

How understanding the Musicology and leisure in Argentina: a brief review

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Annotation

Like the leisure, ethnomusicology looks to be a discipline that still remains covered by most part of scholars. In a world that has been cut in two, north and south cultural contacts are too old as the culture themselves insofar the knowledge humankind has about cultural differences. Basically, after the conquest of America cosmology of Nation-State founded the basis for the appetite of knowing that characterized the diverse civilizations in Europe; under such a context, the needs of economic and military expansion in combination with the hegemony of knowledge on hands of Sciences constituted the foundations for what scholars know as Colonialism. In the meantime, administrative State encouraged the efficacy and efficiency as an instrument of progress; peripheral wisdom seemed to be relegated to play a secondary role in the production of research; that way Social British in XIX century and French Anthropology in the middle of XX century centered the control of the main thesis written in anthropology in the world (Krotz, 1993). Nowadays, other new disciplines are claiming to play a protagonist role in this game.

The present piece is aimed at dialoguing as to how musicology and leisure can be used in scientific research. In a combination with authors such as Pelinski, Kant, Munné and Ruiz we introduce a new discussion contrasting the postmodern context with the history of this discipline. From this point of view, musicology is facing several problems in inserting as a scientific academy with certain independence of anthropology and Social Sciences. Noteworthy, the root of Science appears to associate to economy and material development.

Initial discussion

In a book that lay precedent in the world of musicology, Ramon Pelinski sets forward an interesting issue as regarding to the interpretation scholars have given to this discipline as well as limitations and contributions to other ones like Anthropology. For this author, musicology would be defined as a field aims to investigate how work the music of all cultures so that scholars can understand the meaning and applications in the daily life. Furthermore, anthropology will put under debate the fact that music should not be an element that researchers study in a laboratory but by the means of interaction and observation. This kind of methodology between norms and practices converges whenever anthropologist makes field-work sharing their meaning with interviewed people (Malinowski, 1985).

In other terms, music not only is part of the culture but also should be studied ethnographically. Pelinski argues that musicology is characterized by features, which merit to be considered in such a scientific Science such as: a) music is defined as a social fact, b) culture allows the ethnographical approach, c) process of identity seems to be shaped by the performance of music (Pelinski, 2000).

His standpoint focuses on musicology should be considered as a part of ethnology since shares with this a similar method. Historically, musicology was deemed as a subordinated discipline stem from anthropology. By the way, Marcel Mauss emphasized that songs should be considered inside the esthetic of tribes relating emotion, rhythm and intuition. For this scholar, societies are embodied in the subtlety of sensations and innovation. In a scientific ethnography, the anthropologist must

approach the emotion of songs detaching who is the author, singers and listeners forming the principles of psychophysiology (Mauss, 2006).

Of course, perhaps it is important to denote that the paradox of Mauss. Even if his suggestions have been taken by more important ethnologists, he has never conducted ethnography in fact. Possibly, this reason was as to why Mauss left behind the independence of musicology from ethnology. Noteworthy, for Mauss the music is only an esthetical issue aside from the world of reason. As Maillard noted, philosophically this turn of mind entails a serious limitations since it supposes ethnocentrically that European Sciences are the only way instrument toward exploration that the entire world should use (Maillard, 1999).

Musicology in Argentina

Whatever the case may be and like the rest of the globe, in Argentina the musicology will be born on hands of anthropology as well. In regards to this, Irma Ruiz in her work entitled *Ethnomusicology* initiates the debate in first steps of musicology inside this country in authors such as Berutti, Lynch, Vega or Ambrosetti. These researchers were initially concerned about the disappearance of Argentina folklore tradition; the complexity about the risk of extermination in aboriginal tribes is a difficult matter to grasp. Like the European anthropology in XIX century, in Argentina scholars mistakenly supposed that aborigine cultures will be next to disappearance (Krotz, 1993). Advent of capitalism and development will generate the disappearance of non-western cultures.

In consequence, a sentiment of protection and fraternalism emerges in the mind of them searching the different customs and habits around these tribes. As a result of this, museums centralizes and recovers all pieces sent by diverse part of Argentina regarding the culture of music in aborigine circles. This recompilation of historical background allows Ruiz affirming Ambrossetti is the first pioneer for the scientific research of folklore in Argentina. However, the discipline gained acceptance in hands of Robert Lehmann-Nitsche who picked up more than 51 songs from a tribe called Tehuelche and once there recorded roughly into 50 cylinders (Ruiz, 1985). Finally, this unworthy material will be some awhile in La Plata town waiting for a future return towards Santa Cruz. Of course, because of a lack of resources these instruments landed in Europe were codified and returned to Argentina a couple of years later. Even though it is well-known, the compulsion of Lehmann-Nitsche in recording obsessively these kinds of songs, anthropology and ethnomusicology owe an immense gratitude to these scholars and his contributions. Under this utopist point of view, anthropology was decisively aimed at selecting and protecting to natives, and once again, music was not the exemption.

