

General Exam in Ethnomusicology

August 2008

Part I. General Ethnomusicology (Wednesday, August 20, 2008, 9 A.M.–5 P.M.)

A. Two Essays (1 hour each)

Answer TWO of the following three long essays (one hour each)

1. The focus of some ethnomusicologists on specific kinds of mass mediated objects (e.g. cassettes) and the mass spread of certain genres and styles of music across regions and throughout the world would seem to be very different from the focus of American ethnomusicologists at the time the Society for Ethnomusicology was founded. Compare and contrast the aims and goals of the former and the latter. Cite the work of specific scholars and be sure to take account of similarities as well as differences. Use specific repertoires in your discussion.
2. Integrating the analysis of music into a broader analysis of culture, society, or movements therein, has long been a goal of ethnomusicologists. Discuss at least two contrasting approaches to this problem and refer to specific ethnomusicological monographs or articles that make use of these approaches. Avoid placing emphasis on works cited in Part I.
3. Discuss critical trends in the ethnography of musical performance. What do you see as productive new directions?

B. Shorter questions Select four from the following six items. (1 hour inclusive)

1. John Blacking
2. raspiness
3. speech surrogate
4. aksak
5. berimbau
6. Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft

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Part II: World Music

(Thursday, August 21, 2008, 9 A.M.–5 P.M.)

A. Two Essays (two hours)

Answer TWO of the following three long essays (one hour each)

1. In what ways do non-indigenous musical traditions inform representations of indigeneity in Taiwan. Provide examples from Taiwanese music, citing at least two musical genres.
2. Contrast and compare the nature of musical narrative in two of the following genres: Noh, Kabuki, Bunraku, Enka, and Gangtai.
3. Why should ethnomusicologists pay attention to storytelling? How does the study of musical narratives in “East Asia and its extensions” contribute to general ethnomusicological knowledge? What do you consider to be the “extensions” of East Asia from the perspective of musical narratives? How do the connections you trace between East Asia and its extensions feed into your notion of the importance of musical narratives as a topic of study?

B. Shorter questions. Select four from the following six items (1 hour inclusive)

1. prosimetric form
2. model opera
3. kunqu
4. quguan
5. beiguan
6. “Return to Innocence”

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Part III Interdisciplinary Approaches (Friday, August 22, 2008, 9 A.M.–5 P.M.)

Two essays (three hours)

Answer TWO of the following three long essays (1.5 hours each)

1. Analyze a case study of musical interaction (musical-social interaction, etc) using theories of “the gift” as developed by Marcel Mauss and exchange more generally as developed by Malinowski and others.
2. Use contemporary critiques of the culture concept in anthropology to deconstruct the arguments of two musical ethnographies.
3. Discuss the use of the voice and the politics of its performance. Cite and critique appropriate literature.

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Part IV Analysis – Part A

**(Wednesday, August 27, 2008, 9 A.M.–
Thursday, August 28, 9 A.M.)**

In your commentary about the recorded example, you should feel free to engage any aspects of the piece that interest you—e.g., tonal or timbral detail, rhythm, “form” or the emergence of events, ensemble interaction, virtuosity, improvisation, repetition, style—but please attempt to show connections among whatever aspects you choose to discuss.

You may provide, but are not required to do so, any analytical examples you deem appropriate, such as charts or musical transcriptions. If you do transcribe, you are not required to transcribe the entire piece!

You may consult the ethnomusicological literature for historical or contextual information if you wish to do so, but this is not required and should not be the focus of your analysis.

The piece is “Ben Cao Gang Mu” (A Herbalist's Manual) by Jay Chou. The lyrics and other information are provided on a separate sheet.

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Part IV Analysis – Part B

**(Thursday, August 28, 2008, 5 P.M.-
Friday, August 29, 5 P.M.)**

Please choose between Haydn Symphony #46, Second movement (1772) and Takemitsu *For Away*, for solo piano (1973).

Comment analytically on your selection. Your discussion may include brief references to such broad aspects as style, genre, quotations, and historical context, but should focus primarily on providing an analysis of the work. In this analysis, it is less important to give a measure-by-measure account of the entire work than to focus analytically on salient points in the score (discussing meter, harmony, melody, texture, form, etc.) that are relevant to the piece as a whole. You are encouraged to make use of annotated musical examples wherever it helps clarify your argument or substantiate your observations. No reference to secondary literature and library materials is expected for this part of the exam. A recording of the work and scores are provided. Please note that if you choose the Takemitsu, there are two interpretations included on the cd. You may of course also use a piano in the process of studying the score.