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## Talking Machine World: Selling the Local in the Global Music Industry, 1900–20

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In the summer of 1920, the *New York Evening Post* interviewed Edmond F. Sause about the state of the international recording industry. Sause was in a good position to answer the query. The middle-aged export manager had begun working in the phonograph trade in 1903 as a basement stock clerk at the Columbia Graphophone Company store in Manhattan. Eventually, Sause became a salesman and store manager. Literally rising through the ranks, he ascended to an office on the twentieth floor of the Woolworth building where he oversaw one of the largest international departments in the business. “Like the sewing machine, typewriter and cash register, the talking machine can be said to be an American product,” Sause told the *Post*. “Its possibilities in foreign trade were appreciated practically from the beginning. While the industry was still struggling in home markets, progress was being made in developing foreign trade. Few American industries can show as large a percentage of foreign trade to its total turnover as the talking machine industry during the last twenty years.” Sause’s comments were brief, yet his message was clear: the phonograph, invented by Thomas Edison in 1877, may have been an American product, but its early history was one of international success and domestic difficulty. What did Sause mean by this? And how does his characterization of the industry force a reconsideration of the history of music, commerce, and globalization in the twentieth century?<sup>1</sup>

First, Sause suggested that globalization and recorded music had been

together almost from the start. This runs counter to most of what has been written about both the phonograph and musical globalization. Standard industry histories focus primarily on the United States with nods to Great Britain, Germany and France. They rarely mention the foreign trade that Sause found so significant to the industry as a whole.<sup>2</sup> The large body of literature about musical globalization, on the other hand, is dominated by discussion of the years since the 1970s, an era noted for the rapid movement of media, people and money, and the integration of global markets. For all of its diversity, recent literature largely agrees that musical globalization is a story of the late twentieth century.<sup>3</sup> Yet Edmond Sause’s comments came after more than two decades of rapid global expansion by the fledgling phonograph industry. In these years, major patent-controlling firms such as Columbia, Edison’s National Phonograph Company, the Victor Talking Machine Company, and its British affiliate Gramophone scrambled to establish markets throughout the world. Companies spread across Western Europe in the 1890s. They systematically expanded into Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe in the first years of the new century. Business grew quickly.<sup>4</sup> By 1910, companies had established sophisticated global networks of production and distribution for their machines and phonograph records. They had recorded thousands of musicians in dozens of countries, and the quantity of “foreign” or “ethnic” records in their catalogs outnumbered domestic releases by a significant margin. The industry’s largest trade journal, founded in 1905, was called *The Talking Machine World*. The title was no mistake. Phonograph dealers and company executives understood themselves as part of a global industry.

Second, Sause implied that there was something wrong with phonograph marketing in the United States. Again, the current literature is of little help here, for it focuses primarily on the internal development of the United States industry. It is only by contrasting the domestic situation to the global scene – something Sause no doubt did regularly – that the United States’ problems come into focus. Sometime between 1901 and 1905, a major split occurred within companies in response to perceived market saturation. Domestic dealers began promoting the *universal* values of Western art music. They attempted to convince American consumers with little interest in the concert hall that they – lo, their very nation – would be better off if they acquired an appreciation for “serious” music. International dealers, on the other hand, developed concepts of *local* music, promoting American technology as a means of listening to native songs and styles. The concept of local music proved a more successful model upon which to build the phonograph business. As Sause implied, touting the universal value of Western music caused the domestic industry to falter. Promoting “serious”

music did not create a nation of art-house patrons nor did it alleviate domestic dealers' fears about the future of their industry. In fact, at the very time that the *Post* interviewed Sause, companies were beginning to apply the local-music paradigm developed by their international departments to domestic markets within the United States. This would result in the national flowering of local music styles during the 1920s. Styles such as African-American blues and rural white "hillbilly" or "old-time" music marked the concerted efforts of these groups to promote their own music as well as American consumers' recognition of the nation's powerful local music cultures. They also signified global marketing strategies coming home to roost.

This story suggests a number of conclusions about the historical relationship between the universal and the local in the global music industry. First, claims about the universal value of Western art music did not emerge in opposition to ideas about local music styles. Rather, strategies of marketing universal or local music arose simultaneously as separate alternatives to earlier, exhausted strategies of marketing the phonograph. They shared a great deal in common, as each was propelled by similar assumptions about racial hierarchy, culture and the marketplace. Second, musical globalization cannot be equated with export Americanization. Although it was home to many of the major phonograph companies, the United States nevertheless experienced the industry's local marketing strategies relatively late, long after they were in place in many other corners of the globe. American culture thus was deeply affected by globalization processes taking place beyond its borders. Blues and country music – for many, quintessential symbols of American culture – arose at least in part from marketing strategies imported from Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Finally, the concept of "local music" itself emerged as a byproduct of the global expansion of commercial music production and distribution networks. In this case, the global created the local. By the 1920s, the concept of distinctive local music cultures had become commonplace and relatively uncontested – a universal assumption shared by corporate leaders, musicians who hoped to participate in the burgeoning industry, and even communities tactically resisting the increasing commercialization of culture.

### Imagining local music: the creation of global markets

When the phonograph business was in its infancy, few involved talked about the meaning of local music. Hardly any talked about music at all. Early advocates thought Thomas Edison's talking machine was remarkable enough to sell itself. *Scientific American* captured some of this excitement

when it announced the invention in 1877. "It has been said that Science is never sensational; that it is intellectual, not emotional," the author began. "But certainly nothing that can be conceived would be more likely to create the profoundest of sensations, to arouse the liveliest of human emotions, than once more to hear the familiar voices of the dead."<sup>5</sup> The writer listed possible applications for the new machine: the recording of political speeches, great works of literature, business correspondence, and famous singers of the day. Possibilities were everywhere – in the business office, in the library, and in children's toys. One thing was certain: there was money to be made.

In the years that followed, dealers scurried to get their products in front of consumers, hoping to cash in on the wonder predicted by *Scientific American*. Nineteenth-century sales efforts focused on placing coin-operated phonographs in arcades, saloons, and other places of public amusement. People were willing to pay a nickel for the spectacle of sound emanating from a box. "When a man can hear the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment Band of New York play the boulangier March, a Cornet solo by Levy, or the famous song, The Old Oaken Bucket, for five cents he has little desire to pay five cents to ascertain his weight or test the strength of his grip," wrote the *Cincinnati Gazette* in 1890. "That is the reason the musical machine has killed the business of other automatic machines."<sup>6</sup> Technological novelty – "arousing the liveliest of human emotions" – got the talking machine industry off the ground.

Early dealers did their job almost too well. By the first years of the twentieth century, many began fearing an industry based on novelty was destined to falter as consumers got used to the talking machine. Past successes bred current failures. Dealers decried "the popular impression that the talking machine is still only a scientific toy, and that anything to which the generic name of 'phonograph' can be applied is something capable of emitting only weird screeches and scratchings without the slightest pretensions to musical quality of tone."<sup>7</sup> The burning question confronting phonograph producers was how to build a consistent market for the invention as initial wonder wore thin.

It was within this context that phonograph companies began expanding internationally. New markets offered new consumers, novices who could still wonder at the marvel of mechanical reproduction. In fact, for many within the industry, the first inkling that the phonograph was becoming a global phenomenon came through echoes of the invention's earliest days: stories touting the arousal of lively emotions upon hearing the voices of the dead.

In 1902, engineer Henry M. Blackwell accompanied a surveying

company building a railroad track through eastern China. Soon after setting camp in a small village along the route, the crew was alarmed to hear "several hundred chattering Chinamen" gathered outside its quarters. The villagers had caught wind that the surveyors possessed a miraculous talking machine, their military escort explained. The crowd was demanding a demonstration. Once produced, the machine "received more reverence than an ancestor's tomb," recalled Blackwell. Events then took a turn for the worse. As Blackwell dropped the needle, there was a pop followed by stone silence. The machine refused to talk. "Muttering arose from the crowd and a spokesman addressed the interpreter, declaring that there had been unfair discrimination and that if their sovereign rights were withheld, they would 'get hung.' When the little file of soldiers attempted to disperse them the uproar became deafening and the engineers rushed out to find an incipient Boxer outbreak." Several tried to storm the house and take the machine by force, but the soldiers held their ground. Eventually, the crowd tired of the scene and dispersed but not before three "ringleaders" had been arrested. Blackwell and his associates worked half the night to repair the machine. They presented a concert of "'coon' songs and comic opera trifles" the following morning to a "grateful, awestruck" audience. Not in attendance were the ringleaders, who had been sentenced to hang by their wrists for 48 hours for their offences. "Every innovation is bound to have its martyrs," Blackwell concluded.<sup>8</sup>

Henry Blackwell's story of technology, wonder and violence was not unique in the early years of the century. Stock narratives of distant peoples' first contact with the phonograph regularly graced the pages of *Talking Machine World*. From rural China to Chilean forests, Alaska to Central Africa, published stories and photographs depicted exotic foreign populations genuflecting before the talking machine. Phonograph dealers fetishized these images of "uncivilized" people marveling at the phonograph. Victor maintained a collection of such photographs that it would lend to various periodicals for publication.<sup>9</sup> These complex texts and images communicated several contradictory messages. The awe-inspiring magic of mechanical reproduction collided with violence and exploitation. Accounts of racial difference and distance – often finding natives worshipping Western technology or men – mingled with portrayals of the phonograph ultimately smoothing uneasy encounters between civilization and primitivism, colonial powers and colonial subjects. Behind all of these images crept the expanding market for music and machines, a force willing to overcome or reinforce cultural difference as the situations dictated but always able to reframe global cultural clashes as opportunities for consumption. The contradictions contained in these images enabled phonograph dealers to interpret them in multiple ways.

