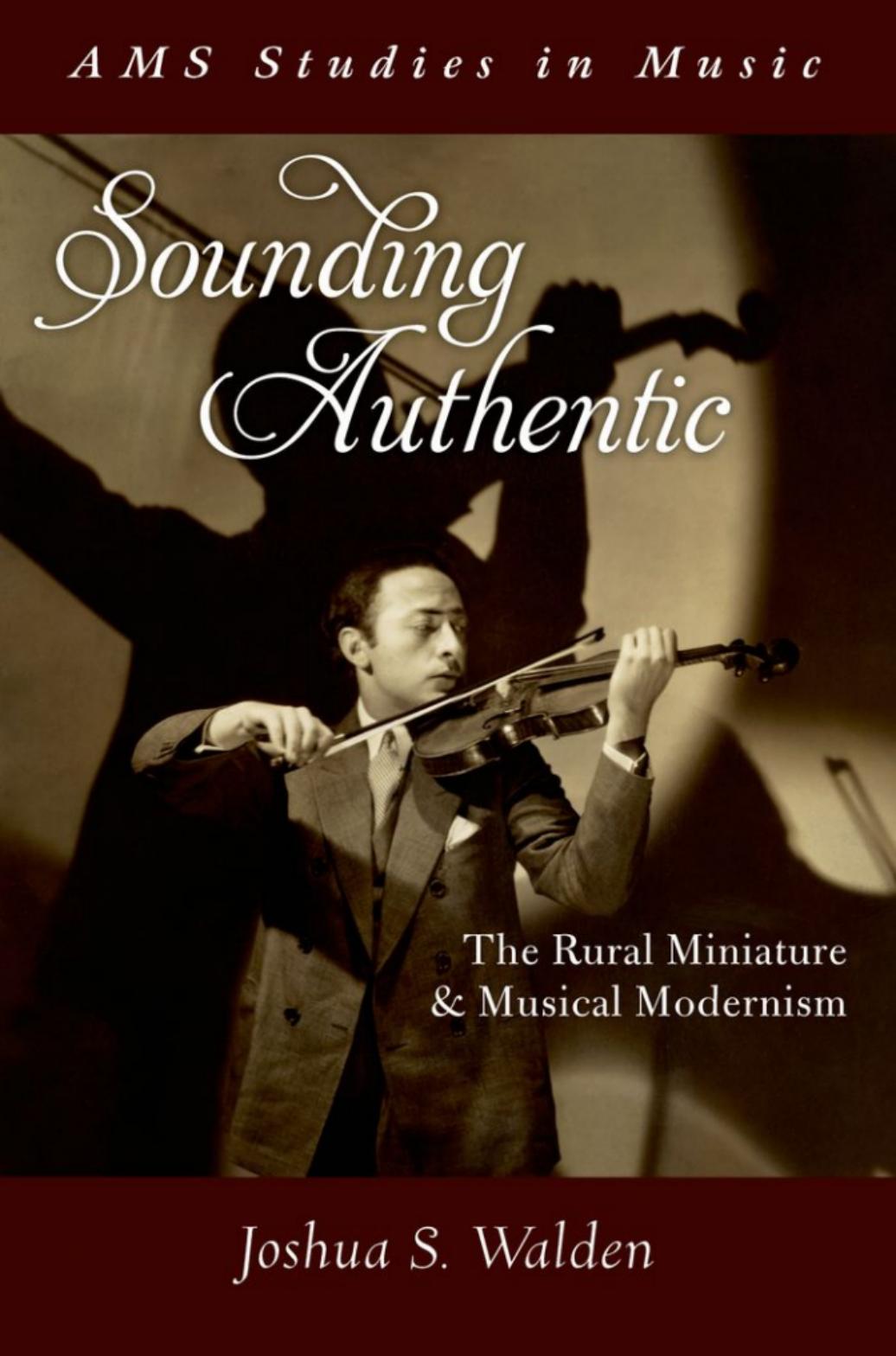


AMS Studies in Music



*Sounding
Authentic*

The Rural Miniature
& Musical Modernism

Joshua S. Walden

SOUNDING AUTHENTIC

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For Zuzia and my mishpokhe

Men can do nothing without the make-believe of a beginning.
—George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*

