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**Citation:** Agawu, K., Bhogal, G. K., Cavett, E., Dunsby, J., Horton, J., Monchick, A., Pace, I., Stobart, H. & Zagorski-Thomas, S. (2023). Valuing the Surplus: Perspectives on Julian Horton's Article 'On the Musicological Necessity of Music Analysis', Musical Quarterly, 3/i–ii, pp. 62–104.Contributors: Kofi Agawu, Gurminder K. Bhogal, Esther Cavett, Jonathan Dunsby, Julian Horton, Alexandra Monchick, Ian Pace, Henry Stobart and Simon Zagorski-Thomas, compiled and edited by Esther Cavett. Music Analysis, 42(3), pp. 412-471. doi: 10.1111/musa.12221

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DOI: 10.1111/musa.12221

Valuing the Surplus: Perspectives on Julian Horton's Article 'On the Musicological Necessity of Music Analysis', *Musical Quarterly*, 3/i–ii, pp. 62–104.

Contributors: Kofi Agawu, Gurminder K. Bhogal, Esther Cavett, Jonathan Dunsby, Julian Horton, Alexandra Monchick, Ian Pace, Henry Stobart and Simon Zagorski-Thomas, compiled and edited by Esther Cavett

## Introduction

*Esther Cavett,*
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This Critical Forum has been developed from a round table discussion of Julian Horton's 2020 article. The original discussion was convened by Ian Pace to conclude the *Music in the University* conference held at City, University of London in 2022. Representing different perspectives and preoccupations, yet sharing some common concerns, the original participants are joined here by Kofi Agawu and Gurminder Bhogal. It has been my privilege to collate these materials, aiming to retain something of the informal yet considered character of the original event. Together, these reflective pieces offer a multi-faceted response to Horton's seminal contribution, as is appropriate given that – just as in a Picasso cubist realisation, say *The Girl with the Mandolin* (1910) – there can be no single or simple view taken of the many issues he raises.

This forum commences with a synopsis of the original article by Ian Pace (approved by Horton), followed by the seven commissioned responses. Horton then responds to those contributions, and Jonathan Dunsby, the chair of the conference round table and founding editor of this journal, has the last word. *Music Analysis* has a distinguished history of debate through Letters to the Editor. Readers are encouraged to add their views to those expressed here.

## Synopsis

*Ian Pace*
*City, University of London*

Julian Horton's article continues a long-standing debate in musicology (Kerman 1980 and Agawu 2004). If in 1996 Tim Howell could delineate the field into 'the three S's: Schenker, Semiology and Set-Theory' (Howell 1996), already by 2004, as noted by Kofi Agawu in his response to Joseph Kerman's polemic,


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a range of other subdisciplines had emerged in the United States, including neo-Riemannian theory, new *Formenlehre*, further developments in Schenkerian theory, work on cognition, perception and rhythm and the application of analysis to a wider range of repertoire than the Western Classical tradition. Writing sixteen years later, and inevitably reflecting the priorities of a UK rather than US theorist/analyst, Horton surveys further expansion and diversification of the field of musical analysis and the growth of institutions and events devoted to the subject.

But the heart of Horton's article deals with strong criticisms of analysis per se from other musicologists, which, he argues, frequently take one of two forms: *historicist*, by which close reading of music is self-confirming and relatively meaningless without wider history and historical evidence and that analysis itself can be a manifestation of a particular set of historical priorities and to elevate a particular repertoire (Tomlinson 2003, Abbate 2004 and Smart 2008); and *performative* (inaugurated by Small 1998), by which analysis fetishises musical scores over music as actions in time.

In response to historicist critics, Horton criticises an over-reified portrayal of two centuries of analysis and assumptions of its always having constituted an end in itself, as well as of its being necessarily equated with value judgement. He also notes the omission by some historicist critics of work by such theorists as William Caplin (1998), James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy (2006) and Robert Gjerdingen (2007), and maintains that the new *Formenlehre* does not exhibit many of the tendencies bemoaned by older criticisms of 'formalism'. He questions whether historical research is any less vulnerable than analysis to charges of solipsism and notes historical evidence pointing to the importance of analytical/theoretical concerns in different times and places. The performative critique, which received its most sustained exposition from Nicholas Cook (1999, in sharp distinction to Schmalfeldt 1985, Narmour 1988 and Berry 1989) and (2013), as well as Carolyn Abbate (2004), presents an oppositional dichotomy between analysis and performance, especially when the former is alleged to exert a hegemonic influence over the latter. Small and Cook seek to decentre musical 'texts' and even the very idea of 'music' as an object rather than a series of actions. Abbate, mirroring arguments made elsewhere by Cook, seeks to present analysis as a type of theoretical imposition, compared unfavourably with the supposed immediacy of the untutored listener. Horton argues for a broader view of the value of analysis and questions the primacy afforded by some scholars to the 'immediacy' of performance, suggesting via an example that Abbate's view can only produce trivial results. He also urges wider consideration of the ways by which performance and experience of it are themselves mediated by musical knowledge, including analytical knowledge, denying that the type of listener idealised by Abbate really exists.

Horton situates these musicological developments in the context of neoliberal and postmodern thought (citing Jameson 1991 and Habermas 1984 and 1996 on the confluence of the two), links postmodern attacks on formalism to neoliberal


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ones on socialism, notes how various forms of analysis are rooted in historical theories and practices known by many composers and questions whether a musicology which eschews analysis and replaces it with valorisation by cultural context can offer a meaningful alternative to large-scale instrumentalisation and marketisation of culture and knowledge, also referencing the 'end of history' narrative (Fukuyama 1989 and 1992) as reflected by Richard Taruskin (2005). He draws on Karol Berger (2000) – as well as Adorno (1982) on artistic *surplus* and Popper and Eccles (1983) – to argue for a type of relative *technical autonomy* of music (the loss of which is registered with concern in Bourdieu 1998), linking this to Habermas (1984) as part of a critique of *instrumentalised rationality*, maintaining that analytical propositions can equally constitute *communicative understanding* which can be discursively contested, neglect of which informs antiformalist claims of hegemony. Noting various elements of music which remain invariant regardless of performance, Horton fleshes these arguments out through analytical examples from works of Henry Purcell and J. S. Bach, challenging one to account for its intricacies in purely historical and/or performative terms, without recourse to technical autonomy, which he associates with *critical resistance* to utility. He concludes that the viability of analysis relates to a range of different disciplinary imperatives – *historical* (in terms of pedagogical traditions), *ontological* (especially relating to the score), *systemic* (relating to models), *discursive* (facilitating specialised discourse), *phenomenological* (identifying foundational characteristics of musical experience) and *political* (to reveal and critique cultural-political hegemony), and makes the case for its necessity in terms of each.

## Music Analysis Beyond the Classroom

*GURMINDER K. BHOGAL*
*WELLESLEY COLLEGE*

I find myself responding to Julian Horton's thought-provoking article from an unusual perspective. To give some context: I grew up in the UK, so I have a good sense of the institutional framework in relation to which Horton makes his observations about the necessity of music analysis for music scholarship and pedagogy. After I completed my doctoral education in the US, opportunities to find a job in the UK were scarce, and I was fortunate to begin my career at an elite liberal arts college in Boston. The viewpoints I share here are purely my own and based on my experience of teaching at this small institution of approximately 2,400 undergraduate students over the past seventeen years or so. Many of my students are double majors: a STEM major[1] is often completed alongside their music major. Students choose which courses they want to take in our small, shrinking department, and we try to accommodate their preferences. We have music majors who do not read scores with confidence and

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who do not play conventional musical instruments, but their expertise in the digital realm broadens an understanding of what it means to undertake music analysis, especially when this activity is tied to interrogating a soundscape whose complexities lie in a different material realm than that of a musical score or an acoustical performance.

Horton's attention to 'neoliberalism and the musical art's plight in late-capitalist society' helps me ground my observations (Horton 2022, p. 63). Unlike most participants to this forum, I write from the ground up: my research is, to many extents, tied to my teaching. Much of what I write makes its way into my classroom (and vice versa). Broadly defined, 'success' at my institution is tied closely to issues of a neoliberal concern: how many students are enrolled in my classes, what is the quality of my student evaluations, how many 'A' grades do I award, do higher grades correlate with better student evaluations, and so forth. These are among the types of questions which drive instructors to 'thrive' in this environment, and these concerns hang over our heads as we prepare our files for tenure, promotion and other kinds of review. While guiding students towards attaining degree-level expertise (in two fields of study for double majors), we are also bound to pleasing our students/consumers. How do these observations relate to music analysis?

When students are inching closer towards paying $100,000 per year, it is very clear to me who has control over what is taught in the classroom, how it is taught and by whom. Many of my students are versatile listeners and performers with immensely broad musical tastes. My understanding is that students see music analysis as an act of intellectual appreciation which they perform in a variety of ways about a wide range of repertoires and musical practices. Music analysis can involve sitting down with a score, as I often do in my classes, but I must also keep in mind that I have students who want to major in music and who can't (yet) read music. While these students take the time to build up their skills in score reading, they pivot towards talking about music using technical language which attends to sensation, memory and embodiment. Their experience as auditors, performers and composers has already contributed to this body of knowledge, and an embodied approach to hearing music – many students listen through headphones – remains a default entry point for analysis even once students have attained 'musical literacy' as defined by the academy.

In parallel, an understanding of historical, cultural and social contexts also provides students with valuable cues which help them become better readers of scores, sensitive listeners and performers and sophisticated composers whether their literacy is of the traditional sort, which decodes signs on the page, of a type that deals with the memorisation and improvisation of orally transmitted patterns, or is tied to languages of computer coding. Music analysis can be as broad or as narrow as one might need for a particular moment. Above all, to echo Kofi Agawu's point about analysis as 'dynamic and on-going' (Agawu 2004, p. 270), analysis must be understood as a fluid act which intersects with other disciplinary skills and intellectual–social concerns. In a liberal arts context,


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a critical mindset is deployed at every moment. Thus, even while acquiring basic aural and note-reading skills, students will notice the implicit value system which underlies *whose* music is being used to demonstrate specific musical principles and techniques. A commitment to equity and diversity means that my students will immediately seek to rectify any overarching imbalance with regard to how their acquisition of musical skills is shaped by expressions of gender, race, sexuality, ability, age, ethnicity, and so on.

Against these contexts, music analysis emerges as a 'much-vaunted pluralism' in that it is one of *many* skills my students seek to learn to deepen their understanding of musical techniques across a range of styles, contexts and idioms (Horton 2020, p. 63). Because a liberal arts approach is built on the ability to make broad and in-depth observations, a mode of analysis that focuses on musical minutiae for a sustained period is no longer tenable. I find myself constantly anchored by a fundamental concern of my students: what are we doing, why, whose ideologies are in play and what is the larger global relevance of this activity? For better, possibly (?), I am in no position to undertake a blow-by-blow analysis of a Mozart piano sonata, although I would relish the opportunity to do so – such an endeavour is now a personal indulgence which the occasional student will sometimes encourage (or endure, as the case may be). Musical details matter, as I argue in a book dedicated to this very topic (Bhogal 2013), but only if sight of the bigger picture is not lost (which was actually *not* my point in said book). Our students/consumers are open-minded and happy to learn. I'm not worried about music analysis growing old or irrelevant for them. As long as I can tie up the threads and keep the big picture in view, as long as I can continue to appreciate the act of music analysis as not only being tied to the score, but also as an activity where their *whole selves as global and globalised musicians* are valued and validated, students will remain curious. And I will continue to experience satisfaction in my teaching.

I'm not sure I can say the same for how music analysis fares in the larger field of the humanities. Having served on fellowship committees where music is represented alongside humanities-adjacent disciplines, I am quite surprised by how often projects which deal with notation or a type of music literacy involving score reading are underappreciated by colleagues working outside music. There is almost a phobia of music notation. Part of this anxiety relates to a lack of music-reading skills on the part of the evaluator and a lack of understanding of basic music terminology. Another aspect has to do with insufficient effort by the applicant to communicate the humanistic value of their work. This concern might seem far removed from Horton's discussion of music analysis, but it links directly to his valuation of analytical surplus where musical technique manifests as a form of critical resistance (Horton 2020, pp. 88–91). Horton writes for a specialist and, from what I have seen, largely sympathetic and empathetic audience. Playing devil's advocate for a moment, I imagine having a conversation about the value of music analysis as 'a musicological necessity' (Horton 2020, p. 94) with my dean in making a plea for additional hires or

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bolstering department funds. I'm fairly certain Horton's valorisation of 'music's surface', 'what is artistic in music' and an 'imperative to comprehend art' would appear lofty and not go far to serve my cause in the face of neoliberal economics. Retreating into music analysis can be done only if we are also able to communicate the value of what we are doing to those who see analysis as an irrelevant, socially insignificant and narcissistic pursuit. In the neoliberal academy, my survival depends on my ability to explain why the intrusive $C\flat^3$ in the reprise of the arabesque in Debussy's *Clair de lune* is devastatingly melancholic for the auditor. Horton wants to keep a distance from the 'utility' of music, but I am required to wrestle with it to stay relevant.

What Horton doesn't address are the perils of undertaking music analysis. At its best (worst?), it is a dangerous task because of the inwards-looking nature of the analytical act. Diving deep into a work, a performance, an improvisation, a code – this is perilous. Who is to say whether the analyst will emerge unscathed, unchanged. But surely that is also the point of analysis. And surely it is the task of those who undertake these risks to emphasise the transformative potential of analysis for 'an ideal world', to cite Agawu once again, where 'analysis would go on always and forever' (2004, p. 270). We no longer live in an era where the social, intellectual and pedagogical validity of music analysis can be taken for granted. As Horton's essay demonstrates, music analysis needs its defenders and its critics, and it is the debate itself which continues to rejuvenate and lend vitality to the will to analyse.

Funding institutions in the United States ask explicitly about the public value of a scholar's research, and applicants are encouraged to use non-technical language which can be understood by a non-specialist audience. These kinds of instructions can sometimes feel stifling, controlling and humiliating, but I wonder if there is something to be gained from this exercise? I would argue that being forced to rethink my use of specialist terminology has allowed me to share my work with more people: now more of my colleagues and (non-academic) friends have a better sense of what I do, instead of feeling fearful about having to navigate technical terms. To be clear, I wholly endorse the importance of music analysis – defined broadly, as I have done in this response. At the same time, I find myself leaning towards an empathetic approach which seeks to include colleagues from other fields. To this end, I don't give up on using specialised terminology. Instead, I take the extra step to define and paraphrase key terms even if the result appears simplistic or essentialist. This effort sometimes feels laborious, but it helps establish a more inclusive and collaborative community.