First, stories such as Blackwell's fit into larger tropes about the uses of Western technology in the colonial project. The phonograph joined the rifle, dynamite, fireworks and the pocket mirror as a tool to subdue primitive populations. It held a special place in such narratives for it was a technology of culture rather than force, encouraging colonial metaphors of exchange to eclipse those of conquest. The machine provided what anthropologist Michael Taussig calls "spectaculars of civilized primitivism, exchanges of magic and of metamagic satisfying to both primitive and civilized."<sup>10</sup> The talking machine, like the mirror, invested inanimate objects with human form or function. Ghostly voices arose from a box possessed. It thus could bridge the apparent divide between Western science and primitive superstition, and everyone could delight in its charms. Beyond the scratchy sounds, however, the machine's true magic in these narratives was its ability to evoke commonality while inscribing difference. All were in awe of the talking machine, but there was no doubt that Blackwell and his compatriots were in control. Backed by a military escort, they possessed the machine and proved themselves midnight masters of the technology behind its magic.

White explorers and colonists also controlled the voices emanating from the phonograph, resulting in a firm association between its technological brilliance and white racial superiority. "Huh! Him canned white man," the Alaskan Indian reportedly declared upon hearing his first record.<sup>11</sup> The racial ideology encoded in such stories suggested that white people created and owned the machine, which in turn was haunted by white voices that insinuated themselves into the consciousness of the listener. It was a short leap to the suggestion that primitive people became more civilized through exposure to American technology and culture. One 1905 photograph displayed exotically clothed Aleutian Islanders cocking their heads toward a talking machine in the center of the frame, mirroring the stance of the famous dog in the Victor logo responding to "His Master's Voice." The accompanying article enthused, "It is possible they are hearing for the first time modern music of the leading orchestras, as well as the songs and witty sayings which are current in the large cities. What is true of the Aleutian Islanders is true practically of everywhere the talking machine becomes known. It is a great civilizer and its popularity is founded upon the substantial grounds of giving a tremendous value to every user throughout the world."<sup>12</sup> Author Howard Taylor's 1905 poem, "A Phonographic Legend," further delineated the perceived congruity between the spread of the phonograph and the civilizing effects of American culture. The poem begins with a phonograph washing ashore on a remote island ruled by "King Jamboree." When the mysterious machine begins to speak, the gathered

crowd "did not understand the words,/But felt that it must be/A command from their Fetish/To pray on bended knee." Thus, just as in Blackwell's story, Taylor's listeners first associate the talking machine with the supernatural. The mood quickly shifts, however, when the king eats one of the records, thinking it to be a pancake. Others follow, and the technological encounter acquires a specific cultural referent:

No sooner had they eaten it  
And started for a walk,  
Than with stirring eloquence,  
They all began to talk.

Not in the savage guttural,  
But in old U. S. A.  
The kind you hear in Boston,  
And that is swell, they say.<sup>13</sup>

The talking machine spoke with an American accent. To all others, the stories implied, it was a foreign technology representing an American modernity just now arriving on their uncivilized shores. They literally could consume it, but it would remain possessed by its American creators.<sup>14</sup>

Even as such stories celebrated the unifying magic of the talking machine and its power to transmit American culture, they reveled in their own absurdity. Blackwell's saga, like Taylor's poetic legend, was less reportage than a comedic set piece. It evoked what historian Philip J. Deloria calls an "ideological chuckle" born from the recognition of a cultural anomaly. Stark juxtapositions of primitivism and civilization – chattering Chinamen listening to light opera or island monarchs sporting a Boston brogue – reinforced expectations of racial distance and domination by briefly overcoming them, Deloria explains.<sup>15</sup> The juxtaposition was funny exactly to the extent that one believed it could never happen. The laughter placed oneself and one's culture above that of the primitive protagonists. These stories of first contact thus ambiguously professed a hope that cultural imperialism could make the world a more civilized place, yet they constantly expressed doubts that primitives would be able to appreciate American music when they heard it. The value of civilized culture was simply beyond many foreigners' comprehension.

First contact stories became popular among United States dealers at the precise moment that the novelty of the talking machine was waning among US consumers. They helped express the longings many dealers felt for the not so distant past, an era when American consumers still marveled at mechanical reproduction and the machines sold themselves. *Scientific*

*American* had identified the emotional power the machine possessed in its 1877 introduction of Edison's invention. Domestic dealers recalled that even as expressions of awe and wonder depicted the complacent colonial subject, they also characterized the ideal consumer. As dealers swapped tales of distant phonograph encounters, they found in "primitives" the wonder and excitement about talking machines that they and their domestic customers no longer possessed. Yet they also read these fantasies of unspoiled consumers through their experiences with the US market. Foreign wonder could not last. A new strategy would be required once international audiences got used to sound coming from a box. It was with this realization that the international phonograph campaigns departed fundamentally from the path pursued in the United States. Initial impetus came from those working in local markets around the world.

In 1905, an anonymous phonograph dealer was asked by *Talking Machine World* to assess business prospects in the Philippines. "I should say, from my superficial investigation," the dealer noted, "that the possibilities for a large business here with talking machines is most encouraging. To begin with, the Filipinos take to novelties. They are like children in many respects, and to see them gather around some machine which is sending forth a reproduction of a famous American song, and note the childlike look on their faces, is interesting." The dealer struck the familiar chord of primitive wonder and American culture but then departed from the score. "Of course, all of the records must be in Spanish," the author maintained. "I believe that if the talking machine manufacturers could get some noted Filipino to sing for recording purposes, or some native orator, the records and the machines would have an enormous sale. All people who can, would buy one simply to hear the local singer or speaker."<sup>16</sup> It represented a reinvention of the industry.

Other dealers and investigators were coming to similar conclusions about the importance of recording local music in foreign markets. John Watson Hawd traveled to Calcutta on a fact-finding mission for Gramophone in 1901. He was alarmed at the number of talking machine dealers who were already present in the city. Furniture and bicycle salesmen were adding talking machines to their line of goods. He urgently wrote the Home Office in London suggesting that Gramophone establish an Indian branch office before other transnational and local firms flooded the market with rival machines. Some were using the recording capabilities of Edison's consumer phonographs to capture the singing of their friends and families. Such amateur recordings were selling crisply to Calcutta music lovers. Hawd thus insisted that Gramophone send recording experts to capture the sounds of "native" musicians. Gramophone responded immediately, offering to

dispatch Fred Gaisberg, their most successful scout, fresh from recording tours of Europe. Hawd did not wait for Gramophone to act. After sending his request, he quickly befriended Amerendra Dutt, manager of the Classic Theatre in Calcutta. By the time Gaisberg and his recording equipment arrived, Dutt had selected and rehearsed a number of local artists for the scout to record.<sup>17</sup> Similar networks for finding local talent were established in other markets. Quite often these involved tapping into existing arts organizations or infrastructures: music schools in the Philippines, court musicians in India, noted scholars in China.<sup>18</sup>

