

Using fieldwork data in publications: musicology

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Role of fieldwork data in (ethno)musicology

- "The fact that musical phenomena are constantly changing challenges the ethnomusicologist to provide continuing interpretations of the world's various musics."
(Hunter College Music Department, 2005)

Summary

- Role of fieldwork data in (ethno) musicology) in relation to communities and other (sub)disciplines
- Citation and quotation: issues for ethnomusicological publications
- The future?

Music researchers in relation to community

- Part of the contract of engagement with community collaborators
- Model of 'alternating disequilibrium' (Redmond)
- Mutual obligation - consultants support our research, just as we support theirs
- Fundamental is agreement on shared terrain, and its boundaries

Preservation ethics and the research contract

Frequently the role of the ethnomusicologist as preserver of tradition is acknowledged or even desired by people within the tradition itself. ...

It strikes me that preservation is therefore not just an outgrowth of older scholarly paradigms, but ... an acknowledgment of the realities of musical change as well as part of an implicit contract between the ethnomusicologist and the tradition's native carriers.

Shelemay, K. K. (1996). The Ethnomusicologist and the Transmission of Tradition. *Journal of Musicology*, 14(1), 47.

Disciplinary issues

- Tensions between 'anthropological' and 'musicological' approaches within ethnomusicology
- In US ethnomusicology is institutionally separate from other branches of "musicology" therefore need to differentiate approaches
- In Europe and Australia ethnomusicologists tend to be housed with other musicologists

Musicology and linguistics

- Both linguistics and ethnomusicology rely on on qualitative analysis of primary data
- Validity of research outputs judged in part on accuracy of description, transcription and analytical methods based on these
- Preservation of primary data is therefore fundamental to assessment of quality of secondary outputs.

Shared ground ...

ETHNOGRAPHIC DATA
(audio, video, text, image)

Qualitative analytical methodologies

Field linguistics

Ethnomusicology

Anthropology

Other humanities disciplines

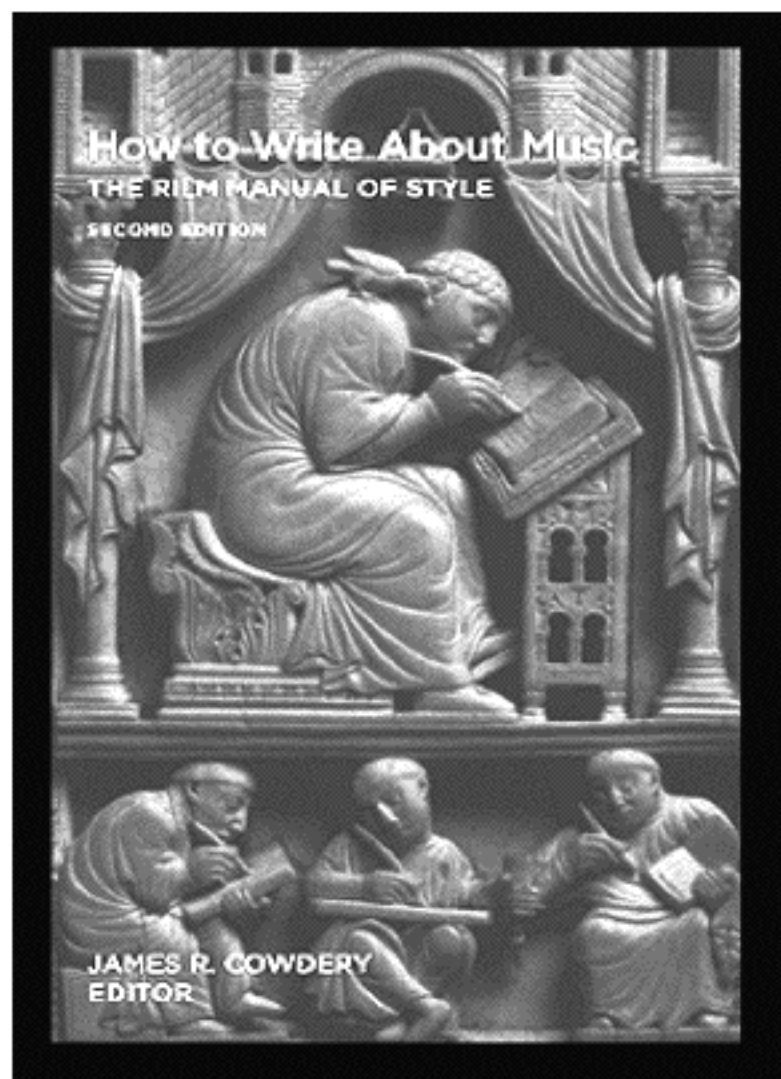
- Other disciplines (e.g. textual scholarship and fine arts) are able to quote the objects of their study directly within the research publication.
- Quotation of text is surrounded by a very well-articulated apparatus of conventions and standards for referencing authoritative or widely available editions of works.