Despite my intensive training as a performer and academic, there are moments when I don't want to analyse music – I seek to hide under the Romantic aura of letting music speak for itself. At other moments, I want nothing more than to retreat into the safe and secluded space of the ivory tower to examine scores, recordings and performances through the filters of various analytical methods and my own gut instincts. But the neoliberal academy demands answers. If we prioritise music analysis in our research, then our


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funding is tied to our ability to explain what it is, how we do it and why we need it. Going back to Horton, I would like him to consider a larger, more ambitious question which takes him beyond the confines of how one subfield – music analysis – shapes another – musicology: *how is music analysis a human necessity?* This is a question which many of us contend with as we work towards creating more inclusive and equitable communities of students and scholars at our institutions and beyond. Horton's thoughtful and generous approach to evaluating scholarly debate provides a helpful model for further discussion of these kinds of issues and others which are central to the vitality of our field and its continued efforts to build interdisciplinary alliances.

## Analysis in the Toolbox

*ALEXANDRA MONCHICK*
*CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE*

At the beginning of his essay, Julian Horton points out that musical analysis has been conceived more narrowly in the United States than in Europe, with analysis topics being relegated more to theorists than musicologists. Horton also explains American music theorists' initial focus on organic unity (in both the Schenkerian and Schoenbergian senses) as well as more recent moves to incorporate form and topic analysis. Although I agree that the British and Europeans have embraced a wider variety of analytical methods than their American counterparts, I would argue that Americans have also simultaneously turned to broader repertories – particularly non-Western and popular music – as subjects of study. Thus, European and American approaches to analysis have been limited, but in different respects. However, I do not believe that the recent attack on musical analysis results from these disciplinary limits. There are simpler explanations.

I agree with Horton that analysis is an important musicological tool. According to Don Michael Randel's now somewhat dated 'Musicological Toolbox' essay (1992), analysis requires a knowledge of repertory, philosophy, notation and analysis. Randel ends the article with an acknowledgement that the toolbox changes as the discipline evolves, citing then current disciplinary trends in feminist studies and 'world music'.

> As we use our tools, we constantly remake them […] we can only hope to be honest in our account of the canons in the past – and of the forces that created and maintained them – without, however, restricting their expansion in the future. (1992, p. 20)

Can we restock the toolbox as having more tools but require that everyone's box still have a basic saw, hammer and set of nails? Are current critiques of analysis the result of contemporary politics? Are they a result of interdisciplinarity in universities, where topics such as postcolonial, critical race and gender theory

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enter curricula, or rather of intellectual laziness? Are university departments broadening methods of analysis or are they allowing them to decline in light of recent trends towards narrowing discourse?

Current battles in the academy centre on the need for 'skills-based' versus 'critical thinking' courses. Curricular clashes are prevalent in music departments, and, because of the amount of applied individual instruction required, music departments are expensive to run. Thus, a greater burden falls on the departments to fill classes to capacity, even with non-majors. The administration pressures faculty to replace theory classes with more accessible music technology and entrepreneurship classes and 'sexy' classes which incorporate issues of social justice, popular press headlines and 'the music students actually listen to'. Much analysis demands different quantitative reasoning skills, and its ease of mastery has been linked directly with previous familiarity with Western music, which has sociological and economic corollaries.

I understand the overtones of using a term like 'musical literacy' in this politically fraught climate, so for my purposes here, I limit it to the ability to read Western music notation. I no longer take for granted that musical literacy is a requirement for matriculation in music departments at Western institutions. In 2017, the Harvard music department changed its requirements for an undergraduate degree. The student-run newspaper *Harvard Crimson* explained that the new curriculum would eliminate a two-semester introductory music theory requirement and permit students to count certain freshman seminars and general education courses towards concentration requirements (see Leiffer 2017). The department chair explained that the new curriculum would not be less rigorous but would allow students to better tailor their courses to their interests. However, this change has ramifications inside and outside the academy in that many would assume a Harvard music graduate would have not only a rudimentary but an advanced understanding of Western music fundamentals.

Although the change was to the Harvard undergraduate curriculum, some of these students will continue on to graduate school in musicology or in other fields. Is such a change serving our future PhD students? Most of them will not be able to get a job in a large school of music or conservatory by teaching upper-level seminars in gender studies and poststructuralism alone. For example, I teach a seminar on the LGBTQ+ community in music, which I feel is incredibly important, but I must also teach the medieval-to-Baroque survey and an occasional theory class. But beyond academia, do we want to read a *Times* review of a Mahler symphony by a journalist who does not understand how harmony and form work? Worse yet, would you want to have to pay $7.2 million because an 'expert witness' did not understand the musical building blocks of *Blurred Lines*?[2]

The importance of language learning has faced similar challenges in the US. Six years ago, an incendiary discussion erupted on the AMS Listserv,[3] an email group made up of members of the American Musicological Society, about


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whether PhD programmes in music should continue having foreign-language requirements. The commentors spanned ages, career stages and careers. The consensus was that at least reading knowledge of one or two other languages should be required for research degrees in music. There were some dissenters, including this rejoinder by William Cheng:

> When it comes to tearing down walls and joining hands across the world, a semester of 'Reading German' can do far more than, say, a silly hypothetical recommendation for AMS-L commenters to read/catch up on the last two decades of postcolonial theory, disability studies, critical race theory, queer of color critique, and other gay nonsense. And lastly, as for the dire issue of becoming 'dependent' […] Goethe forbid that we phone a friend when we need help with a source. (William Cheng to AMS-L, 18 October 2017)

Even as I do not agree with his rhetoric, I understand Cheng's position in that one must advocate legitimising new fields and modalities of research. Cheng has been at the forefront of the emerging fields of queer and disability studies in music. Yet, Cheng implies that all the important fields listed above are fully accessible in English. The 'phone-a-friend mentality' to ascertain direct quotes and facts underscores the importance of linguistic competence. Knowing other languages is a gateway into scholarship, literature and much else. We should certainly choose research topics which play to our interests and strengths, but we should also commit to working on our methodological weaknesses. I don't expect a Debussy scholar to have the same command of German which I need to do my research on Hindemith, nor am I expected to have the same grasp on combinatoriality required by someone studying Babbitt. Yet, I do expect music majors to understand tonal function just as I expect them to recognise basic musical terms in Italian and German, as Google Translate often provides the most literal (and thus inapplicable) meanings.

I make this analogy because many of the same debates exist regarding the importance of analysis. I believe that, in both cases, they have more to do with musicologists' own insecurities than their actual fields of research. This plays out not only in relation to what we deem respectable research, but in how we redesign curricula. By changing degree requirements, by saying something is unnecessary, we validate scholarly deficiencies.

I defend the need to learn and employ musical analysis with two disclaimers. First, I agree with the need for analysis in academic musicological positions, while recognising that there are historians, anthropologists and psychologists, for example, who study music, but whose work does not feature analysis or need to (John Rosselli's work on opera comes to mind; see Rosselli 1984 and 1992). A scholar of Elizabethan England, in general, would not be castigated for neglecting to interpret the intricacies of Shakespeare's language and handwriting, nor would a Shakespeare scholar be criticised for not being able to explain economic failures in Elizabethan England to the same degree as an English professor and a historian, respectively. An issue for music research

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today, however, is that musicologists tend to dismiss modes of enquiry when those modes do not fall within our interests or abilities. Second, analysis should not be used as a prescriptive praxis, whereby the work is used to validate a scholar's theory. Analysis should be flexible to deepen our understanding of a work. Another intellectual trap arises when a structuralist model is forced on the piece ex post facto to legitimise a musical game, rather than to create a deeper comprehension of a piece. We have been hesitant to contend with certain ethnomusicologists on such practices when their application of Western musical and sociological analysis has been applied to a non-Western culture. This argument seems to me to be no different from the achronological and solipsistic analysis for which Horton criticises Mary Ann Smart (2008, pp. 65–70). Is the interpretation of fieldwork itself not analysis?

As a concluding (and somewhat hopeful) note, I was a member of the 2022 Roland Jackson Awards committee for an analysis article published in the last three years by a member of the American Musicological Society.[4] Several articles in the past competition employed newly developed or applied methods to illuminate wider repertoires, songs, dances or multi-media, as well as a broader set of analytical tools, such as the employment of dance notation, methods for theorising accents in hip-hop or engagement with performer physicality. These are new analytical tools which should lead us to deeper understandings of musical meaning, but to get to these new and diverse modes of enquiry, we should understand the lingua franca of the Western academy: Western music analysis.

## The Engagements of Analysis

*ESTHER CAVETT*
*KING'S COLLEGE LONDON, SOMERVILLE COLLEGE, OXFORD*

My response to Horton's article is influenced by my time inside and outside the field of music theory and analysis. As an insider, I was a passionate young researcher and teacher in the 1980s and, 30 years later, I find myself back where I started, teaching analysis of eighteenth to mid-twentieth-century Western art music at the University of Oxford, except of course that, although I care equally strongly about my subject, the past is a foreign country (Hartley 1953, p. 9), and I teach things differently now. While outside academic music, I practised law for nearly 30 years, took a degree in psychology, joined the board of a UK music conservatoire and became deeply committed to widening access to music education in UK primary and secondary state schools. Perhaps because of these perspectives and because the world has moved on in ways none of us could have imagined since Horton wrote his article in 2020, I am ambivalent about Horton's contribution. As a fellow academic I salute his project, but I wish it would reach a wider audience, even if that was not his original intention.


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Horton first summarises the key trends in academia leading to current negative views of analysis and then offers a robust defence for the continuing relevance of the analysis of 'literate music' (Horton's term) in academia today. He therefore contributes to the ongoing debate between those who do and do not value music analysis, and his work is carefully crafted to give analysis the tools to fight back on its own territory. Horton describes his approach as an act of 'political activism', but that is an ideological stance rather than a proposal for specific reforms. In contrast, my response imagines how his key messages might be reframed to reach those outside academia who would otherwise be indifferent to or alienated or disenfranchised from the matters he raises. The squabbles between different factions of our discipline which he describes will not, after all, resonate with people who hold the purse strings funding it – the vice-chancellors, policymakers and politicians who look at the broad canvas of tertiary education today and see music as hardly distinguishable from broader humanities study. Without catching the attention of these people, probably through the very channels and formats Horton so dislikes (such as the popular press), as well as non-music journals and conferences, the wheels of (not much) change to which Horton objects will grind on regardless.

For analysis to be valued within the contemporary music curriculum, it must be relevant (and seen to be relevant) not only to further postgraduate academic research but also to those seeking to transfer the specialist skills of analysis into careers in other fields (as I did). Most students being taught music analysis will not, after all, become academic music analysts and many will not even make a career in music, so it is reasonable for them to ask what transferable skills they receive from their study. The primary responsibility for answering this question lies with their teachers. For instance, a strong case for contemporary music analysis teaching could be based on the idea that it offers a powerful set of tools for examining process and structure in contexts both inside and outside further academic study. Prospective employers outside academia could thereby have a better understanding of why studying analysis might increase the problem-solving skills of music graduates, and music students would be more effective advocates in making their own case for their employability. Such an approach might also engage the strong faction in school and tertiary education as well as governmental and think-tank 'policymakers' who think notated music is elitist and outdated, because the process of analysis Horton proposes, and demonstrates, could access the 'surplus' inherent in technical autonomy of other artefacts outside the sphere of music, across the creative industries and beyond.

Although Horton says he speaks for music analysis generally, he several times refers to the analysis of 'literate music', and his examples of analysis are taken from the Western Classical musical canon – J. S. Bach and Henry Purcell. Whatever assumptions underlie these choices, they surely imply that readers will be able to auralise the music examples or at least play them at the keyboard. In reality, many of my first-year students will not be able to do this. For instance, many have never listened to, let alone performed, works

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by either of these composers before starting their degrees, some will not play a keyboard instrument and even fewer will have prior four-part score reading skills. In teaching these same students a course about the depiction of women in nineteenth-century opera, I learnt that more than half of them had not attended any opera from any era. They therefore had no visceral connection with the experience of being inside an opera house, no experience of being pierced in the chest by the force of a lyric tenor or thrilled by the tessitura of a coloratura soprano. These students are no less interested in music than were students in 1980s Oxford; they are listening to and playing other things. Accordingly, as an analyst of Western art music, I feel most comfortable positioning myself nowadays as an ethnomusicologist introducing these enquiring young people to an exotic new repertoire. Having been encouraged to listen to this music, some of these students go on to love it, performing it for the first time and analysing it in interesting ways. They may initially, however, need a bridge to help access understanding, as is increasingly on offer from the Society for Music Theory's publications, such as the SMT Podcasts, or their 'SMT-V' series.

A further wish of mine is that Horton's article could be recast in simpler prose. This is a fantasy wish because part of his mission is to make the case for complexity of expression. As it stands, however, Horton's language is so specialised in this article that those outside his field of expertise (including the 'purse-string holders', the pedagogues and the employers referred to above) would not make the effort to engage with the essence of what he is saying. There can of course be a place for highly technical language in any advanced academic discipline, but I query whether Horton's article, any more than some current music-theoretical writing (for instance on new *Formenlehre* or Neo-Riemannian Theory), 'necessarily' needs to be as difficult to read as it is to make the same points. For music analysis to be vital and relevant today, it must be understandable. I say this not as a music theory researcher but as a teacher of bright undergraduates studying music analysis. These young people are the *next* generation of theory and analysis researchers without whom our discipline is dead. By defending and encouraging the use of technical language in music analysis, Horton risks disenfranchisement not only of certain kinds of students and academics but also the wider musically curious public. Music theory in traditional form is less and less taught in schools, as we know, as is Western art music. It would be good to expand the teaching of our discipline so that it is attractive to a broad spectrum of students, from young to mature. This is not dumbing down; it is opening up opportunity.

The benefit of attracting a broader range of students to tertiary music courses is reciprocal. To give some brief examples from my own experience: in admissions interviews, we played applicants a video of one of Esperanza Spalding's *12 Little Spells* (Spalding 2018) and asked them what in their prior listening it reminded them of. In many cases, their responses took me far away from the repertoire I knew as an undergraduate, into indie, rap and trance. Later in their course, those same students wanted help with analysing the soundtrack


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of a *Star Trek* movie (Schatner 1989) from the perspective of ingroup–outgroup psychology and accounting analytically for the experience of the ecstatic in contemporary Gospel music. What rich, communicative learning existed in these exchanges. In the process of engaging with those students, I open myself to new aural vistas and potentially new analytical approaches to repertoires both familiar and strange. The next iteration of first-year students then benefits from my recent learning.