For other hand, it is hypothesized that Nitsche demonstrated more interests in the involved instruments in such than in the structuring of songs and the relation with social institutions. Other event circumscribed to the travel conducted in Tierra Del Fuego by the Coronel Furlong in 1908 has been other substantial advance in the musicology field. He discovered and shipped to Berlin some records collected from Salknam and Yamana tribes but many time will elapse until 1922 whenever findings of such a records to be given back to Argentina. As the previous argument given, Irma Ruiz accomplishes a correct historiography not only about the first advances in musicology fields for Argentina, but also she describes in depth the different limitations and approaches that scholars were coming across with the study of music ranging from Carlos Vega to Jorge Novati. Personally, we appreciate this work as pivotal for all them who like to study the historical background and posterior development of musicology in Argentina and South America.

Modernity and Social Sciences

More than 20 years ago U. Beck emphasized in the effects and consequences of a new modernity in industrial societies. In a moment wherein the effects of capitalism on environment are under debate,

this book presents an historical analogy with the end of reconsidering a classical conceptualization of progress and development. On his introductory chapter, Beck argues that the process of modernity has been suffered a break up to a nuclear accident occurred in Chernobyl, Ukraine. Afterwards this tragedy, the perception of threats was radically altered. Unlike medieval travelers, who evaluated personal risks before departing, a new form of living the adventure is being surfacing. That follows, global dangers are represented as collective, catastrophic and chaotic beyond the possibilities of individual reaction. To put this in brutally, there is nothing one can do when the catastrophe is coming.

Under such a context, Beck suggests that a shift of this magnitude is feasible in accordance with an increasing materiality as well as empowerment of productive forces. That way, threats are implicitly derived as a product of the economic development where society lies, but sooner or later a situation of increasing dangers is too much for the ability of response that society can tolerate, and system definitely collapses. In opposition to bourgeois society, which maintained the line between poverty and richness, modern societies face a new configuration of social order. The fact is that this aforementioned transformation has been given birth to a new kind of society known as “The Society of Risk” where fears and risk are indiscriminately distributed to all strata of structure. Needs of mass-consumption in association with a growing sentiment of fear paved the pathway to the advent of a new spirit of capitalism. As a result of this, logic of appropriation, which characterized classical mercantilism in past decades, is replaced by its own antithesis, the logic of denial. It is not surprising that privileged groups hide collateral damages derived from non-sustainable consumption; their practices are supported thanks to the intervention of Science and Journalism. The underlying problem seems to be that duties and responsibilities are globalized at the same time humankind jeopardizes in exhausting the non-renewable resources in earth as well as polluting the ozone layer. Implicitly or not, that spurs the boundaries between victim and culprit; but in perspective, whenever risks are denied, fears emerge. Unless otherwise resolved, post-modernism has changed the basis of whatever social science had worked in last century, today new instruments, methods, ideas and knowledge is strongly needed (Beck, 2006).

Postmodernism

At the other extreme, the text of Roman Pelinski entitled “musicology in postmodern era” provides us with an analysis as to how the theoretical perspectives born as a product of modernism affected the present paradigms in ethnomusicology. By combining notions and definitions based on late capitalism, new technologies, geographical displacements, migrations and postcolonialism, he argues that this discipline has dissociated from oppressive rules and norms at the time it incorporates postmodern theories linked to language as a vehicle towards the political articulation of resistance (above all in scholars such as Foucault, Deleuze, Lacan and Gramsci).

That way, this new stream realized that politic ideology, discourse and music converge in a same mechanism which merits to be studied; the goal of musicology is providing a critical basis on what the influence of colonialism can be broken (Pelinski, 2000). In other words, the question as to whether anthropology will be associated to an economic process of colonialism and oppression, postmodern musicology will find a pretext to distinguish from anthropology embracing opposite values. Emancipation and freedom were enrooted in the belief that musicology should make emphasis in special mobility as a key facto to understanding the “deconstructionism” or “political discourse detachment”. These consisted in the criticism of how otherness is re-constructed by western imaginary, not only in central but also in peripheral countries. If today the center is nomad in a time characterized by constant migrations, displacements, multiculturalism and crossbreeding, music will play an important role as an expression of resistance opposing local customs against international capital.