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SOUNDING AUTHENTIC

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INTRODUCTION

AUTHENTICITY AND IDENTITY

In 1918, the renowned Russian Jewish violinist Toscha Seidel published a work for violin and piano titled “Eili, Eili.” The phrase “Traditional Yiddish Melody” appeared under the title, indicating that the work was based on a preexisting folk song, and rather than listing the violinist as the composer, the score stated that the music was “Transcribed by Toscha Seidel.” The solo part, in a slow and lilting triple meter, featured a plaintive hummable melody with prominent augmented seconds and alternating duple and triple rhythms that evoked Eastern European Jewish song. When Seidel performed the work at Carnegie Hall that same year, the critic for the *New York Times* identified the piece as Seidel’s “own arrangement of the Hebrew prayer ‘Eili Eili.’”¹ The violinist Mischa Elman, also a Russian Jewish immigrant and formerly a student in the same St. Petersburg studio where Seidel had studied with Leopold Auer, published a new adaptation of the same source melody in 1922, in a score that described the music as “A Traditional Jewish Melody.”

During the 1910s and 1920s, “Eili, Eili” was performed and recorded repeatedly by violinists as well as vocalists, who sang the melody’s original Hebrew text, an adaptation of Psalm 22, verse 2, which begins, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?”² This text and melody were also the subject of ethnographic collection, included in 1910 and again in 1917 in anthologies of transcribed Jewish religious and folk songs published by the Society for Jewish Folk Music, an organization founded in 1908 at the St. Petersburg Conservatory that was devoted to the study of the traditional music of Jewish communities and the development of a “Jewish” national style of composition.³

In live performances and on records produced by major labels, Jewish cantors including Yossele Roseblatt and Shloimele Rothstein intoned the melancholy song.⁴ It was later reported: “When Yossele Rosenblatt chanted ‘Eili, Eili,’ angels in heaven seemed to sing along with him.”⁵ Opera singers also performed “Eili, Eili,” beginning with Sophie Breslau’s acclaimed 1917 rendition at the Metropolitan Opera. Rothstein’s 1920 disc identified the music as a “Religious Prayer”;

and among other singers' interpretations, vaudevillian Belle Baker's 1919 record stated that the text was "In Jewish" and opera singer Rosa Raisa's called it a "Traditional Hebrew Melody." The music made its way into other artistic genres, too—for example, it was performed hundreds of times by the orchestra that accompanied screenings of the 1920 silent film *The Golem*, based on a Jewish legend, during its run at the Criterion Theatre in New York.⁶ Indeed, by 1920 the melody had become so popular and ubiquitous that it was the subject of a playful parody in Leo Wood and Archie Gottler's song "That Eili Eili Melody," whose chorus began, "That melody called 'Eili, Eili,'/ Is always haunting me."

How, then, did this cherished Jewish religious song find itself at the center of a heated copyright infringement case brought by the Yiddish operetta composer Jacob Koppel Sandler against the music publisher Joseph P. Katz, argued before the Honorable John C. Knox, in a New York City federal courtroom in 1925? Sandler claimed that "Eili, Eili" was not a traditional folk song or prayer but an original composition he had written in 1896 for a production of M. Horowitz's Yiddish operetta *The Hero and Brocha, or the Jewish King of Poland for a Night*, directed by the Yiddish theater impresario and actor Boris Thomashefsky at the Windsor Theatre in New York. He had composed the number for the actress Sophie Karp to sing as she hung from a crucifix, enacting a young woman's medieval martyrdom for refusing to repudiate her Jewish faith (Figure 0.1).⁷ Sandler attempted to copyright "Eili, Eili" only in 1919, however, after learning that the song had become an international success, and he was suing Katz for violating his copyright by continuing to publish arrangements of the music.