I imagine some might think that an older, white, classically trained scholar like me should send the students just described to the best qualified people to supervise them and, never fear, where appropriate I always do. But here's my point. The real challenge for teachers of analysis today is, in my view, to be as versatile as our students would like us to be. As someone who started her tertiary training at a conservatoire, I would love to feel more confident in the analysis of jazz and popular music. The non-classical repertoire of the 1970s onwards exists for me somatically, in my bones and memory, as the soundtrack to my youth, but not in my academic training. I wish it were easier to engage with it now as a teacher and practitioner, rather than feeling an imposter in a vernacular which is not, technically, my own. In any case, it surely requires far greater intrinsic musicianship to engage with some less 'literate' musics than with only 'canonical' repertoires. I'm thinking here of a wonderful Afro-jazz singing student, with little background in music theory, who eventually opted for their techniques paper to write a passage of plainchant in preference to a pop song, on the grounds that the former was easier to notate.

In summary, and bearing in mind some of the issues outlined here, music pedagogues have a choice about what music they teach at university, how they do so and what ideologies they offer students or suggest they might subscribe to. Students are largely passionate, enquiring and engaged, and will absorb and debate what we offer. Rather than bemoaning the death of analysis, for so long as there is a sliver of time in the curriculum to teach it, I advocate teaching it enthusiastically, confidently and engagingly – and in ways which are as relevant to our students (our 'consumers' some would say) – as we can manage. To do so enhances their lives and ours and creates vigour in the discipline. Even entertaining the idea that analysis must be brought back from the dead may turn out to be something of an own goal.

## Territorial Disputes, Analysis and Performance and Redefining the 'Surplus'

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Julian Horton's article constitutes a cogent and pertinent argument for the central importance of musical analysis, framed in terms of the necessity of the

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technically autonomous dimensions of music, which as he demonstrates via the finale of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 4, could never be accounted for in purely historicist or contextual terms, nor through the type of 'immediate' response lionised by Carolyn Abbate (2004). I feel, however, it is a shame that this article needed to be written and wonder if the defensive position forced on analysts militates against wider interactions between diverse subdisciplinary tendencies (see Donn and Pace 2023 on the troubling position of theory and analysis in UK curricula).

As Horton demonstrates, many of the critiques are of straw targets, often ignoring major contributions to the field, which was heterogeneous at the time of the article as it is today; earlier events such as the fall of communism or the credit crunch can be argued to have equal significance for an academic discipline such as music analysis as those examples cited by Kofi Agawu in his contribution to this forum. Critics employ exaggerated rhetoric and stentorian, denunciatory language, charging the rather innocuous discipline of music analysis with complicity with colonial domination (as might have surprised Frantz Fanon) as a means of fighting what are ultimately territorial struggles in a beleaguered academic field in which student numbers are falling, in part because of lessening provision of primary and secondary education such as provides a route into more demanding music for young people. Consequently, academic jobs can become increasingly scarce.

Few mainstream analysts feel the need to denounce other musicological fields, or even alternative approaches to analysis, in anything like the extreme manner of Nicholas Cook (1999 and 2013), Gary Tomlinson (2003), Christopher Small (1998), Abbate (2004, at odds with many of her other writings) and others. That their preferred approaches to scholarship are necessarily an improvement, or any less prescriptive, is far from clear to me. More to the point, their wider disdainful attitudes are resolutely *anti*-pluralist, disallowing the possibility of multiple musicological methods, strategies and priorities which can coexist. I doubt many analysts (perhaps Schenker, but few others) would have claimed their work constituted a comprehensive theory of everything of consequence about music, nor seek to dismiss most other approaches preceding or contemporary with them. And many have demonstrated how some of the tools supplied by Schenker can be fruitfully applied without subscribing to the more unpalatable aspects of his thought and world view. But the situation may be different if one presumes instead to present major theories about culture, humans, and so on, leading to grand pronouncements on many musics and associated academic fields (regardless of specialised knowledge of individual cases), often rendered as trivial or sinister in comparison.

Many academics in popular music studies, ethnomusicology, the new musicology, cultural studies and, more recently, sound studies have long resented music theory and analysis, which are the *primary skills which distinguish musicology from other disciplines*. Without these, musicology is reduced to a position on the margins of sociology, anthropology, cultural history, and so


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forth, voided of the types of musicianship common among the best practising musicians (in whichever genre), and thus distant from their own everyday concerns. To reframe Henry Stobart's claims below, some such scholars, including ethnomusicologists, whose work can involve little or no engagement with sounding music, may feel insulated from some of the dilemmas and challenges faced by analysts and other musicologists. The net result is to render musicology an even more marginal presence than it might have been otherwise, in ways which are increasingly evident in large sections of UK academia today. Esther Cavett believes university managers and politicians do not distinguish music from the wider humanities, but my experience has rather been of attempts to render it further from these towards primarily practical study, but at a much lower level than that in specialist conservatoires (see Pace 2023). This process will swallow up and erase most musicology, including ethnomusicology. Furthermore, there is no intrinsic reason why popular music studies should be any less rigorous than any other area of musical enquiry, but it may be a struggle to reconcile such with student demands. I have seen from some students and performance teachers the very opposite of an embracing of analysis, or for that matter sociological and cultural theory, and as such cannot believe that Simon Zagorski-Thomas's proposals in his contribution to this forum can easily be adopted in such a context.

Abbate's neoprimitivist view, akin to those expressed elsewhere by Cook (2013, p. 246, citing Leech-Wilkinson 2012, paragraph 4.11) and in an ethnographic context by Stephen Cottrell (2004, p. 4), or in Susan McClary's alarming construction of the 'mind/body split' (1989, p. 80), turn an ideal of untutored, unreflective performance, listening or thinking into a fetish, dismissing expertise as contemptuously as do some politicians (see Nichols 2017). In a sense, they implicitly deny the value of education at all (except perhaps their own and that they teach) – for why spoil the authentic experiences of such imaginary figures through critical reflection? Stobart argues that music literacy (a term for which, in general, Alexandra Monchick's definition is most suitable) in colonial Latin America was 'largely restricted to elite groups' and 'tended to confirm and reinforce racial and class hierarchies'. However, I believe this could be said of most educated skills in various contexts, and so the view of skills as 'tools and processes of colonialism' comes close to the perspective of Abbate and others in a broader sense (see also J. P. E. Harper-Scott 2012, pp. 186–96, for a parallel critique).

From this perspective, the scholar's task seems primarily to be to flatter others simply for being themselves, rather than trying to teach them anything concrete, a process I have seen grow in recent decades in music education. A redirection of arguments about colonialism may not be out of order; Abbate's listeners, Cook's performers and Cottrell's participants are all constructed as noble savages, exoticised 'others' to academic experts, mirroring the views of colonisers and racial ideologues towards non-Western peoples. All such groups are denied critical intellectual agency of their own.

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When Wallace Berry (1989) or Eugene Narmour (1988) express a preference for certain approaches to performance, they are doing nothing worse than anyone else who valorises different approaches. I would suggest that most listeners fall into this category, with the exception of Cook and some ethnomusicologists for whom value judgement constitutes an original sin.

I am a performer and listener as well as a scholar, and from these former perspectives simply love reading (as well as writing) music analysis, including of the type above; as such, I cannot share the view Gurminder Bhogal expresses above of this as an 'ivory tower' activity. I do not always necessarily agree with or adopt the approaches proffered, just as I do not always accept at face value the conclusions of other scholarly work. But these contribute to the type of discursive space made possible by Habermas's communicative rationality, where they can be debated and contested, as I can do for myself based on other knowledge.

I maintain that many performers of notated music (at least soloists and conductors) undertake a type of analysis just by performing, making many critical decisions when rendering a score in sonic terms, reflecting their insights into that score. But this does not make the work of the non-practitioner analyst redundant. The writings of James Hepokoski and Warren Darcy (2006) on Viennese Classical works, of Horton himself on Bruckner and Brahms (2004 and 2017), of Mark DeVoto (2004) and Hepokoski (1984 and 2010) on Debussy, to name just a few, employ systematic techniques and huge reserves of knowledge of repertoire and context, facilitating insights unlikely to be available otherwise to many performers. The technical language employed (*pace* both Stobart and Cavett) is at best no more redundant than that in many scientific disciplines and facilitates precision and concision.

It would be unproductive to hold up performers' work to criticism for falling short of representing such insights, if imagined to reflect 'definitive performances' of a musical text. Rather, such analytical work represents a contribution to a discursive space of interpretation, to be brought into dialogue with other insights from composers, performers and listeners. There is no more reason to assume that Performer X might not find valuable and applicable insights in the work of Analyst Y than that Analyst Y might not also learn from Performer X. For a meaningful dialogue between scholars and other musicians, scholars must be allowed to bring something of their own (as outlined by Monchick) to the discourse.

The more difficult question I would suggest, in response to some fellow respondents making the 'worthy' case for pluralism, is whether a regular interaction between theory/scholarship and music-making, as has existed for some time in the Western literate tradition, has the same importance for some other traditions (how many popular musicians engage with popular music studies?). And following from this, do those latter warrant an equally prominent place in academia? Zagorski-Thomas's claims below about domination of research culture require evidence (and it is relatively meaningless to measure parity between 'popular' and 'Western art' music, considering the vastly differing


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periods encompassed – a comparison between research funding of popular and Baroque music would make more sense). It is much harder to justify to university managers, as evoked by Boghal and Cavett, realms of activity which have little currency outside academia.

Nonetheless, the performative critique of analysis cannot be easily dismissed. Notated scores may contain elements which remain largely invariant in performance, such as Horton's example of canons, but there is plenty of music which, as *heard*, is equally informed by specifics of instrumental or vocal timbre, approaches to vibrato or pedalling, agogics, flexibility of rhythm and tempo and other aspects of performers' creative contributions. This is not to mention production in the case of recordings or works with a studio element, and sometimes wider opportunities for ornamentation, diminution, various types of improvisation, and so on.

Although making a strong case for analysis centred on performance-invariant elements, Horton does not register the growth of a substantial body of analytical work on performance and recordings of notated works (for example Philip 1992; Day 2000; Fabian 2003; Leech-Wilkinson 2009; Volioti 2012; Peres da Costa 2012; and Moreda Rodriguez and Stanovic 2023), itself a more systematic rendition of what record critics and presenters have done for longer. Music analysis as a field remains overwhelmingly of the broad types discussed by Horton. Timbre in particular remains on the margins, although there are difficulties in integrating it into analysis in ways which are neither blandly descriptive nor super-scientific in ways which might crowd out considerations of other parameters.

I welcome a growth in work in which rigorous score-based work is married to performance analysis (as in brilliant examples such as Llorens 2021), and perhaps potentially to cognitive scholarship, which is so often related to musical generalities rather than specifics. Tonally or harmonically ambiguous music can be rendered in very different ways by performers, and I believe some supposedly neutral analyses of such repertoire actually amount to those of a particular imagined performance, because of the musical hierarchies entailed (see my critique of the analysis of Michael Finnissy by Richard Beaudoin in Pace 2019).

Horton's most distinctive line of argument has origins in the thought of Max Weber ([1921] 1958), Theodor W. Adorno ([1969] 1982 and [1932] 2002) and Jürgen Habermas ([1981] 1984), arguing the need for analysis to discern those aspects of music which are *surplus* to instrumentalisation, linked to familiar critiques of postmodernism's essential relationship to neoliberalism from Frederic Jameson (1991), Pierre Bourdieu (1996, 1998) and others. I doubt this would prove persuasive to Cook, Tomlinson, or others including McClary and Georgina Born, who have all been explicit in their advocacy of varieties of neoliberalism, in Tomlinson's case denying other economic possibilities for culture, or in Cook's associating these latter with Nazi ideology (see Tomlinson 1992, pp. 82–3; McClary 2000, pp. 1285–6; Cook 2003, p. 257; and Born 2013, p. 64). The critique is also distinct from that alleged by Stobart,

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although I find the latter's indifference to questions of commercialism, and especially to any attempts to distinguish art from commerce, as problematic as Bhogal's and Cavett's equation of students with 'consumers'. Zagorski-Thomas has a few critical words to say about market economics but sees the only alternative force as being 'privilege and power', a phrase he uses twice, as if that were the only reason Bach's Brandenburg Concertos still speak to many almost 300 years after their composition. In common with some of the above commentators, this artificially conflates real attempts to modify the market in the name of wider artistic ends (from a social democratic perspective, which barely exists in US political life and musicological discourse, the latter of which dominates the Anglosphere) with simple assertion of neo-feudal privilege. For Stobart, Zagorski-Thomas, Tomlinson, McClary, Cook and Born, it is as if Margaret Thatcher's statement 'There is no alternative' (TINA; Moncrieff 2013) to the rule of the market is a truism (see also Pace et al. [2016] for more on this subject in response to Zagorski-Thomas).

But there is another way to conceive surplus, as a force beyond the boundaries of rationalisation, which brings the concept somewhat closer to Georges Bataille's *part maudite* (Bataille [1949] 1991). Analysis unearths many technical aspects of music and its relationship to conventions. If this were the music's essence, the process might be undertaken in reverse (possibly employing AI) to create a passable example of the body of work to which the original belonged. With highly generic works this can sometimes be done, but I believe most who have thus attempted to 'create' a work which could pass as Monteverdi, Palestrina, Mozart or others will have come to grief. The musical 'surplus' then amounts to those musical aspects which *frustrate* attempts to account for them in analytical terms and distinguish truly memorable and individual works from those standing in more recognisable relations to genres. An approach to analysis which can distinguish Beethoven from Stamitz or Wöllfl in the content *resistant* to analysis can also play an important role.

## Horton Hears *The Who*

*Simon Zagorski-Thomas*
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I was asked to contribute to the original forum as a voice from the world of popular music studies in this discussion – therefore the rather childish Dr Seuss wordplay in my title – but it has increasingly become clear to me that the things I want to say about this stem just as much from being a voice from the world of vocational education. Horton mentions that 'recent public debates about music's declining position in Britain's education system […] produce a potent cocktail of cultural-political justifications for analysis's curricular irrelevance' (Horton 2020, p. 2). I agree completely about 'music's declining position' but my


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experience in popular music studies is not of 'analysis's curricular irrelevance'. Martin Cloonan and Lauren Hulstedt's (2012) report for the HEA was an 'an investigation into the teaching of theory and analysis' in popular music higher education. One of the 'key findings' suggests that

> traditional music theory and analysis can be seen as something of a minority interest within PMS. Our respondents suggested that any approach to the teaching of music theory and analysis should acknowledge that popular music is largely an aural tradition. (Cloonan and Hulstedt 2012, p. 4)

They also pointed to a desire among the popular music academics surveyed for mechanisms to develop and share more relevant forms of theory and analysis. My experience is similar to this. Any sense of 'curricular irrelevance' relates to the perception that 'traditional music theory and analysis' is not fit for purpose in popular music studies.

