teaching. By giving students a framework for understanding music in this way, I hope to enhance their musical pleasure, and by showing them an example of such appreciation in something as familiar as the sports pages, I hope to show them that nothing I'm asking them to do is particularly abstruse. Often, it is enough to give them permission to think about music, and when that happens you can almost see the light bulb go on.

Andrew Mead

The Dialogue of Past and Present: Approaches to Historical Music Theory*

In this essay, I wish to make a series of claims for the centrality of the study of historical music theory to the discipline of music theory as practiced today. These claims go well beyond the usual role accorded to history of theory. They are claims which are dependent in no small sense on work that I am presently engaged in: a study that uses four carefully selected historical moments as the basis for exploring the nature of thinking about music and the ways in which musical knowledge is transmitted and transformed in specific cultural contexts. These "moments" range widely from Greek theory into Arabic and Latin in the Middle Ages, to Renaissance dialogue, to Anglo-American translations of theoretical texts in the nineteenth century, to recent trends, especially neo-Riemannian theory. The study traces points of contact between

* An earlier version of these remarks was formulated for the concluding plenary session of the first Mannes Institute for Advanced Theoretical Studies which focused on Historical Music Theory (June 2001). I am grateful to Wayne Alpern for inviting me to participate as a faculty member in the Institute, and to my fellow participants, whose lively discussions pushed me toward articulating the position I argue here.

these discrete (and relatively narrowly defined) historical moments through the mutability of linguistic representation of thinking about music, the lability of music-theoretic concepts, and the nature of discursive mediation of non-discursive experience. The connection I posit derives from an examination of the underlying intellectual pursuit of contemplating music and the myriad manifestations in which such activity appears and is recorded. Thus I aim to offer in this larger study an understanding of the nature of musical theorizing as an enterprise that exceeds a mere series of theorists and treatises and further to argue the importance of historical understanding for the discipline of music theory as it is currently practiced. Thus I am deliberately contrasting widely divergent case studies of familiar and unfamiliar materials. My work in progress will provide a comparative study of Latin and Arabic reinterpretations of Greek theory of which only the Latin is known to students of Western music history. It will offer a cultural history of a theoretic genre—the dialogue—whose significance has barely merited comment, yet which reaches not merely to music theory, but toward an understanding of a central literary genre and fundamental questions of orality and textuality. It will explore the very basis of present-day Anglo-American theory through the texts and audiences created by a social impetus that resulted in massive publication efforts in the nineteenth century and the role that women played as translators. And finally, it will read closely the recent history of music theory as an academic discipline, exploring the intellectual climate responsible for the directions most prominent in recent research.

Through the understanding of its history that such a study offers—coupled with an attempt at a deliberate reconnection with that history—I wish to argue that music theorizing holds the potential to occupy a role as a fundamental intellectual activity and means of knowing. As such, music theory and its history tell us not merely something about music and musical thinking at a given time and place, but open new possibilities within the fields of cultural studies and the history of ideas.

Obviously, in the space of a short position piece with a deliberately polemical tone, I will be able only to sketch the claims

that emanate from this larger study. Nevertheless, I wish to claim baldly that the history of theory and historical theoretical texts must play a central role in the direction of future work in the discipline of music theory as it is most broadly construed.

Two related trends may be highlighted in the recent history of the practice of music theory (taken as roughly the last fifty years). The first is its relatively new status, particularly in Anglo-American circles, as a discrete academic discipline along with the fields of historical musicology and ethnomusicology.[1] The second trend follows as a corollary to the first with origins tied closely to the activity of musical analysis: an assertion that the discipline and its pursuits are essentially "ahistorical." Paradoxically, music theory has the longest history of the three subdisciplines of music study, stretching back to ancient Greek writings about music. The initial impetus for a history of music theory was part and parcel of the larger move to establish the study of music as an academic discipline in the nineteenth century. The result was progressive histories of harmony like Fétis's *Esquisse de l'histoire de l'harmonie considerée comme art et comme science systématique* (1840) and Riemann's *Geschichte der Musiktheorie IX–XIX. Jahrhundert* (1898). While the evolutionary narrative of those histories has been muted and contested in more recent enterprises, the tendency has nevertheless been toward a history that might be informally described as of the beads-on-a-string variety: a chronological survey of theorists and treatises that strives for comprehensiveness while stressing continuity and highlighting innovation.[2]

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[1] See McCreless 1997 for an extremely useful and balanced overview of the state and history of music theory as an academic discipline.

