

FINAL EXAM ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Introduction to the anthropology of music (week 2)

(1) Provide an outline of the developments of ethnomusicology from its early phases to contemporary scholarship, considering both its research methods and objects of inquiry. Support your discussion with one or two specific examples of ethnomusicological studies drawn from the materials of this course.

2. Traditions and post-traditions: challenging authenticity (week 3)

Please respond to either one of the following essay questions:

EITHER

(2A) Outline a musical history of Central Asia, with particular emphasis on processes of modernization, westernization and, more generally, musical change. In your discussion, use Central Asian music to reflect on how musical authenticity can be defined from different standpoints.

OR

(2B) In the light of the increasingly syncretic character of many popular musics of the world, with the worldwide influence of Euro-American music idioms being paramount, to what extent are the categories of “western” and “non-western” musics meaningful and of some utility to ethnomusicology? Support your argument with examples from the course materials (for example, Central Asian music or any other music studied in this course).

3. Globalization and (g)locality in the popular musics of the world (week 4)

Please respond to either one of the following essay questions:

EITHER

(3A) “Our Western mass-production and communication systems are inadvertently destroying the languages, traditions, cuisines, and creative styles that once gave every people and every locality a distinctive character – indeed their principal reason for living” (Alan Lomax). Evaluate this claim in light of the growth of popular musics in what is often referred to as the “non-western world.” Please support your discussion with examples from the course materials.

OR

(3B) Drawing from the course materials, illustrate how the very process of *globalization* is variously understood in ethnomusicology. In particular, discuss different interpretations of the dynamics between the *global* and the *local* in popular musics worldwide.

4. Audiovisual media: worldwide uses and issues of representation (week 5)

(4) New technologies (including the Internet, electronic music technology, audiovisual resources, and a variety of mass- and micro-media) are becoming increasingly central to music making and music reception in a great variety of locales around the world. What has been the response of ethnomusicologists to this process? In particular, how is the role of new technologies in the musical settings studied by ethnomusicologists affecting ethnographic representation *and* methods in ethnomusicology? Support your discussion with examples from the course materials.

Student's name _____

5. Music, identity and nationhood (week 6)

Please respond to either one of the following essay questions:

EITHER

(5A) “The crucial link between identity formation and arts like music lies in the specific semiotic character of these activities which makes them particularly affective and direct ways of knowing” (Thomas Turino). Discuss and illustrate the semiotic potential of music argued for in this proposition, with specific reference to national identity in music and musical nationalism. Support your argument with examples from the course materials.

OR

(5B) Musical nationalism, as well as the musical construction of national identity, have often been characterized by a dual preoccupation with, on the one hand, encoding modernity, and, on the other hand, evoking or defining tradition, heritage or a historical past. Discuss with examples drawn from the course.

6. Music, religion and ritual (week 7)

(6) Illustrate and discuss various ways in which “religion” may be relevant to the performance and evaluation of music. Which particular understandings and experiences of “religion” emerge from the music examples found in the course materials?

7. Musics of the world in the World Music market (week 8)

Please respond to either one of the following essay questions:

EITHER

(7A) Discuss and critique how the work of ethnomusicologists may be or become implicated in the World Music market. On the basis of the course materials, what has been role of ethnomusicologists in and their response to the commercialization and global projection of traditional musics?

OR

(7B) With particular reference to the circulation and appropriation of local musics in the international music industry, discuss and critique the aesthetic, representational and power implications of what Steve Feld defines as “schizophonic mimesis.” Support your argument with examples from the course materials, including but not limiting yourself to Feld’s assigned article.

8. Transnational migrations and diaspora musics (week 9)

Please respond to either one of the following essay questions:

EITHER

(8A) “The diaspora experience... is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity: by a conception of “identity” which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity” (Stuart Hall). Discuss this proposition and its implications with reference to examples of diaspora musics drawn from the course materials.

OR

(8B) Drawing from the course materials, discuss how diaspora musics may be used or perceived to reference and reinforce, but also to challenge and redefine, ethnic, religious or social identities.

Student's name _____

9. Music, politics and resistance (week 10)

(9) Drawing from the course materials, illustrate how music may acquire political significance. In particular, discuss various ways in which music may relate to political power, dominant social structures and ideologies, and oppositional politics.

10. Music, conflict and violence (week 11)

(10) On the basis of examples from the course materials, illustrate various and contrastive ways in which music may relate to violence and conflict. Also, discuss how music scholars have differently interpreted such relationship and its implications for an understanding of the affective power of music.

11. Worlds of film music (week 12)

(11) Taking into account a broad overview of Indian film music history, assess the socio-professional and economic changes, the changes in the process of composition and production of film soundtracks, and the cultural and technological changes that have characterized such history. Also, discuss how such transformations contribute to an understanding of the changing aesthetics of Indian film music.

END OF QUESTIONS