Teaching World Music in the Netherlands 1983-2003. A cross-cultural investigation into concepts, ideas and practices of music transmission in culturally diverse environments
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Preface

In the course of the twentieth century, the world has witnessed an unequalled democratisation of access to music through radio, recordings, television and the internet. Added to this there was the explosion in travel for business and leisure, and decades of extensive migration. These have rendered most countries culturally diverse for good, both in terms of population, and in the area of arts and culture. Through these developments music of all kinds is being distributed to an extent that could not easily be imagined before: Western classical music, jazz, and many different forms of music from other cultures have come within hearing range of billions of music lovers. The rise of popular commercial music is a subject in itself: by profiting from the technological possibilities of first broadcasting, recording (from EP to LP to MC to CD to MP3), amplification, and finally the marriage of image and sound that has become known as the video-clip, it has become the single most important reference for musical life in most countries, if only in terms of sheer aural consumption.

With these changes, the conditions for the world of music education have changed drastically as well. While Western classical music practice has served as almost the single reference point for the practice and thought on formal music teaching and learning in many countries across the world, and certainly in the international dialogue on music education, contemporary societies are faced with the challenges of cultural diversity in all aspects of life and art. This study attempts to shed some light on some of the issues this has raised in the area of music education, particularly through the rapidly developing presence of what is now often referred to as ‘world music’ in the cultural arena. World music - however it is defined exactly - can no longer be considered a marginal phenomenon. Surveys of the world music scene in Europe by the Federation of World Music Festivals over 2002 result in audience figures of 1,43 million visitors for festivals alone. In addition, trade conferences such as WOMEX provide indications that CD-sales approach those of classical western music, although this is much more difficult to ascertain due to reluctance to divulge trade figures, and a confusion of terminology that will be examined later in this study.

The encounter - and sometimes confrontation - of music with various cultural backgrounds invites (ethno)musicologists and music educators to readdress presuppositions and prejudices on the practices of music making and learning across cultures. This study will attempt to illustrate some of these encounters through a brief, ‘autoethnographic’ account in the rationale of this study. These experiences give rise to closer examination of a number of concepts and ideas that have featured prominently, but often ill-defined and uncritically, in discussions on cultural diversity in music education over the past twenty years, such as multicultural, ethnic, traditional, authentic, contextual, oral, holistic, and world music.
This study addresses these and related concepts, first by an examination of approaches and terminology used, and an exploration of sources in ethnomusicology and music education. Next, a discussion of core concepts such as tradition, authenticity and context, oral and holistic demonstrate how terms are often used in the literature and practice with little expression of awareness of a vast diversity in meaning. This is followed by an analysis of modes and methods of teaching and learning in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. The study culminates in a descriptive model that makes visible a number of the explicit and implicit choices made in music transmission and learning in culturally diverse societies, with the aim of creating an artistic and academic frame of reference for further research, scholarly discussions and decision-making on these subjects.

The model presented here does not pretend to replace existing models of thinking on music education. Rather, it attempts to complement these models by adding new dimensions in making explicit a number of crucial choices music educators make when moulding settings for music teaching and learning in culturally diverse surroundings. In that way, it can play a role in describing, analysing and designing situations and moments of musical transmission that are in line with current thinking on student-centred and competency-based learning. Consequently, it can contribute to creating stimulating learning environments for learners of different backgrounds in the cultural diversity that characterises the environment of music learners at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

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