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The Secularism of Music Studies

Jim Sykes

Why does power need glory? If it is essentially force and capacity for action and government, why does it assume the rigid, cumbersome, and “glorious” form of ceremonies, acclamations, and protocols? What is the relation between economy and Glory?

– Giorgio Agamben¹

Political Theology and Formations of Music History

In his book *The Kingdom and the Glory*, Giorgio Agamben reconsiders Carl Schmitt’s famous thesis that “all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts.”² Schmitt, a committed Nazi, sought (as Carl Raschke puts it) “to revalidate somehow the pre-modern assumption that political absolutism had its own kind of legitimacy, if it had the warrant of religious transcendence.”³ Agamben argues that there is in fact a second paradigm of sovereignty also operative in early Christian political theology, the “divine economy” or *oikonomia* (“an immanent ordering—domestic and not political in a strict sense—of both divine and human life”).⁴ To stick with Raschke’s summary of Agamben a bit longer, he suggests that the origins of the second paradigm lie “in Jesus’ proclamation of the ‘kingdom of God’”:

On the one hand, “kingdom” (*basileia*) signifies unconditioned divine sovereignty, but as the Great Commandment implies, and Jesus’ own *radically relational* interpretation of what it means to be a participant in the “kingdom,” it also connotes limitless mutual obligations that we have to each other, a form of a *familialism* reaching infinitely beyond the limits of blood, kinship, and any particular, concrete “household.” It was under the influence of

Christianity and the writings of Saint Paul that the classical notion of *dike* morphed into the broader, “cosmopolitan” ideal of what nowadays we term *social justice*.⁵

Trinitarian doctrine sought to resolve how God could be complete, infinite, and pure while existing on earth in limited and material form.⁶ Here is Hippolytus’s description of this (as summarized by Watkin):

The Father is one, but he is two persons, Father and Son, and then there is a third, the Holy Spirit. The third mediates between Father and Son, first in that the Father gives orders which are performed by the logos revealed in the Son. Then the Son, through belief, is accorded to the Father as the one who performs the Father’s will. In other words economy, the Holy Spirit, is a doubly mediating articulation that does not actually reconcile Trinitarian and Gnostic theology but solves the age-old theological problem of how God’s will is actuated on the earth without undermining all the elements of God’s power, such as omniscience, atemporality, the will of good resulting in the existence of evil etc.⁷

The heavenly army of bureaucrats—that is, the angels and clergy—act to dispense, manage, and produce the glorification of God, making humans aware of his providence, leading ultimately to their redemption in the kingdom of heaven. The central

observation of Agamben's book is that "the apparatus of the Trinitarian *oikonomia* may constitute a privileged laboratory for the observation of the working and articulation . . . of the governmental machine" because it shows modern sovereign power in its "paradigmatic form."⁸ What Agamben finds in each era is an "empty throne" whose power is dispersed, managed, and legitimized through glory to produce consensus. He likens the economy of salvation to the modern media's ability to produce and retract glory in secular democracies ("the acclamative and doxological aspect of power that seemed to have disappeared in modernity").⁹

In a stunning argument that should give music scholars pause, Agamben locates music at the very center of the early Christian *oikonomia*. This is because music is central to the production of glory that is bestowed upon the sovereign by liturgy, ceremonies, and acclamations, the purpose of which is to "cover with its splendour the unaccountable figure of divine inoperativity."¹⁰ Glory fills the "unthinkable emptiness" left in the wake of divine inoperativity (i.e., the empty throne), but in so doing, it is also what "nourishes and feeds power (or, rather, what the machine of power transforms into nourishment)."¹¹ Thus, Agamben asks, "what is a politics that would not be of government but of liturgy, not of action but of hymn, not of power but of glory?"¹² The empty throne of the sovereign who is glorified through the divine economy that acts on his behalf to redeem humans is fully revealed as inoperative after redemption, when what will remain is "a hymnological hierarchy": the angels, "left without act or praxis as God's will has been completed so that he is, yet again, pure

Being without any further act, represent through their songs of praise, God's inoperativity (he no longer needs to act on earth)."¹³ Note the *causal* power of music in this production of sovereignty—music acts to provide "cover" for the sovereign's inoperativity—yet note also that Agamben does not perceive music as doing anything to humans, society, or God here, since music-as-glory is revealed in the end merely to *represent* divine inoperativity. (Notice the dichotomies in Agamben's phrase "not of action but of hymn, not of power but of glory.") Paradoxically, music in this conception lies at the center of the *oikonomia* but is noneconomic, without action and without power.

"Inoperativity as the dimension most proper to God and man" reaches its apotheosis in the Jewish Sabbath and Christian Sunday, when all work ceases.¹⁴ To my ears, the celebration of rest—which in churches and synagogues has long featured uses of song to glorify God—is the origin of Western society's notions of music as transcendence, epiphenomenon, and an alternative to normative labor. Musicological scholarship has often located these concepts in the emergence of the Western classical canon in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the value of Agamben's text is not just that he shows how going back to early Christian political theology allows us to grasp their Christian origins. Rather, it is that he demonstrates the signal importance of music-as-glory, music-as-non-normative labor, and music-as-noneconomy to Christian tradition, concepts that (I strive to show in this essay) become firmly integrated into the modern Western ontology of music in secular form but have been much less discussed by music scholars than the historicization of

transcendence and the musical works that (I contend) derive from them.¹⁵

At this juncture, I want to question whether Agamben is not taking a modern view of music and projecting it onto early Christian political theology – for surely the role of music in early Christian theology is more complex than he makes it out to be. Music’s role throughout diverse Christian theologies today is emotive, redemptive, salvific: music transforms the interior state of a person. For the early church fathers, though, music’s value lay in large part in the sense of unity that monophonic choral singing facilitated, conceived as a mimicking of the angelic choirs.¹⁶ Music was granted as a concession to human weakness, since God does not need singing – perhaps music, then, was “nourishment” more for people than for divine sovereign power.¹⁷ The value of music-as-glory lay, I suggest, not so much in its legitimization of God’s power but in the spiritual discipline it facilitated for worshippers: music in this conception moves to the sovereign as glory, but it also points from the angels to the individual who pours open their soul within the social unit of the choir, offering “one’s whole spirit as incense.”¹⁸

I suggest music was a critical part of the early Christian economy of salvation (and not just a representation of divine inoperativity) in at least one other sense. In virtue of music’s role as a smokescreen for divine inoperativity that is conceived as a representation of angels’ hymnody (labor conceptualized as nonlabor), it actively shapes the *oikonomia* itself: this is because music works toward redemption by doing away with divisions between humans (ethnic, national, cultural, gendered, etc.) in a way that presumes Christianity’s universality but is hierarchical since it places

those who are not Christian on the outside. Consider the political theologian Shane Akerman’s statement that

the sacred liturgy is . . . not only a public act of the Church, but also one that sets itself in opposition to the narrowly nationalistic public space of the state. As one moves up the vertical axis, participating more profoundly in the worship of the angels, then one’s horizontal reach is also widened. All of creation is called inward and upward in the participation of the worship of the triune God.¹⁹

The German theologian Erik Peterson describes this ontology of musical salvation in terms that would horrify any ethnomusicologist: “every type of ethnic singing, folk music, and national anthem eventually succumbs to its inevitable decline.”²⁰ The result is that “it is worship that predates governmentality and worship that will outlast it.”²¹ God is eternal while cultural practices and governance, giving rise to difference and violence, are transitory and ultimately superseded: “the government is nothing but the brief interval running between the two eternal and glorious figures of the Kingdom.”²² This veneration of music-as-inclusive-inaction diverts attention from its active exclusion of those who think otherwise.²³

We might ask why Agamben takes the early Christian presentation of liturgy as laborless and powerless at face value, viewing only what music does inwardly (it is a smokescreen for divine inoperativity) rather than outwardly (it excludes through its ideology of inclusion). The reason, I contend, is that our modern ontology of music carries forward these notions of music-as-glory, music-as-non-normative labor, and music-as-representation from

early Christian political theology. This makes it difficult for thinkers who have grown up in that tradition to analyze music outside of its concepts (this is why many keen musical listeners and thinkers can read the phrase “not of action but of hymn” without batting an eye). It becomes difficult to see what music is *doing* to Others through a framework that assumes music doesn’t do anything to Others. Or, to put this another way, the ontology positions music as having a community-forming capacity through the idea that music, which does not really do anything but bestow glory and serve as an antidote to normative labor, can be a way for a community to understand itself.²⁴ Music’s ability to divide one community from another, its ability to connect to Others outside a community, its ability to be a form of mundane and everyday labor, its way of relating directly to nonhuman animals and God(s), its efficacious powers to plea with and cajole the divine—these and similar concepts (widespread outside Abrahamic religions) are expressly avoided in the Christian paradigm that (as Agamben demonstrates, albeit accidentally) undergirds many modern assumptions about what music is and how to think about it.