Katz testified that he had no knowledge that the melody was by Sandler; to the contrary, his father, a Jewish immigrant from Eastern Europe, had hummed it to him decades earlier, and it was so common in Jewish traditional contexts that it was assumed to be a Jewish folk song imported from Eastern Europe. At trial, as the *Times* reported, Yiddish theater actors including Jennie Moskowitz and Mischa Nechamkus testified for the plaintiff, while Lazare Saminsky, a composer, author, and performer who had been a founding member of the Society for Jewish Folk Music and was now musical director of New York's Temple Emanu-El, recounted that he first heard the song in St. Petersburg with other Society members and they had "concluded that the composition was a folksong," following which it was published in Germany and Russia, and included in "a Russian encyclopedia."⁸ Elman's accompanist Joseph Bonime, too, told the court that when he was young his father had often sung him the song, evidence that it was plausibly a folk song.⁹ At the same time, however, it was also established that a number of musicians who had played in the orchestra during the production of *The Hero and Brocha* had returned to Russia in the intervening years; perhaps it was through them that the melody became known there.¹⁰

At the end of the trial, Judge Knox decided in favor of the defendant, the publisher Katz, on a technicality of copyright law: too much time had elapsed



FIGURE O.1: Jacob Koppel Sandler, “Eili, Eili,” arranged by Louis Friedsell, 1908. Heskes Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress, C.D. Box 2, Folder 247.

between the alleged composition of the tune and the filing of the lawsuit. “Of course it is to be regretted that Sandler, if he in fact wrote ‘Eili, Eili,’ cannot enjoy the fruits of his labor,” Judge Knox told the court, “but it is difficult to find that he did not, for many years, acquiesce in the wide-spread publication of the song. No sufficient reason for the delay is revealed by the evidence.”¹¹ Judge Knox reviewed the equivocal evidence, noting that although it appeared

that “Eili, Eili” may be a genuine folk song, the piece, “as it now exists, was not generally known in Russia before 1908. And it was in 1896 that Sandler claims to have written the song. It is, therefore, not impossible that ‘Eili, Eili’ originated in America, and was carried abroad.”¹² In response to the verdict, Sandler reportedly lamented, “What I feel is—is like a father that’s told he can’t have his own child.”¹³ Judge Knox later wrote in his autobiography that in reaching his verdict he had felt sorry for Sandler: “It is probable, nevertheless—or so it seems to me—that Sandler, the poor New York Jew, really wrote it, but I did not have to decide the matter. The injunction was asked for on the basis of Sandler’s copyright.”¹⁴ By the time Sandler filed his application for copyright, the music had “entered the public domain. . . . His copyright, therefore, could not avail him.”¹⁵

Was “Eili, Eili,” then, an authentic Russian Jewish folk song—as assumed by many scholars and immigrants and as implied or stated in published sheet music, in concert reviews, and on record labels—or was it, to the contrary, a number composed by Sandler for the fin-de-siècle New York Yiddish operetta? Although the latter appears to be the true story of the music’s origins, the widespread impression of the former is instructive for the historian of early twentieth-century music, as exemplary of the values and priorities of so many musicians, publishers, composers, and listeners during this era. In many of Europe’s urban centers as well as among New York’s immigrant communities, folk music was frequently cast as a symbol of nationality, ethnicity, and race, a notion that led composers and performers to search for inventive ways to incorporate folklore into their works for the purpose of depicting modern identities. In cases like that of “Eili, Eili,” this pursuit led to the construction of a discourse of authenticity around some newly composed melodies too, in a process of folklorization involving music that was anything but “traditional.”