Under such a context, musicology is prone to gain territory as a scientific independent discipline in a moment wherein all conditions are given for that. Even though, Pelinski's text appears to be illustrative in this matter, some considerations should be highlighted before-hand. We base our criticism on the lack of clarity that present Pelinski in regards to the bridge between deconstructionism and modernity. Secondly, as though Pelinski mentions, postmodernity is characterized by the exacerbation of legal rational logic –in a weberian sense-, it is also difficult to argue that there exist a social fragmentation or a declination in social bondages. Readers who wishing have clear this, will remind that iron cage in Weber suppose an incessantly accumulation of material goods and people reinforcing the centripetal development (Weber, 1996) (Wallerstein, 2006) (Korstanje, 2008).

¿How may capitalism to work exactly without the coordination of social bondages?. In that point, diverse studies have been devoted to stress that urbanization and international migration from peripheral to industrialized societies has to do with a tendency of capitalism to centralize material and resources in urban areas (Marmora, 2004). In this regards, we have not yet in certainness if migration is a product of cultural resistance or an occulted side related to the expansion of economy. In such a circumstance, modern leisure paved the pathway to elucidate the role played by leisure in the musicology study.

Ethnomusicology and leisure

Definitively, like musicology many interpretation surfaces in recent years about leisure represents. F. Munne defines it as a phenomenon determined in two contrasting senses: self-determination and imposition. At a first instance, people is conditioned for many rules that guide their daily life. Also, in their lapses of leisure people choose to launch in an escape; for instance, they are subsumed in other logic characterized by other norms. For other hand, self-determination works reflexively in encourage the subject to make its own rules. Also for Munné, total time that involves 4 phases: psycho-biologic time wherein person is oriented to satisfy the proper basic necessities; a socio-economic time characterized by focusing in activities which will bring an economic rewards; socio-cultural time in which case the subject can reinforce the emotional linkages and finally, free-time wherein people take the occasion to follow internally their wishes alternating emancipation with self-conditioning (Munné, 1999). For that reason, the leisure should be understood as the time a person spends in activities oriented to its emancipation as well as the predominance of rules.

It is unfortunate that in Latin America, empirical studies regarding leisure are scant and superficial. In general, they are guided by paradigms of classical north-related Social Science such as Psychology, Anthropology or sociology. Indeed, studies that create a bridge between leisure and musicology are more than seldom. However, as Kant realizes music not only is a social phenomenon but also is inserted in broader analytic categories like time and space. In his theory of contiguity, Kant argues that tones are tuned in extension to coordinate and perceive harmonically a melody. But it comprises a disconnected set of noises without any kind of meaning for people (Kant, 2004).

The case appears to be that Munné and Kant agreed by respecting to what extent music and leisure can offer: a) there is a normative expressed by means of preexisting codes which are not external to the language, b) an self-determination oriented to enjoyment and amusement not only in music but also in leisure and c) both are determined by a similar degree of freedom, d) musicology and leisure studies were relegated under the hegemony of classical social Sciences. Inversely, today classical Sciences do not hesitate in trivializing the approaches, terms and contributions that not only musicology but also study of leisure can provide with.

Conclusion

Following a same line of reasoning, we consider that the internalization as well as the externalization of music is a communicative issue at a first instance and onyric or ludic at a second one. For that reason, musicology and leisure should be deemed as Social Science in independence of classical disciplines. Although today they had certain problems in concerting a steady body of research, it is interesting the process as to why either have been trivialized from the past century onwards. In accordance to Pelinski, we guess that music and leisure remained under the wings of anthropology because of functional interests. For popular wisdom both represented in different ways a sphere of humanity beyond the logic of capitalist production. And for that, dangerous pieces circumscribed in social resistance. It is not surprising that musicology and leisure studies were accompanied in progress of decolonialism. From first social theories enrooted in functionalism as far as the psychoanalyst circles in psychiatry, scholars agreed consensus in emphasizing the negative effects of leisure as a sing of laziness. The free time constituted an important platform so that the worker can rest and being reinserted at work stronger but not as an activity in such. As a combination of many sophisticated factors related to technologies advances, working-hours reductions as well as salaries enhancements -no later than 1950-, leisure was considered as a serious institution. Like the musicology, it is also debatable wherein should be placed the leisure as an academic discipline. Similarities between both still are unresolved in our times. In future approaches we will underpin the proposition in enhancing for the convergence of either disciplines in only new one.

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