Secular Resonance

In this essay, I provide a framework for registering the enduring presence, if not dominance, of concepts from early Christian political theology—music-as-glory, music-as-noneconomy, music-as-non-normative labor, music-as-representation, and music-as-salvation—in the secular methodologies of music studies.²⁵ I propose (1) that Agamben’s analysis demonstrates the widespread tendency for Western scholars to recursively use concepts from the early

Christian ontology of music, personhood, and devotion in secular form to analyze those concepts’ development in Western history (as well as musics that developed outside Christian influence). I call this tendency “secular resonance” and contend it has shaped music studies—indeed, much of music history around the globe—in its (in His?) image. The notion that music’s primary function, given its presumed “inaction,” is to form community and bestow glory upon it or individuals, especially through festivity (as a presumed break from normative labor) and through music’s ability to serve as a representation of a community’s beliefs, has a Christian (perhaps more specifically, a Protestant) heritage.²⁶ To be clear, my aim here is *not* to call out scholars who inadvertently use this Christian-derived ontology when it is inappropriate to do so, but rather to gain a basic understanding of how it came to shape (and continues to shape) formations of music globally and in music scholarship (including ethnomusicology) through the process I call secular resonance. (2) I argue that secular resonance, in taking music’s representational capacities at face value—in presuming the legitimacy of music-as-non-normative labor that builds community through its capacity for a shared experience of salvation—has long obscured music’s function as an economy in the structuring, hierarchical, familial, and political sense (*oikonomia*), including between humans and nonhumans, and between humans belonging to different communities.²⁷ (3) I contend that in secular modernity, music-as-glory became redirected away from God, but the early Christian theological conceptualization of music—expanded via Protestant-influenced secularism to include a community’s supposed emerging

in “private reason”²⁸ via a “scene” defined by symbols that represent and mediate musicians’ and listeners’ actions—remains marshaled (such as through the culture concept) as an inclusive methodology that excludes through its transformation of difference.²⁹

In celestial mechanics, “secular resonance” describes a type of orbital resonance in which the rotation (or “precession”) of a celestial body gradually becomes synchronized with a larger body, typically a planet, over a duration of a million years or more.³⁰ This use of “secular,” pertaining to “characteristics that change slowly over time,” derives from an old definition of secular as “a long duration” that was once widespread in scientific fields from economics to geology. It is from the late Latin *saecularis* (“worldly, pertaining to a generation or age”),³¹ which, as Charles Taylor and many others have shown, developed into “secularism” through the medieval European notion of secular as “worldly” activities not considered sacred.³²

I use the term “secular resonance” here in the first sense above: it is a process of slowly bringing the sounds of Others into the orbit of the Christian ontology of music, even when the latter has been firmly secularized, through an influence that is barely if at all noticeable. Music-as-glory and music-as-salvation, I suggest, double themselves in terminology like “music and nationalism” and “music and ethnicity,” slowly transforming musical difference into Christianity’s likeness.³³ Marilyn Strathern calls this “the duplicate”: when we demarcate the concept “knowledge,” for example, it produces knowledge; through such doubling, concepts come to occupy “both an object position and subject position in relation to itself” and thus “subject and object cocreate one another.”³⁴ In music

studies, “the question as to what constitutes knowledge is going to be intimately bound up with the question as to what constitutes relations.”³⁵ This is not just because we investigate the relations between people and their music, nor because we must consider ourselves as researchers in relation to the people and musics we study. If we frame our methods only in these ways, we are already performing secular resonance since we will leave out relations between (say) people and their neighbors, God(s), nonhuman animals, plants, ritual objects, and the like—all of whom/which have been shown to be relevant (if not generative) for musical actions the world over—while assuming that music functions as a representation and expression of the interior state of the peoples who made it. What needs to be a focal point of scholarship is how those who think otherwise have engaged this Western conception of music-as-nonrelation (music defines who is on the inside of a boundary, not how those within a boundary relate to those outside), music-as-noneconomy (music is an expression of an interior state, not an action that produces personhood through exterior relations with Others), and music-as-nonlabor (music is a way to blow off steam, as entertainment and/or devotion). This can be achieved only by avoiding our own imposition of the Christianized secular ontology of music in our documentation of the otherwise. By “secular resonance,” then, I mean the process through which our musicological vocabulary doubles itself to eliminate the types of relations from music history that contradict Christian political theology’s ontology of music and its myriad doublings (through the ages) that have come to shape music studies. The legacy of secular resonance, I suggest, has been: (1) a decline of music’s social power (“not of action but of

hymn, not of power but of glory”); (2) the sedimentation of a notion of musical labor as non-normative that affects musicians’ livelihoods (sometimes positively, though more often, I suggest, negatively); and (3) an enormous transformation in global conceptions of “musicianhood” that mimic early Christianity’s eradication of pagan ontologies of music.³⁶ To be clear, I am not making the endlessly repeated suggestion that scholars need to better place music in its social context. Rather, I am making the claim that when we do so, we tend to utilize conceptions of music and personhood derived from an early Christian political absolutism that ignores the potential for the second paradigm of Christian theology to reach outside itself and wind down our secularized, Christian-derived exclusionism, the result of which would accord more closely with what Raschke calls (above) “social justice.”

**Ancient Christian Musics:
“Drastic or Gnostic?”**

I turn now to addressing the yawning gap between those who study European musics from the medieval era to the present and those who study musics of the ancient world (mainly classicists). For what lies between is the historical transition to Christian hegemony articulated by the church fathers. Nowhere has the Christian theological paradigm of music been more pronounced in silencing musical difference—nowhere has our secular resonance been more prolonged and powerful—than in the near-total erasure of “pagan” (ancient Greek and Roman) musics from Anglo-American music studies. In writings by musicologists coming from the “American school,”³⁷ ancient Greek and Roman musics have

often been “cleaned up,” celebrated for their mathematics, morals, and cosmology (in a secular manner), removing them from their well-documented (by classicists) attachment to sacrifices, processions, and religious cults. Alternatively, ancient Greek and Roman musics are studied on their own terms, mainly by classicists, typically at a distance from early Christian music or the *longue durée* history of Western music.³⁸ Surprisingly underresearched are the efforts of the church fathers to ban pagan musics and instruments from the church.³⁹ This foundational exclusionism of Western music history, indeed the whole era of transition from ancient musics to Christian dominance, is routinely skipped over or barely mentioned in music textbooks, and it is virtually absent as a scholarly specialization in Anglo-American music departments.⁴⁰ It is as though those of us who work in Anglo-American music studies believe that very little of interest happened for four or five centuries (or more) after the birth of Christ (I must admit, I long assumed so myself).⁴¹ In my experience, a reason often given for this temporal gap is a “lack of sources,” so it bears emphasizing that there are thousands of texts in Latin and Greek (and myriad other languages, like Aramaic) that survive from the period. Such sources are detailed enough about daily life, for example, that they have led classicists to study the sounds and smells of ancient cities.⁴² The musicological gap here strikes me as akin to scholars of (say) thirteenth-century Europe or Asia skipping over the Mongols because they can’t sympathize with their worldview; the problem, I suggest, is that we have trouble taking the pagans’ side in the story of the emergence of Christian

musics. Musicologists who come to this early material often do so *because* they are Christian and intend to study the growth of that musical tradition (a Strathernian doubling). The blame can be spread around to include ethnomusicologists' commitment to ethnography and their general lack of interest in this subject matter, as well as the methodological tendency for music scholars studying ancient music history to research Christian musics qua Christian musics rather than their communal encounters with Others. The point I want to drive home here is that when the fundamental violence of the break with pagan ontologies of music is not acknowledged, the Christian musical ontology appears as something that early Christians simply assented to—I will describe this below as a Protestant ontology of music projected back in time—rather than a world-historical transformation in what music *is* that was brought about through the disciplining efforts of the church fathers and early Christian music itself.

I do not have space to consider the church fathers' disciplining of music here in much depth. I point readers to two sources: Johannes Quasten's *Music and Worship in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* and James McKinnon's *The Temple, the Church Fathers and Early Western Chant*.⁴³ Both are obscure and, in my experience, not discussed much (if ever) in Anglo-American music departments. Both are old: Quasten's book is based on his 1927 dissertation submitted to the Catholic Theology faculty at the University of Münster, with the English translation (now out of print) appearing just in 1983; McKinnon's book, published in 1998, is based on his 1965 dissertation.⁴⁴ Quasten's book begins with several chapters

on music in Greek and Roman sacrificial rituals and cults—here are the opening lines of his chapter 1:

The legends and myths of nearly all pagan peoples have sought to explain the elaborate use of music in their worship by indicating that *the art of music was a gift of the gods to men*. . . . According to the view which was most widely held, it was *to the gods themselves that music was pleasing*. This is how Tibullus, for example, interprets the connection between music and worship. In keeping with this is the explanation Horace gives for sacred music when he calls it *a means of appeasement* which, like the fragrance of incense and the blood of animals, *disposes the gods to act favorably toward men*.⁴⁵

Even according to the Christian theologian Quasten, then, the foundations of Western music history lie not in the theorization of scales, or Platonic or Aristotelian notions of music and morality, or the harmony of the spheres, or chant or polyphony, but in music's use as a gift to the gods: music in the earliest moments of Western history is fundamentally relational, conceived not as an expression of an interior self or identity, but as a means to cajole, plead with, and appease divine sovereign power. If a retort to this claim is that such an ontology is a "prehistory" to Western music, that it disappeared in the wake of Christianity, bears little resemblance to Western music history today, and thus does not constitute what defines Western music history, we must note that you are then defining Western music history as founded upon and equivalent to the growth of Christianity. But this line of thought makes two rather extreme assumptions: first, that the shift to Christianity was willingly assented to by the bulk of the population, and thus was a choice that is reflective of a broader civilizational

identity; and second, that dissenting voices and ontologies did not persist and do not also define Western music history over the *longue durée*.