Depending on where you stand, the widening of participation in higher education can be seen as a dumbing down of our great and excellent institutions in the service of Chicago School economics or as an attempt to break the vice-like grip of an education system which maintains structures of economic privilege through financial and cultural barriers to social mobility. Horton's concern with 'how art should be protected against commodification' (2020, p. 17) surely invites the much larger question of how we negotiate the historical interactions between knowledge and power. In his critique of postmodernism as 'a kind of neoliberal false consciousness, under which any distinction between music's autonomy and its commodity form disappears altogether' (2020, p. 16), Horton identifies 'the surplus that is the domain of technical autonomy […] music's artifice' (2020, p. 33). This is written in the context of the argument that music and art are becoming more subsumed into economics. Where and when was this golden age in which any of the 'great art' which Western culture lionises wasn't made possible and subsequently made 'great' by economic privilege and power? These are, of course, exactly the points that Kofi Agawu's response makes about postcolonialism, that Henry Stobart makes about what is worth a close reading and to what Gurminder Bhogal and Alexandra Monchick make in relation to their teaching practice and what their students respond to.

Horton points to the value – the surplus – in Purcell and Bach and makes the argument that 'counterpoint has value […] not because it demonstrates Bach's superiority as a representative of Western culture, but because it constitutes a locus of critical resistance rather than utilitarian compliance' (2020, p. 30). He makes the point that choosing to conduct this analysis is not 'a negative judgment on music occupying a different cultural sphere' (2020, p. 30). Except, of course, it is. It is Horton's choice as to which 'surpluses' he chooses to analyse, write about and teach, and it is the culmination of millions of prior choices, by people with varying amounts of privilege and power, about what to publish, what to play, what to programme, what to release, what to review,

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what to write about and what to teach. Most important (for my argument), it is the way in which all of those choices have shaped the tools of analysis to focus, quite logically, on the musical features which are important in the 'literate music' of the Western canon. Identifying the surplus is not an empirical act and does not negate arguments about the canon being culturally constructed through the mechanisms of financial, cultural, social and symbolic power and privilege (Bourdieu 2018). Most privilege and power is not based on explicit or even deliberate repression and exclusion. It flows from the implicit and often unintended implications of someone taking advantage of the affordances in their life. Just because it is not a zero-sum game does not mean that a positive claim has no negative implications for alternative claims; it just means they are not equally counterbalanced. The existence of 'an act of communicative rationality, which is now available to be confirmed or refuted in a field of music-analytical discourse' (2020, p. 30) simply explains a mechanism by which someone can take advantage of some affordance in their life: it explains that a surplus can be identified. The analysis may not necessarily involve a qualitative judgement but the decision to analyse Bach's Concerto rather than The Who's *Baba O'Reilly* does (therefore the title).

Horton is right that the general principle of 'analysis is not tied irrevocably to organicism, formalism, Hegelianism, colonial narratives of Western supremacism, nor to any necessary marginalization of music's performative, cultural, historical, social, or even carnal dimensions' (2020, p. 31). Henry Stobart, elsewhere in this Critical Forum, makes the point that his problem is not with analysis or close reading per se but with a 'restricted view of what is worth analysing'. Léon Walras's (1874) notion of *perfect competition* in economics doesn't 'cause' inequality, but when this general principle – the idealised notion that a market can be thought to involve perfect, universal and prior knowledge of options and rewards – is applied to the real world, it does cause inequality because not only is access to this knowledge distorted by power and privilege but the illusory notion of the general principle is then used to maintain that status quo. The notion of music analysis does not 'cause' inequalities, but the well-established power and privilege of the Western canon means that the 'market' has to play by its rules.

I work in an area of analysis (e.g. Zagorski-Thomas 2015, 2018a, 2018b and 2019) where notation is superfluous and where harmony is one of the least important features of musical expression. In that sense, I feel as if one of Thomas Kuhn's (1962) structural revolutions has already taken place on the courses on which I teach. Horton was making a general plea for the musicological necessity of musical analysis and yet, as always in the academic world, the word music without any adjectival qualifier means Western art music. And although he recruits forms of analysis from outside that subset of music to argue for analysis's ubiquity and importance, his characterisation of the threat is drawn entirely from within. I see no such attempt to argue for the death or irrelevance of analysis in popular music studies. What I do see is that, despite the fact that most UK music


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students are now studying aspects of popular music, the research culture, and funding in particular, is still dominated by the Western art-music tradition.

Horton also asserts that '[t]his discursive imperative affects any music we wish to comprehend: to the extent that a Mozart symphony, a song by Madonna, or an Indian raga disclose musical phenomena requiring taxonomy, they require theory': (Horton 2020, p. 32) – but they all require different theory; to this point the casual way in which Alexandra Monchick discards 'more accessible music technology and entrepreneurship' classes and 'sexy' classes which incorporate issues of social justice, popular press headlines and 'the music students actually listen to' with the implication that they require less rigorous critical thinking seems problematic. It also assumes – and this is something which Ian Pace wrote about on the *Times Higher Education* website (Pace 2023) recently – that if a new subject area is not as rigorous as an existing one, that it is the subject area (i.e. popular music) which is lacking rather than that we should be exerting ourselves to improve the theoretical basis of that subject area. This is the inertia and inherent conservatism of any well-established system: the amount of work which is required to make it better is much more than the amount of work required to tinker with the existing system – until the moment of Kuhn's (1962) paradigm shift.

I would argue that this paradigm shift should be causing a panic among research funders. We have a huge chasm between the existing tools and specialised language available and the music that universities are teaching. Indeed, I would turn Horton's words around and say that if the academy does not afford 'the opportunity to acquire such specialized language, then it colludes in the musical body of knowledge's circumscription by market forces' (Horton 2020, p. 16). There is restructuring in the UK Higher Education music sector away from Classical music and towards vocational popular music, music technology and musical theatre courses – although we are currently also seeing a little overall shrinkage. In addition, there is definitely what Maria Delgado recently called a hostile environment in HE governance towards music and performing arts.[5] We are also seeing these newer vocational courses struggling to find appropriate and rigorous theoretical and analytical frameworks to underpin their practical orientation. That is the primary reason behind my new monograph, *Practical Musicology* (Zagorski-Thomas 2022) and the main thrust of all my research. I do not, however, see a particular slant in the 'hostility' towards analysis in popular music studies. If anything, the opposite is true. There is a thirst for appropriate forms of analysis to ensure these courses provide rigorous education rather than training (or alongside training). The shift towards more vocational courses in UK popular music studies has, if anything, strengthened the position of analysis in relation to sociological, cultural theory and historical content.

The neoliberal extension of market economics into education is successful because of the way it deflects attention away from the logic or morality of that extension by creating divisions of competition. In addition to the illogical and

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immoral notion that supply and demand, embodied in universities and students, will lead to some democratisation of education, there is also a damaging internal market of competition between disciplines – so the promotion of STEM subjects over the arts – and within disciplines – of popular music studies against Western art music and of analysis versus history or performance studies in Western art music. Any winning or losing in this competition is more the result of shifts in privilege and power than of intellectual argument. Of course, as participants, we are then faced with the dilemma of whether to focus our energies on the short-term goals of survival within this damaging and divisive system or on the longer term, bigger-picture goals of countering that neoliberal extension. We only have limited energy, and the neoliberal system is reliant in general on individual, short-term survival goals 'trumping' communal, long-term ideological goals.

## Close Readings, Intelligibility and Global Perspectives

*Henry Stobart*
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When I was asked to offer comments on Julian Horton's music analysis-focused article (2020), I was hesitant for a number of reasons. Although I regularly ask students to complete transcription and analysis projects as part of some of my modules focused on global musical traditions, and periodically make my own, I have no formal background or training in this area. Indeed, I never took an undergraduate music degree. The organisation Analytical Approaches to World Music (AAWM, n.d.) has become increasingly dynamic over recent years, but I have neither attended their conferences regularly nor published in their journal.[6] My response is therefore idiosyncratic and should not be read as representing ethnomusicological work on music analysis.

As a first simple response to Horton's article, I strongly support his advocacy for 'close reading' – something that can so easily be pushed aside, yet which could reveal and illuminate fundamental aspects of a phenomenon. This is just as true of close reading – or analysis – of a musical score as it is of performances, song lyrics, ethnographic interviews and other types of texts or practices. You will notice that I have immediately grossly expanded Horton's remit – probably to his horror! Exploring structural relations in Quechua song texts, such as the use of semantic and syntactic coupling or word play (which concern texture rather than meaning), has overlaps with the ways which Horton identifies autonomous procedures in Purcell's *Fairy Queen* or Bach's Fourth Brandenburg Concerto. These poetic structures do not tell us much about the context or social meanings of the songs, but they do highlight some of the ways that Quechua poetry – an oral tradition – is structured and how it communicates affectively, and about its aesthetic priorities, where – for example – there is nothing clever or aesthetically valued about rhyming.[7]


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Horton cites Gary Tomlinson's critique of music analysis as legitimising European imperialism, and this initially sounds very plausible from a Latin American perspective, my main area of research. Music literacy in the region was largely restricted to elite groups, and analytical procedures – employed pedagogically for developing European-style regional art-music composition – tended to confirm and reinforce racial and class hierarchies; it was part of the colonial 'toolbox' (Monchick riffs on this term more positively in her response). Music analysis was also used by late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century *indigenista* scholars to construct historical imaginaries of Incan music. This included developing the later discarded theory of Inca pentatony, but such analysis usually failed to engage with living Indigenous people (even if their expressions were sometimes viewed as the withered vestiges of a glorious Inca past).[8] However, I do not view music analysis as any more culpable than the many other tools and processes of colonialism at the time. Indeed, Horton's point that the bulk of earlier 'analysis' – as 'a means to an end' – served pedagogy or supported criticism, listening, aesthetics or music history is pertinent here. Striking also is his point that 'analysis as an end in itself' did not become widespread until after World War II.

As an outsider to some forms of Western art-music analysis, I have periodically found it hard to appreciate this latter form of analysis for its own sake. After sitting through analysis papers at conferences or seminars, including presentations dedicated to pieces I know well, I have sometimes come away with little sense that my grasp of the music has been developed or deepened. Esoteric language, numbers and symbols may have been employed, and a few individuals (members of the sect?) may have nodded sagely. Undoubtedly, this partially reflects my lack of familiarity with analytical language and procedures – I would have had a similar experience sitting through a presentation on particle physics. Although I appreciate that it can be difficult to explain certain aspects of music theory to individuals who lack music literacy (specialised language), and I have periodically struggled with this myself, I strongly concur with Esther Cavett's point that '[f]or music analysis to be vital and relevant today it needs to be understandable'.

I recognise how both historians and analysts forge connections implied by textual evidence and often 'stray into each other's domains'. Here, I agree with Horton that epistemological priority should not be given to one above the other. However, a caveat here is that, without adequate historical or other contextualisation, an analysis can *seem* meaningless and fail to have much relevance beyond a very small group of experts. This context – be it historical, social, political or ethnographic – is not so much necessary to give the analysis credibility, as Horton complains in this quarrel with historians, but simply to help it communicate. These approaches should be mutually reinforcing. Once again, we come back to questions of intelligibility and wider relevance and would do well to heed Gurminder Bhogal's provocative wake-up call: how is music analysis a human necessity?

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Another area of concern for Horton is the relatively recent focus, by a number of scholars of Western art music, on the study of performance. Nicholas Cook (2013), for example, critiques how 'music as writing rather than music as performance' has dominated music research – with analysis claiming epistemological authority over performance. I am sympathetic with the argument that we must continue studying scores, as an important and very particular manifestation of the musical process relating to specific traditions (most notably, but not exclusively, Western art music). However, it is also astonishing that the critical role of performance and performers, and for that matter reception, was left out of the equation for so long. I can see that, in the rise of this new kid on the block, analysis has felt its former hegemony challenged. Nonetheless, the political argument occasionally developed to discredit the study of performance, where in a familiar and somewhat reductionist way it becomes tarred with the brush of neoliberalism, is not entirely convincing to me.[9] Given that musical composition and performance are so symbiotic, it is evident that differences must be put aside and more effort made for these two equally valid approaches to inform one another.

This also offers a vivid contrast to ethnomusicology, where the analytical starting point tends to be the performance – or a recording of it. A score might be created later, as a descriptive or prescriptive representation, which is necessarily subject to the transcriber's interpretation and perceptions and the constraints of the notation system. Like other scores, the transcription can be analytically useful as a synoptic version of the music, removed from its real-time constraints. This is how I usually approach transcription, a medium which focuses my listening and enables me to identify elements, structures and relationships which might take me much longer to grasp from just listening. Indeed, like music analysts more generally, I very much enjoy puzzling out what is going on in the music and how best to represent and communicate this. However, this interest in analysis or transcribing music – especially using stave notation – is by no means shared among all ethnomusicologists, indeed for some it is seen as deeply suspect. For example, a former master's student from the US once refused to undertake a transcription assignment I had set on the grounds that this was a form of colonisation. On similar lines, Philip Bohlman has highlighted the essentialising, disciplining and colonising tendencies of Western notation, whereby rendering all music in this medium 'one creates a universe of music and then succeeds in controlling it' (1993, p. 424). This, in turn, resonates with Linda Tuhiwai Smith's comment in *Decolonizing Methodologies* that 'Knowledge and the power to define what counts as real knowledge lie at the epistemic core of colonialism' (2021, p. xii).

Possibly, analysts working on Western art music feel insulated from some of the above dilemmas and challenges faced by ethnomusicologists, as the music they study usually starts out as a score. But the beginning of Horton's closing paragraph perhaps suggests otherwise and is a red rag to an ethnomusicologist. He writes:


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> Above all, analysis is necessary, because the comprehension of music as *art* requires it. It is only via analysis that we can access the surplus that is the domain of technical autonomy; and it is only by accessing technical autonomy that we can hope to define music's artifice, rather than its utility or fungibility. (Horton 2020, p. 94)

I have a real problem with this 'music as *art*' approach in practice, even if not in theory. If this is applied to '*all* music', this is fine. In practice, however, this rarely tends to happen. Certain expressions are discounted as of only utilitarian or commercial value and are not considered worth a close reading. This is where I depart with some music analysts because they have such a restricted view of what is worth analysing – or 'close reading' – and may even dismiss the study of other genres as a 'neoliberal' enterprise.[10] Also, when they do make their analyses, they are sometimes so impenetrable that nobody except those music analysts who share their specialised language are informed by the exercise.

Thus, rather than adopting a defensive approach and attacking other forms of close reading or analysis, I encourage music analysts to be more collaborative and use their skills to further elucidate historicist and performative approaches. National and university politics are currently pitted against music scholars' and teachers' efforts to undertake 'close readings' of texts (whether historicist, performative, analytical, cognitive or ethnographic), so there has never been a more critical time to work together.

