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RESEÑAS / REVIEWS

Jason Toyne and Byron Dueck (eds): *Migrating Music*. London and New York, Routledge, 2011. 256 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-59448-6

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The terms music and migration have been increasingly associated in recent years after earlier evocations of music and race (e.g., Radano and Bohlman 2000; Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000). *Migrating Music* (2011) brings together insights from music and diaspora studies to better understand complex musical translations in a cosmopolitan perspective. Echoing critical debates on the notions of diaspora and cosmopolitanism, the editors prefer the term migration to focus on the increasing number of in-between spaces produced by transnational flows of people (e.g. Côté-Real 2010; Kiwan and Meinhof 2011). While this focus on globalized localities challenges binary dependency relations of ‘minority’ with ‘majority’ communities, on the one hand, it also brings to light new representations that contest, negotiate or adjust previous definitions of society, on the other. Beyond problematizing issues of ethnicity, authenticity, nationalism and western cultural hegemony, a better perception of the ways in which the politics and cultures of local communities are “derivative of the very discourses they seek to interrogate” is needed (Erlman 2008: 20). By stressing the dimensionality of culture rather than its substantiality (Born and Hesmondhalgh 2000: 6), musical practices can be disengaged from institutional cultural policies or national ideologies. *Migrating music(s)*, Toyne and Dueck argue, may well be “the most salient mode of performance of otherness to mutual others,” transcending other expressive forms of cultural

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behavior. But, how to analyze them?

The division of the book in four main parts —‘Migrants’, ‘Translation’, ‘Media’ and ‘Cities’— aims to tackle that question conceptually. Each section is prefaced by one of the editors (Dueck for parts 1 and 4 and Toynebee for parts 2 and 3) to connect the thirteen individual contributions to the four themes, while the editors’ general introduction frames the volume theoretically. Toynebee, a media sociologist specializing in ethnicity and postcolonial practice, and Dueck, an ethnomusicologist researching the role of musical experience in public cultures (both at the Open University) have gathered an interdisciplinary team of scholars, who are primarily based in the United Kingdom, as well as in the Netherlands, France, Finland, Turkey and Canada. Martin Stokes, Carolyn Landau and Laura Steil have contributed to the ‘Migrants’ section; Antti-Ville Kärjä, Laudan Nooshin and Keir Keightley to the ‘Translation’ section; Ruth Finnegan, Kevin Robins, Jan Fairley and John Baily to the ‘Media’ section; and Kristin McGee, Helen Kim and Sara Cohen to the ‘Cities’ section. Their contributions originated in a 2009 SOAS conference that focused on the BBC World Service.

In the introduction, Toynebee and Dueck point out that theories of mobility, travel, flows and scapes (Gilroy, Clifford, Appadurai) have become commonplace to talk about transfers and circulation of people, objects and expressive practices in the global age. Ethnographic understandings of such migrations, they argue, can and should defy fixed notions of culture. In addition, the editors contend that neoliberalism has greatly impacted musics both by increasing the relocation of people and by introducing new communication technologies and cultural industries. In their opinion, these ongoing reconfigurations have created structural inequalities by privileging ‘western music’ flows over south-south collaborations. They also indicate that a growing societal climate of fear regarding difference, with rising populist racism and overt opposition to migration, has increasingly essentialized understandings of culture, music and identity.

As an antidote to these rather pessimistic notes, Toynebee and Dueck focus on the resilience, agency and mobility of migrant musics. They argue that globalizing discourses have come to acknowledge the contradictions inherent to cross-cultural appropriations, mass-mediated mediations and cosmopolitan fusions. Framing their thinking through Taussig’s 1993 notion of mimesis, Toynebee and Dueck contend that cultural actors often appropriate difference through music. Especially in postcolonial contexts, both dominant and subordinate groups may utilize mimesis as a strategy for assimilating ‘potentially threatening’ alterity and, in so doing, obtain

power over that other; in this respect, mimesis is quite similar to Bhabha's (1994) concept of mimicry. While arguing that Taussig's theory re-instantiates difference instead of creating sameness, the editors are skeptical about the existence of epistemologies able to transcend these power structures.

In part 1, Dueck connects migrants to three interrelated social bearings: imageries, public spaces and social intimacy. He understands imageries as the result of people's shared sense of affiliation, either to extend to the homeland or to overstep national and ethnic boundaries. Categorizing music and dance as embodied, expressive, sacred or ethically motivated social imageries, Dueck contends that migrants use public spaces for strategic musical interventions, either through (potentially confrontational) public performances, or by (less invasive) publicity, broadcasts and recordings. Why, then, he asks, are certain sounds (and not others) perceived to be migrant musics? What determines whether they represent 'pleasurable encounters with alterity' or 'disturbing signs of foreignness'? And how can cultural policies effectively approach this otherness? According to Dueck, one possible answer is to investigate actual people active in music production and reception beyond the official or dominant music broadcasting channels.