The scramble for foreign sales was a highly competitive game. Heinrich Bumb, a scout for the German Beka-Record firm, arrived in Hong Kong in 1906 only to discover several others already ensconced there. "The Columbia Graphophone Company had just finished its latest recordings – said to be of 1,000 titles, for which fees of 50,000 dollars had been paid. 'Victor,' 'Grammophon' [sic] as well as 'Zonophon-Records' and 'Odeon' were represented in the colony," he recalled.<sup>19</sup> Successful phonograph companies designed detailed strategic plans for global expansion. In 1907, for example, Victor and its sister company British Gramophone agreed upon a global division of markets so they could spread the use of Berliner disc technology without directly competing with each other. Victor's sphere included North and South America, China, and Japan. Gramophone would sell the Berliner phonograph system in Europe, India, and other Asian countries.<sup>20</sup> Gramophone soon recorded a significant number of musicians in India, Turkey, and Egypt as well as several other smaller national markets. The company cut 14,000 discs in Asia and North Africa during the first decade of the century. Phonograph companies moved throughout Latin America with almost equal speed. Columbia established a presence in Mexico by 1903. Victor and Edison followed within a few years. The Latin American trade grew quickly. In 1913, Argentina imported an estimated 2.7 million phonograph records. Companies that could not afford to set up their own international offices expanded their catalogs by signing licensing agreements with other labels. General Phonograph, the maker of the popular Okeh records, increased its catalog and cache in this way when it became the US distributor for the European Odeon label. By the mid-1910s, when almost all United States recordings were made in a handful of urban centers, the major phonograph companies had made thousands of records in countries around the world.<sup>21</sup>

As the industry expanded, companies developed international networks of production, distribution, and information. Gramophone's production chain provides but one example. Gramophone constructed its machines and cabinets out of wood harvested from around the world: mahogany from

Africa and South America; oak from Great Britain, North America and Russia; and walnut from southern Russia and the United States. Recorded discs themselves were manufactured out of raw materials gleaned from East Asia, India, Spain, France, and the United States. The company maintained even more sophisticated global networks for the production of its recorded music. International recordings were made through the collaboration of company scouts and recording experts with local agents, dealers and talent. Once initial recordings were made, commercial discs were pressed in Hanover, Germany, although by 1912 Gramophone had expanded disc production to plants in Paris, Spain, Berlin, Austria, Russia and India. Discs then were distributed along with machines to exclusive dealerships for sale in the country of origin and migrant communities throughout the world. Gramophone also licensed large portions of its ethnic and classical catalogs to Victor for production and distribution in the United States. This transnational production network was essential to the growth of both Gramophone and Victor. Victor's access to international opera stars through the Gramophone catalog enabled them to dominate the United States opera trade, and the combined geographic reach of the two powerhouses allowed them to claim one of the most comprehensive catalogs of "ethnic" music.<sup>22</sup>

In the beginning, United States recording engineers had a very difficult time comprehending the music they encountered on their international expeditions. "Generally they are strangers in the countries to which they may be despatched [sic], knowing little, if anything, of the language or customs of the people and ignorant of the material from which to choose suitable record-making talent," confessed Edward Burns, manager of Columbia's Export Department.<sup>23</sup> Fred Gaisberg concurred, "On the first day [in Shanghai in 1903], after making ten records we had to stop. The din had so paralyzed my wits that I could not think ... Up to the 27th of March we made 325 records for which we paid \$4 each. To me, the differences between the tunes of any two records were too slight for me to detect."<sup>24</sup> American scouts were out of their element. Their skills in assessing and recording musicians from Western art traditions had helped them rise within the ranks of the growing recording industry. Their initial recording successes in the United States and Europe had convinced industry executives that they were the right people to carry out similar ventures throughout the world. Yet they had no framework or aesthetic criteria with which to judge the strange sounds they encountered. "We entered a new world of musical and artistic values," recalled Gaisberg. "One had to erase all memories of the music of European opera houses and concert halls: the very foundations of my musical training were undermined."<sup>25</sup> Many questioned whether the sounds they captured on disc – often based on complex, unfamiliar rhythms

and quarter-tone scales “sounding to the Western ear constantly out of tune” – could be considered music at all.<sup>26</sup>

Confronted with such musical and cognitive dissonance, scouts and dealers escaped into the logic of the free market. John Watson Hawd wrote back from India to his Gramophone superiors in 1902, “The native music is to me worse than Turkish but as long as it suits them and sells well what do we care?”<sup>27</sup> S. Porter, a recording engineer working in India, echoed this sentiment in 1905: “To be sure the selections are weird, if not altogether grand, gloomy and peculiar, but they sell like hot cakes.” Since “American records are absolutely unknown” and “orchestral records are also little in demand,” Porter saw no alternative to supplying the “weird” music to Indian consumers willing to pay the price. In fact, once he focused on “native music”, the demand was great enough for him to declare: “India is the best place on earth for talking machines ... I have made records in Russia, Sweden, Norway, in fact all the principal countries of Europe, but India tops them all, and appears to me a great field for American enterprise in this line.”<sup>28</sup> Such declarations suggest what American scouts may have been thinking of during their international adventures. Hawd and Porter first pronounced disgust for local musical tastes. Yet failing to arouse interest in American or orchestral music, they threw up their hands, surrendered their own musical tastes, and succumbed to local consumer desires. This new premium placed on local music was born not from an ideology of cultural relativism or equality but from a reassertion of cultural and racial hierarchy.

The primitivist rhetoric perfected in the stories of first contact enabled talking-machine men to focus on local music. A subtle but unmistakable alchemy was occurring as international scouts explained their experiences to domestic readers. From one sentence to the next, stock descriptions of ignorant natives were transformed into detailed analyses of local musical styles and tastes. Primitive stereotypes – particularly the denial that foreign peoples could comprehend Western art traditions – became the justification for taking local music seriously. Reporting on scout Henry Marker’s trip through China, one author asserted,

Talking machine exporters know only too well that the most insignificant nations will buy talking machines if they can hear records made by their own people. A cannibal would flee from a record of Cavalieri but would go almost insane with delight at hearing his own tongue emerge from the horn of a machine.

The author then parsed the Chinese population into a variety of distinct markets, proving his knowledge of Chinese society and geography:

One of the first things that strikes the foreigner when he travels about the Chinese Empire is the lack of homogeneity. This is particularly noticeable in the languages. There is the Pekin dialect and the Canton dialect, and so many others that only a skilled linguist can distinguish them ... so in making talking machine records it is necessary to have actors in all the dialects of the provinces where the goods are to be sold.<sup>29</sup>

Edward Burns, Columbia’s export manager, likewise began his summary of the company’s Asian expeditions by evoking standard images of foreign superstitions. “In fact, in some countries in the far East,” he announced, “the people looked on the talking machine not only with wonder, but positive awe, and approached it with fear and trembling, regarding the mysterious voice from the horn as that of a god.” Burns then insisted that Columbia’s success throughout East Asia was dependent on a broad and detailed knowledge of local cultures. He offered a running list of his company’s work toward this end. In the four years of its campaign, Columbia had studied a variety of local dialects and musical styles; charted the internal and international migration patterns of different ethnic groups; categorized the musical tastes of different economic and social classes; compared the use of music in different religious traditions; chronicled local trade and distribution networks; invented a new recording diaphragm to accommodate the broad dynamics of some local singing styles; learned to promote loud records in areas favoring open air architecture; and even surveyed different locales regarding the colors consumers preferred to see on their record labels.<sup>30</sup> International campaigns were producing serious students of foreign cultures even as they maintained a deep investment in racial and cultural hierarchies.

Some scouts even began to acknowledge the artistic qualities of the music they encountered abroad. T. J. Theobald Noble recorded extensively throughout Europe and Asia in the early 1910s. The prominent engineer chronicled his dawning comprehension of the Hindustani music he captured in Calcutta. “At first I found it unmusical and weird, but eventually began to follow the songs with keen enjoyment and appreciation,” he explained. Noble was particularly impressed by an amateur singer accompanied by a harmonium and a set of tabla drums, or “tum-tum”. “These instruments are very curious for, although the playing of them appears to be simple, they are in reality extremely difficult,” he admitted.

It was many days before I could follow even to a small extent – how the tum-tum was supposed to accompany the singer, and I do confess that to this day I cannot fathom how it is possible to accurately accompany an Indian song on such an instrument. The artist sings up and down the keyboard, and to my

mind there are no bars, rhythm or tempo, yet the tum-tumist crescendos, stops, commences and synchronises [sic] perfectly with the singing. It was and still is an enigma to me.<sup>31</sup>

Here was the culmination of the industry's slow recognition of local music and cultural difference. Noble's comments represented a profound, if subtle, change in the conception of foreign sounds. It was a shift from *noise* to *music* – from Fred Gaisberg decrying a paralyzing “din” to the acknowledgement of a conscious, skilled performance. Noble began to hear Hindustani music on its own terms, discovering its difficulty and appreciating its internal logic. In the process, he relinquished some of his power to define cultural value. Even as he acknowledged the music's merits, he admitted that full comprehension and mastery was beyond him. While not admitting its transcendence or even its parity with Western music traditions, Noble allowed that Indians had their own culture and that native musicians understood its artistic characteristics better than American scouts.