This book examines a genre of arrangements of folk music and original “folk-like” works for solo or small ensemble that I call the “rural miniature.” Works in the genre, such as Elman’s and Seidel’s versions of “Eili, Eili,” Manuel de Falla’s *Siete canciones populares españolas*, Joseph Achron’s “Hebrew Melody,” and Béla Bartók’s *Romanian Folk Dances*, were played frequently in recitals in the early twentieth century, and many have persisted to this day as canonic “encore” pieces and pedagogical exercises for students of violin, cello, piano, and other instruments. They can be difficult to master, incorporating flashy techniques that allow the musician to display virtuosity. The composition of rural miniatures in the early twentieth century emerged from the synthesis of recent changes in the methodology of folk music collecting, developing ideologies of political nationalism, and the rapid burgeoning of sound recording technologies. Although the music on which rural miniatures were based was not always rural—in the case of many works in the genre by Jewish composers, the source melodies came from Jewish music of urban

areas—they were generally associated nevertheless with the entrenched ideological distinction between urban “society” and rural “community.” The genre was founded upon the belief that musical structures, notation, and performance could be employed to represent the musical traditions of rural and minority European cultures in a realistic manner. The rural miniature thus provides the basis for a broad case study examining the search for authenticity that preoccupied so many musicians during the modernist period, in their exploration of folk music and incorporation of new ethnographic findings into the composition and performance of art music.

Authenticity is a discursive construct rather than a property inherent in music, and it is always subjective and mutable.¹⁶ In the period under discussion, authenticity was a central concept in many nationalist ideologies, in which it was used to define the collective members of a nation as united and separate from other nations. At the same time, authenticity was an important trope in anthropological and ethnographic scholarship, where it frequently underpinned descriptions of folklore, crafts, music, and other subjects of study as intrinsic features of the social and cultural groups to which they belonged.¹⁷ The notion of authenticity has thus been a central component in the construction and expression of shared identities across social groups.¹⁸ Studying historical ideas of authenticity allows us to contemplate why many musicians have defined what they believe to be true and inherent to their identities through the arrangement of folk melodies as works of art music, and how changes in cultural identities over time have led to variations in the ways such works were performed and discussed long after their composition.

This book explores the pursuit of authenticity in art music by examining musical realism, an aesthetic mode according to which musicians depicted folk music traditions in a manner that was interpreted by many listeners, critics, and other musicians as accurate and objective. Musical realism was predicated on the notion that instrumental music could evoke a perceived reality; working in this mode, musicians developed a set of techniques aimed at persuading listeners that their compositions offered an authentic image of rural life. It emerged in part under the influence of the new sound recording technologies and their early reputation for providing objective representations of musical performances. The concept of musical realism is helpful in characterizing the process of representation involved in folk music transcription and arrangement, as well as the inevitable gap between source melodies and the ethnographic transcriptions and art music compositions and performances based on them. Indeed, any effort to notate sound involves a transformation in the medium of musical transmission, as a unique and ephemeral performance becomes fixed on the printed page. The composition of a work based on a collected melody also requires significant changes associated with the contrasting conventions of folk and art music, and the interpretation of such a

piece is typically undertaken by a performer who has had a different form of training than the original musician and plays for audiences with different expectations. These changes along the path between the initial rendition of a folk melody encountered during fieldwork and the performance of the rural miniature, however, do not preclude an aesthetic mode of realism in transcription and arrangement. The ethnographer and composer may still aim to be as accurate as possible, or to create the impression of accuracy, in spite of the alterations they make, and their audiences may be persuaded to some degree by the truthfulness or verisimilitude of what is revealed by the finished product. The study of musical realism thus helps to explain why and how composers and performers attempted to depict folk music accurately in their works, while it also allows for a richer understanding of the nature of the gap between the musical representation and that which it represents.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, musical realism was deeply entwined with the conceptions of authenticity associated with folk music. When rural miniatures were reinterpreted and adapted in changing contexts and for different audiences as the century progressed, other stylistic traits were frequently adopted to purvey authenticity in new ways. Achron's 1911 "Hebrew Melody," for example, was performed and recorded frequently over the first three and a half decades after its composition, and was adapted by performers, filmmakers, and lyricists as a short Zionist film, a concert aria, a popular song, and, finally, a recital piece for the theremin (see Chapter 5).¹⁹ The persistent purpose of these artists was to achieve through their realizations the authenticity of expression they believed this work, reportedly based on a traditional melody, made available to them in their varied contexts.