Now consider how Clement of Alexandria (d. ca. 215 C.E.), in his *Paidagogos*, felt “called to take up the struggle against the ‘music of idols’”:

When a man occupies his time with flutes, stringed instruments, choirs, dancing, Egyptian krotala and other such improper frivolities, he will find that indecency and rudeness are the consequences. Such a man creates a din with cymbals and tambourines; he rages about with instruments of an insane cult. . . . Leave the syrinx to shepherds and the flute to superstitious devotees who rush to serve their idols. We completely forbid the use of these instruments at our temperate banquet.⁴⁶

Arnobius (d. 330), in his *Adversus nationes*, “advises the pagans” thus:

You are convinced that the gods are pleased and influenced by the sound of brass and the blowing of flutes, by horse races and games in the theaters and that, as a result, the wrath which they have conceived at one time or another is quelled by such satisfaction. To us [Christians] this seems out of place. In fact it is incredible that those who far transcend every kind of virtue should find pleasure and delight in things that a reasonable man laughs at and which no one appears to enjoy except little children or those who have been poorly and superficially brought up.⁴⁷

The polemic goes on and on like this for a couple hundred years—the ancient sources read not much differently from today’s Muslim reformists’ banning of instruments (with whom there are indeed shared roots in ancient Greek philosophies

stating that music leads to licentiousness). According to McKinnon, early Christians blamed poor behavior on instruments and their condemnation should not be taken to mean they were not performed in the early church. By the third and fourth centuries, however, due to mass conversions to Christianity, instruments became more directly associated with pagan rites and strictly forbidden on those grounds: “Where aulos-players are, there Christ is not,” John Chrysostom (d. 407) states.⁴⁸ The Christian liturgy was advertised as a “sacrifice ‘worthy of God,’ in sharp contrast to pagan sacrifice.”⁴⁹ McKinnon notes that “the attitude of opposition to instruments was virtually monolithic even though it was shared by men of diverse temperaments and different regional backgrounds, and even though it extended over a span of at least two centuries of changing fortunes for the Church.”⁵⁰

Despite such strict proclamations by the church fathers, Quasten claims, early Christian worshippers resisted giving up aspects of pagan musical worship:

The more Christianity expanded among the pagans, the more difficult it became to hold fast to “adoration in spirit,” as Christ had asked for. No longer did it suffice merely to offer the people a substitute for pagan sacrifice and cultic music . . . in the singing of psalms and hymns. Now apologists had to work against the people’s attraction for customs that they had grown to love.⁵¹

The struggle was made more difficult because “even the Jews, God’s chosen people, had made great use of this art [i.e., instrumental music] in their liturgy.”⁵² Ephraem of Nisbis (d. 373) expressed anxiety that worshippers might relapse into pagan musics:

Today, to all appearances, they sing psalms as God has ordained, and tomorrow they will eagerly dance as taught by Satan. . . . Let it be far from you that today you listen attentively to the reading of the divine Scripture as one loving Christ, and that tomorrow you listen to lyreplaying as a criminal and a hater of Christ.⁵³

Gregory of Nazianzus (d. 390) “had to impress continually upon his flock the fact that the playing of the tambourine had been replaced in Christian liturgy by hymnody, while the psalms took the place of other songs.”⁵⁴ In the fourth century there was a move against allowing women to sing in Christian worship, which Quasten suggests was due to their prominence in Gnostic rituals.⁵⁵

Why present the outlines of this violence against pagan musics here? I am struck by how, through the many years I have spent in music departments in the United States (and two in the United Kingdom), not once have I heard anyone ask about the mass ontological transformation in music forced by early Christianity, nor question the impact this had on the language we use to study music today. Meanwhile, the language that emerged through Christian theology (much of it stemming from Judaism)—representation, expression, salvation, noneconomy, and so on—is often taken as the default assumption about what music *is*, while Western music history—analyzed through those very concepts—is defined precisely as a story about how those concepts won out. Regardless of one’s valuation of this history, it still seems to me that a scholarly discussion on this history of suppression should be had, from outside of the musicological terms that were born by Christianity itself. Yet the only

two academic books I found on the social history of music in this era were published long ago and are now out of print. In sum, I am not saying no one currently researches this (I do, after all, spend a lot of time with ethnomusicologists), but in my experience, few music scholars specialize in this era, and it seems that few of us feel we need to care about it.⁵⁶

My aim here is not to vilify Christianity nor any particular scholar, but rather to point this out as an example of secular resonance—in this case how nominally objective, secular scholarship may carry with it a Christian bias in how it defines Western music history, who the protagonists of that history are, and what its operative terminology and ontology consist of. I should also stress it is not my aim to argue that music needs to be revived as an accompaniment to the sacrificing of bulls. Rather, I am suggesting that by failing to recognize the depth of these struggles over the ontology of music within Western music history—which would amount to admitting that many in the Western past resisted what is now the “orthodox” ontology of music in the West—“Western music history” becomes a story about how Christianity worked inclusively in the West, in opposition to perceived external Others (e.g., Muslims as the boundary with the West), rather than an acknowledgment that Christianity worked hard to exclude internally (i.e., non-Christians in Europe; and those deeply Othered by the Christian ontology of music, such as drummers).⁵⁷

As a drummer from the West, I know all too well that the “Otherness” the church placed on percussion continues to define drummers in the West today (consider the early drummer joke from Paul the Apostle: “If I speak with the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy

gong or a clanging cymbal”; Corinthians 13:1). The hegemony of the voice over drumming surely extends to music scholarship—I consider this a key secular resonance—as though the voice is more fundamental to what it means to be human, a Judeo-Christian-derived tendency reinforced by the fact that music scholars these days often grow up in an atmosphere that privileges the voice over drumming (another secular resonance). The fear of drumming’s evident relationality outside the bounds of community has always appeared to threaten disorder (such as in the colonies, whether in the United States, where drumming was banned for slaves on plantations, or in South Asia, where the British regulated processional drumming through permits) and of course has long been racialized, with characterizations of Africans as talented at rhythm and drumming in opposition to European music defined as melodic and vocal.⁵⁸

The hegemony of sheet music as the premier source for historical musicology in that field’s opening decades, particularly with regard to the study of early Western music, was another key secular resonance that is necessary to mention here. The problem was not just with the formalistic approach it allowed but that the use of sheet music (a form of representation) to generate scholarly representations of music history is a form of “doubling” (in the Strathernian sense above) that uses a particular object (sheet music) and the discourse about music it generated to study the growth of music itself as a historical phenomenon. I am not suggesting that formalism has a genealogical relationship to Christian ontology, but rather that it lent a veneer of secular objectivity to a method that was bound to position Christian musical

ontology and subjectivity as normative for the foundation of Western music. The point was registered by Rousseau long ago in his *On the Origin of Language* (1781), which Jacques Derrida (in his *Of Grammatology*) sums up thus: “The history of music is parallel to the history of language, its evil is in essence graphic.”⁵⁹ Rousseau’s complaint was that sheet music facilitated greater distance from the tetrachord system of ancient Greek music, which he romanticized as closer to speech; leaving this romanticization aside, I can rephrase this to say that early sheet music and its doubling in secular music scholarship was a key mode through which pagan musical ontologies became marked by absence and taken to constitute a non-normative aspect of the “identity” of Western music history.

Carolyn Abbate’s famous article “Music—Drastic or Gnostic?” urges musicologists to turn to performance (for which, following the philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch, she uses “drastic” as a shorthand) as opposed to a focus on gleaning the meaning of a musical work through hermeneutic analysis (which, following Jankélévitch, she calls “Gnostic”).⁶⁰ On the one hand, I am echoing Abbate here by suggesting music scholars need to better recognize how early Christian music played this disciplining, transformative role (for surely that was “drastic”), thus lessening our reliance on treating sheet music as a “neutral” source that provides a window onto early Christian musical meaning (“Gnostic”). On the other hand, I named this section after Abbate’s article to point out that any online search for the term “Gnostics and music” brings up her article rather than any study of what the actual Gnostics—those stigmatized insiders/outsideers to Christianity—did with music. Perhaps it is time for music

studies to be *both* drastic and Gnostic, by which I mean we need to consider the dissenting ontologies of music in the West during the period of ascendance for orthodox Christianity (and beyond).