At the same time, the local music paradigm placed serious constraints on the music that foreign musicians were allowed to record. It defined local music through its isolation from scouts' own culture and civilization. On the prowl for music that could charm local consumers into purchasing a talking machine, scouts regularly ignored or suppressed evidence that the musicians they encountered in distant lands had already forged their own extra-local connections and cultures. Fred Gaisberg, for example, had no patience for Indian musicians enamored with Western music. Soon after arriving in Calcutta in 1901, he was treated to a female chorus singing “And Her Golden Hair Was Hanging Down Her Back” accompanied by a brass ensemble. Gaisberg cringed. “I had yet to learn that the oriental ear was unappreciative of chords and harmonic treatment and only demanded the rhythmic beat of accompaniment of the drums,” he recalled. “At this point we left.”<sup>32</sup> Often, such reactions arose out of corporate strategies of market development. Phonograph companies saw little money to be made from recordings of Indians singing British music hall ditties.

Just as often, scouts' reactions in the field were driven by their assumptions about music, race, and primitivism. Henry L. Marker, for example, traveled over 12,500 miles making records for Columbia between 1910 and 1912. In Singapore, Marker arrived for a recording session wearing his standard pith helmet, white suit and matching shoes. He was surprised to discover the scheduled Malay ensemble similarly decked in identical trousers and boots. The scout believed the Western clothes would inhibit the passions of the performers. “Tell that bunch of misguided heathens to take off their boots or there will be no more records made,” he declared. The

musicians quickly complied.<sup>33</sup> Casting themselves as savvy globetrotters confident in the artistic supremacy of their own Western music traditions, phonograph company scouts imagined they were introducing modern technology to isolated, primitive people around the world. Well shod Malay musicians or Indian brass bands challenged such conceits. They not only demonstrated the worldliness of supposedly isolated, racially inferior people but also suggested that white talking-machine scouts were not as superior or as unique as advertised. Artists or music that challenged scouts' understanding of the dichotomy between primitivism and civilization rarely got recorded.

The global expansion of the phonograph industry thus launched a new conception of local culture. In this new configuration, the local was something separate. It was a distinct, circumscribed space that contained its own musical culture, one demonstrating little apparent relationship to either that of its neighbors or to the music emanating from the United States and Europe. Second, the local was something deeply private. Local culture was known and understood only by insiders and represented something of the essential identity of its practitioners. Finally, local culture was inferior. Scouts did not promote local music because they believed it was equal to the universal values of the Western music tradition. They embraced it because they understood it to be the best that racially inferior foreign populations could achieve. Lacking the capacity to comprehend civilized art, they could be sold music from their own lands. The industry was progressing differently in the United States.

### Promoting universal music: cultural uplift in the United States

Domestic salesmen responded to the waning novelty of the talking machine by launching what can be called a campaign of cultural uplift, repositioning their product as an educational tool rather than a parlor trick. In 1905, a vice-president of a major firm declared, “1904 can really, I think, go into history as the year when the talking machine first became generally recognized as more than a toy and as a medium not only of entertainment suitable for the home of the refined and artistic and when it first assumed its place as an educational force.”<sup>34</sup> It signaled another reinvention of the industry.

At the heart of the cultural uplift campaign was a dedication to encouraging the use of “serious” art music in the private home. Victor led the pack by promoting its new Red Seal line of classical recordings. The company signed exclusive contracts with Enrico Caruso and other opera singers featured in New York's Metropolitan Opera House. Fine furniture makers

designed beautiful cabinets, and interior designers began including the talking machine as an integral part of a modern home's accoutrements. Records by the great opera and concert artists of Europe sold heartily, and dealers often compared the talking machine to a home library of great literature. The industry also promoted the use of art music and opera recordings in state schools.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps no one epitomized the cultural uplift campaign more than Frances E. Clark, the Supervisor of Music for Milwaukee state schools who in 1911 became the director of Victor's Public School Educational Department. In a 1909 speech before the Wisconsin State Teachers' Association, Clark directly tied American cultural uplift with technological innovation and serious music. "If music is to become the great force of the uplifting of this American people that I firmly believe that it will become, it must be brought about by the next generation knowing more about music and knowing more music itself," Clark declared. The phonograph was an essential tool for this musical education. "It is necessary to reconstruct our old ideas of the wheezy, blaring, blatant, brassy thing we have known in the days agone," she insisted. "The new talking machine with its wood horn, its bamboo needle and the wonderful records obtainable is a joy and delight – an artistic success." With these technological improvements should come more uplifting listening habits:

The old was almost wholly given over to the lower class of music – the coon song, the ragtime, the cheap popular song heard in saloon and dance hall. The new talking machine is eminently respectable and worthy of a place as an educational factor in every school in the land ... By the use of the machine we may enjoy opera, oratorio, orchestra, band, violin, cello, folk songs and ballets over and over again as many times as we like.<sup>36</sup>

Between 1905 and 1917, Clark's opinions about class, race, technology and education became increasingly common within the domestic talking-machine trade. A Columbia sales manager simply echoed standard industry hyperbole in 1917 when he declared: "Music in the home is the greatest addition to the education of man since the printing press was invented."<sup>37</sup>

The cultural uplift campaign seized the imagination of many within the United States industry for it soothed interrelated anxieties concerning American culture, consumerism, and their own identity as cultural brokers. In many ways, cultural uplift was not about transforming American consumer tastes but about changing the very meaning of consumption itself. Though difficult to glean from cultural uplift campaign materials, many citizens outside the industry saw the phonograph's commodification of music as symptomatic of the larger problem of mass-marketed culture. John Philip

Sousa expressed a common feeling when he decried "mechanical music" in 1906. "Sweeping across the country with the speed of a transient fashion in slang or Panama hats, political war cries or popular novels, comes now the mechanical device to sing for us a song or play for us a piano, in substitute for human skill, intelligence, and soul," the composer wailed.<sup>38</sup> Cultural uplift attempted to counter such attacks by imbuing the industry's products with the very "intelligence" and "soul" others reserved for human culture and interaction beyond the cash nexus. It was a bold bait and switch – a Trojan horse in the fragile fortress of uncommodified culture.

The campaign worked as well as it did because it also buttressed the class and racial hierarchies that were marking out United States society and culture. On the one hand, it reinforced the class distinctions that had come to define "highbrow" and "lowbrow" culture during the latter half of the nineteenth century. As historian Lawrence Levine has chronicled, opera itself went through a similar process of uplift as American elites rescued it from popular audiences and recast it as symbol of their own superior social standing, complete with an emphasis on private consumption, a rhetoric of transcendent universal value, and a desire to evangelize the uninitiated about how to approach true art. Levine is quick to point out that the emergent cultural hierarchy was propelled by racial – as well as class – ideology. The terms "highbrow" and "lowbrow" themselves were borrowed from the racist pseudoscience of phrenology that posited racial types and intelligence could be determined through cranial measurements. Opera and orchestral music may have epitomized upper-class refinement, but they also came to signify white cultural supremacy in an era characterized by the racial violence of lynching and Jim Crow segregation, as well as by the growing fear that white children were, in the words of an influential 1913 editorial, "falling prey to the collective soul of the negro through the influence of what is popularly known as 'rag time' music."<sup>39</sup>

Phonograph company spokespeople such as Frances Clark performed this script to perfection, regularly attacking African-American and popular music, predicting national transcendence through the cultivation of high-brow culture, and convincing elite audiences that they could maintain class and racial dominance only by overcoming their misguided objections to cultural commodification and mechanical music. In the process, they projected themselves into the ranks of the nation's cultural elite. This was a dramatic transformation for a group that until very recently had been defined as toy and novelty peddlers, a designation more likely to evoke patent medicine con games than upright professionals rubbing shoulders with renowned conductors and celebrity tenors.<sup>40</sup>

Advocates believed one of the major obstacles to cultural uplift was



ordinary citizens' love of inferior local music. They reveled in reports of consumers – particularly those in remote rural locales – learning to appreciate serious music. Thus West Virginia dealer H. C. Farber published a rebuttal to Sousa's critique of "mechanical music," noting that the talking machine had created legions of new Sousa devotees among the nation's rural residents. "The ruralite or hayseed," Farber wrote, "buys himself a 'talker' of some kind, and plays it to beat the band. He hears some of Sousa's pieces and then when the March King comes within one or two hundred miles of his lonely mountain home this very hayseed will put on his store suit and dig down into his jeans for the fare and go to hear the famous bandmaster, whom he would never have heard of if not for the 'talker.'" <sup>41</sup> Once exposed to the great artists of the Western tradition, others agreed, consumers would no longer remain satisfied with the sounds of the amateur or semi-professional musicians from their own communities. "Only a few years ago, when the price of a talking machine was not within the reach of people of ordinary means, I noticed that most especially in the smaller towns and hamlets, a traveling musician, an organ grinder or a 'barn-stormer' show proved a great attraction and was received with the warmest of welcome," explained writer William F. Hunt in 1905. "The people, most in particular those of the rural class, were anxious to hear music, regardless of quality – anything, just so it had some of the characteristics of music about it." Now that the phonograph had arrived in homes across the country, Hunt continued, audiences no longer settled for mediocrity:

The traveling musician is now rarely if ever seen, and poor class shows are getting scarce. People have been cultivated to the best class of music and entertainments through the marvelous little entertainer – the phonograph – and the above-named class of vendors could now not get a hearing, to say nothing of a recompense for their labor if they put in an appearance. <sup>42</sup>

Hunt was getting ahead of himself. Rural audiences still supported traveling musicians, street performers and local bands. Live music offered a thrill and excitement that could not be banished by the scratchy sounds of the talking machine. It also offered local songs and styles not available on record at the time.