Rural miniatures were also made to serve as signifiers of social and cultural identities for listeners far away from the works' stylistic origins. In America, for example, a number of European rural miniatures resurfaced in the influential guidebook for silent movie scoring, Erno Rapée's *Encyclopædia of Music for Pictures*, as tools ensemble leaders could use to heighten a film's portrayal of setting and character. Rapée wrote that in developing the accompanying score for a silent feature film, "Firstly—determine the geographic and national atmosphere of your picture,—Secondly—embody everyone of your important characters with a theme," using music that corresponds to the filmic depiction of places and identities.²⁰ Rural miniatures are listed under multiple headings throughout the encyclopedia, which is divided into sections by themes, regions, moods, and genres. Under "Hebrew Music," for example, Rapée suggests the ensemble play Achron's "Hebrew Melody" and several editions of "Eili, Eili"; under "Hungarian" he recommends programming Brahms's *Hungarian Dances* and Jenő Hubay's "Hejre Kati"; and under "Spanish" he lists rural miniatures by Isaac Albéniz, Enrique Granados, and Pablo de Sarasate. If rural miniatures in concert programs were a vehicle for offering urban listeners insight into rural

and minority cultural artifacts and thereby depicting the sounds of the nation, here the same repertoire functioned as a tool of authenticity to enhance a silent film's photographic representations of place and to "embody" its characters by contributing a sense of realism to the two-dimensional image.

RACE AND HYBRIDITY

The genre of the rural miniature emerged out of urban European composers' encounters with folk and popular music, encounters that took place in some cases through active involvement in ethnographic fieldwork and analysis and in others through the study of writings by ethnographers. Bartók conducted fieldwork throughout East Central Europe and elsewhere, and Falla studied Spanish traditional music with musicologist and collector Felipe Pedrell and consulted ethnographic anthologies, while Achron worked with ethnographers as a member of the Society for Jewish Folk Music. Many of the musicians and critics who figure in this study believed race to be a principal determinant of identity, although definitions of race differed from place to place and person to person.

The scientific study of race gained footing and became systematic in the late nineteenth century as a field that was considered to provide empirical evidence of the inherent traits of differentiated groups of people.²¹ This contributed to a racial turn in folk music collection and taxonomy, and the search for authentic examples of the music of different populations, including ethnographers' own nations and communities. This racial turn often evinced a preoccupation with the search for origins and the belief that pure and unmodified folk songs could provide insight into the history of a race.²² Thus, for example, the French composer and folklorist Jean-Baptiste Weckerlin stated in 1886 that French folk songs, or *chansons populaires*, contain evidence of "the memory and the history of races that have sometimes been lost or disappeared"; he produced collections of folk song arrangements, presenting them as cultural artifacts of the French and other global racial groups.²³ Indeed, the search for national and racial origins provided an important impetus for the collection and arrangement of *chansons populaires* in France. Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray wrote that the songs allowed listeners as well as composers seeking new languages of musical innovation to look backward "to the origins of music";²⁴ and Julien Tiersot described *chansons populaires* in the 1880s as "the chronicles through which the people conserve their memory of past times."²⁵ In the first decades of the twentieth century, Bartók and Achron, seeking to represent Hungarian national and Jewish diasporic identities, respectively, also turned to the arrangement of folk music.