Colonialism, Culture, and Political Liberalism

Talal Asad's writings on secularism have been vastly influential in the academy but underrecognized in music studies. Thus it bears mentioning that his famous demarcation is between "the secular as an ontological-epistemic formation, secularism as a political doctrine about the separation between religion and politics, [and] secularization as simultaneously a historical process and a sociological thesis."⁶¹ As Sabah Mahmood puts it, the secular "is not simply the organizing structure for what are regularly taken to be a priori elements of social organization—public, private, political, religious—but a discursive operation of power that generates these very spheres, establishes their boundaries, and suffuses them with content, such that they come to acquire a natural quality for those living within its terms."⁶² Thus far, I have been proposing a framework for thinking about "the secular" in music studies as "a domain of historically constituted and variably related behaviors, sensibilities" related to (and reproducing) early Christian notions of music, experience, personhood, community, and discipline through nominally secular methodologies like the study of early sheet music.⁶³

Asad's *Genealogies of Religion* explains that the idea that religion has an autonomous essence allows us to view it as a transhistorical and transcultural phenomenon.⁶⁴ In modernity, he claims, this resulted in the assumption that Protestant Christian

understandings of religion—as based on "inner states rather than outward practice,"⁶⁵ defined as "a matter of symbolic meanings linked to ideas of general order,"⁶⁶ and as a set of beliefs one assents to—are universally applicable to all religions. Such a perspective, Asad argues, has a Protestant Christian history and ignores the role of institutional power and discipline, which needs always be situated in its unique social and temporal context. In light of Asad's critique, I would like to return to my earlier point about the persistence of a Christian ontology of music and ask whether formations of the secular in music studies utilize *Protestant* Christian understandings of music (even when studying the distant Christian musical past), and if so, how these might differ from the early Christian theology of music described via Agamben. But before turning to this, I want to consider secularism as a political phenomenon, because I believe doing so is necessary to grasp the ways the Christian theology of music in its Protestant guise spread globally, including its shaping of ethnomusicology.

Sociologist José Casanova argues that capitalism and racial exclusions laid the foundations for secularism: alongside 1517 (Martin Luther's reforms), he believes an important date was 1492, both as a signifier of the general period in which Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain "to create a religiously homogenous realm" and "the beginning of European global colonial expansion initiated by the Iberian monarchies."⁶⁷ It was in the wake of all this, Casanova writes, that the management of new confessions in Europe allowed states to increasingly centralize their power. As Kenneth Dean and Peter Van der Veer note, for Casanova, the Reformation and Counter-Reformation are best described

as creating the conditions for nationalism through state-controlled religious confessionalization processes involving ethnic or religious communal “cleansing.” Where adherence to a national (or a territorially divided and nationally supervised) church was a prerequisite to full belonging.⁶⁸

Through this process, they write, “religious imaginings of majoritarian belonging [became] crucial to the formation of the multiple forms of secularity and secularism.”⁶⁹ Religious innovations usually happen in cities; after all, “pagan” originally meant “country bumpkin,” since the earliest Christians were in cities.⁷⁰ Urbanization does not necessarily lead to a drop in religion when those from rural areas move to the city and become cosmopolitan.⁷¹ In many cases the result is rather the development of overt ethnonationalisms in which urbanized elites use religion in the public sphere to rewrite a nation’s music history. We can see this, for example, in India today, where the trend to “Hinduize” Hindustani music elides the influences of Others (particularly Muslims and the lower castes). Even in a comparatively tolerant country like Singapore, the notion of equality between races (liberalism: each must act equally in accordance with the law) has pressured communities into “rationalized” expressions of religion due to the need to maintain orderliness in public space, resulting in pressure to eradicate practices like trance.⁷²

In this way, the relationship between music and secularism becomes a mode of communal identity formation that produces notions of essential difference between ethnic and religious groups. Traditional

music, now metonymic for community and mobilized as a “transhistorical and transcultural phenomenon,” serves as “proof” of communal differences and a community’s willingness to conform to liberal demands for equality. This Protestant secularism in “traditional music” resembles a Lacanian process of identifying “lack” in the Other—those having to rationalize their religious musics to conform see a lack of concern for the “real” (i.e., efficacious, trance-inducing) traditions from the state, while those on the side of the state see a lack of modernity in the former—and each side looks to the law (including state-driven discourses on cultural authenticity rooted in state funding and nationalist displays of culture) to safeguard its rights in virtue of having authentic practices. This drives an “archive fever” to find and prove the authenticity and ancientness of practices.⁷³

This intimate attachment between music and identity—the transference of music-as-glory and salvation to non-Christian settings around the globe—should be understood as emerging from the imposition in the colonies of the trifecta of political liberalism, secularism, and the culture concept. As numerous scholars of South Asia have shown, in British colonies like India, public space became masculinized and assigned as the rightful place of the market, while private space became feminized and considered the domain for formations of culture and religion.⁷⁴ This echoes Charles Taylor’s claim that the Protestant revolution, in conjunction with the growth of science and capitalism, appears to have promoted a detachment of religion from public life that made religion appear more about community and communal values.⁷⁵ In

turn, music could easily be taken as representative of a community's culture rather than being efficacious, public, and relational; religious processions, in this view, are not gifts to gods that plead with and cajole them into action but the public emergence of a community and its already-formed culture expressing its identity in public. Mahmood puts it this way:

. . . the inescapable quality of secularism in part emanates from the structure of the modern liberal state, which promises to demolish premodern forms of hierarchy in order to create a polity where all citizens are supposed to be formally equal in the eyes of the law. This promise, we might recall, was linked to a foundational critique of ascriptive inequality and a recalibration of particularistic forms of belonging. The modern political subject had to subordinate fealty to his religion, locale, and clan to loyalty to the nation-state. A key dimension of this transformation was the legal and political elaboration of the public-private divide, which was an important source for elaborating other modern distinctions such as secular/religious, political/civil, and universal/parochial.⁷⁶

In promising to “demolish premodern forms of hierarchy” to produce equality under the law, liberalism emerges as secularism's version of Agamben's second paradigm of early Christian political theology, since the mandate to accept equality requires leaving one's differences behind to be included in a social context that claims neutrality but is, in fact, transformative and exclusionary.

The result has *not* been the total rationalization and disenchantment of music. In many former colonies, the anticolonial elites of an earlier generation

gave way to those invested in efficacious ritual practices and religious revivals that have merged with ethnonationalists' uses of music-as-identity to drive contemporary politics. Certain secularized musics partake in the “magical elements of state sovereignty,” helping produce the “sacrilized nation” in secular form.⁷⁷ What *has* resulted, however, is a collapsing of cultural practices into a relationship with ethnicity that obscures their histories of connection between Others. This, I contend, is the global legacy of the Christian ontology of music-as-glory, music-as-representation, and music-as-salvation.⁷⁸

In looking at “music and secularism,” then, I suggest we need to avoid collapsing it into a study of how sacred music traditions become disenchanting or hidden in private spaces; rather, we should look at how the *work* of secularism, in public spaces, institutes “Protestant secular” beliefs about the human, God, causality, space through the law, capitalist development, and “tradition”—the result being that cultural practices become “ethnicized” and conceptually lacking in “relations” with Others. It is precisely this formation of the secular that we “double,” I suggest, when we write about “music and ethnicity,” “music and nationalism,” and the like. My point is not that we should refrain from studying such topics; rather, I suggest that when we presume the naturalness of music-as-salvation and music-as-noneconomy and mobilize it to conceive of what music *is* in relation to identity formation, we are producing a secular resonance that investigates a formation of the secular from within the vocabulary the secular has made available to music studies—a language that is heavily Christianized in secular form.

Capitalism and “Protestant Secular” Music Studies

Rather than celebrating divine sovereignty, music today glorifies the individual (as composer, musician, band, listener, or community in isolation), while sovereignty is equated with a lack of institutional or divine control (small government) and work ethic (as Weber famously showed). Akin to Asad’s critique of Protestant secularism (above), music is now a matter of lifestyle, rife with symbols that stand for what the person or community “assents” to, which mediate actions (e.g., long hair, rock, free love). Also “Protestant” is that the privileging of music as a personal choice turns listeners into consumers and obscures the disciplining role of music on the body by institutions (record labels, high schools, venues) and inscriptions (e.g., films). Music still glorifies inoperativity since it is viewed as a temporary release from labor (time off work, when one “blows off steam”); even when economic success is achieved through music, it remains conceptualized as an alternative to real labor (not a “normal job”). Thus, as with early Christianity, music-as-glory continues to serve as a smokescreen for its own labor. But now this operates via commodity fetishism, since the social labor that influenced the compositional process (yielding the musical “product”) is obscured in favor of the genius-star-sovereign whose glory is bestowed by fans and managed by bureaucratic figures (the new *oikonomia*)—first the conductor, sheet music publisher, concert booker, and musicologist; then the record company, record producer, music video director, and so on; and in our times, the solitary electronic musician at her laptop who is at once a musician, composer, manager, and promoter (the apotheosis of

neoliberalism). In the neoliberal era, each musician is her own *oikonomia*, dispensing and managing her own glory, with the necessity of a vigorous work ethic marketed by institutions (e.g., websites charging you for distribution) as a musician’s personal choice to be independent from institutions (e.g., record labels). Music as freedom from normative work undergirds our notion of music as the celebration of human achievement and culture, severing music’s relationship to our natural environment except as aesthetic inspiration (where music serves to represent nature or present a composer’s feelings toward nature) and eliminating the notion that we labor through music for others rather than just as an expression of ourselves.

Meanwhile, in music studies, this Protestant secular musical ontology allows for the seeming translatability and mutual comprehension of differing conceptions of sound, personhood, community, and territory, “binding” and “tying” bodies and sounds together so that they appear in sync like planets in orbit, consumable in the classroom today amid a musical marketplace dominated by phenomena like “the playlist” (secular resonance).⁷⁹ As with Asad’s discussion of “religion,” the positing of “music” as a universal category likewise positions it as having an autonomous essence—allowing us to view music as a transhistorical and transcultural phenomenon—when we look for it in particular contexts. Conceived as a neutral framework, a search for “music” tends to utilize the Protestant secular understanding of it as lifestyle when discussing an individual or musical product in the capitalist marketplace, while the communal, ethnicized framework (described in the prior section) is used for “traditional” and

“classical” musics around the world but excludes the Western classical canon.