[2] Thus the ongoing multi-volume *Geschichte der Musiktheorie* fills in the gaps and highlights the inaccuracies of Riemann's narrative, while in many ways continuing much of his original initiative, now magisterially expanded through a multi-author venture and a range of sources never available to Riemann. Similarly, the *Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), while forgoing a chronological organization in favor of a typological one, nevertheless makes claims for its comprehensiveness. It

Ironically, it is precisely this approach to its history as a series of theorists and treatises that allowed the music-theoretical community at large to dispense with meaningful engagement with historical texts as part of present-day theoretical praxis. A persuasive case has been argued by Kofi Agawu (1993 and 1997) and amplified in a slightly different context by Peter Schubert (1994) that the concerns of modern day music analysis (and by extension, and in Schubert's case conflation, music theory) operate outside the confines of music history. The "ahistorical" stance is in part a way of marking and reinforcing contested disciplinary boundaries, but it is also a result of the increasing role that the activity of musical analysis has come to play in professional theoretical circles as well as the kind of history of theory that has predominated in academic institutions in the last twenty-five years.

From the standpoint of a humanist with historical interests, the approach to a series of treatises outlined in a 1982 article entitled "Preface to a Graduate Course in the History of Music Theory" by Mark Lindley, a highly respected writer on the history of tunings and temperaments, would seem to be nothing short of shocking: notions of "history" and how it is written and understood never enter the article. Instead, Lindley lists four pragmatic categories of treatises with which the well-educated Ph.D. in music theory should be familiar. The intrinsic value or context of these sources is never raised; rather they are laid out as something of a "Harvard Classics" or "Everyman's Library" for the well-rounded music theorist-to-be. This was exactly the sort of history of theory seminars that I (and, I suspect, most of my contemporaries and the generations which preceded and followed us) experienced as graduate students.[3]

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will be interesting to see the extent to which the availability of such a multi-authored single-volume work in English alters the ways in which history of theory is taught and practiced.

[3] With such a statement, I intend no disrespect to those who led such seminars (and indeed it was my initial exposure to a number of texts in just such a seminar which ultimately shaped the direction my own work has taken). Yet I can no longer imagine teaching such a seminar myself for the reasons outlined below.

The last decade has witnessed a surge in interest in the history of music theory. An uncertainty about the direction of the discipline was captured in the title of Ian Bent's keynote address to the Society for Music Theory in 1992: "History of Music Theory: Margin or Center?" Articles and books by Scott Burnham, Brian Hyer, Thomas Christensen, as well as my own recent book, have posed pointed questions about how a history of theory might be written.[4] In each case, the arguments have been carefully constructed in relation to a particular theorist and repertory. For Burnham, Hyer, and Christensen, A.B. Marx and Beethoven, Riemann, and Jean-Philippe Rameau and his *Traité de l'harmonie* (1722) featured prominently; my own work dealt with sixteenth-century theorists. However, my sense is that these studies have yet to have a marked impact on the field of music theory at large, in no small part because they appear to be about historical "curiosities" (and perhaps, in my case also because I work on a repertory that might be described as "pre-music" in relation to what are perceived to be the central concerns of a group like the Society for Music Theory). Broader claims from these articles and books about the nature of historical theory and its relevance are easily dismissed by means of the focus on a single (remote) historical figure or epoch.

I have recently realized—perverse though the claim may seem—that I have been fortunate that most of my music-theoretic work has been with a musical repertory that is not the one in which I was initially trained, whose notation has posed obstacles and proved opaque at times; that I have to read theorists in languages that are not my own; that I have had to come to grips with theological and philosophical perspectives that are other than mine. For in the process I am constantly reminded and confronted with the difficulty of understanding someone else's musical culture. Further, by working on a repertory outside the theoretical mainstream, while being trained and practicing within that mainstream, I have gained a unique perspective on the role of the history of theory and the potential it has for shaping the discipline.