United States dealers were blinded to the value of local music by the dichotomous categorizations behind the cultural uplift campaign. As a 1917 pamphlet entitled "Helping Record Buyers" argued,

There are two kinds of record customers, one who makes an initial purchase of the latest topical records, and then quickly tires of his Gramophone, and the other type of buyer who when purchasing his instrument selects a variety

of good records, as the base of an ultimate collection. This is the class of customer that is a real asset ... The dealer has a Gramophone enthusiast in embryo, and according to the method of the training so the customer. When it comes to selecting records, the dealer should give his advice, and state his reasons for so advising. Fully 60 per cent of the customers do not know the type of record they require and are probably drawn to the topical and humorous because they have never had the opportunity of hearing good music.

There were two kinds of customers, and there were two kinds of records: topical novelty selections, and uplifting classical recordings. This was the dichotomous vision of American music that drove the domestic phonograph industry. The dealer had a duty to instruct consumers how to make the right decision. It was a matter of economics as well as cultural education. The brochure concluded, "Neglecting an opportunity to familiarize a customer with higher class music than he is accustomed to buying, never did build a business and never will." <sup>43</sup> Local musical tastes, when considered at all, were seen as part of the problem facing the phonograph industry rather than as a potential basis for phonograph sales.

#### Importing the local: selling foreign music at home

The conceptions of local music that were developed internationally slowly began to influence phonograph marketing in the United States. As global expansion progressed, industry employees crossed borders with ease through travels, transfers and promotions. A stratum of middle-level administrators and technicians thus became well versed in sharing knowledge about selling phonographs and records within a variety of ethnic and national markets. They increasingly brought their international experiences to bear on the domestic market. US native Raphael Cabanas, for example, was the president of the *Compañía Fonográfica Mexicana*, the exclusive distributor for Columbia in Mexico. In the early 1910s, Cabanas made frequent trips to the home offices in New York and Washington, DC, where he created collaborative marketing campaigns with the Columbia advertising department. In 1913, Cabanas extended the reach of his company by purchasing Columbia dealerships in Texas and Arizona. His Dallas store significantly increased its business following a spate of innovative billboard advertisements, a strategy Cabanas had perfected earlier in Mexico City. <sup>44</sup> Edward N. Burns, Cabanas' chief contact at Columbia, boasted one of the most significant international résumés in the business. Burns was the founding manager of the Columbia Phonograph export department around 1902. He held the position until 1915, when Edmond Sause replaced him so that Burns could be promoted to the vice-presidency of the company. In addition to supervising exports,

Burns served as an adviser to domestic dealers hoping to increase sales among immigrant populations.<sup>45</sup>

It was through fostering sales among US immigrants that international experts had their most direct influence on United States sales strategies. Talking-machine companies began to realize the potential markets that existed in the nation's immigrant neighborhoods during the first decade of the century. Early rhetoric about immigrant sales reflected the emphasis on local singers or speakers developing in the international campaigns. "Remember that in all large cities and in most towns there are sections where people of one nationality or another congregate in 'colonies,'" explained a writer in the *Columbia Record* in 1909. "Most of these people keep up the habits and prefer to speak the language of the old country ... To these people RECORDS IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE have an irresistible attraction, and they will buy them readily."<sup>46</sup>

The arrival of ethnic recordings in the United States was disorienting to some in the industry. Many dealers invoked caricatures of ethnic difference similar to those of the foreign first contact stories when they imagined domestic consumers of foreign records. One dealer related the apocryphal tale of a traveling salesman who sold a machine and twelve records to an Irish immigrant, a Mr O'Toole. The customer was very excited that the traditional Irish songs he ordered arrived in time for his daughter's birthday party. At the appropriate moment, Mr O'Toole hushed the gathered crowd and placed the first record on the machine, stating, "O! will now give yez Chauncey Olcott's latest song av th' ould country." To the party's surprise a "mysterious tinkle of bells" came forth from the horn, followed by "a series of barbaric shouts." After a second record brought similar results, the crowd demanded the worthless machine be thrown out the window. Just in time, the salesman appeared at the door and breathlessly apologized for mixing up Mr O'Toole's order with that intended for a local Chinese restaurant. The party proceeded as planned.<sup>47</sup> The tone of such stories closely echoed both the violent confusion of Henry Blackwell's Chinese villagers and scout Fred Gaisberg's disorientation while recording the paralyzing "din" of different music traditions.

Yet the role of talking-machine dealers in such tales is notable for two reasons. First, in stark contrast to international scouts, the phonograph company employees in these stories were no longer the ones experiencing anxiety. The shock of encountering the strange music of another ethnic tradition was reserved for other immigrants. The talking-machine man negotiated between multiple ethnic groups, containing and channeling ethnic anxiety by teaching immigrants to be more informed consumers. Second, such stories reveal an important loophole in the industry's cultural

uplift campaign. Here are domestic dealers gladly giving customers what they want. It was a double-edged sword. The same racism displayed in the international campaigns excluded many immigrant groups from the possibility of cultural uplift in the eyes of the industry. Yet this very exclusion enabled many American immigrants to demand that phonograph companies grant them recordings of their unique musical traditions.

Companies dramatically accelerated efforts to sell "ethnic" music in the US following the outbreak of war in 1914 in an effort to protect themselves from the possible interruption of global trade networks. As editorialists pleaded for calm and predicted a growing US economy, phonograph companies moved quickly to make up for endangered international profits through increased domestic business. Companies immediately placed their sights on fostering immigrant consumption. "The immense stirring of patriotic fervor due to the European war has given an impetus to the sale of Columbia records of foreign music which is truly phenomenal," a 1914 Columbia publication announced. Victor and Columbia expanded their recording of international material in the United States, setting up recording studios in Chicago to complement their primary New York and New Jersey facilities. Anton Heindl of Columbia's International Record Department was named director of the company's new Chicago studio and promised to place special emphasis on recording the "folk songs, the dances, and the religious hymns" desired by US immigrant populations.<sup>48</sup>

In 1917, Columbia launched a major campaign to pressure their dealers to take advantage of underexploited immigrant markets. "This is harvest time for foreign record business," its advertising copy announced. "Our International Record Department issues records in 37 different languages, and thousands of Columbia dealers in this country are making good, regular money on these records."<sup>49</sup> In the fall, Anton Heindl organized an unprecedented, week-long conference that brought together Columbia executives from both the domestic and international departments to share experiences and develop joint marketing strategies. It was attended by regional sales managers and featured a series of lectures by Edward Burns, the architect of Columbia's global expansion. The conference had the explicit purpose of fostering foreign record sales in the United States. Following the conference, sales managers were to take its message to dealers throughout their territories. Samuel Lenberg, a sales manager out of Chicago, left the conference with orders to "study the conditions in the dealers' territory, collect data and show them how to cultivate successfully trade to which they have not hitherto catered" and "seek to establish new Columbia dealers in localities where there is a large foreign trade and in which the company is not now represented."<sup>50</sup>

It was through this concerted push to increase foreign record sales during the First World War that conceptions of local music and difference – born in companies' international expeditions – came to dominate the United States talking-machine business. First, the campaign changed the way many dealers conceived the history of the industry. Previous dealers had characterized it in terms of its oscillating commitment to cultural uplift, themselves as soldiers in the fight to protect serious, transcendent culture from class or racial degradation. Others now identified the motivating force behind the industry as the search for new markets. "The secret of increasing business lies not alone in redoubling efforts in accepted and familiar fields, but in discovering and operating in new fields where it is possible to create a fresh demand for a product," one author argued. Distinct ethnic markets offered just such possibilities, the author concluded.<sup>51</sup> Second, the foreign record campaign introduced domestic dealers to the marketing magic of local music, the idea that consumers would line up to purchase music that represented their own identity. As one 1917 advertisement explained, "The big foreign-born population of the United States is hungering – yes, *actually hungering* – for its own native music ... These are not just records sung in foreign languages. They are records that have been actually *made in their native land*. That is why they have the indefinable atmosphere which the purchaser immediately recognizes and cherishes."<sup>52</sup>