Between these poles of the individual and community, curiously, lies the Western classical canon as formulated by some long-canonized musicologists, of whom I’ll name Carl Dahlhaus as a preeminent example. The idea of *relation* emerged for such scholars as *internally* valid through highlighting (some might say fetishizing) the listener-music-transcendence relation—a Christian extrapolation if there ever was one (as some of them admit). Once again, music-as-glory presents itself as welcoming and inclusive but excludes any perspective that might claim external relations. This ideological opposition to the social—the idea that recognizing the social is a bastardization of the music which, though nominally secular, is treated as an object that must not be profaned—was perhaps most infamously expressed by Charles Rosen in the hostility he showed toward Tia DeNora for her sociological study of Beethoven’s genius.⁸⁰ Viewed as potentially debased by the market and linked to ethnic identity only by reference to the *Volk* who could be referenced within the abstracted work, the pretense to secularism (in scholarship on the canon and the canon itself) greatly loosened as scholars (of that era) became enthralled with how Western classical music produces Christianity from within the supposedly secular space of its performance—what has been termed “secular enchantment.” Consider Dahlhaus’s statement that “even Beethoven’s symphonies [became] ‘religious’ music, since they represent an evolutionary stage at which the ‘ever-drifting World Spirit’ has transmuted clearly the defined Christian beliefs into previsions of the ‘marvels of a distant realm.’”⁸¹

It is a sign of how far we have come that Abigail Fine (in this special issue of the *Yale Journal of Music and Religion*) locates the roots of Dahlhaus’s (and the canon’s) secular enchantment rather than simply using it as her mode of analysis:

The politics of canon formation mirror secularity because canons emerged at the intersection of sacred and secular, through a constellation of practices known as *Kunstreligion*, or art-religion. In the nineteenth century, cultural heroes like Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart became surrogate saints for the liberal elite, for whom *Bildung* was grounded in an amalgam of religious practices: Catholic sainthood, Lutheran Pietism, and Jewish educational ambition, all latent behind the smokescreen of secular self-improvement.

No longer a smokescreen for divine inoperativity, music became “the smoke-screen of secular self-improvement,” taking on many of religion’s material components. The term *Kunstreligion* (art-religion), Fine says,

refers to a set of concepts at the intersection of German Romantic philosophical idealism, Catholic revival, and a growing interest in Eastern religions in the early nineteenth century. Its roots in musical thought have been traced to early Romantic writers like Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder and Friedrich Schleiermacher, who sacralized the listening experience as a form of devotion and likened religious feelings to a “holy music” (*heilige Musik*) that should accompany secular life.

Fine shows that some Jewish intellectuals hid their roots and conformed, while others rebelled against the “Christian secularism” of the canon by adopting Marxism—“a satisfying surrogate for

national consciousness” since it appreciated “the collectivity of human achievement by Jews and non-Jews alike.” The struggles of Jewish composers and critics to assimilate to the secular canon’s Christian underpinnings, Fine argues, demonstrates that *Bildung* failed to offer the secular space it promised. The same process of exclusion through inclusion identified above in the erasure of the pagans and Gnostics from music history, and through the imposition of secularism and liberalism in the colonies (and of course also missionization), thus happened similarly in Europe at the heart of the classical music canon through the assimilation or exclusion it mandated of Jews. The message of the Western ontology of music seems always to be: you can join us, but only if you listen (and think) as we do.

The Special Issue

The six essays in this special issue mark a turning point in music studies’ engagement with secularism because they refuse the types of facile secular resonance described above. More important, they demonstrate how musicians are combating the exclusions of Christianized secularism as it dominates various public spheres, particularly in tandem with neoliberal capitalism.⁸²

Braxton Shelley’s essay considers Rev. Dr. William Barber’s role in the “fusion politics” of the North Carolina-based Moral Mondays movement, through which he aimed to produce “higher ground” following the enactment of Tea Party–influenced policies by the state’s Republican legislature, which gained control of both branches of state government in 2010 and the governorship in 2012. Speaking at largescale protests, including the 2014 Historic Thousands on Jones Street March, when 85,000

people gathered, Barber problematized the boundaries between the sacred and secular through his use of “Blackpentecostal breath”⁸³—“jeremiads” that are situated “at the intersection of political speech and ecstatic sermon.” In Barber’s performances, sounds that are highly characteristic of black sacred rhetoric are recruited to “critique the oppression wrought by contemporary social orders.” What I am interested in here is how Barber’s refusal of secularism is a refusal of the secular resonance between the ethics of neoliberal capitalism and white, conservative, evangelicalism that positions itself as embattled but actually dominates the “neutral” public sphere:

By claiming that various features of a governing program are immoral, Barber seeks to deny the system the legitimacy on which it depends, suggesting that this interruption is the most effective affront to the extant structure. As he names protest in these moral terms, Barber aims to invalidate the injustices that are naturalized by market capitalism, the persistent inequity that is explained away as evidence of personal irresponsibility, asserting that there is also a public responsibility. If neoliberalism is a political theology, then it is differently vulnerable to theological critique.

Reverend Barber produces an inclusive universalism akin to the second paradigm of early Christian political theology outlined at the start of this essay—a radical relationality necessary for social justice.

In Andrew Mall’s essay, liberal, white Christians come together to combat the toxic mix of neoliberal and conservative evangelical hegemony. The Beer & Hymns movement—which fosters community through the singing of Christian hymns in bars and festival settings—allows for

those who left the church to engage in their nostalgia for hymnody and childhood, while calling on others who simply enjoy hymns to gain a sense of togetherness in the wake of neoliberal isolation. The event brings Christian singing into public space, but it also somewhat divests Christianity from hymnody by situating it in a secular setting. Here the theology of music-as-salvation remains but has been transferred to “Protestant secular” notions of the self and community. Though less overtly political than Barber’s jeremiads, the Beer & Hymns movement also challenges the secular resonance between neoliberalism and evangelicalism by aiming to be “as welcoming as possible, and in doing so to recognize that faith identities are multivalent and problematic, and that no matter your religious beliefs, baggage, or lack thereof, singing hymns can be fun.” Here Christian music becomes a welcoming “secular” public expression of the longing for relationality that, ironically, refuses the Christian absolutism dominating the “secular” public sphere in the United States.

Shobana Shankar’s essay explores how Hindus in Ghana have responded sonically to Christianity’s dominance in Ghana’s public sphere. Though Ghana is a secular state and safeguards the right for people to join different religions, Pentecostal Christians have had a large influence on defining religiosity in the public sphere, and according to Shankar they tend to look down on Ghanaian Hindus as idol worshippers. Hinduism is positioned by its Ghanaian practitioners as a return to “tradition” that liberates some senses Christianity has kept down, though Ghanaian Hindus have reshaped certain mantras in the wake of Christian influence, adopting some musical practices not found in India. This is the third

example in this special issue of how secular public space is dominated by a hostile and conservative evangelical Christianity, leading to particular compromises and refusals by those who think otherwise.

In Oksana Nesterenko’s essay, these dynamics are reversed: in the former Soviet Union, the government and public sphere were defined by atheism and so Catholicism came to signify a radical otherness that signified the possibility for freedom, relationality, and community. In the 1970s, composers like Alfred Schnittke, Sofia Gubaidulina, and Arvo Pärt turned toward Christianity, a move that happened, as one pianist of the era quipped, because “the flavor of life forced everyone to go to church.” Nesterenko highlights the emergence of a theme that has productively dominated discussions of secularism in music studies, “secular enchantment,” and, through the music of Vyacheslav Artyomov, an attempt to revive religion in public spaces in the wake of state atheism.⁸⁴

What appears at stake in these essays is oppression rather than religion per se: whatever exclusions come to dominate the public sphere call forth sonic protests for inclusion and respect for difference. Religious musics become vessels, or perhaps I should say efficacious offerings, that have the potential to produce social justice through relationality outside the bounds of community.

Conclusion: From “The Other” to “The Otherwise”

While I have been critical of secular resonance throughout this article, adopting the normative, Christianized, secular musicological language is not always misplaced, and in fact is often impossible to move beyond for good reason. This

is because secular resonance in many places has become something like what Mauss called a “total social fact” and thus created the conditions many of us study. For example, if we are able to trace a line from certain anticolonial and postcolonial constructions of music as national culture in newly independent states to colonized intellectuals whose notions of culture have a clear genealogical relationship to the Herderian paradigm of folk music as communal and national expression (Herder was a Lutheran pastor), it follows that scholarship on those postcolonial traditions may need to utilize concepts that emerged from and reproduce the inherited Christian musical ontology in secular form that they are being used to analyze. But this does have the effect of making our Christianized, secular musicological concepts – which today have an astounding global ubiquity – appear to be what music is *in nature*, a tendency that is of course another secular resonance.