## Fragments of a (Postcolonial) Response

*KOFI AGAWU*
*THE GRADUATE CENTER, CUNY*

Julian Horton's thoughtful intervention in the debate about music analysis is more fully contextualised – both institutionally and intellectually – than earlier contributions to the genre. In a wide-ranging argument, he rebuts claims about music analysis's complicity with empire and imperialism, the priority of history, the ostensible circularity of close reading and analysis's superfluity to performance, among other assertions. His analysis of the contrapuntal sediment in works by Henry Purcell and J.S. Bach highlights the surplus produced during an analytical proceeding, a surplus which is not always available for appropriation for cultural, social or historical interpretation. Horton thus restates the case for technical autonomy and portrays analysis as an intellectual project committed to unveiling the particularities of musical objects through close engagement with musical detail.

Horton's article appeared in 2020, but much has happened since then. From a North American resident's vantage point, we've had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, the ensuing lockdown and its toll on our mental and emotional health, and the challenge of remote teaching, including its impact on the nature

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of knowledge transmission. The murder of George Floyd in 2020 reminded many that America's race problems endure, while the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement sparked demonstrations and debates and raised awareness of social injustice even among normally cloistered academics.

In the meantime, big changes have been underway in music studies. (Again, I'm confining my remarks here to what I see in certain parts of the US.) In 2019, the American Musicological Society met in Boston and presented a programme which few will have recognised as the face of historical musicology as it had been known and practised for a century (Watkins 2019). In the same year, the Society for Music Theory's annual meeting was held in Kansas City and featured a keynote panel on 'Reframing Music Theory' which included a short version of Philip Ewell's now widely circulated article arguing that the SMT had been operating within a white racial frame (Ewell 2020). And the Society for Ethnomusicology were thrown into turmoil over Danielle Brown's 'Open Letter' (Brown 2020) accusing the SEM membership of habitually speaking for others.

It would be a huge undertaking to synopsise recent developments to characterise the current moment in music theory before responding to Horton. I must nevertheless briefly indicate some of what's happening today (in no particular order): calls for greater diversity in the musics we analyse (especially music by women and BIPOC composers); calls for the creation of antiracist curricula; the blossoming of disability studies; the continuing growth of popular music studies; the explosion in technology-assisted analytical methods; the emergence of big data projects, including corpus studies; a renewed energy in the practice of what is now dubbed the *New Formenlehre*; new initiatives in rhythm and dance studies; and the flourishing of a new movement committed to the rigorous analysis of non-Western repertoire, Analytical Approaches to World Music (AAWM, n.d). Permeating all these initiatives and practices is the question of pedagogy: just how might these things be taught in the classroom? Given these numerous and divergent initiatives within a scholarly field such as the Society for Music Theory – a field which, only four and a half decades ago, was fighting for a forum to pursue its own brand of theoretical and analytical research – it should not seem unreasonable to declare that the current moment (2023) is more charged with difference than any previous moment in the history of music analysis.

How, then, might one respond to Horton's rich text without being defeated by this daunting heterogeneity? Obviously, only a brief and fragmentary statement is possible in 1500 words. So, rather than engage dutifully with Horton's detailed arguments, I have chosen to relate an outsider's thoughts inspired by aspects of his text. That outsider is a postcolonial subject of African origin interested in the theory and practice of music analysis. (So much for today's obligatory performance of positionality!)

From a(n imagined) postcolonial perspective, it would seem unnecessary to have to argue the necessity of music analysis. Do we not always proceed from


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analysis? If you are tired of Goethe's maxim 'With every glance at the world I theorise', then this one from the postcolony will bring you little comfort: 'I analyse, therefore I am'. For how could it be otherwise? How is it possible to negotiate any action or interaction without some enabling theory? What speech acts or acts of communication can be carried out without theory? And more to the point, which species of singing, drumming or dancing can be subject to regular enactment without being grounded in known and tested routines, routines that theory accepts as its task to taxonomise?

It appears, then, that the 'problem' is not with theory or analysis as such (I follow Horton in using the two terms interchangeably) but with specific methods. Unfortunately, the musicological critiques cited by Horton don't always engage the technologies of analysis fully, being content to refer to a general practice of music analysis. We know, however, that the deployment of Sonic Visualiser's traces (Sonic Visualiser 2007), form charts, paradigmatic tables, voice-leading graphs and a variety of prose styles often engenders (radically) different analytical deliverables. Perhaps the musicologists' under-specification of the targets of their critiques is strategic.

Turning to the postcolony, we might ask, 'What sorts of methods should students value'? Consider Schenkerian theory, for example – mentioned only in passing by Horton, despite its undoubtedly profound influence on (North American) music theory for more than half a century. Postcolonial students will wish to know what in the theory made it so powerful so that they, too, can pursue cognate strategies of self-empowerment. Acquiring knowledge of diminution and prolongation and the graphic representation of hierarchical structure alongside forms of Indigenous knowledge will be their path to modernisation. And they will follow this path for the same reason that their peers pursue technological transfers affecting agriculture, commerce, medicine and the law. Postcolonial subjects are focused on technical knowledge (for scientific and analytical work), on techne (for music composition) and on a range of technologies which will open up avenues to them to be competitive in the modern world. Visions of analysis such as those promulgated by Horton are precisely what postcolonial advocates would be drawn to.

This pragmatic approach is surely key not just to intellectual prosperity but to intellectual survival in our increasingly globalised world. Of course, I get that metropolitan musicologists engaged in debates about music analysis are not necessarily losing sleep over the postcolony's educational systems, over the sorts of skills which might be considered essential to musical training in Kampala, Lagos, Accra or Dakar. But if injunctions to diversify the curriculum are to be regarded as more than merely symbolic, then internationalisation should be given priority as well. Recognising a range of geo-cultural diversities in the course of internationalisation will almost certainly complicate the habitual postulation of race, ableism, gender and sexuality as the main things we need to worry about. Equally pertinent will be history, class, economic opportunity and the hegemony of the English language. Eventually, too, discussion of the prospects

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of decentring North American academic hegemony will no longer be consigned to an unspecified future date.

Postcolonials occupy a third space of enunciation, a hybrid space which is beholden – in diverse ways – to the complex legacies of colonialism. Might decolonisation be the answer? Judging from the casual and opportunistic alignment of colonialism with racism, or decoloniality with antiracism, we must ask what it would mean to decolonise the postcolony's music theory curriculum. Wipe out every last trace of the colonial legacy? Selectively appropriate some aspects of that legacy and infuse them with local content? Design a self-standing indigenous curriculum based on local practice? Or simply pronounce a curriculum decolonised even while relying on frameworks of foreign origin? Decoloniality in principle advocates a delinking from European theorists (like Schenker), but putting aside what this would mean in practice, we must also ask what would be offered in return. So far, the deep anthropological work which would reclaim indigenous music theories and institutionalise them for the twenty-first-century postcolonial classroom has been slow to appear. Rather, critics of the old order are constantly sniffing the postcolony for the merest signs of ostensible colonial influence in order to condemn colonialism. This produces very limited results, however. No doubt some form of occupational exorcism is necessary for individual spiritual renewal, prosperity or even survival. But doesn't the attendant obsession with Europe testify to the ongoing success of the colonial project?

The issues are many and entangled, and it would require a great deal more space to untangle them. I close by reiterating two brief points. First, as Horton acknowledges early on in his article, the practice of music analysis in the US academy today remains vital and vibrant. The teaching of music theory guarantees that, and even though revisions to curricula are underway, theory as such seems not to be experiencing any sort of existential threat. (The situation may be different in the UK or elsewhere in Europe, as other contributors to this forum have noted.) Second, realising the postcolony's modernising ambitions depends in part on deploying the tools of analysis. If we understand theory primarily as a way of thinking rather than a content, then selective appropriation of metropolitan theory will remain an attractive option. On both counts, Horton's timely text could be read as a sermon to the (postcolonial) choir.

## Horton, Having Heard *The Who*: Responses to the Responses

*JULIAN HORTON*
*DURHAM UNIVERSITY*

### *Introduction*

Citation metrics in the humanities can make for dispiriting reading. According to one recent analysis, the average quantity of citations for a humanities article


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is a number between 1 and 0 (Doğan and Taşkın 2020); another source claims that approximately 82 per cent of humanities publications are never cited at all (Williams 2014). Although concerns about scholarly echo chambers are often voiced, it seems that shouting into the void might be a more appropriate metaphor.

All of which only heightens my gratitude to Esther Cavett, Chris Stover and the editors of *Music Analysis* for conceiving and assembling this special issue of the Critical Forum, to my respondents for agreeing to participate and for reading my work so assiduously, to Ian Pace for proposing the original panel and to Jonathan Dunsby for his characteristically incisive afterword. No publication of mine has yet attracted this degree of collective scrutiny; I doubt that future publications will replicate the experience. This privilege is, however, also a challenge, because I am now tasked with responding across the gamut of issues raised, which range beyond theory and analysis into diverse regions of philosophy, sociology, economics and academic politics. I will consider each of the seven responses in turn, drawing out key issues and, where appropriate, offering a robust defence.

Although Pace's summary captures my arguments concisely, it is probably helpful to distil four principal objectives. My primary aim was to update two commentaries on music analysis's condition from twenty years ago, by Agawu and myself, taking stock of intervening debates and engaging them critically. Second, I sought to address what I perceive to be a rift between music analysis and historical musicology, characterised by a tendency for historians to make critical assertions about theory and analysis, which is not mirrored by any discourse travelling in the opposite direction, and by a general musicological indifference to the utility of analysis. Third, I wanted to situate these debates in a political context, swerving towards a kind of revenant Marxism, which revives the base-superstructure distinction (*pace* Hall 2016) and equates postmodern and neoliberal strains of thought (after Jameson 1991). Finally, I sought to establish a philosophical framework which underwrites analysis's value, both as a field in its own right and as a tool of musicology more generally, by reanimating Adorno's concept of the 'surplus' (*das Mehr*) as a locus of technical information and social signification (Adorno 1982).

There are important issues I did not address, some of which my respondents raise. Much has happened since I wrote the article, not least the COVID-19 pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, the upheavals of Brexit, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting economic crises. *Pace* Esther Cavett's perception, my aim was *not* to argue for an activist analytical practice. Now, however, there is scarcely a region of scholarship which is not touched by the political impulse, if not motivated by it from first principles. In music theory, Philip Ewell's 'Music Theory and the White Racial Frame' (2020) and the ensuing 'Schenkergate' controversy are the most prominent instances; but, as Agawu and Zagorski-Thomas make especially clear in their responses, analysis has become increasingly politicised in recent discourse, in

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ways that resonate beyond Schenkerian pedagogy. A second thread winding through the responses is the effects of student expectation and prior knowledge of pedagogy and curriculum design, mindful of the neoliberal academy's consumerist orientation; Bhogal, Monchick and Cavett pay close attention to these issues. In addition to more abstruse questions concerning the nature and function of analysis, I will also address these political, economic and pedagogical matters – if, necessarily, in a cursory way – as they arise in the seven responses.

*Gurminder Bhogal*

Bhogal's comments around students' consumer-driven expectations, the restrictions their prior knowledge places on what can be taught and the pedagogical impact of their strong concerns for equity and diversity amplify Cavett's remarks, albeit with a distinctively American inflection. Bhogal's sensitive characterisation of students' needs and expectations in the analysis classroom raises the difficult question of the extent to which their values and experiences should condition teaching and course content.

The tilt towards student-centred pedagogy which consumerism and the social justice turn jointly compel has negative as well as beneficial consequences. Analysis is not, so to speak, an empty signifier, which students can freely populate with any methodology that chimes with their lived experience; it is an active research discipline, supported by bodies of knowledge that have deep genealogies. Consequently, analysis teaching is not simply a process of helping students to understand 'their' music; it is also the means by which existing bodies of knowledge are transmitted intergenerationally. Teachers of analysis, in other words, have a responsibility to the discipline as well as the student: their role is curatorial as well as facilitatory, ensuring that accumulated knowledge remains in the discourse and is not lost to posterity for want of a channel of transmission. This process should, of course, be practical and critical as well as expository, training students to apply theories and critique them on technical and, if necessary, moral-philosophical or political grounds. But an analysis course which repudiates theory does not thereby emancipate students from an inherited technocracy; it rather implicates them in a kind of year-zero disciplinary forgetting, which will in time necessitate reinvention of the music-theoretical wheel.

Lurking beneath all of this is the question of whether universities' responsibilities in a capitalist society should fall inside or, at least partly, outside the horizon of the economy. In the UK, governments have, since the 1980s, devised increasingly draconian methods for forcing universities into compliance with neoliberal values, by shrinking public subsidies and regulating the sector in ways which emphasise social relevance, vocational training and consumer value for money. Yet the university's primary object is still knowledge; and knowledge


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is not a commodity. The fact that economic and political circumstances force us to treat it as such is not a good reason to align teaching with consumer demand. This is a matter of urgent pragmatism, not intellectual elitism. Economic benefit is not the sovereign criterion for determining whether a proposition about the world is true. As academics, we are tasked with evaluating truth criteria and the claims to which they apply, because the world needs functioning truth criteria irrespective of economic conditions. We abdicate this responsibility if we allow the value of both our teaching and our research to be determined by consumer demand.

Bhogal raises two further substantive points. The first is that analysis is a perilous enterprise because deep musical engagement changes the analyst in unpredictable ways. I agree that such change should be understood positively, as transformation rather than detriment. One common objection to analysis is that it demystifies music, converting it from a transcendent into a quotidian experience. But ignorance is not bliss, and informed listening is never defective listening. Analysis is a vital tool for dispelling musical ignorance, in the sense that it allows listeners to classify and comprehend what they hear in ways which align with compositional praxis. Perfect authentic cadences, for example, are essential features of a Mozartian sonata form. Mozart employs them sparingly and distributes them strategically. There is no disadvantage to knowing this and being able to identify PACs when they occur. Such cadential strategies are not arcana, knowledge of which ruins music's sensual immediacy; they are known conventions, familiarity with which Mozart could assume in his informed listener. The Adornian notion of structural listening became one of the first casualties of the new musicology's assault on formalism. An aural knowledge of cadences is not, however, incompatible with the aesthetic of a Mozart sonata; and it is reasonable to suppose that all music embeds comparable keys to comprehension, which appropriately sensitive analysis can uncover without disadvantaging the listener.

The second point, raised explicitly as a question, concerns the ways in which analysis might be a 'human necessity'. This question is partly answered in Agawu's response: analysis is a human necessity because human attention is analytical. Or rather, *music* analysis is a human necessity because *analysis* is a human necessity: the former instantiates the latter. Drawing in the Habermasian distinction between instrumental and communicative rationality which was central to my article's philosophical framework, I would add that analysis is also an essential part of the human conversation about music. More specifically, it is a musical subset of the discourse which makes available, for rational contestation in the public sphere, statements about how the products of human culture are constructed. We naturally want to know how the Pyramid of Giza, the Hagia Sophia, or the Sistine Chapel were made; technical knowledge of this kind aids debates about their function and meaning. There is no good reason to exclude music from such conversations.