By contrast...

- Ethnomusicologists in particular typically have to provide their own indexes and transformations of the aural object (transcriptions or diagrams) to reference it within the work
 - Transcription systems and standards more or less ad hoc (in the sense of adapted to the particular purpose at hand)
- Referenced works (field recordings) typically maintained by researcher and not generally available
- Variety of standards (including none) used for referencing field recordings

Style manuals

- Cowdery, J. R. (Ed.). (2005). *How to write about music: the RILM manual of style*. New York: Repertoire Internationale de Litterature Musicale.
- Unpublished archival sources ignored!!



Citation of resource

- "held in my collection"
- "deposited at AIATSIS"
- "AIATSIS tape A17684"
- Barwick, L. (2001), *Djanba Ragburning at Kuy (NT)*. Unpublished digital video recording deposited at AIATSIS (Collection Maret-Barwick 02, VT2001_1-2 [AIATSIS identifier]). Canberra.

Quotation: Visualising time

- In order to reference within published work, need to transform aural data into 2-dimensional representation
 - Diagrams
 - Transcriptions

Issues with transcription system

- Western musical notation is the only candidate for interoperability standard but poorly adapted to many non-Western musics
 - Diatonic (12-semitone) scale is reference point, unable to cope easily with microtonal variation, non standard scales
 - Difficulty with unmeasured music
 - Lack of timbral notation
- Accuracy vs readability (descriptive vs prescriptive)

Transcriptions are interpretations

- No one correct way to transcribe
- Automatic transcription does not work
- Many attempt to avoid the problem by publishing without attempting direct citation of the music -> words about music but with no apparatus to connect to particular instances of the phenomena

Microtonal transcription attempt - Cath Ellis

- Central Australian style group singing
- Non-diatonic scale
- Ellis theorised (controversially) that arithmetic rather than logarithmic scale
- C. Ellis, "The Pitjantjatjara Kangaroo Song from Karlga" *Miscellanea Musicologica 1* (1963)

3. $\text{♩} = 100$



Timbral notation attempt: Nick Vines

- Didjeridu player Nicky Djarug (Belyuen), recorded Allan Marett AT86_4, item 9
- Complex harmonic spectrum
- Variety of techniques
- Often only fundamental transcribed