Secular resonance becomes more noticeable and important to flag as a tendency to avoid when one is doing research with communities that have not been shaped by it. Thus it is not so easy to ask, has music studies moved beyond secular resonance or does secular music studies remain a “fugitive way for [Christian] religion to survive”?⁸⁵ What is more appropriate, to my mind, is to ask, have we learned how to move beyond secular resonance for those contexts when our inherited Christian musical ontology is inappropriate? I believe we have indeed made significant improvements, though a discussion is outside the bounds of this article. Suffice it to say here that despite the rather polemical tone of this article, I acknowledge that music scholars of all stripes have been chipping away for

decades to make available the perspective on secular resonance that I present here (which is not to say they would agree with all my assumptions and formulations). Some noteworthy examples, to name a few stretched out over the past few decades, include Philip Bohlman’s historicization of Herder’s identity paradigm; Georgina Born’s mobilization of Alfred Gell’s anthropology of art in a music studies framework, which treats art objects as having agency on the viewer; Tamara Levitz’s convening of the “Musicology Beyond Borders?” colloquy in a special issue of *JAMS* that she edited; and Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier’s work on ontological difference in colonial Colombia. Each of these works helps us move beyond secular resonance, even if they do not use that term.⁸⁶

I should also be careful to avoid my own secular resonance by unwittingly attributing to the Christian secular ontology a global dominance that it does not have. Many countries in the world are not secular, and in many societies where secularism is state policy, many sounds and musics remain largely untouched by secularization. There are also places where Christianity is not dominant in state-driven secularism (for example, the imposition of the Islamic conceptualization of God on Balinese Hindus by the constitutionally secular Indonesian state).⁸⁷ Lauren Osborne shows in her essay in this issue that Christianized secularism is not a force that positions qur’anic recitation in Oman. Her study highlights the bureaucratic, governmental, and economic (i.e., cultural differences in how sound plays a role in any given ordering, “domestic and not political in a strict sense—of both divine and human life”).⁸⁸ Rather than the transformation of religion, Osborne shows that, on the

one hand, technologies like the internet are tools through which the Omani state promotes traditional ways of reciting and memorizing the Qur'an. On the other hand, the modern state is "secular" (the official place of Islam in Oman notwithstanding). Religion here again adopts the mantle of "culture" and is presumed to be an important component of Omani identity, history, and heritage. Religion and secularism are thus not naturally opposed. Rather, the secular state and new technologies in Oman become means through which religion is at once newly situated and traditionally reinforced through governmentality.

These are important points for scholars of music to keep in mind as we increasingly turn to sound studies: for, as Jonathan Sterne famously showed, the West's "audio-visual litany" is of Christian heritage.⁸⁹ This ordering of the senses "idealizes hearing (and, by extension, speech) as manifesting a kind of pure interiority. It alternately denigrates and elevates vision: as a fallen sense, vision takes us out of the world. But it also bathes us in the clear light of reason."⁹⁰ This is a "metaphysics of presence" that, Robin James notes, "we get from Plato and Christianity: sound and speech offer the fullness and immediacy that vision and words deny."⁹¹ But when scholars turn to sound but retain the idea that it produces immediacy and is necessarily opposed to vision, she notes, they actually double down on what the discourse on sound is intended to supplant: the hegemony of Christian framings of the senses – which is to say, they produce secular resonance. As Elizabeth Povinelli puts it, in terms that echo my description of secular resonance, "What is initially dispersed noise comes to enclose itself through self-reference (and thus an initial this-that differentiation),

creating its differential qualities and skin, and, in the process, pulling in and altering that which surrounds it."⁹² Following Povinelli, I suggest we might strive to move beyond "the Other" *per se* in music studies – beyond thinking that what is needed for equity in music studies is simply a greater representation of difference according to the terms of our Christianized secular ontology – and move toward a better respect for what Povinelli calls "the Otherwise." This would amount to being more careful about inadvertently forcing the Otherwise through the sieve of the audio-visual litany, but it will also require avoiding what Povinelli calls "the cunning of recognition" – the tendency for liberal multiculturalism to require minority groups (such as in courts of law) to act traditionally.⁹³ In other words, moving beyond secular resonance is not a process of naming authentic traditions that are seemingly beyond the grasp of modernity, for doing so has long been the task of ethnonationalist movements that, paradoxically, appropriate such traditions through the colonial-derived framework described above (and thus their own secular resonance).

In sum, just as ecomusicology reinforces a boundary between nature and culture when writers demarcate a seemingly enclosed concept of "nature" there for study (as Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier has argued),⁹⁴ positing religion in music studies as "a distinctive space of human practice and belief which cannot be reduced to any other" is a formation of the secular.⁹⁵ In saying this I mean no ill will toward this journal; rather, my aim is to issue a warning for scholars of music who think the topic of secularism is irrelevant for their research if they do not study

religious musics. To sequester the study of secularism and music in journals of “music and religion” would be another secular resonance. Furthermore, when we position Christian musics (vis-à-vis the public and private spheres) as the ground level for our investigation of music and secularism—as I suggest we tend to do—we position what is actually a globally specific case for thinking about music and secularism as the norm. Christianity is unique for the study of “music and secularism” because the religion’s notions of salvation, glory, and representation already define the normative secular ontology of music, so what emerges from such studies is an emphasis on the public/private placement of religion rather than the misrepresentation and elimination of ontological difference that occur when the normative secular ontology is applied to non-Christians. This hiding of the transformative power of Christian-derived concepts of music studies that occurs through their doubling—even when “music and secularism” is the topic of study—is of course another secular resonance, a binding and tying effect that, over a long period (*saeculum*), transforms difference.

A more interesting question than Agamben’s that leads off this essay—why does power need glory?—is to my mind its opposite: why does glory need power? The secularization of music and music studies removes music from the formal/societal institutions that gave it power in order to position music-as-representation as the will of a sovereign individual (musician, composer, listener) removed from social obligations. In some cases, such as when music-as-culture works to eliminate caste discrimination in India, this can be a good thing.⁹⁶ But too often around the world, I suggest, musical labor loses its value as part of an ordering economy or *oikonomia* and becomes valued merely as the production of a self seemingly removed from relations to Others. Power comes from relationships; the British queen is nothing without her subjects. Once conceptually removed from the production of political and social power—viewed as being situated *in relation to* politics and *in* an economy rather than always already being a political economy—music is reshaped into what it is not in nature: merely representative and not causal.

NOTES

1 Giorgio Agamben, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), xii.

2 Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006 [1922]).

3 Carl Raschke, “Forget Schmitt! Political Theology Must Follow Agamben’s ‘Double Paradigm’ of Sovereignty,” *Political Theology* 19/1 (2018): 2.

4 Agamben, *The Kingdom*, 1.

5 Raschke, “Forget Schmitt!,” 3 (his emphases).

6 William Watkin, “*The Kingdom and the Glory*: The Articulated Inoperativity of Power,” *Res publica: Revista de filosofía política* 28 (2012): 248–49.

7 Ibid., 209. Philo of Alexandria remarks that God made the Word “to stand on the border and separate the creature from the Creator” (cited in *ibid.*). As “the divine principle that mediates between the ultimate God and the created world,” the Word (*logos*) achieves its creative and forceful capacity through vocalization—it is a performative utterance in the classic Austinian sense. As religion scholar David Brakke puts it, “it is God’s voice that brings the world into existence,” for “according to Genesis, God created the universe by speaking: ‘Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light’ (Genesis 1:3). David Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 60.

8 Agamben, *The Kingdom*, xi.

9 Ibid., xii.

10 Ibid., 163.

11 Ibid., 244.

12 Ibid., 166.

13 This is Watkin's summary of Agamben. Watkin, "The Kingdom," 252.

14 Agamben, *The Kingdom*, 239. "Sabbatism is the name of eschatological glory that is, in essence, inoperativity" (ibid., 240). Agamben points us to a passage from John Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, which he translates as "What other inoperativity then is there, except the kingdom of Heaven, of which the Sabbath was an image and type?" (ibid.).

15 My work here builds upon a sea change in musicological scholarship that is swiftly moving past this earlier emphasis of the new musicology in varied ways. See, e.g., Olivia Bloechl, *Opera and the Political Imaginary in Old Regime France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017). It will be useful at this juncture to provide a comparative example of a sacred music tradition where the relationship between personhood, musical labor, and the causality of sound is of a wholly different cloth. Consider South Indian Tamil culture, where the *periyā mēlam* ensemble performs daily service inside Hindu temples, and where Dalit drummers traditionally perform the stigmatized *parai* drum as a service to the upper castes at funerals. (See William Talotte, "Improvisation as Devotion: Nāgasvaram Music and Ritual Communication in Hindu Temple Festival Processions," *Ethnomusicology Forum* 27/1 [2018]: 88–108; and Zoe Sherinian, *Tamil Folk Music as Dalit Liberation Theology* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014].) It would be wrong to view these musics as acts of devotion that honor gods through music meant mainly for human ears: the *periyā mēlam* is a form of communication "in which musicians perform first and foremost for divine beings" (Talotte, "Improvisation," 89), while the *parai* drives away evil spirits at funerals. Traditionally, both genres are hereditary occupations and thus literally constitute work, even when performed in a festival context. The musics do not "unite" people together in worship per se, as the musics embody and reinforce caste distinctions. I suggest that the ontology of music in early Christian political theology has never been the historic norm around the globe, yet often has been marshaled by scholars to understand non-Christian traditions.