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*Alexandra Monchick*

Monchick's response focuses on curriculum requirements and the tensions between course content and university finance of which analysis modules are, increasingly, casualties. Citing Harvard's widely publicised decision to drop its mandatory music-theory requirements, she draws an important analogy between musical literacy and language acquisition. In both cases, the concomitant risk is the disappearance of specialised knowledge. The 'phone-a-friend' option, voiced in William Cheng's contribution to the 2016 AMS Listserv controversy over language requirements, which Monchick cites, is problematic in part because the friend you phone must be able to read (for example) German, even if you can't. If other curriculum requirements always supervene language skills, then before long, excepting native speakers, there will be no friend on whom you can rely, who is literate in German. And if the same situation prevails for German speakers as well, then they will not learn English and, consequently, will not understand your request. The curricular reductio ad absurdum of such arguments is a course in German literature, for which literacy in German is not required. This is not really a course in German literature, but in English translations of German literature, which only come into being because *someone* is literate in both German and English. Linguistic monocultures benefit nobody: arguments to the contrary are invariably foils for complacent parochialism.

The analogy with theory and analysis is close and resonates with the motivations for the new formalism in literary studies, which I cite in my article's conclusion, notably Ellen Rooney's concern that 'the extinction of an entire range of modes of formal analysis has eroded our ability to read every genre of text' (Rooney 2006, p. 35). A course in Western art music, for which musical literacy is not required, isn't really a course in Western art music, but a course in Western cultural history, which incidentally cites pieces of music. If such courses predominate, then, in the short term, the acquisition of knowledge about music becomes vicarious and uncritically dependent on the existence of people who *can* read genres of musical text, and in the long term, it becomes impossible, because sufficient literacy has disappeared altogether for want of a curriculum which teaches it. Under such conditions, past texts that assume musical literacy would become opaque, a kind of hieroglyphic language which is incomprehensible in the absence of a musicological Rosetta Stone.

In general, it seems to me that music curricula should include no music for which the necessary supporting modes of literacy are not supplied at some point, defined not just as the theory and application of Western notational convention, but as whatever specialised knowledge accrues to music, underwriting its conception, transmission, storage and dissemination. If we propose to teach Western art music – and I see no good reason why we shouldn't – then we need students to be literate in its theoretical traditions, for two reasons. First, because they supply the tools by which this repertoire is described and explained in its technical specificity, without which rich understanding is impossible at even the


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most basic level: to invoke the terms key, chord, triad, pitch or harmony and use them with descriptive accuracy is, already, to mobilise literacy in this way. These concepts have no alternative in ordinary language and can't be replaced. Whichever repertoires they address, such theories collate *necessary specialised language* – terms of art – which are minimal criteria of musical knowledge formation. Second, music is frequently created via a conceptual framework, which is itself literate: literacy supplies the condition of its creative possibility as well as its mode of dissemination. If we are not theoretically literate, then we have no access to the conceptual conditions of this music's production, which is disastrous from the point of view of comprehending it historically as well as analytically. Variants of this point can be made for any musical practice: what chance do we stand of understanding popular music if we don't have the tools to grasp song forms, the technologies of production, flow in rap music, or any other concepts forming the literate base of popular music's creation and production?

*Esther Cavett*

Cavett considers my article's pedagogical implications and how to convey its general message to an audience not equipped to tackle its philosophical and analytical technicalities. I take the point, with the obvious caveat that the article was never designed with pedagogy or public advocacy in mind. A parallel project, which makes a pedagogically motivated case for analysis, is sorely needed. No undergraduate textbook focused on analysis as an *activity* has been produced since Jonathan Dunsby and Arnold Whittall's *Music Analysis in Theory and Practice* (1988) and Nicholas Cook's *Guide to Musical Analysis* (1987), both of which take us back several decades. Textbooks in current usage, especially in the US, tend to espouse single theories, a focus encouraging casual perceptions of repertorial hegemony and cultural myopia, which do not accurately represent the discipline or serve it well in the public consciousness. One such misunderstanding is evident in Adam Neely's widely viewed YouTube video 'Music Theory and White Supremacy', five minutes into which it dawns on you that he thinks academic music theory is *entirely synonymous with Schenkerian theory* (Neely 2020). This, of course, is not true, which means that many of his subsequent arguments are compromised. But it is understandable how musicians whose undergraduate theory experience consists purely of Edward Aldwell and Carl Schachter's *Harmony and Voice Leading* ([1978] 2003) might conclude that theory is exclusively the secondary reception of Schenker. There is an urgent need for a textbook which exposes students to the discipline's full diversity and makes a case for its curricular and intellectual relevance.

Cavett's focus on my article's political dimension also betrays a misunderstanding: the model of analytical praxis which the article advocates is *not* primarily political, in that I was not proposing that analysis should, from first principles, be a species of activism bent on social reform. To the contrary, it is

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essential that scholarship remains *pre-ideological* in the first instance: research should inform activism, but research is not itself activism. If activism drives research, then research becomes shackled to political power interests and vulnerable to debilitating self-justifying arguments, because conformity to a political ideology usually requires scholars to assume their conclusion in their premise. I was rather pointing out that, if we want to know what is not fungible or functional in music, then we should look at those technical features which exceed social or commercial function. Because analysis is the means to this end, it facilitates access to sociopolitical meaning as an immanent musical property in a way which sociologically orientated approaches do not, because they necessarily assume that music's meaning is socially constructed and resident purely in the discursive superstructure. In brief: analysis furnishes evidence, which has political utility; it should not be a form of activism *ab initio*.

Cavett also charges me with a mandarin disdain for populist channels of communication, which is nowhere voiced in my article. To reiterate: my target audience was musicologists and theorists, not policymakers, educationalists and funding bodies. Like music itself, analysis is a complex phenomenon; the discourse about it should be appropriately complex in turn, especially when the conversation is conducted among specialists. A layperson's version of my argument might run as follows: analysis is essential, because it allows us to understand how music works. It does this by investigating musical artifice, which is the skill and craft of musical production as it is manifest in pieces of music. We need to know how music works in this way not simply because such knowledge underwrites a self-serving academic exercise, but because it is crucial to understanding how music relates to society, history and politics. Characterising analysis as a hermetic activity which has nothing to do with society is wrong, not only because it pits analysis and history needlessly against each other, but also because it hobbles musicology's ability to engage with the music it purports to explain.

On the questions of relevance and transferable skills, I see no contradiction between my higher level claims about analysis's nature and undergraduates' practical requirements. But embedding relevance and skill transference in our disciplinary discourse requires care, because they are political shibboleths as well as pedagogical priorities. Relevance has two common meanings in public discourse: its right-wing variant concerns economic utility and student employability; its left-wing variant focuses on students' 'lived experience' and the gaps between what we teach and what students value in their lives. Although the claims that students' learning should serve them beyond academia and that, as teachers, we should forge connections between curriculum content and prior knowledge, are both laudable, it should also be remembered that our discipline is not purely or even primarily an educational medium. It is also, foundationally, a research methodology, which is tasked with expanding and advancing the musical body of knowledge. It is imperative that this function is not subsumed into vocational training or the reinforcement of lived experience if analysis,


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and musicology more generally, are to prosper as disciplines. Subsumption into vocational training risks reducing research to a mere instrument of the labour market; subsumption into lived experience relativises analysis to school leavers' musical taste, which is hardly a solid foundation for a research discipline charged with objectively comprehending the past. (STEM subjects would disintegrate under this requirement – imagine if medical schools were obliged to exclude cardiology from their curricula because it isn't part of a first-year undergraduate's lived experience.) Our challenge is to make theory and analysis accessible and meaningful to students, without eroding the discipline's methodological base or higher purpose.

*Ian Pace*

Several of my respondents urge disciplinary unity. But as Pace points out, many of the debates around analysis came into being as territorial conflicts, predominantly in the US academy, in which theorists were not the aggressors. A point left unaddressed in calls for alliance-building is that, in successive waves over the past three decades, theorists and analysts have been provoked to defensive action by unprovoked attacks. There is no good reason why commentators from Lawrence Kramer (1992) to Richard Taruskin (2011) needed to establish their methodologies in constitutive opposition to music theory. But the easiest way to align yourself with modish postmodernism is to identify and denounce modernist bogeymen, and North American music theory's roots in European modernism made it an easy target, compounded by Milton Babbitt's aggressively scientistic agenda for music theory, which allowed new musicologists to annex the humanistic high ground. The opportunity to accuse theorists of formalism, with all its unfortunate Zhdanovite resonances, proved a conspicuous bonus. Placed in this context, Ewell's critique of Schenker is the latest stage in a thirty-year history of internecine strife, which differs from earlier iterations chiefly in the authorities it preferentially cites (Joe Feagin and Robin DiAngelo supplant Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault; critical race theory displaces French postmodernism).

Criticisms of theory's narrow historical alliance with the canon are not unfounded, but they are also very old-fashioned, misrepresenting the discipline's current diversity and targeting one version of it as if it were the only possible version. If theory and analysis are to flourish, then the territorialism Pace diagnoses must stop. There is no recent history, of which I am aware, of music theorists taking critical aim at historical or cultural musicologists in order to delineate their own discipline. Music theory, in contrast, has subsisted for three decades in an environment in which it periodically has to justify its own existence because historical, cultural or performance-orientated scholarship compels it. I think we can accommodate a musical academy in which the positionality of musicology does not rely on playing zero-sum games with music theory.

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Pace's observations about the relationship between analysis and performance complement Stobart's, broaching a field exhibiting its own share of internal conflict. Contributions from the late 1980s (Berry 1989) placed analysis firmly in the driving seat; Cook (1999, 2012 and 2013) responded not only by privileging performance over analysis, but by construing analysis as a species of performance; others (Schmalfeldt 1985 and 2011; Rink 2002; and Swinkin 2016) have developed more mediated approaches, modelling the interaction of analytical and performative decisions. Pace comes close to an argument I have pursued elsewhere (Horton 2017) when he construes performance as, in one sense, a kind of analysis; Agawu's point about the analytical nature of attention is, once more, also relevant here. To the extent that performers pay focused attention to compositions when they prepare them for performance, they surely engage in a type of analysis; and if their goal is, in some way, to make sense of music, then it is consonant with the analyst's objectives. The fact that we typically don't define performance in this way says more about the limitations we have placed on the definition of analysis than it does about performance or analysis per se. Moreover, when Pace conceives analytical–performative work as 'a contribution to a discursive space of interpretation', he in effect brings performance within range of my Habermasian view of analysis. By making readings of a piece available for public contestation, performers engage in a species of communicative rationality: their readings, like the analyst's, can be confirmed or contested for good reason, this being the rational basis of musical discourse.

I naturally concede Pace's point that notation does not supply the totality of analytically relevant information. My defence of score-based close reading was not intended as a repudiation of non-notated parameters' analytical significance. Precisely because the act of capturing such nuances takes us beyond the realm of notation, it enters domains which are not traditionally housed within music theory. Positively construed, these encounters are opportunities for interdisciplinarity. Accounting for the analytical relevance of improvised ornamentation opens conversations with performance practice; explorations of timbre incline towards computer-based modes of representation; analytical consideration of performative gesture intersects with empirical research focused on video analysis and motion-capture technology; and so forth.

Pace's thought-provoking invocation of Bataille's 'accursed share' as an alternative way of conceiving the analytical surplus also suggests a dialogue, this time with composition. If we think of the surplus as 'those musical aspects which *frustrate* attempts to account for them in analytical terms', then it becomes possible to imagine an act of compositional reconstruction, which falters if it proceeds from the surplus, because the surplus is, in one sense, the locus of unconventionality in music. I would, however, push back against this final point, because I think that analysis's utility is precisely its ability to detect and explain the extraordinary as well as the conventional. If we think that the surplus is synonymous with those aspects of a composition for which convention cannot


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account, then it seems reasonable to bisect analysis into two complementary activities: the codification of convention and the identification of procedures which convention does not demand. The former describes analysis's role in the construction of theory, the latter its capacity for explaining musical specificity.

*Simon Zagorski-Thomas*

Zagorski-Thomas approaches my article from the perspective of a popular music scholar concerned with curricula orientated towards popular music production, composition and technology. He points out that there is a market for analysis in this context, perhaps obviating claims that the discipline has declined in British universities, suggesting in turn that the rhetoric of decline masks anxiety over threats to the hegemony of Western art music. It is true that my existential concerns about analysis refer to Western art music to a significant extent. But I maintain these concerns *not* because I think Western art music deserves some hegemonic position it has lost, but because I think that no music curriculum which pretends to diversity can omit it if we are to stand any chance of understanding the West's cultural history, surely still a vital enterprise. Europeans, it seems to me, cannot afford the luxury of historical amnesia, but this will be forced upon them if education in the products of European culture becomes no more than an essentialised disclaimer about power and privilege.

In fact, I dispute Zagorski-Thomas's arguments concerning the intersections of knowledge, power and privilege from first principles. His invocation of the Foucauldian knowledge–power nexus wheels out what has become an uncritical cliché in the humanities (Foucault 1977 and 1984), which is deeply problematic in practice. All knowledge, we are encouraged to conclude, is relative to power, except knowledge of the relativity of knowledge to power, which we are obliged to accept as true absolutely. Foucault's higher-level argument seems exempt from its own premise, presumably because to relativise the knowledge–power nexus itself to political power is to devalue its epistemological currency. Moreover, although the imbrication of knowledge and power is an evident feature of human societies, it doesn't follow that all epistemological propositions are automatically compromised by some underlying power relation. It remains possible, indeed likely, that some propositions are pre-ideologically true and will remain so regardless of whether they are entangled with power. Heliocentrism may well have served political power interests at some point since the time of its formulation by Copernicus; if we like, we can discard it as a politically motivated instrument of Western science. But we do not live in a geocentric universe, and this fact cannot be relativised to history or ideology: the diurnal and annual cycles of the planet remain dependent on the Earth's solar orbit. Unless we want to live in a society in which fact always capitulates to ideology, we must retain the possibility of pre-ideological truth, in musical scholarship as in other domains of human enquiry.

