp in northern Spain. The footage of Fraser playing music with Spanish campers and the brief accompanying interview clips suggests Fraser is connecting to musicians whom, like his fellow Scots, he perceives as afflicted with the musical and social constraints of “cultural cringe”. The portrayals of Fraser connecting with the temporary communities of musicians he creates through his camps offers, for instructors and scholars, a fertile site for interpretation, though the documentary does not – and is not designed to – offer this sort of theorizing.

Through extensive original interviews, compelling musical performances, and deft interludes of historical narrative and news reports, director Tommie Smith weaves a riveting narrative of one musician’s mission to salvage his own relationship to his cultural heritage, and in so doing, connect musicians from around the world to their music through genuine embodied encounters. With Fraser’s vision and political leanings coming through so strongly and shown as so completely interwoven with his musicality, the film amounts to a fine ethnographic text.

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Review: *Music in the World: Selected Essays*

Timothy D. Taylor
Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2017
ISBN: 9780226442396

In many ways an adjunct *to Music and Capitalism: A History of the Present* (Taylor 2016), Timothy Taylor's previous work on music and neoliberal capitalism, his most recent publication provides a broader theoretical analysis of shifts in music production, dissemination, advertising and consumption in multiple capitalist regimes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. By embedding his specific case studies in critical discussions on the relationships between music and culture, affect, and value, Taylor astutely evidences that commodification cannot simply be understood as a phenomenon in and of itself, but is indeed informed by social and cultural context. Combined, the individual essays included in *Music in the World* chart out a compelling theoretical framework for a historically, socially and culturally informed study of music and capitalism that is a most welcome contribution to ethnomusicological discourses.

The first two chapters of this volume problematize the lack of consideration given to culturally specific meaning in many existing studies of music and music making. Chapter 1 revisits anthropologist Clifford Geertz's seminal definition of culture as a man-made web of significances that can be decoded through ethnography (Geertz 1973: 5), to illustrate that both music and its practitioners are shaped by culturally, socially, and historically constructed value systems. Extending this crucial argument, chapter 2 deconstructs dominant Western assumptions on a somewhat "natural" connection between music and affect, showing instead that ways in which music evokes emotional responses in listeners have been defined differently throughout the course of history and in various cultural contexts across the globe.

In chapter 3, Taylor draws upon the rise of the player piano in the US to provide a culturally and historically specific examination of musical commodification in the early twentieth century. On the basis of this illuminating case study, he outlines that consumers became convinced that purchasing music in the form of novel sound production technologies was "better than making it themselves" (53). Several detailed illustrations supplement the text and reveal how this particular marketing strategy became further propelled through advertising and gave rise to a more widely accessible, "reified" music, a commodity that was produced and consumed in the capitalist system. In the bounds of this particular ideology, music was no longer strictly understood as "humanly organised sound", as John Blacking (1973: 3) once famously put it. Instead, it became detached from any human contribution and the social and cultural meanings originally tethered to it. In what follows, Taylor further engages with the problematic co-option of various musics for commercial ends under capitalism. Focusing on the rise of radio in the 1920s, chapter 4 clarifies how agendas for elevating the musical taste of the nation and the recording industry's strive to raise sales figures contributed to an increase in radio broadcasts of high art music in the US. In chapter 5, entitled "Stravinsky and Others", Taylor argues that the growing importance of finance capital and exchange value of cultural forms in the early twentieth century allowed Western art music composers to readily appropriate the music of Europe's Others in their works, while obscuring the actual use value of these musics for practitioners *in situ*.

Several chapters in *Music in the World* deal with interfaces between dynamics of globalisation and changes in cultural production and consumption in the post-World War II era. Chapter 6 interrogates the "world music" label in terms of its homogenising impact on diverse musical genres. This commodification of difference plays out particularly drastically in the context of world music festivals, where artists are given performance platforms on the condition that they succumb to a profit-driven definition of diversity imposed on them by the

music industry. Taylor further prises apart this issue in chapter 7, scrutinising the world music genre as a field of cultural production within which issues of identity, authenticity and branding are negotiated.

In the globally interconnected society of neoliberal capitalism, expressions of cultural capital have become important means of asserting identity and stability. Departing from this key argument, chapter 9 critically evaluates UNESCO's safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage as a way of commodifying cultural forms and introducing them to the market. Just as forces of globalisation and neoliberal capitalism have turned culture into a consumable product, the concept of taste has become commodified as well. In recent decades, this process was accelerated through the distribution of digitised music via online platforms and Taylor addresses this complex phenomenon, introducing the music supervisors that select suitable music for the entertainment industry, as well as the hidden algorithms that manage our listening habits and search preferences.

The final chapter in this volume returns to the Geertzian concept of cultural meaning. Taylor sets out to broaden the scope of this paradigm by considering the value that social actors ascribe to cultural goods as another form of meaning. While he draws upon established Marxist theory to tease out the economic value of music as a cultural good, Taylor equally considers anthropological perspectives on value. He argues that what is meaningful to social actors in particular settings is by no means monolithic, but proves highly diverse and shifts over time. Ethnography is one way of eliciting layers of meaning attached to cultural goods, although we also need to consider that social actors can choose to express what is meaningful to them through other channels – for instance, in the form of online networks, social media threads and playlists. Meaning is constantly fashioned and remodelled in a world in flux, which calls for a socially and culturally specific analysis of musical (and economic) values in capitalist cultures. After all, commodification does not exist as a given fact and in splendid isolation from lived musical experience. Instead it has to be examined in light of its recursive relationship with social and cultural dynamics. Timothy Taylor's *Music in the World* is a refreshing read and a much needed contribution to existing literature, precisely because it embraces what ethnomusicological and anthropological paradigms have to offer for a culturally, historically and socially informed study of music in capitalist cultures.