16 Agamben, *The Kingdom*, 235. See also Johannes Quasten, *Music and Worship in Pagan and Christian Antiquity* (Washington, DC: National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 1983), 67.

17 Quasten, *Music and Worship*. 64.

18 Ibid., 54. It is outside the bounds of this essay to fully consider why, in Agamben's mapping of the Trinitarian *oikonomia* onto the modern world, music disappears in favor of media, to which he grants the power of glorifying the sovereign in modern democracies. But by the end of this essay, the reason should be obvious: the Christian-derived, secular ontology of music I describe at length in this article was fundamentally altered in modernity. Music now glorifies individual musicians (or ethnic, religious, national, and other groups to whom music is attributed) as sovereign, rather than God. This means music is now seen as needing to be situated *within* politics or *commenting upon* politics rather than as being foundational to sovereign power (see, in particular, my section on Protestantism below). This is of course not "actually" the case in many Christian contexts (let alone globally), even if it is commonly discursively positioned this way. For example, though it is a Muslim-majority context, consider the case of praise-singing traditions in West Africa, which, as Nomi Dave has shown, continue to play an important role in Guinea in legitimizing politicians. Nomi Dave, *The Revolution's Echoes: Music, Politics, and Pleasure in Guinea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

19 Shane Akerman, "Classical Trinitarian Theology and the Idolatry of Nationalism: The Doctrine of the Trinity as a Critique of Political Theology" (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2020), 54.

20 Cited in ibid., 263.

21 Ibid., 54.

22 Agamben, *The Kingdom*, 162.

23 Christianity differs from non-Abrahamic religions in that it covers up music's active, ordering role in favor of its representational capacities portrayed as celebratory and inactive except with regard to the opening up or transformation of the self. The role of music in Western tradition is different, I suggest, not because of "transcendence"—a generic component of many musical traditions the world over—but because of the Christian-derived refusal to recognize music as a legitimate form of normative labor that performs necessary functions for the operation of society in an everyday, ordering capacity.

24 Below I will argue that this is the origin for the link between music and identity that characterizes so much ethnomusicological scholarship. For a complementary discussion of music and community, though from a very different angle, see Naomi Waltham-Smith, *Music and Belonging Between Revolution and Restoration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

25 Bear in mind that this is a position paper and commentarial essay on the articles that make up this special issue of the *Yale Journal of Music and Religion*, rather than a research article; I have room here just to sketch out the proposed framework. Nevertheless, I hope I can spur readers on to pursue threads from the discussion at greater length.

26 I query the Protestant connection farther below.

27 I mean, too, to point out that music's transformative powers on the individual are not often read as economic—doing so can situate the emotions in larger sociological networks. Recognizing music as part of the *oikonomia* is not simply about recognizing exterior relationality and ignoring interior states (and thus includes a sociological perspective on musical transcendence).

28 Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), 8. Asad writes that “if secularism as a doctrine requires the distinction between private reason and public principle, it also demands the placing of the ‘religious’ in the former by ‘the secular’” (ibid.). He notes that “private *reason* is not the same as private *space*; it is the entitlement to difference, the immunity from the force of public reason” (ibid.; his italics). I return to this idea of Asad's (as it pertains to music) below.

29 Though I am antagonistic in what follows to certain core aspects of musicology and ethnomusicology, my aim here is just to highlight the hegemony of a vocabulary in these fields that I see creating exclusions and to posit its Christian origins; I intend no ill will toward Christianity nor toward my colleagues (indeed, I have inherited this vocabulary as well).

30 See, e.g., Rory Barnes, “Secular Resonance,” in Muriel Gargaud et al., eds., *Encyclopedia of Astrobiology* (Berlin: Springer, 2011).

31 American Heritage Dictionary, 5th ed. (2020), <https://ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=secular>. In ancient Rome, *saeculum* referred roughly to the span of a lifetime, about ninety years; it was used to demarcate the point from a specific event, such as the founding of a city, to when all who were alive in that period would be dead. The *Ludi saeculares* (“secular games”) organized by Cesar Augustus in 17 B.C.E. celebrated the “fifth saeculum of Rome.” See, e.g., Jussi Rantala, *The Ludi Saeculares of Septimius Severus: The Ideologies of a New Roman Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

32 “Secularism” emerged in English in the 1850s “when it was adopted by reformers who regarded the church and capital as the joint enemies of the worker.”

Michael Warner, “Secularism,” in Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler, eds., *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* (New York: New York University Press, 2014), 220. The term was “introduced by utilitarian free-thinker George Jacob Holyoake c. 1851.” Sindre Bangstad, “Contesting secularism/s: Secularism and Islam in the work of Talal Asad,” *Anthropological Theory* 9/2 (2009): 190. See also Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007).

33 It is worth noting at the outset that this process does not have to be fully transformative: local conceptions of the good, personhood, space, sound, and so on can be brought into or even appropriate and transform the Christian secular ontology of music. But such local entanglements need to be documented without subsuming them to the Christianized secular resonance of our normative musicological language.

34 Marilyn Strathern, “Opening Up Relations,” in Marisol de la Cadena and Mario Blaser, eds., *A World of Many Worlds* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 23–24.

35 Ibid., 29.

36 If one's retort to all this is that the perspective I build here is not relevant for the musics you study, I gently suggest that the musics you study have likely been shaped by this Christian ontology that obscures how it functions across its constitutive boundaries as economy.

37 Eleonora Rocconi, “Review: *Apollo's Lyre: Greek Music and Music Theory in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, by Thomas J. Mathiesen,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 54/3 (2001): 645.

38 In her review of Thomas Mathiesen's 800-page opus *Apollo's Lyre: Greek Music and Music Theory in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, classicist Eleonora Rocconi remarks: “The field of ancient Greek music, perhaps more than any other sector of classical studies, has long been investigated by scholars of different disciplines separated by their methodological controversies and goals. On one side are the classicists, who at least in the past have favored only certain aspects of scientific inquiry, principally the metric-rhythmic structures of the ancient lyric and drama, neglecting or minimizing everything else; on the other side are the musicologists, whose approach to this historical period has had as its principal goal that of identifying the roots of medieval and Renaissance music theory, without any real, concrete interest in understanding musical phenomena in their ancient context” (ibid.). Her review, critical of Mathiesen's approach (and the “American school” she takes him to represent), nevertheless saw a rapprochement beginning between these camps at the start of the twenty-first century. Now consider

classicist Alexandre Vincent's recent statement about studies of ancient Roman musics: "Largely ignored by musicologists (for whom 'ancient music' is pre-Renaissance, but still no earlier than the fourteenth-century invention of *Ars Nova*) and treated as a minor subject by ancient historians, Roman music has only recently started to garner scholarly attention" (Alexandre Vincent, "The Music of Power and the Power of Music: Studying Popular Auditory Culture in Ancient Rome," in Lucy Grig, ed., *Popular Culture in the Ancient World* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017]: 149). Though Vincent writes about ancient Rome rather than Greece, his statement demonstrates that the gap between classicists and Anglo-American musicologists identified by Rocconi has not yet been bridged. Consider, for instance, that in the recent (2020) *Companion to Ancient Greek and Roman Music* (Blackwell), of thirty-five contributors, only four are musicologists and all work in Italy. (For a recent bibliography of writings on ancient Greek and Roman musics, see Tosca A. C. Lynch and Eleonora Rocconi, *A Companion to Ancient Greek and Roman Music* [Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2020].) Several exciting developments in the study of ancient Greek and Roman musics have occurred recently outside the purview of Anglo-American ethno/musicology: a new (as of 2013) journal called *Greek and Roman Musical Studies*; a series of conferences on "Soundscapes of the Ancient Greek World" (held at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Greece); and studies of Roman soundscapes and musics by French scholars (see, e.g., Alexandre Vincent, "Une histoire de silences," *Annales: Histoire, sciences sociales* 2017/3: 633–58; Christophe Vendries, *Instruments à cordes et musiciens dans l'empire romain* [Paris: Éditions L'Harmattan, 1999]; and Sibylle Emerit, Sylvain Perrot, and Alexandre Vincent, *Le paysage sonore de l'Antiquité: Méthodologie, historiographie et perspectives: Actes de la journée d'études tenue à l'École française de Rome le 7 janvier 2013* [Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 2015]).

39 There are Anglo-American musicologists who delve into early Christianity, but they tend to focus on Christian musics qua the history of Christianity, rather than on their relationship to pagan musics or the disciplining efforts of the church fathers on pagan musics. Of particular note is the work of Peter Jeffery, e.g., "The Earliest Christian Chant Repertory Recovered: The Georgian Witnesses to Jerusalem Chant," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 47/1 (1994): 1–38; Peter Jeffery, *Re-envisioning Past Musical Cultures: Ethnomusicology in the Study of Gregorian Chant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and Peter Jeffery, "Philo's Impact on

Christian Psalmody," in Harold Attridge and Margot Elsbeth Fassler, eds., *Psalms in Community: Jewish and Christian Textual, Liturgical, and Artistic Traditions* (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003): 147–87.