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Appeals to the politics of privilege are similarly contentious. When Zagorski-Thomas contests the value-neutrality of my analysis of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 because 'It is Horton's choice as to which "surpluses" he chooses to analyse, write about and teach and it is the culmination of millions of prior choices, by people with varying amounts of privilege and power, about what to publish, what to play, what to program, what to release, what to review, what to write about and what to teach', he rehearses an argument, which is as flawed as it is currently ubiquitous. All analyses are, at base, exclusive: because, when I analyse one piece of music, I cannot simultaneously analyse every other piece, I make an exclusionary decision. Zagorski-Thomas's supposition is that such decisions encode privilege because some music has prior credibility as an object of analysis and some does not, and this inequality reflects a history of alignment with power politics. By this argument, the choice to analyse Bach is always a positive value judgement about Bach and, ipso facto, a negative judgement about all the music which Bach's cultural frame excludes, however much the analyst protests to the contrary. By choosing Brandenburg No. 4 rather than The Who's *Baba O'Reilly*, to invoke Zagorski-Thomas's popular music counterexample, I tacitly reject as unworthy of analysis all the music falling beyond the charmed circle of works that reinforce privilege, which is ordinarily assumed to be the Western art-musical canon.

Yet if I choose Bach as 'the culmination of millions of prior choices, by people with varying amounts of privilege and power', then I do not really make, so much as inherit a value judgement, which signals membership of a privileged social group defined in part by the value judgements it transmits. Bach's music is, in these terms, never objectively good; its apparent quality is merely a vehicle for the performance of social privilege. There are various circular arguments at work here. Why do I analyse Bach? Because Bach is worthy of analysis. Why is Bach worthy of analysis? Because people have analysed Bach. What defines cultural privilege? An appreciation of Bach. Why do I appreciate Bach? To define my cultural privilege. Any judgement about Bach is always already evidence of cultural privilege, and cultural privilege is always already prefabricated, in part, as the valorisation of Bach. Under such conditions, no analysis of Bach's music is ever genuinely an attempt to grasp the way it works; it is merely the latest stage in an infinite regression of self-justifying social position statements, the real purpose of which is to reinforce a dominant ideology.

Clearly, however, Bach's music does not exist simply as the totality of its self-replicating hagiographic reception, because all reception history is the reception of *something*: it has an object as well as a subject, in the absence of which no reception is possible in the first place. In other words, Bach's music is not, *pace* Bourdieu (1984), simply a cipher for those who promote it as an expression of socioeconomic privilege; it exists, *as a musical object*, apart from those power interests and can be examined, *as an object*, without automatically reinforcing the discourses of privilege to which it may have attached. Cultural products are not only discursive social constructions, as prevailing sociological orthodoxies seem


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to dictate. They have a materiality which places them in a dialectical relationship with social discourse.

This returns me to the argument for technical autonomy proposed in my article: analysis's object is music's artifice, which is an expression of the labour of production and exists in music's material base, not purely in discourses of reception. Had I analysed *Baba O'Reilly*, I would have made the case that the instrumental outro – which departs from the song's hitherto-ubiquitous F major I–V–IV riff and introduces a more complex linear texture – demonstrates a critical surplus in its increasing introduction of elements which are extrinsic to the song's conventionalised strophic form. This argument differs from my claims about Purcell and Bach only to the extent that, in the latter, I was interested in canonic and fugal counterpoint, an objective with which an analysis of *Baba O'Reilly* cannot assist, because it contains no canonic or fugal counterpoint. It seems perverse to exclude Purcell and Bach from the pool of composers whose music *can* serve that purpose on the grounds of some generalised association with privilege.

Zagorski-Thomas evidently doesn't regard popular music as subject to the same restrictions. A decision to analyse *Baba O'Reilly* is also necessarily exclusive; it excludes, for example, the Western art-musical canon. But in this case, the argument is presumably justified on emancipatory grounds: by signalling that *Baba O'Reilly* is 'worthy of analysis', I disrupt popular music's oppression by art-musical hegemony. To valorise Bach is an act of oppression; to valorise The Who is an act of emancipation. Yet *Baba O'Reilly* isn't the music of a marginalised social group, but one track on a mainstream, triple-platinum-selling rock album, by a band whose global success and prestige occludes Bach's privilege in the present. The cultural hegemony of Western art music is and has for some time been a postmodern fiction, which sustains the alleged marginality of subdisciplines but is adrift of economic reality. If we are seeking a contemporary musical hegemon, then we should look first and foremost to the Anglo-American popular-music industry, a corporate behemoth which dwarfs the Classical-music market and functions as a global colonising force more thoroughly than any music in the Classical traditions. The Nielsen-Billboard *Year-End Music Report* (2019), which collates information about the US music market over the decade 2009–2019, for example notes that Classical music captures the market's smallest fraction, a meagre 1 per cent, contrasting R&B, hip-hop, rock and pop music, which collectively account for 61.5 per cent of the decade's sales by overall volume. R&B and hip-hop by themselves accumulated 27.7 per cent of sales in this period, outpacing their nearest rival – rock – by nearly 8 per cent. In short, the American cultural dominant is popular music broadly construed, not Classical music; and this dominance is globalised without obvious restriction. To emphasise popular music in our teaching and research to the exclusion of other repertoires is to align the academy with market hegemony.

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Zagorski-Thomas's arguments about methodological hegemony are comparably problematic. Popular music studies does not want for analytical methodologies which stand apart from Western art music, as he seems to contend. Substantive precedents are at least as old as Philip Tagg's 'Musicology and the Semiotics of Popular Music' (1987). How anyone could survey the flourishing field of hip-hop studies and decry its dependence on Western art-musical theory, as if analysts of J Dilla are somehow being corralled into employing Schenker for want of a better alternative, is hard to fathom. In any case, my argument was not framed as an attack on popular music studies, and I was not seeking to pit analysis against popular music in any way. When Zagorski-Thomas states that 'Horton was making a general plea for the musicological necessity of musical analysis and yet, as always in the academic world, the word music without any adjectival qualifier means Western art music', my concise response is 'no it does not'; or rather, this was not my intended usage, notwithstanding disciplinary neuralgia about art-musical hegemony.

It is, of course, critically important that popular music studies flourish in the academy, as scholarship about any music should. But the prevailing situation in the UK, in which universities are potentially forced by government-induced economic necessity to orientate degree programmes towards vocational training for the music industry, is an affront to academic freedom, not because it disrupts some utopian fantasy in which music is produced in blissful isolation from the market – I know very well that such a condition never existed – but because it contravenes the basic principle that universities should pursue knowledge across the widest possible spectrum of human experience without political constraint.

*Henry Stobart*

Many of Stobart's observations chime with my position, I suspect to a greater extent than he anticipates. The gross expansion of my remit on which he embarks early in his response is certainly not horrifying, as he imagines, but delineates a pluralism which I warmly embrace. To reiterate: at no point in my article did I seek to preserve analysis purely for the study of Western art music. My focus on Purcell and Bach was a matter of evidential expediency, not disciplinary restriction – where better to look, if I want to corroborate an argument about counterpoint? – and in defending the importance of the analysis of Western music, I certainly did not mean to suggest that it should dominate the academy, or that we need to protect the synonymy of analysis with the Western canon, although, as I've already argued, I think that Western art music's curricular inclusion remains essential. To the contrary: as a mode of scholarly close reading which asks basic questions about music's technical specificity, analysis surely has broad transcultural applicability, a point that the burgeoning field of world-music analysis makes abundantly clear.


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A second misconception suggested by both Stobart's and Zagorski-Thomas's responses is that I regard literacy as wholly synonymous with the ability to read Western musical notation. This is not the case; but my article left literacy under-theorised and failed to distinguish between literacy as notation and literacy as familiarity with the technicalities of a given musical practice, which broader definition I happily endorse. In the Western traditions, literacy is entangled with notation to an extent that cannot be unravelled. In aural traditions, literacy might be haptic, organological, grounded in the memorialisation of repertoires and pedagogies and much else besides. In popular music, it has a strong technological dimension, rooted in the primacy of recording technologies as the principal means of preservation and dissemination. I regard all these as forms of musical literacy; and I view knowledge of them as a prerequisite for analysis, which, in this respect, can be defined as *literate musical close reading*. I am certainly *not* of the view that literacy is reducible to *Western* literacy, nor that analysis of non-Western or non-art-musical repertoires is only legitimate if it is channelled through Western literacy. I agree that the forcible reconfiguration of non-Western traditions in line with Western notation has colonial import, but I see colonialism as an end to which notation has been put, not an inherent tendency.

There is a problem of optics here, a solution to which would go a long way towards mollifying tensions between historical musicology, ethnomusicology, popular music studies and theory and analysis. It should be obvious that there is no such thing as music which is not 'worthy of analysis'. My specialism as an analyst of nineteenth-century Western art music is exclusionary only to the extent that any scholar must delimit their focus in some way, regardless of their chosen field; Stobart's concentration on Andean music is also exclusionary in this respect. *Pace*, once more, Zagorski-Thomas's point about privilege, power and value judgement, I maintain that questions of how music works in a technical sense are pragmatic, not aesthetic. They can be asked of any music; and when asked, they do not imply valorisation. That analysis has, in the past, been employed to valorise the Western canon speaks to an unhelpful elision of the technical and the aesthetic – of fact and value – beyond which we must move. Analysts choosing to scrutinise a Beethoven piano sonata are not, by definition, exercising a prejudice; and ethnomusicologists and popular music scholars should be free to analyse any music in their field, without first disposing of the perception that their focal repertoire does not have analytical value. Disciplinary divisions persist because there is an insufficient appreciation of the fact that, properly understood, *analysis is common scholarly property*. It is a mode of engagement, not an incipient value judgement tied to a single repertoire.

Stobart also raises the question of performativity. I agree that it *is* surely astonishing that the study of performance seems such a musicological latecomer. My objection to Cook's argument is that it locks analysis and performance into an unhelpful binary: instead of seeing performance as an extension of analysis, we must see analysis as a kind of performance. Actually, we must do no such

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thing, because analysis has legitimacy as a mode of musical understanding regardless of any relationship with performance. We can emphasise this point while accepting that performance might inform analysis and analysis might inform performance, or that performance might be a legitimate object of scholarship in its own right. I see no problem with any of these propositions, but I'm quite sure that there is no need to use the neglect of performance as a stick with which to beat analysis.

On the 'red rag' issue of music as art, a clarification might be helpful. I was specifically concerned with art as a shorthand for *artifice*, not as a synonym for Western art music. Recalling my revenant Marxism, I was seeking to orientate the study of music in terms of the technical means of its production and as a form of aesthetic labour, this being the strict etymology of the term 'art'. According to Merriam-Webster (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/art), art is defined as 'skill acquired by experience, study or observation'; its etymology is sourced to the mediaeval French word *art*, the Latin *artem* and the Greek *artizein*, which refer to the skill, craft or labour of production. I did not intend any more casual or loaded meaning, including one which differentiates high and low art, art music and non-art music. My point was that analysis is *how the artificial in music is revealed, via engagement with its material trace*. My overarching concern remains that the demise of analysis is the demise of the ability to comprehend musical artifice.

*Kofi Agawu*

As Agawu rightly points out, my article predates the tumultuous events of the past three years (as a British citizen, I would add Brexit to his demoralising list) and the imperatives which have ensued, most pressingly the social justice turn in US and, in proximate rather than identical ways, UK universities. His view from the postcolony clearly delineates my arguments' transcultural implications. Agawu's contention that the analytical impulse is foundational to musical comprehension is important. The daunting edifice of theory which has grown up around the Western canon tends to conceal the fundamental instinct from which theory and analysis are born, which in a sense underwrites all modes of musical comprehension and can be understood as instantiating the problem of *attention*. Any specific phenomenon given in perception requires, in some way, that we differentiate it from other phenomena (which is an act of analysis) and that we devise phenomenon-specific vocabularies for communicating that differentiation (which is an act of theory). Understood this way, theory and analysis are *forms of musical attention*. Thus construed, there is no reason why they should be the unique province of Euro-American curricula or of research concerned with Euro-American music.

The curricular sharp end of Agawu's perspective is its intersection with the project of decolonisation. Although this has been pursued vigorously,


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and in some cases controversially, in UK universities, its curricular outcomes remain opaque, partly because definitions of decolonisation tend towards open contradiction rather than consensus.[11] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012), for example, insist that decolonisation is a matter of settler-colonial land rights and that applying it to Western universities is a further act of colonial expropriation. William Fourie (2020) contrastingly urges that the former colonial metropole is the appropriate site of decolonisation, mindful of resurgent neo-imperial discourses (Fourie thinks especially of Brexit). Some commentators fuse decolonisation and social justice, construing it as a kind of panacea for white supremacism;[12] others charge all Western scholarship with epistemological colonialism (Bhambra, Nişancıoğlu and Gebrial 2018); and educationalists (Bradley 2012) have even claimed that the mere act of prescribing a curriculum colonises the mind of the student. Any reform agenda which attempts to synthesise these positions is liable to collapse under the weight of its internal contradictions.

My positionality is not Agawu's. But decolonisation's ambitions are global, applying to the postcolony, the setter-colony and the metropole; and many of Agawu's questions about the postcolonial theory curriculum apply to the metropole as well, if with different political sensitivities. One troubling issue is that decolonisation's conceptual largesse tends to sideline non-compliant historical details. Beethoven, for example, has become synonymous with Western colonial hegemony and often serves as a metonym for canonical music theory. But as a citizen of the Electorate of Cologne and subsequently a resident of Habsburg Vienna, Beethoven lived, worked and died in polities which were not directly implicated in overseas colonialism or the transatlantic slave trade. The Holy Roman Empire was not an empire in the decolonial sense (Bonn, in fact, was annexed to the First French Empire in 1794); and the Austrian Empire possessed no overseas colonies and did not participate in either the transatlantic or the Ottoman slave trades. The same point can be made about many canonical Austro-German composers. Robert Schumann spent the first forty years of his life in Saxony, well before the unification of Germany in 1871 and the subsequent emergence of the Wilhelmine Empire. In what sense, then, do Beethoven and Schumann instantiate colonialism? If decolonisation doesn't differentiate the historical specificities of music's production from the dominant epistemologies formed in its reception, then it risks becoming a vacuous catch-all, which can't distinguish between Biedermeier Saxony and Edwardian Britain. This argument's relevance to music analysis should be obvious: when we analyse Beethoven, are we analysing Viennese music of the Napoleonic period or an ahistorical metonym for Western colonial hegemony? To favour the latter is effectively to abdicate analysis's historical responsibilities.

Agawu also notes my neglect of Schenker. Broaching Ewell's work as the obvious recent landmark in Schenker's US reception, Agawu counterpoints Ewell's concerns over the consanguinity of Schenker's theory and belief in racial

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hierarchy with the more positive idea that studying Schenker in the postcolony might aid modernisation. As Agawu argues in his response:

> Postcolonial students will wish to know what in [Schenker's] theory made it so powerful so that they, too, can pursue cognate strategies of self-empowerment. Acquiring knowledge of diminution and prolongation and the graphic representation of hierarchical structure alongside forms of Indigenous knowledge will be their path to modernisation.