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[4] Most directly relevant for this article are Burnham 1993 and 1997, Christensen 1993, Hyer 1996, and Judd 2000. There are a number of other well-known studies by this group of authors that could be added to the list.

There has, on occasion, been a certain non-critical comfort associated with analyzing works from the "common practice" period, an assumption of continuity of tradition that provides a veneer of "intuitive knowing" to the enterprise. Recognizing the distance which separates us from music like that on which I work forces us to confront the distance and difference of repertories that *appear* to be more familiar.

It is incumbent upon our analyses and readings of historical theory to acknowledge late twentieth-century musical and theoretical preferences and preoccupations while trying to understand treatises and music as their earlier readers and performers did—an understanding that is created and sustained by shifting dialogue of past and present. With some hesitation I invoke "dialogue" here in the very specific sense in which it was used by Bakhtin in his early writings—hesitation, because the metaphorical use of the term is both so common and so easily misconstrued. The use of the term dialogue can easily place a false sense of mutuality over the enterprise and suggest that a divider between two artificial worlds of past and present is easily or arbitrarily defined and somehow neutral. But what the concept offers is a point of mediation (of which our ownership is beyond dispute) that shifts as various historical and theoretical perspectives are encountered and examined, highlighting the imaginative background against which dialogic meaning is configured.

I am not here arguing for some simple glance back into a distant but flattened landscape. The chronological proximity of a theoretical source and a musical repertory guarantees no easy, obvious, or even necessary relationship. If we imagined a simple two-dimensional representation of a triangle, our vantage point at the top of that triangle would connect us to both the theory and the practice, while reminding us that the triangle is not closed: the mediation between the two is our activity. In so doing, we open possibilities for interpretation. It is facile to claim merely that "their questions are not our questions." For in learning what "their questions" are, we open the possibility of de-familiarizing our own questions, of learning how it is our own questions came to be formulated. This is neither a paralyzing nor prescriptive exercise.

It is just as impossible to re-create the past as it is to erase the present—the crucial element becomes the vantage point we adopt for negotiation. The disagreements among the accounts of near-contemporaneous theorists and their own occasional admissions of perplexity, should make it obvious that no music-culture is a homogeneous, self-consistent entity. The dialogic process offers the possibility of showing why earlier theorists offered certain insights and how they shape our own interpretation—of what it is that we share in our apprehension. Consideration of historical theoretical sources and the reception history of musical sources may point us toward a web of interpretation and the possibility of extrapolating from this web a convergence on an ideally cogent view. In learning from theorists of the past, we learn not solely from their pronouncements but from their practice. We enter their enterprise in an attempt to partake of a continuity of theoretical praxis. In ways many and varied, the conventions established by earlier theorists have shaped our own. Trite though it may sound, in reading other theorists, whether from the recent or more distant past, we also read ourselves.

Cristle Collins Judd

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Embracing the Non-West

The future of American music theory rests, in part, on coming to terms with non-Western music and associated theories. While not new, this claim has grown in pertinence in recent years not because we are bored with the canon, not because traditional theories have failed us, but because we have become more keenly aware of the diversity of our world. Think back to the fourth volume of *The Music Forum*, published in 1976, which carried an extensive article on Japanese koto music by composer-theorist David Loeb. The centerpiece of the article was a transcription of Yatuhashi's composition, *Midare*. Loeb developed a detailed linear analysis of variation processes in *Midare*, showing how a pentatonic deep structure is brought to life through imaginative use of various diminutions. He provided a concise historical background and rehearsed some theoretical considerations before plunging into the moment-by-moment analysis.

Loeb's article appeared in one of the central organs for the dissemination of music theory research in this country, the venue for Carl Schachter's well-known rhythm articles, Roy Travis's provocative voice-leading graphs of the first movement of Bartok's Fourth String Quartet, and William Mitchell's Schenkerian study of the *Tristan* Prelude, among others. But I have often wondered: how many students have actually read Loeb's article? How many