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Review: *Make Arts for a Better Life-A Guide for Working with Communities*

Brian Schrag & Kathleen J. Van Buren
New York: Oxford University Press, 2018
ISBN: 9780190878283 (pbk.)

In this comprehensive guide, Brian Schrag and Kathleen J. Van Buren present a seven-step methodological framework designed to help "spark artistic creativity that feeds into better lives for people" (12) and invite readers to "think of the steps as a reliable, solid framework you can refer to" (26). They draw on their scholarly and practical expertise in ethnomusicology and additional contributions from folklore, performance studies, anthropology, communications studies, and community development to inform their approach. The proposed *Make Arts* process details a bottom-up approach to researching a community and its arts; identifying community goals and aspirations; designing, managing and evaluating artistic outputs or events; and engaging in plans to embed arts activity in future community life.

The overall aim of the volume is "to stir up creativity in local forms that meet community goals" (58). The focus, throughout, is on collaboration, facilitation, understanding, trust, respect, dialogue, and communication as intrinsic to the *Make Arts* process. Schrag and Van Buren suggest that, while the arts cannot solve local and global problems, they can and are making a difference to communities worldwide (see Veblen et al. 2013; Bartleet & Higgins 2018). However, they explain that, in spite of a growing body of evidence for the benefits of "intentional artistic creativity in community well-being […] best practices for arts-influenced community development remain widely unknown and incompletely applied" (ix). Their response, therefore, is "to provide a resource that can consider a wide range of contexts and further explore ethical and practical issues involved in developing community arts initiatives" (ix-xi). The authors consider three categories of potential community goals: identity and sustainability, health and well-being, and human rights, acknowledging that these are "sometimes contested terms" (17). The authors state that *Make Arts* is for arts advocates – for "anyone who wants to help communities draw on their artistic resources to improve their lives" (xii). To that end they focus on three target categories: researchers, project leaders, and educators.

The book is divided into three distinct sections. The opening section outlines the rationale for writing *Make Arts*, the historical context of arts interventions, and the need to expand knowledge of the role of the arts in evidence-based research that demonstrates the utility of the arts in these contexts. The authors explore the concepts of "a better life" (4), and "what is good"? (7). The authors clearly outline their own positions, definitions and perspectives in relation to each of the concepts discussed. The main section presents seven steps aimed at helping individuals and communities to learn about, and build on, their own artistic strengths and to use local arts to achieve self-identified practical goals. The seven steps are: meet a community and its arts; specify goals for a better life; connect goals to genres; analyze genres and events; spark creativity; improve results; and celebrate and integrate for continuity. The seven steps provide comprehensive and detailed guidance on how to work through various stages involved in facilitating a collaborative arts project. A central argument throughout is that "people are at the core of artistic communication" (200). The authors persuasively argue that while there may be many factors involved in achieving community goals communities can benefit from well-researched, well-planned arts projects. The closing section, numbered 1 to 9, contains a substantial bibliography and glossary of terms. This section also provides a really useful overview of the main features of the Guide, with suggestions for educators, project leaders and researchers, and quick reference indexes to various sections of the book.

The language throughout the book is clear and accessible. Case studies, practical activities, and supplementary resources are presented as "effective aids for research, teaching and community work" (xiv), for example, the arts can help with literacy problems or promote awareness about particular issues. A particular strength of the book is its honesty and the authors acknowledge that the arts alone cannot solve problems. They acknowledge that projects can fail but stress the im-

portance of learning from failure. They highlight the importance of research and evaluation, not just as a means to be accountable to funders (see Crossick & Kaszynska 2016), but to build on accumulated knowledge and experience to help communities to help themselves in the future, and to give something back to community members. They emphasize that arts research and subsequent artistic projects do not involve a quick or easy process; the arts communicate in complex ways; communities are complicated and varied; and dialogue, ethical considerations, and collaboration are of the utmost importance in this type of work. They encourage people to set realistic goals, to be aware of constraints, to think creatively about how to overcome challenges, to learn from past projects, and to learn from social contexts.

Ultimately, Schrag and Van Buren generously share an accumulation of expert knowledge gleaned from their own scholarly research, fieldwork, and practical experience. They support this expert knowledge with additional library and web resources, contributions from other experts, and practical activities. The key idea, throughout, is that researchers, project leaders, educators, and others should learn from communities, communities should choose their own goals, arts initiatives should be designed in collaboration with local artists and community members, and, above all, the arts can make a difference in people's lives and have a lasting effect. The authors want "the *act* of creating to endure so that community can continue to make arts that help its members" (15).This book would be useful to ethnomusicologists, community musicians, community arts facilitators, educators, arts administrators, or voluntary arts groups. It would also be useful to artist/researchers engaged in arts practice research where design and analysis of an artefact or performance, alongside a written thesis, evidences a research inquiry (Nelson 2013; Smith & Dean 2009). The level of detail makes this an invaluable resource for anyone engaged in individual or collaborative arts practice.

Fran Garry

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