

1. Social categories of music

2-way categorization - In 18th century and before the big musical division was between rural and urban music – urban music was closely connected to royal courts – rural music was music of villages and suburbs – Urban music was sung and played by professionals, rural music by amateurs (part-timers) – They encountered one another on country estates (e.g. Estoras) and in suburbs (e.g. Magic Flute)

Over course of 19th century there was more and more commercial music in cities – Especially dance music and songs – sheet music for home consumption – Music in pleasure gardens, restaurants, bars – Theater and concerts open to large audiences - Old 2-way categorization was replaced by 3-way categorization: “Art-pop-folk”

“Art” refers to music of educated elite, “folk” refers to traditional, rural music, “popular” to commercial, urban music - 2nd two can be called “vernacular” - for language: speech of the people (not of the learned class) - For music: “people's music” as opposed to art music

Don't bother with arguments over what category to place this or that piece in – Don't bother with arguments over whether categorization is a good thing or a bad thing – It's been well established since c.1900 and will be with us for some time to come

2. How art music relates to folk and popular music

Art music traditions up to 18th century acknowledged rural music and borrowed tunes and themes (e.g. oboes, drones) – Used mainly as a signifier

Linked in 19th century to nationalism and political ideology (usually democratic) especially German national identity and unification – Romantic folksong collection –

Other countries where folksong collecting was linked to politics – especially opera

Russia – mighty 5

Czech lands – Smetana, Dvorak

Hungary - Liszt

Norway - Grieg

Ireland - Moore

Usual method was to “civilize” rural tunes and fit them into “art” musical structures

Urban popular music mostly ignored – considered “inauthentic” – Occasionally borrowed by mistake

2 big changes in 20th century

1. folk song seen as basis of “modernism” – e.g. Stravinsky

2. Some composers began to relate to urban “pop”

3. Ralph Vaughan Williams – 5 Variants of Dives and Lazarus (1939) – commissioned for NY World's Fair

Example of “nationalism” much like 19th century model

Difference is that V-W also adapts harmonic principles from “folk” music as well as tune – This fits with national project in that modal harmonies and “fantasy” format can also be heard as derived from English music of the Renaissance

V-W (1872-1958) was deeply committed to nationalist project

Folksong collecting and arranging from 1904 - Child

Editing Renaissance English music

Hymn collections

Project of creating English music on this basis

Concept of “available vernaculars” – i.e. what English vernacular music traditions could V-W draw on that signified “England” to his listeners? – ballads, hymns, village dances, music hall, military music, ?? – Note how limited his choices were: mainly ballads and hymns – Was this a conscious or unconscious choice?

The tune “Dives and Lazarus”

Called a “carol” – i.e. vernacular song on religious theme – strophic – often has a refrain –

However this one is constructed like a ballad

V-W encountered in a collection, though he may have heard it performed in villages or perhaps as a hymn – many different versions of words and of tune

READ beginning of text

PLAY “folk” recording”

PLAY 5 Variants beginning – Can you hear tune? – only as skeleton – Piece is organized as “theme” plus 5 “variants” – These aren’t “variations” but elaborations of different versions of the tune – V-W said they weren’t collected versions but rather versions that he remembered
PLAY violin solo c. 7:00 – This is closest to the version we heard sung

4. Aaron Copland – Billy the Kid (1938)

Ballet – commissioned by Lincoln Kirstein for Ballet Caravan –

Relation to Copland’s political beliefs –

worries about modernism

folk songs as communist project

popular front politics

irony of cowboy ballet by Jewish composer from Brooklyn

nationalist project – but with a particular vision of the “nation” (all nationalist projects have limited vision)

What were Copland’s “available vernaculars”? Which did he use?

jazz and dance music

pop song

hymns – traditional, gospel, spirituals

march music

Latin American music, etc. etc.

PLAY beginning of “Street in Frontier Town” – What is vernacular? – Western dance music – Supposed to be a tune called “Great Granddad” – Counter-melody is “Come Wrangle your Bronco” transformed into “Mexican” rhythm (5/8)

Gentle modernism

mixed meters

applied dissonance

orchestrations

PLAY “Open Prairie”

Not based on folk songs or any other pre-existing materials

What makes this sound “American”? – harmonization, hint of pentatonicism, applied dissonance,

Copland created “American” idiom that proved very durable

5. Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959) – Choros #7 (1924)

Example of transformation of urban pop music into art music – Same contexts of modernism and nationalism

Brief bio - Brazilian – From Rio- As teenager supported himself playing cello and guitar in pop music ensembles around Rio – Also theater orchestras – Influenced by ideology of cultural nationalism of Mario d’Andrade, also writings of Bartok – Trips to hear music in Brazilian countryside (but no systematic collecting) – Local reputation as modernist – sponsored by Milhaud and Rubinstein – to Paris in 1922 – In Europe his Brazilian modernist music was heard as “exotic” – very successful – Return to Brazil in 1930 and worked for the nationalist government – International success after 1945

Choro music – Rio pop style from c.1900 through 1940 – Name for ensemble of flute, guitar, cavaquinho (ukelele), percussion and other insts – played serenades and dances – Songs they played called “chorinhos” – Mainly 4/4 time, based on European forms, lively rhythms, syncopations, virtuoso passagework, active bass, modular organization – Villa-Lobos based many pieces on this style and called them “choros”

PLAY “Dinorah”

PLAY – Choros #7 beginning – HANDOUT – Listen for analogies

Do you hear this as “nationalist”? “modernist”? “exotic”?

Does it make any difference that this is based on “pop” rather than a “folk” music?