These were lessons that international scouts had learned many years before, yet they represented a revolution of values to domestic dealers reared on the rhetoric of cultural uplift. Odes to "native music" not only shattered the dichotomous definitions of music behind cultural uplift, they also insisted that consumers – not talking-machine dealers – were in the best position to recognize musical quality. Harry A. Goldsmith, a Milwaukee Victor wholesaler, made this point forcefully:

Tony Andrianopolis shyly enters your store, hat in hand, and asks if you have some Greek records. Of course you have none, and in the past simply told him so and turned away from him. He slinked out of your store. You soon forgot the incident. Now, had you invited Tony into your office, inquired from him about how many Greeks, for instance, lived in your city, and put it up to him squarely if he thought it would be profitable for you to carry Greek records, you might sit up surprised that you had wasted some wonderful opportunities ... Just hand him a Greek catalog and ask him to mark in this what records he thinks you ought to carry for a starter ... Have faith in Tony. Order every single record he tells you to ... When you get these Greek records in stock let Tony know. Tony will do the rest.<sup>53</sup>

The dealer's role in this transaction was far different from that proposed during the educational and cultural uplift campaigns. The dealer looked to

the immigrant customer for musical guidance. By focusing on consumers' current desires rather than trying to foster new ones, phonograph dealers could profit in the foreign record business.

Edmond Sause was interviewed at an important moment in the history of music in the United States. Even as he spoke of foreign success and domestic difficulties in 1920, the local-music model invented in the global marketplace was coming to dominate the phonograph business within the United States. This process, begun by targeting immigrant populations, reached a turning point little more than a month after Sause's words appeared in print. On August 8, 1920, Mamie Smith and Her Jazz Hounds recorded the song "Crazy Blues" for Okeh Records. It was the first significant blues record by an African-American singer and backing band. "Crazy Blues" helped to inaugurate the "race" record industry that sold music made by and for African-Americans. It was a market conception that owed a lot to the local-music paradigm developed internationally. Race records were soon followed by "hillbilly" or "old-time" tunes marketed to rural white audiences. For many Americans, these products traded on their racial, class, and regional authenticity in new ways. Here was music made by artists who lived and performed in the same milieu as their audiences. If previous commercial recordings represented national culture imposed on consumers in every city, race and old-time music often were marketed as local sounds writ large – the triumph of local authenticity over homogenizing bids for universal value.<sup>54</sup> Edmond Sause and others involved in the international industry may have understood these products differently. Race and old-time records in part signified global marketing strategies coming home to roost.

Ralph Peer was a prominent record scout for Okeh, where he supervised Mamie Smith's recording of "Crazy Blues." He later worked for Victor, where he developed a strong catalog of race and old-time records. When asked in 1959 how phonograph companies first got into recording African-American and Southern white music, he quickly credited the immigrant marketing campaigns. "I saw that this was really a business like our foreign record business. We put out German records, Swedish records and what have you. So I decided that, like the German records were all in let's say the 6000 series ... well we need another number series so I started using this 8000. That was the theory behind it," Peer explained.<sup>55</sup> After learning to sell local music to various racial and ethnic groups in the foreign record business, the industry discovered that the United States was as fertile a ground for marketing musical difference as they had slowly discovered the rest of the world to be.

### Conclusion: globalization and local music

This story suggests some general conclusions about globalization and the local. First, American music is a product of globalization. Global markets were a major concern of the industry practically from the start, and global experiences were intimately intertwined with the conception and development of music markets in the United States. Some scholars have attempted to locate the emergence of the local-music paradigm within the history of American popular music. A number of scholars have emphasized the 1950s rise of rock and roll, along with its attendant valorization of local “roots,” its global appeal, and its apparent anti-commercialism.<sup>56</sup> Others have insisted that the 1920s witnessed the birth of the local-music paradigm as race and old-time records began selling briskly. Unfortunately, such explanations suggest that the local-music paradigm developed in isolation within the US and was then exported. As surely as we must question images of discrete, isolated cultures prior to contact with the phonograph (then or now), we should be skeptical of these portrayals of local US music developing prior to globalization.

Second, within the phonograph industry, concepts of the universal and the local did not arise in opposition to each other. At first glance, proponents of Western classical music or local music appeared to be picking sides in the era’s fundamental battle over the meaning of culture. Whether identified in terms of universalism versus the local, high culture versus low, or even Matthew Arnold’s “sweetness and light” versus E. B. Tylor’s “complex whole,” cultural historians have tended to describe these cultural configurations in opposition to each other.<sup>57</sup> The two camps were not as distant as this characterization would suggest. Both were driven by a fundamental faith in racial and cultural hierarchy. Within the phonograph industry, both shared contempt for earlier marketing strategies that pitched the talking machine as a piece of awe-inspiring technology. Both insisted that the future of the machine was as a carrier of culture. The fact of mechanical reproduction mattered less than the ways in which consumers were moved by the music emanating from the horn. Likewise, as historian Michael Denning has suggested, both spoke to an uneasiness about the growing commodification of culture in industrial capitalist societies. Each identified culture as that human activity existing outside the marketplace: the uplift program found it in the fine arts; the international campaigns located it among isolated, supposedly primitive peoples. What is significant about the campaigns for cultural uplift and local music is not that one faltered as the other came to dominate the United States record charts. It is that the industry so quickly was able to commodify two realms of music celebrated for their existence beyond the commercial nexus.<sup>58</sup>

Finally, local music was produced by corporate globalization. Local culture has played a defining role in the recent literature about musical globalization. At its most basic, the local has stood for everything the global is not: rooted in place and tradition, uncommodified, and uninterested in empire-building. Many scholars have challenged the simplicity of this formulation, suggesting that the local emerges through its opposition to globalization or as the specific ground upon which globalization occurs. Yet for all the theorizing, scholars have had a difficult time escaping the basic idea of the local as a thing apart. It remains a way a particular place is defined against the global. The story of the early twentieth-century phonograph industry suggests otherwise.<sup>59</sup>

The local-music paradigm within the phonograph industry arose out of a particular two-pronged historical process. First, the identification of local music was a story of discovery. It involved the slow determination that different locales (defined according to geography, nationalism, race, or class) had developed their own unique musical styles. This discovery of local sounds was partially a byproduct of the capitalist tendency toward differentiation common to the historical quest for new labor and consumer markets. It was also spurred by the Western intellectual revolution in the concept of culture that challenged Arnoldian visions of transcendent “sweetness and light” with anthropological notions of distinct customs and folkways. Second, the identification of local music was accomplished through a process of erasure. Once phonograph companies identified unique musical styles, they limited their depictions of local cultures to these aspects of the scene by ignoring or eliminating musical evidence of outside influences – particularly that of the Western “serious” music they were promoting back home. This aspect of the “local” is rarely discussed in the literature about globalization, yet it is vitally important. Within the commercial recording industry, the local did not develop in opposition to the universal claims of the Western music tradition. On the contrary, it was born out of the belief that some racial or ethnic groups lacked the capacity to comprehend Western civilization. Local music offered a way to increase consumption among inferior populations. The local music paradigm thus reinforced the superiority of the West, the divide between primitivism and civilization, and the Western tendency to hear foreign sounds through the prism of exoticism. Local music was deeply inscribed with the racialism and racial hierarchies of its day. Recent scholars have had such a difficult time defining a local culture that does not perpetuate exoticizing tendencies in part because that was what the concept was designed to do.