40 To take one of countless examples, *The Norton Anthology of Western Music*, vol. 1 contains a section on "Music in Antiquity" that runs from pages 1 through 6. The discussion of music in Christianity begins with "Roman Liturgy and Chant" (Gregorian chant) on page 7 and runs through page 50, ending with Hildegard of Bingen, then moving to "Song and Dance Music to 1300," a section that begins with the *Musica enchiriadis*—the ninth-century treatise that systemized rules for polyphony. In this well-known story, Western music appears merely in embryonic form in antiquity through the emergence of music theory, is born fully with Gregorian chant, and finds its adolescent footing with the theorization of polyphony at the end of the first millennium.

41 Happily, two forthcoming volumes appear set to better cross this gap, one of which has a coeditor who is a musicologist (Leach): *A Cultural History of Music in Antiquity (C. 800 BCE–500 CE)*, ed. Sean Gurd and Pauline LeVen (Bloomsbury); and *A Cultural History of Music in the Middle Ages (500–1400)*, ed. Helen Deeming and Elizabeth Eva Leach (Bloomsbury).

42 The last volume of the book series *The Senses in Antiquity* is on sound (Shane Butler and Sarah Nooter, *Sound and the Ancient Senses* [New York: Routledge, 2018]).

43 Quasten, *Music and Worship*; James McKinnon, *The Temple, the Church Fathers and Early Western Chant* (Farnham, UK: Ashgate, 1998).

44 The easiest way for readers to access the breadth and depth of the church fathers' intentional violence against the use of instruments in the early church is to access a 1965 article by McKinnon reproduced online: <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=9134>.

45 Quasten, *Music and Worship*, 1.

46 *Ibid.*, 61.

47 *Ibid.*

48 McKinnon, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=9134>.

49 Quasten, *Music and Worship*, 60.

50 McKinnon, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=9134>.

51 Quasten, *Music and Worship*, 60.

52 *Ibid.* On Judaism and early Christian psalmody, see Jeffery, "Philo's Impact." Instrumental music was prevalent in ancient Judaism but banned after the destruction of the Second Temple. (The

classic source is A. Z. Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy and Its Development* [New York: Dover, 2012 (1932)], 93–97.)

53 Quasten, *Music and Worship*, 140.

54 *Ibid.*, 62.

55 For example, the *Didascalia of the Three Hundred Eighteen Fathers* (375 C.E.) states that women should be forbidden to speak in church, nor should they sing or take part in the responses; they should just be silent and pray. Isidore of Pelusiam (d. 440) notes that women were once allowed to sing but this permission was withdrawn because it was learned that they do not “gain any salutary fruits of penance from divine song, but used the sweetness of melody for disturbances of every kind, since they looked on it exactly the same way as theatre music.” These and more examples can be found in Quasten, *Music and Worship*, 81–82.

56 Interestingly, the battle between Christianity and paganism remains an enduring theme of bestselling books about antiquity. See, for example, Catherine Nixey, *The Darkening Age: The Christian Destruction of the Classical World* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2019); and Charles Freeman, *The Closing of the Western Mind: The Rise of Faith and the Fall of Reason* (New York: Knopf, 2003).

57 Most discussions of musicology’s borders have focused on the West and its external Others rather than Others within the West; for some avenues into the latter, see, e.g., Gary Tomlinson, *Music in Renaissance Magic: Toward a Historiography of Others* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Philip V. Bohlman, *Jewish Music and Modernity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); and Tamara Levitz (convenor), “Musicology Beyond Borders?,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 65/3 (2012): 821–61.

58 Kofi Agawu, “The Invention of ‘African Rhythm,’” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48/3 (1995): 380–95. For British colonial regulation of processional drumming, see my “Sound as Promise and Threat: Drumming, Collective Violence, and Colonial Law in British Ceylon,” in Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson, eds., *Cultural Histories of Noise, Sound and Listening in Europe, 1300–1918* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 141–65.

59 Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 199.

60 Carolyn Abbate, “Music—Drastic or Gnostic?,” *Critical Inquiry* 30/3 (2004): 505–36.

61 This is Khaled Furani’s summary of Asad in “Said and the Religious Other,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 52/3 (2012): 605.

62 Sabah Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 3.

63 Hussein Ali Agrama, *Questioning Secularism: Islam, Sovereignty, and the Rule of Law in Modern Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 7.

64 Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

65 Bangstad, “Constructing Secularism/s,” 189.

66 Asad, *Genealogies*, 42.

67 José Casanova, “Asian Catholicism, Interreligious Colonial Encounters and Dynamics of Secularism in Asia,” in Kenneth Dean and Peter Van der Veer, eds., *The Secular in South, East, and Southeast Asia* (Berlin: Springer, 2019), 14.

68 Dean and Van der Veer, “Introduction,” *The Secular*, 5.

69 *Ibid.*, 2.

70 José Casanova, “Religious Associations, Religious Innovations and Denominational Identities in Contemporary Global Cities,” in Irene Becci et al., eds., *Topographies of Faith: Religion in Urban Spaces* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 114.

71 *Ibid.*

72 Patricia Hardwick, “Celestial Horses in the Lion City: Malay Identity and the Sustainability of *Kuda Kepang* in Singapore,” in *The ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia, Proceedings of the 4th Symposium* (School of the Arts, Penang, Malaysia: Universiti Sains Malaysia, 2017).

73 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Andrew Willford, *Cage of Freedom: Tamil Identity and the Ethnic Fetish in Malaysia* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006).

74 Ritu Birla, *Capital: Law, Culture and Market Governance in Late Colonial India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009); Andrew Sartori, *Bengal in Global Concept History: Culturalism in the Age of Capital* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

75 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2007).

76 Mahmood, *Religious Difference*, 3.

77 Dean and Van der Veer, *The Secular*, 6.

78 Certainly, different societies and religious traditions have their own manners of registering and producing difference; a consideration of how the Western ontology of music-as-identity interacts with Sinhala Buddhist understandings of music in Sri Lanka (which has its own exclusionary tendencies) is a topic of my book (Jim Sykes, *The Musical Gift: Sonic Generosity in Post-War Sri Lanka* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2018]). What is unique

to Christianity (or, perhaps, Judeo-Christianity), I am suggesting, is the way it conceives of music as the outward expression of an inward state taken as inclusive and representative of community. For Buddhists, for instance, the soul does not exist in any stable, transcendent capacity, and thus it is not an indigenous concept that music is attached to or expressive of the soul.

79 Which is to say, the reproduction of consumer desire fostered by music curation and recommendation hides its function not only as a space for institutional surveillance and control, but also as a mode of secular resonance. See, e.g., Eric Drott, "Why the Next Song Matters: Streaming, Recommendation, Scarcity," *Twentieth-Century Music* 3 (2018): 325–57.

80 Charles Rosen, "Did Beethoven Have All the Luck?," *New York Review of Books*, Nov. 14, 1996.

81 Carl Dalhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 183–84. On secular enchantment in music, see Jeffers Engelhardt, *Singing the Right Way: Orthodox Christians and Secular Enchantment in Estonia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

82 Since I discuss Fine's essay in the previous section and Osborne's in the conclusion, I consider just four of the six essays in this section.

83 Ashton Crawley, *Blackpentecostal Breath: The Aesthetics of Possibility* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016).

84 Engelhardt, *Singing the Right Way*; Janaki Bakhle, "Music as the Sound of the Secular," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 50/1 (2008): 256–84.

85 Judith Butler in Judith Butler, Jürgen Habermas, Charles Taylor, and Cornel West, *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012), 72.

86 See Philip V. Bohlman, *Song Loves the Masses: Herder on Music and Nationalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2017); Georgina Born, "For a Relational Musicology," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 135/2 (2010): 205–43; Levitz, "Musicology Beyond Borders?" Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier, *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014). Needless to say, this list is intended just to point toward a long and diverse history of querying canonic formations of music studies—though it is significant that secularism has scarcely been a part of such conversations.

87 June McDaniel, "Agama Hindu Dharma Indonesia as a New Religious Movement: Hinduism Recreated in the Image of Islam," *Nova Religio* 14/1 (2010): 93–111.

88 Agamben, *The Kingdom*, 2.

89 Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 14. Sterne describes a number of ways that hearing and vision are placed in a binary in Western culture, such as: "hearing is spherical, vision is directional; hearing immerses its subject, vision offers a perspective; sounds come to us, but vision travels to its object; hearing is concerned with interiors, vision is concerned with surfaces . . . hearing is about affect; vision is about intellect; hearing is a primarily temporal sense, vision is a primarily spatial sense; hearing is a sense that immerses us in the world, while vision removes us from it." Jonathan Sterne, "The Theology of Sound: A Critique of Orality," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 36 (2011): 12.

90 Sterne, "The Theology of Sound," 15.

91 Robin James, "Look Away and Listen: The Audiovisual Litany in Philosophy," *Sounding Out!* (March 2018), <https://soundstudiesblog.com/2018/03/05/look-away-and-listen-the-audiovisual-litany-in-philosophy/>.

92 Elizabeth Povinelli, "Geontologies of the Otherwise," *Theorizing the Contemporary* (2014), <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/geontologies-of-the-otherwise>.

93 Elizabeth Povinelli, *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002).

94 Ana Maria Ochoa Gautier, "Acoustic Multinaturalism, the Value of Nature, and the Nature of Music in Ethnomusicology," *Boundary 2* 43/1 (2016): 107–41.

95 Asad, *Formations*, 27.

96 E.g., Sherinian, *Tamil Folk Music*.