I would add that, in practice, any theorisation of tonality will inevitably incorporate observations that have Schenkerian resonances; this will be reflected in any curriculum that aspires to teach tonal theory, regardless of whether it is taught in the metropole, the settler-colony or the postcolony. If, for example, we observe that counterpoint is important to tonality, that some pitches are harmony tones whereas others are ornamental and that not all triads in tonal music are of equal status because non-tonic triads require resolution to the tonic, then we introduce propositions that are both characteristically Schenkerian and very hard to disregard, if our theory has any aspiration to reflect tonal practice.

Although it is critically important for historians of music theory to map the ideological contexts in which theories incubate, it is also crucial that we don't submit to an extreme constructivism, for which theories are always primarily ideologies and music only exists to the extent that ideology constructs it. Unless we are content to descend into solipsism, we should allow that music exists independently of the language which describes it and that theory captures properties of musical works and systems, rather than bringing them into existence in the image of its generative ideologies.

### *Concluding Thoughts*

Of the many strange dysfunctions characterising British academia in the early twenty-first century, perhaps none is stranger than the contrast between its prevailing leftist modes of thought and the ways it responds to government interference. In the humanities and social sciences, the American social-justice turn has become widely influential: critical race theory, decolonisation and cognate fields dominate scholarly and pedagogical conversations, not only at the academic grass roots, but with the enthusiastic participation of senior management. These agendas are activist by design, urging deep curriculum reform, the disruption of dominant ideologies and the dismantling of long-established bodies of knowledge and modes of pedagogy. Simultaneously, universities comply meekly with government interventions which push the sector ever further towards a commodified knowledge economy. The Research Excellence Framework (REF), which gathers and assesses outputs across all disciplines in UK universities and apportions funding based on the results; the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), which assesses universities for teaching quality and divides the sector into gold, silver and bronze award winners; the


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Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF), which gathers data on universities' external partnerships and their economic benefits; and the National Student Survey (NSS), through which the Office for Students collates comparative data on student satisfaction: all these public instruments constrain and punish universities, even as they are forced to replace public revenues with private fee income.[13] On matters of social justice, we are armchair revolutionaries; on matters of economics, we are obedient neoliberals, who work to ensure that the neoliberal academy functions in line with government mandates, despite manifest structural contradictions.

This situation persists because British universities have, from the top down, been entirely toothless in their resistance to government reform. We have not pushed back with any noticeable effect against the REF, the TEF, the NSS, the impact agenda,[14] the slashing of teaching grants to the arts, the freezing of fees for humanities programmes or the reform of the A level system to the detriment of student recruitment, but have laboured to make this increasingly defective system work, whilst simultaneously sawing off the disciplinary branches on which we sit, arguing that the tree from which they grow is terminally infected with systemic prejudice.

In my article, I define analysis as '*a musicological praxis, which enables discourse about technical autonomy and its sociopolitical import*' (2020, p. 82, italics in original). My aspiration for the coming decades is that broad definitions of this kind will gain general acceptance and that analysis will consequently secure its place in an academy, which values musical scholarship for its capacity *both* to situate music historically, culturally and sociologically *and* to comprehend its syntax, systems, forms, structures and processes, but which is also politically robust enough to defend itself when state interventions are manifestly foolish and detrimental. I suspect, however, that our institutions will not protect us if our music education systems become fractured beyond repair. Instead, they will bend in whichever direction is expedient for the reproduction of capital, whilst maintaining a veneer of social responsibility. Several of my respondents urge that our present predicament demands unity, and I concur: 'scholarly alliances', as Bhogal calls them, are, now more than ever, a necessity. But if musicologists can't agree that their scholarship has value beyond its capacity to generate saleable academic commodities, or even that there *is* such a thing as a piece of music which can be analysed objectively for its intrinsic properties without succumbing to ideology, then I remain unsure as to what form those alliances might fruitfully take.

## The Ease of Unease: an Afterword

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'Whatever is held to be of fundamental importance, of fundamental value', writes Adam Phillips, 'cannot by definition be treated casually. Indeed, one of

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the ways we recognize the fundamental things when they turn up in conversation is that people tend to lose their composure when they talk about them' (Phillips 2010, p. 49). I am emphatically not accusing any of our Critical Forum writers here of losing their composure, but the unease which lies behind Horton's article has clearly osmosed into the probing responses in these pages. What I respectfully call 'unease' can seem all the more pointed in the larger picture of Horton's influential thinking. Some two decades earlier he had evinced, it seems, more confidence in the then state of music analysis. He would even, at that time, reassure us fundamentally that all will be well so long as we avoid confusing 'deep structure in music-theoretical terms, which classifies common subcutaneous structural characteristics, and deep structure in philosophical terms, which implies a transcendental category operating outside the realm of empirical particularity' (Horton 2001, p. 351). Stick with the musical facts; that was the message. Now, it is perhaps less surely so – witness the ease with which we express our uneasiness about fundamental things.

Undoubtedly, music analysis has become somehow decentred.[15] One might even be tempted to say that it has been 'othered', or, to use Pace's word, 'exoticised'. As Agawu observes, contemplating the landscape since 2020, 'so much has happened since then'. The fundamental things are changed, although much depends on where you are starting from.

We could start from a century ago, with Wassily Kandinsky's marvelling at music notation, 'nothing other than various combinations of point and line', marvelling at 'the unqualified brevity and the simplicity of the means of translation, which in clear language convey the most complex sound phenomena to the experienced eye (indirectly to the ear)' (Kandinsky 1979, p. 99)[16]; and then ourselves marvel at the unease of present-day music theorists about the very value of musical literacy. That kind of doubt, signalling a loss of cultural confidence, is, as Monchick pointedly observes, a potential example of fruitless self-denial. As she warns: 'by changing degree requirements, by saying something is unnecessary, we validate scholarly deficiencies'. Starting, instead, a mere seventeen or so years ago, Bhogal perceives the tyranny of the 'neoliberal academy'. Are there really those, responsible for how music education goes, who as she infers 'see analysis as an irrelevant, socially insignificant, and narcissistic pursuit', and if so, are they likely ever to be persuadable that music analysis is, as she wants to ask of it, 'a human necessity', not only a musicological one? Or we can start from now, in a kind of consumer-led, pedagogical market economy. In this contemporary scenario, according to Cavett, tomorrow's top-rated analysis teacher will be the one who is 'as versatile as our *students would like us to be*' (my emphasis).

Where you are starting from might also include the relative comfort, offsetting contemporary unease, to be found in a certain déjà vu. Thus, we have all encountered in Horton (2020) his fetching idea of a 'surplus' in Western art music, a surplus which can be revealed through analysis, laying bare the 'technical autonomy' in which the actual 'art' may be said to reside (see,


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for example, pp. 79–80, but Horton discusses this surplus extensively). This is to look back in particular to Adorno, to his challenge that we penetrate to the 'truth content' of a work of music. There may be no better modern formulation of Adorno's 'truth content' than philosopher Gerhard Richter's summary: Richter states that creativity, modernist creativity at least, 'requires philosophical discourse to bring to the fore as a graspable, cognitive, and propositional structure the *Wahrheits-gehalt*, or the speculative truth content that, in the absence of critical commentary and elucidation, lies latent'. As Adornistas would have it, 'artworks unfold in their philosophical interpretation' (Richter 2006, p. 122). That position might seem opposed to Edward Cone's influential idea, from about the same period as late Adorno, that certain essential features of the work are 'beyond analysis' (Cone 1967). And that idea – Cone's discussion of it at least – riled David Lewin, whose rejoinder article 'Beyond the Beyond' grew so heated at one point as to complain that 'confounding theory, analysis, and criticism in one godawful lump, Cone appears to infer a pejorative: that *analysis* can't prove that a certain piece isn't just as *good* upside down' (Lewin 1969, p. 67; emphasis original). In contemporary terms, we might say that Lewin accuses Cone of failing to understand the surplus generated in a work by its technical 'autonomy' (to use Horton's word – and perhaps we can entertain the vice versa, if this is not just a mind-game, that surplus generates the feeling of autonomy). Perhaps most music theorists today, half a century and more later, would be inclined to agree with Lewin, as it were, on Horton's behalf. Me too. So much for the possible comfort of the déjà vu, yet less of that comfort please, argues Ian Pace. Not only does Pace invite us to evaluate 'performance analysis' as of equal significance to the analysis of performance-invariant features, but in a clearly Boulezian spirit he invites us to consider the idea of surplus as being always unpredictable, as an account of 'those musical aspects which *frustrate* attempts to account for them in analytical terms and distinguish truly memorable and individual works from those standing in recognisable relations to genres'. It might seem to be asking a lot, for us to recognise 'technical autonomy' in musical creativity which was entirely, or most significantly, unpredictable, but those familiar with the Kantian 'synthetic *apriori*' are familiar with making just such an all-purpose conceptual leap. We instinctively 'know' that $7 + 5 = 12$ although any connection between '12' and the preceding two numbers is a synthesis of unlike entities, and although we have no empirical knowledge why $7 + 5$ should always equal 12, which is simply a priori. If I may be permitted a canonical, white-framed musical question by way of analogy, why does Chopin's Second Ballade, Op. 38, begin in F major and end in A minor (please don't tell me that the work begins on VI of i, or ends on iii of I)? Let's just say – if this is not an overly easy analysis – that the Ballade's tonal meaning is a Pacean surplus.

It will, I hope, interest readers of this Critical Forum, as it interests me, that 'surplus' is not a bad generic word anyway for the creativity which its writers are thus bringing to the table, each one offering an enticingly new perspective. Nobody – and I say this only partly in jest – is expecting Horton to hold his

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hands up, to admit to seeing the error of his ways and to withdraw his claim of the musicological necessity of musical analysis. Rather, his colleagues here have been offered a springboard from 2020, and have welcomed the assistance to their various, highly variegated styles of public diving display. Henry Stobart, for instance, aims, with integrity and intellectual courage, to imagine a world in which 'close reading' is applied to any human creativity as an end in itself and not because (in my own words) that creativity has already been awarded the seal of superior aesthetic value, by whatever cultural or socioeconomic forces. He writes, in a footnote as it happens, but significantly, that 'a serious global imbalance remains as regards the musical repertoires which have received close analysis'. That is so true, many would agree, and it can lead us to question what counts as ephemeral, and why the ephemeral should be considered any less significant than the enduring, or indeed than the eternal.[17] Meaning – utterly unforgettable meaning – can arise in what Adorno called a 'flash'; and we are epistemologically defenceless against the human mind's involuntary experiential recall, let alone against its sometimes totally fictitious recall. Possibly, the ephemeral tends to escape or to distract from the surplus registered as technical autonomy. The 'appropriate and rigorous theoretical and analytical frameworks to underpin their practical orientation', for which Simon Zagorski-Thomas persuasively calls, in approaches to popular music studies, may well prove to be of an entirely different order from current research methods. Some of us have been predicting it, particularly with an eye to the development of artificial intelligence, which I for one believe is likely to lead us, increasingly, to be asking altogether new kinds of music-analytical questions in future. Such questions are likely to be grounded in the field of music cognition (for instance, in the secure and white-framed comfort zone, for some, of tonal sonata forms, how many people, let's say per million downloads of a particular piece such as a Mozart symphony movement, actually fail to listen to the recapitulation; and is that an interesting research question to explore and interpret?).

Finally, we are challenged by Agawu to ask whether, or to what extent, we are all analysing music in 'a hybrid space that is beholden – in diverse ways – to the complex legacies of colonialism'. Certainly I hear his clarion calls, that 'internationalisation […] be given priority,' that we face up to the complications internationalisation may bring to the 'habitual postulation of race, ableism, gender, and sexuality as the main things we need to worry about,' to the 'hegemony of the English language,' and to 'the prospects of decentring North American academic hegemony' – from where he and I both write, in our unease.

## NOTES

1. STEM is the acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics used in educational discourse today.


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2. This verdict has been disputed by legal scholars and musicians alike, not only over the inadmissibility of certain evidence in the case but also over the validity of expert testimony (see Gardner 2016 and Lee and Moshirnia 2021).

3. The AMS-L is now renamed Musicology-L and is administered by the American Musicological Society.

4. Only the nominees for the current competition and past winners are made available on the website (see https://www.amsmusicology.org/page/Jackson_Winners, accessed 26 July, 2023). Because the 2022 competition was for articles on music ca. 1800 to present, a greater number of world music and popular music topics were nominated last year than in the current competition, which is limited to music ca. 1600–1800. Only the inaugural award (2016) went to an American popular topic, the subsequent two in this category went to studies of Schoenberg and Rachmaninoff. Because two out of its first three years of the competition were limited to music before 1800, the American Musicological Society might consider opening the competition to broader methodologies and repertoire in future.

5. Delgado was the chair of the panel on Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies for the recent UK Research Excellence Framework (REF2021), which grades the quality of research in UK higher education institutions.

6. For AAWM conferences see https://conferences.iftawm.org/.

7. For analysis of Quechua song poetry, see Mannheim (1986) and Stobart (2006), especially Ch. 5.

8. Discussion of this topic can be found in Mendivil (2018), Wolkowicz (2022) and Stobart (2023).

9. I am not suggesting that Horton forwards this particular argument.

10. Horton's approach to art, as he clarifies in his reply below, is more nuanced (that is art as 'artifice') than I have perhaps implied here, and it is clear that he actively welcomes the broadening of analysis or 'close reading' into other genres. However, to reiterate my point, in practice, a serious global imbalance remains as regards the musical repertoires which have received close analysis.

11. Efforts to this effect at Oxford University have, for example, found their way into the pages of the *Daily Telegraph*, see Simpson (2021).

12. I am thinking particularly of the 'Decolonising SOAS Teaching and Learning Toolkit for Programme and Module Convenors',

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https://blogs.soas.ac.uk/decolonisingsoas/learning-teaching/toolkit-for-programme-and-module-convenors/.

13. For further information on these frameworks, see https://www.ref.ac.uk/; https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/about-the-tef/; https://www.ukri.org/what-we-do/supporting-collaboration/supporting-collaboration-research-england/knowledge-exchange-framework/; https://www.thestudentsurvey.com/.

14. Impact refers to the portion of REF submissions which each department must submit to demonstrate the socioeconomic impact of research. In the 2021 iteration of the REF, impact accounted for 25 per cent of each department's submission.

15. The reader might infer a connection here with Korsyn (2003), although I am more concerned with epistemological than institutional issues.

16. Kandinsky's *Point and Line to Plane* was first published, in German, in 1923.

17. The question of what 'ephemera' newly means in our era has been much discussed in the literature on web-based information. See Daniela Major (2021, p. 5) for a succinct recent account of 'the problem of web-data transience and its impact on modern societies'.

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