## Notes

- 1 "Selling the Talking Machines in the Foreign Markets," *Talking Machine World*, July 15 (1920), p. 63; "Edmond F. Sause New Columbia Export Manager," *Talking Machine World*, February 15 (1915), p. 55.
- 2 Classic studies include Roland Gelatt, *The Fabulous Phonograph, 1877–1977*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York, 1977); Walter L. Welch and Leah Brodbeck Stenzel Burt, *From Tinfoil to Stereo: The Acoustic Years of the Recording Industry, 1877–1929* (Gainesville, FL, 1994). A notable exception is the work of Pekka Gronow. In addition to the articles cited below, see Pekka Gronow and Ilpo Saunio, *An International History of the Recording Industry*, trans. Christopher Moseley (London, 1998). See also William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory, 1890–1945* (New York, 1999), pp. 65–87.
- 3 For an overview of the debates surrounding music and globalization, see Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (eds), *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music* (Berkeley, CA, 2000), pp. 21–31; Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman (eds), *Music and the Racial Imagination* (Chicago, 2000), pp. 28–34. Some important texts on late twentieth-century musical globalization include: Steven Feld, "Notes on World Beat [1988]" and "From Schizophonia to Schismogenesis: On the Discourses and Commodification Practices of 'World Music' and World Beat," in Charles Keil and Steven Feld (eds), *Music Grooves: Essays and Dialogues* (Chicago, 1994); Veit Erlmann, "The Aesthetics of the Global Imagination: Reflections on World Music in the 1990s," *Public Culture*, 8 (1996), pp. 467–88; Timothy D. Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (London, 1997); Robert Burnett, *The Global Jukebox: The International Music Industry* (London, 1996); Simon Frith, "The Discourse of World Music," in Born and Hesmondhalgh, *Western Music and Its Others*, pp. 305–22. A notable discussion of globalization during the late nineteenth century is Veit Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South Africa and the West* (New York, 1999).
- 4 Industry sales statistics are notoriously difficult to determine for the early decades of the industry. Educated estimates suggest annual US record sales in 1900 were approximately three million units. A steady rise occurred through 1915 when sales were approximately 55 million. The following years saw phonograph record sales rise more quickly, reaching about 140 million in the early 1920s. International figures are more difficult to determine. Yet available figures suggest that sales outside the US in the early 1910s sat at around 50 million units. See Gronow and Saunio, *An International History of the Recording Industry*, p. 12; and Pekka Gronow, "The Record Industry: The Growth of a Mass Medium," *Popular Music*, 3 (1981), pp. 59–60.
- 5 "A Wonderful Invention – Speech Capable of Indefinite Repetition from Automatic Records," *Scientific American* (November 17, 1877); quoted in Welch and Burt, *From Tinfoil to Stereo*, p. 9.
- 6 Quoted in Welch and Burt, *From Tinfoil to Stereo*, pp. 32–3.
- 7 "Will Replace the Cheap Piano," *Talking Machine World*, March 15 (1905), p. 9.
- 8 "The Talking Machine in China," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1905), p. 11.
- 9 "Columbia Portable Phonograph in Chilean Forests," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1927), p. 50; "The Talking Machine in Alaska," *Talking Machine World*, March 15 (1905), p. 3; "'Talker' Among Savages," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1907), p. 4; "Carryola Master Portable in Denver–Africa Trek," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1927), p. 34; "Development of the Export Trade," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1910), p. 13; "Talking Machine a Civilizer," *Talking Machine World*, July 15 (1905), p. 7; "Jack London's Great Cruise with the Victor," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1908), p. 20.
- 10 Michael Taussig, *Mimesis and Alterity: A Particular History of the Senses* (New York, 1993), p. 193.
- 11 "The Talking Machine in Alaska," *Talking Machine World*, March 15 (1905), p. 3.
- 12 "The Talking Machine Excites Interest Among the Aleutian Islanders," *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1905), p. 6.
- 13 Howard Taylor, "A Phonographic Legend," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1905), p. 22.
- 14 For a similar point, see Andrew F. Jones, *Yellow Music: Media Culture and Colonial Modernity in The Chinese Jazz Age* (Durham, NC, 2001), pp. 10–12.
- 15 Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence, KS, 2004), pp. 3–14; quote on p. 9.
- 16 "The Musical Filipinos," *Talking Machine World*, February 15 (1905), p. 3.
- 17 Michael S. Kinnear, *The Gramophone Company's First Indian Recordings, 1899–1908* (Bombay, 1994), pp. 9–11, 15–17; See also, Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, "His Master's Voice? Exploring Qawwali and 'Gramophone Culture' in South Asia," *Popular Music*, 18 (1999), pp. 63–98; G. N. Joshi, "A Concise History of the Phonograph Industry in India," *Popular Music*, 7 (1988), pp. 147–56; Peter Manuel, "Popular Music in India: 1901–86," *Popular Music*, 7 (1988), pp. 157–76.
- 18 See "Talking Machines in China," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1906), p. 35. Other early calls to record "local color" or "native bands" in foreign markets include: "Great Export Trade," *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1905), p. 5; "Talking Machine Prospects," *Talking Machine World*, March 15 (1905), p. 22, regarding Puerto Rico; "Chinese Band or Orchestra Making Records in China," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1905), p. 28; "Growth of Export Trade," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1905), p. 35, which notes the global desire for recordings of local talent; and "Cuban Trade," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1909), p. 43, calling for sensitivity to the variety of musical markets in the districts outside of Havana.

- 19 Heinrich Bumb, "The Great Beka 'Expedition,' 1905-6," *Talking Machine Review*, 41 (1976), pp. 729-33, quoted in Pekka Gronow, "The Record Industry Comes to the Orient," *Ethnomusicology*, 25 (1981), p. 251.
- 20 Jones, "Gramophone," p. 81; Gronow, "The Record Industry Comes to the Orient," p. 254; John Perkins, Alan Kelly and John Ward, "On Gramophone Company Matrix Numbers 1898 to 1921," *Record Collector*, 23 (1976), p. 57.
- 21 Gronow, "The Record Industry: Growth of a Mass Medium," pp. 58-60. The phonograph majors' international expansion was part of a larger trend of US companies looking abroad for antidotes to perceived domestic market saturation. The later part of the nineteenth century witnessed a profound increase in US corporate expansion overseas, fostered by government economic policies, fear of domestic overproduction, and anxiety over the perceived closing of the American frontier. See Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, NY, 1963). Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York, 1982); Fred V. Carstensen, *American Enterprise in Foreign Markets: Studies of Singer and International Harvester in Imperial Russia* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1984).
- 22 James C. Goff, "An Interesting Letter," *Talking Machine World*, July 15 (1912), p. 63; Gronow, "The Record Industry Comes to the Orient," pp. 252-3; Kinnear, *The Gramophone Company's First Indian Recordings*, pp. 22-3; Jones, "Gramophone," p. 88; Jerrold Northrop Moore, *A Voice in Time: The Gramophone of Fred Gaisberg, 1873-1951* (London, 1976).
- 23 "Developing Our Export Trade," *Talking Machine World*, February 15 (1908), p. 18.
- 24 Fred W. Gaisberg, *The Music Goes Round* (New York, 1942), p. 62.
- 25 *Ibid.*, p. 54.
- 26 Oscar C. Preuss, "Round the Recording Studios No. 1 - 'Songs of Araby,'" *Gramophone* (March 1928), pp. 411-12; quoted in Gronow, "The Record Industry Comes to the Orient," p. 273.
- 27 Quoted in Gerry Farrell, "The Early Days of the Gramophone Industry in India: Historical, Social, and Musical Perspectives," in Andrew Leyshon, David Matless and George Revill (eds), *The Place of Music* (New York, 1998), p. 59.
- 28 "India a Great Market," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1905), p. 6.
- 29 "Around the World with a Talker," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1910), p. 49.
- 30 "Developing our Export Trade," *Talking Machine World*, February 15 (1908), pp. 18-20.
- 31 Recording Artists of all Castes in India," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1913), p. 32.
- 32 Gaisberg, *The Music Goes Round*, p. 55; Gronow and Saunio, *An International History of the Recording Industry*, pp. 11-12.