— Bobby Lane 1.
Alternative Transcriptions of the Didjeridu

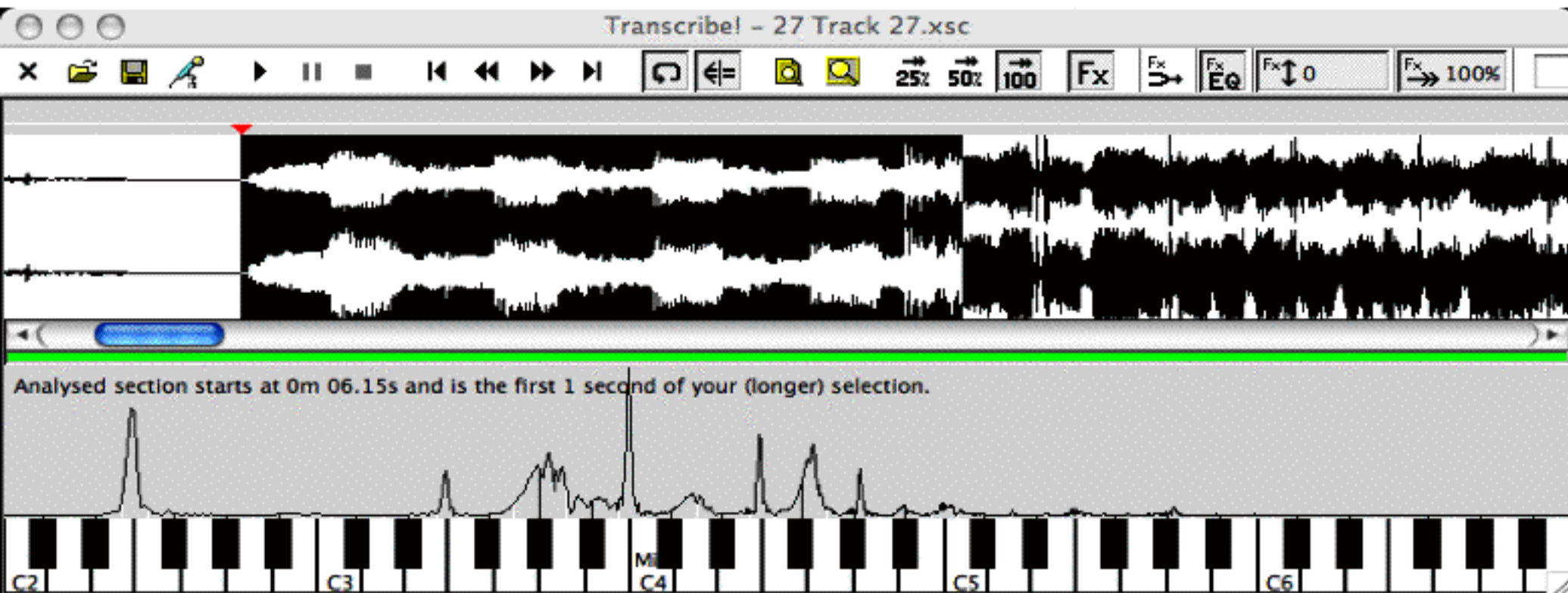


The image displays two systems of musical notation for a didjeridu piece. Each system consists of four staves: a top staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat, and three lower staves with bass clefs. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings. Above the first system, there is a tempo marking '♩ = c. 120' and a series of 'f' (forte) markings. Above the second system, there is a tempo marking '♩ = c. 120' and a series of 'f' markings. A double slash '//' is placed between the two systems. At the bottom of the page, there are two footnotes explaining the notation.

* A "shadowing" of the beating rhythm occurs in the drone at that particular beat - sometimes it is obvious, most often it is implied.

** Represents a pluck from the series of notes, 2 quarter sharp to F three quarters sharp, the most commonly occurring being F# (the song title is of course correspondingly variable).

Pitch transform of section of didjeridu



It's all too hard...

- Example of my transcription of didjeridu-accompanied song
- In this case, only the fundamental pitch of didjeridu is relevant for my discussion

Musical Example 2: Text 1A (Munimenhml #1)

Rhythmic mode: Kiyirri 2 (kiyirri - 'slow')

Pius Luckan

Item 1 on Marett DAT1998/12. Performed by Pius Luckan, Clement Tchimburur (voice and sticks), accompanied by Benedict Tchimburur (didjeridu). Rec. Allan Marett at Wadeye, NT, 1 October 1998

Mim (words)

C=C#

wu - yi kar - ver - vi - ngi ka - ri - ga

Titir (clapsticks)

♩=MM70 two sets of clapsticks played in unison

no detail notated

Karri (didjeridu)

Text: wuyi karver-vingi kari-ga
daylight is coming now



M

a - wa nu - ni - marh - ni

Tir

Kbi

awu munimenhml
a bird



M

ki - ngi - ni - rang na wang - nang-gi

Tir

Kbi

kinji-muriny na wangnngi
calls out at the sunset



The future: Direct quotation of audio

- Sidecar presentation in conventional publication (inserted CDs etc)
- Direct quotation of aural object within the work allows for testing of researchers' claims
- Avoids the question of the perfect transcription
- Situation within context of larger corpus
- Exploits fuller range of possibilities offered by corpus aggregation, multimedia potential of electronic medium, networked modes of interaction with the recordings (commenting, online indexing, etc)
- Based on sustainable repositories of research data

How to make it happen

- Infrastructure
 - Trustworthy repositories
 - Appropriate modes of research community accountability with respect to standards, uses, access, rights management ...
 - Pilot studies to prototype workflows, identify issues, etc.
 - Lots of researcher commitment

Researcher input

- Securing funding, ethics approval etc
- Creating archivable recordings
- Securing commitments to sustainability from repositories
- Creating adequate metadata records and submitting work to repository
- Indexing, translating, transcribing, more fieldwork ...

Wangga "book" to be published by SUP

- Allan Marett, Linda Barwick, Lysbeth Ford - based on 20 years of fieldwork
- Hundreds of song texts in seven different languages with interlinear glosses, translations, musical and social analysis, linked to images (photos and diagrams), audio, video
- Currently in data preparation phase

Repository relationships

- Served out of Sydney eScholarship repository (archive quality originals will be secured)
- Similar model to conference volume
- Harvestable hence discoverable online (Google scholar etc)
- Variety of possible presentation formats including conventional publication, CD ... (print-on-demand)

Recent developments

- Reassessment of the role of ethnomusicological archives and transcription and analysis
 - community collaborator demand for repatriation of archival sources
 - demand for ethnomusicological input into crossdisciplinary research teams
 - Obsolescence of analogue recordings - need for ethnomusicologists to participate in process of transforming our research materials and methods
 - Need to interoperate with European-style and American-style research collections

Responsibility to future generations

Audio and video recordings will be the major sources for the future musicological scholarship of this century But the recordings available for research and enjoyment in one hundred years may be very few, and may only reflect the commercially viable and popular parts of the world's 20th century repertoire ... By not taking action to preserve their collections, ethnomusicologists are reducing the variety of musical performances available in the future.

Seeger, A. (1996). Ethnomusicologists, Archives, Professional Organizations, and the Shifting Ethics of Intellectual Property. *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 28, 89.