

## Music Assignment (The East-to-West Diffusion, the Columbian Exchange, and Culture)

**Hey People:** The music videos, plus the chart on origins of musical genres, I am assigning you (see below) via links available through **Part F** of the *Online Course Materials* page of the class website, are meant to demonstrate (on the basis of my own taste—hey, this is my class, O.K.!) the development and globalization of a U.S.-derived musical genre that has its roots in Africa and Europe called jazz, and its various derivatives (one of the cultural outcomes of the Columbian Exchange); as well as the universalization of the guitar (an outcome of the East-to-West Diffusion) as a key instrument of rock bands. Rock music is one of the derivatives of jazz because of its heavy reliance on African percussion, as well as influences from rhythm and blues, blues, etc.

Additionally, there are some tracks of songs the lyrics of which are in another language; and yet you can still appreciate the music, even if you don't speak the language. My point here is that music is an important universal cultural artifact that has its roots (most likely) in our genetic make-up as humans. After all, music probably preceded the development of language. In other words, music is not only a quintessentially communal affair but it is also distinctively human affair in that the ability to distinguish between music and noise, possibly by means of that musical interval, the octave—from this perspective, music may be defined as *deliberate* structured sound aimed at manipulating emotions—is of such universality that it transcends all cultural barriers across both space and time.

Among the subtexts of this assignment: (a) our cultural identity is not unique to us (surprise, surprise); its genesis includes contributions from other cultures too from across space and time; (b) to discriminate against other peoples while we partake of their cultural contributions demonstrates how stupid human beings are; and (c) we should make music not war!

**NOTE:** You must first study the chart on origins of musical genres titled “The Lineage of Popular Musical Genres,” available in reading **M-1** of Part A of *Online Course Materials*, before you play the music videos listed below. Play all these tracks and make notes of key aspects of the concerts/interviews/ music instruments; and so on. (If a link does not work use your brain and do a search for the same item on YouTube. Do I have to tell you everything?) You will be tested on this material! The questions on the test will be matching-type questions. (Use this opportunity to boost your tests scores, *if, sadly, nothing else motivates you.*)

Music videos you must view from Part F of the *Online Course Materials*:

- **Silk Road Ensemble:** *Instruments....; The Making of a Playlist without Borders; Empire State of Mind*
- **The High Kings** (concerns the potato and the Columbian Exchange and the tragedy of the Irish emigration resulting from the Great Irish Hunger—make sure you access the lyrics too).
- **Ravi Shankar:** All these items pertinent to the sitar: *Norah Jones (Shankar)....; and Receiving the Grammy Award....; and Anoushka: PBS Interview; and At Monterey....; and On BBC with Anoushka*
- **Wazimbo & Orchestra:** *Nanahulvana (Remix)*
- **Youssou N'Dour:** *Birima*
- **Wang Feng:** *In Symphonic concert*
- **Pink Floyd:** *One Slip*
- **AfroCelt Sound System:** *Live at Lushfest; and Festival interceltique Lorient*
- **Hiromi Uehara:** *Desire; and Interview*
- **Keiko Matsui:** *Beyond*
- **Cynthia Mare:** *Neria*
- **Rush:** *Closer*