- 33 "Returns from Making Trip Around World," *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1913), pp. 43-4.
- 34 "The Talking Machine is Here to Stay," *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1905), p. 3.
- 35 Mark Katz, *Capturing Sound: How Technology Changed Music* (Berkeley, CA, 2004), pp. 48-71; Michael Chanan, *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and Its Effects on Music* (London, 1995), pp. 30-1; Welch and Burt, *From Tinfoil to Stereo*, pp. 113-14; Russell Sanjek and David Sanjek, *Pennies from Heaven: The American Popular Music Business in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1996), p. 24.
- 36 "A Great Educational Factor," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1910), p. 4. For more information on Clark, see "How to Put Victors in the Public Schools," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1911), pp. 31-2; "Mrs. Frances E. Clark's Address," *Talking Machine World*, July 15 (1912), pp. 29-30. "Victor Educational Matter," *Talking Machine World*, September 15 (1914), p. 29, reports on Victor promotional material listing 1,783 cities having placed Victor machines in their schools.
- 37 "Music is Approaching its Richest Development," *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1917), p. 47.
- 38 John Philip Sousa, "The Menace of Mechanical Music," *Appleton's Magazine*, 8 (1906), pp. 278-84.
- 39 Lawrence Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America* (Cambridge, MA, 1988); quote from Neil Leonard, *Jazz: Myth and Religion* (New York, 1987), p. 12. The editorial originally appeared in the London edition of the *New York Herald*. It was reprinted in the United States by *Musical Courier*. On industry attitudes toward African-American music, see also Ronald Clifford Foreman, Jr, *Jazz and Race Records, 1920-1932: Their Origins and Their Significance for the Record Industry and Society* (PhD dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana, 1968), p. 46; Neil Leonard, *Jazz and the White Americans: The Acceptance of a New Art Form* (Chicago, 1962); Kathy J. Ogren, *The Jazz Revolution: Twenties America and the Meaning of Jazz* (New York, 1989), pp. 139-61.
- 40 In this sense, the cultural uplift campaign in the phonograph industry had parallels with the contemporaneous uplift campaign in the advertising industry. See Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940* (Berkeley, CA, 1985), p. 87-95; Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York, 1994); Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London, 1996).
- 41 "'Talker' Advertises Sousa," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1906), p. 5.
- 42 "Stimulates Musical Taste," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1905), p. 6. See also, "Talker Succeeds Hurdy Gurdy," *Talking Machine World*, May 15 (1910), p. 14.
- 43 "Some Good Retail Sales Tips," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1917), p. 126. For a very similar argument, see "Importance of Educating Consumers," *Talking Machine World*, November 15 (1910), p. 3.

- 44 "Raphael Cabanas Expected," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1910), p. 34; "Successful Work in Developing Foreign Trade," *Talking Machine World*, November 15 (1912), p. 6; "The Talking Machine Trade in Mexico," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1913), p. 82; "New Columbia Co. Representative in Texas," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1913), p. 33; "Building Business in Texas," *Talking Machine World*, May 15 (1914), p. 30; "Conditions in Texas," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1914), p. 10; "Becomes Canadian Manager," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1915), p. 35.
- 45 "Edmond F. Sause New Columbia Export Manager," *Talking Machine World*, February 15 (1915), p. 55; "Developing Our Export Trade," *Talking Machine World*, February 15 (1908), pp. 18–20; "Burns Chats of Trip to Cuba," *Talking Machine World*, July 15 (1910), p. 44; "Interesting Views on Mexico," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1911), p. 43; "The Old and New World Visited," *Talking Machine World*, December 15 (1911), pp. 37–8; "To Manufacture in Germany," *Talking Machine World*, April 15 (1914), p. 25; "Records in Foreign Languages," *Talking Machine World*, September 15 (1917), p. 96.
- 46 *Columbia Record*, 7 (1909), quoted in Pekka Gronow, "Ethnic Recordings: An Introduction," in American Folklife Center, *Ethnic Recordings in America: A Neglected Heritage* (Washington, DC, 1982), p. 3.
- 47 "Chinese Instead of Irish: Tunes from the Talking Machine Aroused O'Toole to Threats of Action," *Talking Machine World*, August 15 (1905), p. 9. For similar stories, see "Chinese Phonograph Records: Delight Chinatown Citizens in New Orleans – Grand Opera in Chinese a Great Attraction," *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1905), p. 6; "The Good Old Summertime," *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1906), p. 50. The latter, a veritable encyclopedia of ethnic stereotypes, relates a scene on a crowded New York train featuring "a wonderful mixture of Teutons, Scandinavians, Orientals, Africans, representatives of the Latin races, an Anglo-Saxon or two, and lastly a large talking machine."
- 48 "New York Trade Discusses European War," *Talking Machine World*, August 15 (1914), p. 24; untitled editorial, *Talking Machine World*, September 15 (1914), pp. 14–15; Howard Taylor Middleton, "Utilizing the War as an Advertising Medium," *Talking Machine World*, September 15 (1914), pp. 28–9; untitled editorial, *Talking Machine World*, October 15 (1914), pp. 14–15; Howard Taylor Middleton, "Fitting the Record to the Customer," *Talking Machine World*, November 15 (1914), pp. 56–7; "Columbia Recording Laboratory Opened in Chicago," *Talking Machine World*, August 15 (1915), pp. 67–8; "Oriental Records," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1917), p. 126. See also, Richard K. Spottswood, "Commercial Ethnic Recordings in the United States," in American Folklife Center, *Ethnic Recordings*, pp. 55–6; *Columbia Record*, quoted by Spottswood, p. 55. See also Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life*, pp. 79–80.
- 49 Columbia advertisement, *Talking Machine World*, January 15 (1917), p. 54.
- 50 "Records in Foreign Languages," *Talking Machine World*, September 15 (1917), p. 96; "Promoting Foreign Record Business," *Talking Machine World*, September 15 (1917), p. 83.

- 51 "An Almost Untouched Record Selling Field with Millions of Prospective Customers," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1922), p. 4.
- 52 Pathé Frères advertisement, *Talking Machine World*, July 15 (1917), pp. 24–5.
- 53 Harry A. Goldsmith, "Supplying Successfully the Needs of the Buyers of Foreign Records," *Talking Machine World*, June 15 (1918), p. 15.
- 54 Perry Bradford, *Born with the Blues* (New York, 1965); Jeff Todd Titon, *Early Downhome Blues: A Musical and Cultural Analysis* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1994 [1977]); William Barlow, *Looking Up at Down: The Emergence of Blues Culture* (Philadelphia, PA, 1989); Bill C. Malone, *Country Music USA, Revised* (Austin, TX, 1985 [1968]).
- 55 Ralph Peer, interview with Lillian Borgeson, January 13, 1958. Tape #FT2772c. Southern Folklife Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- 56 Charlie Gillett, *The Sound of the City: The Rise of Rock and Roll* (New York, 1970); Robert Christgau, "Rah, Rah, Sis-Boom-Bah: The Secret Relationship between College Rock and the Communist Party," in Andrew Ross and Tricia Rose (eds), *Microphone Fiends: Youth Music and Youth Culture* (New York, 1994), pp. 221–6; Motti Regev, "Rock Aesthetics and the Musics of the World," *Theory, Culture & Society*, 14 (1997), pp. 125–42; Frith, "Discourse of World Music," pp. 313–14.
- 57 Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society* (New York, 1958); George W. Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Chicago, 1982), pp. 72–4; James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA, 1988), pp. 234–5; Michael Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds* (London, 2004), pp. 76–81.
- 58 Denning, *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds*, p. 79.
- 59 Initial accounts of late twentieth-century globalization used the local in this way to articulate a cultural imperialism model, positing discrete, fragile local cultures smothered in a landslide of commodified, mass-mediated Western music. See Bruno Nettl, *The Western Impact on World Music* (New York, 1985); Dave Laing, "The Music Industry and the 'Cultural Imperialism' Thesis," *Media, Culture & Society*, 8 (July 1986), pp. 331–41; Peter Manuel, *Popular Musics of the Non-Western World* (New York, 1988); Andrew Goodwin and Joe Gore, "World Beat and the Cultural Imperialism Debate," *Socialist Review*, 20 (1990), pp. 174–90; Deanna Campbell Robinson et al. (eds), *Music at the Margins: Popular Music and Cultural Diversity* (London, 1991). Later formulations framed the local as a signifier of difference. Influenced by poststructuralism and post-colonialism, writers defined local music not as a distinct entity but as a position that emerged out of a historical power struggle with the West, be it characterized by its resistance to Western imperialism, its critique of Western music's canonical universalism, or its ultimate exoticism to Western listeners. See Feld, "From Schizophonia to Schmogogenesis"; George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis, MN, 1990); Jocelyne Guilbault, *Zouk: World Music in the West Indies* (Chicago, 1993);

Martin Stokes (ed.), *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: The Musical Construction of Place* (Oxford, 1994); Erlmann, "Aesthetics of the Global Imagination"; Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*; Philip Hayward (ed.), *Widening the Horizon: Exoticism in Post-War Popular Music* (Sydney, 1999). A final conception identified the local as a historically specific articulation of the global, a site in which global flows of media, money, people and power intercut and interacted in unique ways. This school of scholars explored, to paraphrase Stuart Hall, the musical aesthetics of the hybrid, the crossover, the diaspora and creolization. Hybrid musical forms could speak of being a global and local citizen simultaneously, complete with the contradictions such twoness implied. See Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis, MN, 1996); Stuart Hall, "The Local and the Global: Globalization and Ethnicity," in Anthony D. King (ed.), *Culture, Globalization and the World-System* (Binghamton, NY, 1991), pp. 38–3; W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York, 1989 [1903]), p. 3; Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2000 [1983]); Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA, 1993); George Lipsitz, *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place* (London, 1994); Taylor, *Global Pop*.