The individual contributors definitely share this belief. Focusing on transnational and -religious musical developments in Malta, Turkey and the Mediterranean in the 1990s and 2000s, Martin Stokes discusses the rise of mass-mediated forms of religious music and the reappropriation of public spaces for sacred activities by formerly disavowed migrant populations. Carolyn Landau builds on a single biographical account to explain how music consumption mediates the experience of a Moroccan individual as he migrates between France, Britain, Denmark and Canada. Laura Steil examines the expressive practices of the danse afro scene, which connects young black, French-born Parisiens with previous links to R&B and hip hop to a notion of Africa, pointing out that this transnational community is torn between innovation and cultural authenticity.

In part 2, Toynebee argues that translation is key to hybridization processes, as it explains socio-cultural change in a migratory context. Nevertheless, he attributes limited contestational capacities to translation because of power hegemonies that may have persisted since imperial or colonial times. Criticizing the 'mimetic excess' of musical tropes, Toynebee instead favors reflexivity approaches to migrating musics.

In her contribution, Laudan Nooshin links the political context of Iran during Ahmedinejad to the specificities of its underground music scenes. Illustrating the ways in which local rappers

utilize the notion of 'ghetto' as a discursive trope while rapping in their native tongue, Nooshin makes clear how the genre's transposition from the U.S. into Iran has implications for music censorship and issues of sociability. This stands in contrast with Antti-Ville Kärjä's article, in which Finnish rappers reflexively downplay rap's contestational role, and instead use mockery to create ambiguity vis-à-vis their national identity. Finally, Keir Keightley highlights bossa nova's hybridization beyond Brazil's borders in the 1960's through an analysis of one song's successive incarnations. Keightley shows how this Brazilian cultural 'feeling' has since become globally associated with adulthood, in part beyond local voices or subaltern interests.

In part 3, Toynbee contextualizes mobile privatization as a means for migrants to stay in musical commune. He argues that diaspora is fully mediated in the 21st century as digital formats allow people to move (with) their musics and use the Internet to connect to those at home. While physical agents play key roles in moving musics, radio keeps being a vitally important channel for their dissemination, be it on a low band frequency or through audio streaming and podcasts.

The contributions of Kevin Robins, Jan Fairly and John Baily deal with the BBC World Service in the last quarter of the 20th century, the early 1990's; and the 2000's, respectively. Being a radio broadcaster himself, Kevin Robins pays homage to the late Charlie Gillett and Robin Denselow for their engagement in promoting world music, by showing that their ethical judgments, enthusiasm and 'good enough cosmopolitanism' were fundamental in expanding musical horizons. Similarly, Jan Fairly represents radio broadcasters as optimistic discoverers, facilitators, and 'would-be sharers' that mimetically evoked sounds and places. She refutes negative perceptions of these professionals, who were accused of reproducing unequal social status among musicians and producers. Illustrating how radio can empower its audience, John Baily depicts the Afghan Service's instrumental role in airing the music of the Afghan diaspora before financial cuts brought it to an end. In particular, the call-in format of the program Zamzama allowed Afghan women to contribute to the transmission anonymously. Baily points out that the musical programming balanced between musical innovation in the new context and Afghanistan's tradition. Finally, Ruth Finnegan analyzes musical mediations on the Fiji Islands in 1937, 1978 and 2009. She concludes that Fiji's media may constitute a public sphere between the state and family, balancing between a shared publicness and a variety of imaginaries across ethnic communities.

In part 4, Dueck describes metropolitan areas as ideal breeding grounds for musical hybridization. Indeed, cities have come to offer a stage for migrant populations, which may eventually fuse with local music discourses over time, thus influencing publics, markets and

imageries. Dueck convincingly argues that mimesis can serve as a descriptor for musical appropriations.

In her contribution to this last section, Kristin McGee shows that international jazz circuits are still dominated by the artistic output of New York City. She depicts a Dutch jazz conservatory that invites New York jazz teachers to transmit their ideology and bebop style, thus paradoxically conveying a prominent European role to their Dutch students. Helen Kim illustrates the ways in which cultural producers of South Asian heritage have recently embraced R&B and rap through discourses of urbanness, despite a problematic transposition from these genres' U.S. origins to the realities of the British Asian working class. In a similar sense, Sarah Cohen maps the ways in which social and genre divisions in Liverpool's Cavern Club in the 1960s corresponded to spatial divisions, and how musical mimesis worked across national and racial boundaries.

In conclusion, *Migrating Music* successfully renders strong case studies that are logically woven into a simple but solid conceptual framework. The volume's key concepts, musical cosmopolitanism and mimesis, permeate the individual contributions, and elucidate how the discursive construction of musical and cultural domains is used to either exercise or contest power. The editors do not shed institutional critique as they point out that contemporary media have increasingly marginalized and politicized cultural difference. They argue that the emphatic technological determinism, which resulted in the BBC world seminar cuts, was a mistake, as it shifted away from acknowledging otherness and thus undermined democracy's cosmopolitan values. Toyne and Dueck have delivered a strong reference tool for under- and postgraduates with crossdisciplinary interests, providing lived experiences to shelter, encourage and develop our curiosity and citizenship for the musical unknown.

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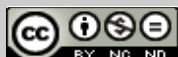
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Cita recomendada

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