

RE-IMAGINING MUSIC AND ARTS STUDIES

EXPLORING MUSIC, RACE, GENDER AND RACIAL JUSTICE IN TROUBLED TIMES



Zoom-Vortrag (E) und anschließende Fragerunde (E/SP/D)
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Musicology and early ethnomusicology were born out of a fascination with the ‘distant other’. Early descriptions of ethnomusicologists (usually white men) depict them almost as adventurers studying ‘foreign’ cultures in far-flung lands, where they mainly focused on “primitive, marginal or vulnerable communities”. This imagery and language were long since replaced by more inclusive methodologies and narratives, which more accurately reflect ethnographic collaboration, dialogue and co-production of knowledge. Today, a growing number of scholars from these ‘far-flung lands’, some with indigenous backgrounds, are studying not only their own music worlds, but those of the former colonisers. Sadly, old hierarchies remain engrained, the same few voices are amplified, academia is still colonised, and we have yet to see academic spaces become safe for all.

Based on my experience as a half-indigenous, queer Peruvian scholar based in the UK exploring the link between music, social elites, whiteness, inter racial/inter ethnic dialogues, social conflict, racism and antiracism and LGBTI resistances; I will problematise what it means to be a BIPOC (black, indigenous and people of colour) music scholar studying the white elites in times of crisis and social unrest. For this, I will provide details of my own academic life and experiences of intersectionality, moving between racial labels, and share some of my contentment and frustration with current academic structures and knowledge-sharing with new generations of researchers.

I hope this will be an opportunity to reflect on our own roles in academia, higher education institutions, and scholarly communities. How do we balance our music passions with our obligations toward our collaborators and students? How do we enable democratic forums for reflective academic discussions? How do we negotiate racial politics in contemporary European academia? How can we challenge the academic status quo resisting, denouncing and acting when faced with injustice? This talk offers a space to imagine a new academic world that celebrates differences, acknowledges diverse individual experiences, vulnerabilities and privileges and is open to radical change.