The emergence of racial ideology in the study of music furthermore manifested itself in pronouncements about the putative authenticity or inauthenticity of the music of diasporic groups, particularly Jews and Roms

(sometimes referred to as Roma or Gypsies). Franz Liszt, for example, wrote in his *Des Bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (On the Gypsies and Their Music in Hungary), published in 1859 and later translated as *The Gipsy in Music*, that in their music Roms “repeat sentiments applying to all individuals of the same race—sentiments which go to form their interior type, the physiognomy of their soul, the expression of their entire sentient being.”²⁶ Decades later the American critic Olin Downes implied a similarly idealized view of race as a source of musical authenticity in describing Ernest Bloch’s “Sche-lomo” as “racial, ancestral, it is the voice of sages and prophets, which never dies, resounding in the souls of the peoples for unnumbered ages.”²⁷

This idea of race has by now been largely discredited in academic discourse, both as a result of new understandings of what science can and cannot reveal about human identities, and in recognition of the role of the concept in horrifying acts of war and genocide during the twentieth century and continuing into the twenty-first. Scholars today generally view race to be not a historical and biological given but an invented category that gradually became ingrained as ideology in the West, and ultimately had an important role in the rhetoric used to justify destruction and genocide during World War II.²⁸ Many academic authors prefer the concept of ethnicity, understood as a social tool used in identity construction, over that of race as a heritable social “essence” passed on by blood.²⁹ The study of the early twentieth century and its music nevertheless demands the interrogation of historical understandings of race and the ways the concept’s meanings changed over the period and varied among different communities. *Sounding Authentic* considers the influence of racial theories on the use of folk music in composition and the ways in which notions of identity and authenticity were defined in relation to the musical boundaries people erected using the concept of race.

Much of the historical discourse around the rural miniature, in the writings of composers, performers, and critics of the early twentieth century, relied on the idea of a stable binary relationship between the urban and rural spheres. In spite of efforts in academic studies to move beyond this conceptual trope, it has left a lasting impression on the reception and study of Western music and its relation to non-Western and folk repertoires. It is crucial in examining the rural miniature, however, to recognize this urban/rural binary as another construction and to look instead at the remarkable intertextuality of composition and performance during the period, and at the fluidity between the perceived boundaries between self and other and among folk, popular, and art musics. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the forms of appropriation and arrangement found in the genre.

In his pioneering 1978 book *Orientalism*, Edward Said described a paradigm that accounted for representations by Christian scholars in the West of Muslim subjects in the East in the academic discipline of orientalism.³⁰ Said’s work left its

enduring mark on scholarship, and in part as a result of his legacy orientalism has typically been viewed primarily as a category of colonial discourse, a language of the West's imperial assertion of domination over Islam and the East. The prominence of this West-East and Christian-Muslim paradigm has meant the general avoidance until more recently of the study of many other complex forms of orientalism that account for representational gazes in different geographical and cultural directions and that stem from motivations other than the assertion of hegemonic power.³¹ European Jews, for instance, were long the subject of an orientalist perspective in Western writings that cast them as Europe's internal other. In spite of this, and in part in response to it, some Central European Jewish scholars also became active in the field of orientalism in the nineteenth century. The work of these scholars provides evidence that not all orientalist works involved the language of imperial domination; their writings on Jewish culture in Muslim Spain, for example, often exhibited more empathy toward their Muslim subjects than the orientalist research of Christian scholars.³² Some scholars and artists within the West turned to orientalism in projects of self-definition as well; this was particularly prevalent among peripheral and non-state cultures and further complicates the West-East, imperialist paradigm of orientalism. The Jewish orientalists who engaged in the study of Muslim Spain, for example, did so partly in response to the history of European anti-Jewish orientalism, hoping to carve out a stronger, more respected position for modern Jewish culture within Europe.³³

Exoticist and orientalist representation in music has also occurred in multiple directions, not only from West to East or imperialist to colonial subject: in non-Western and subaltern cultures, some musicians have shown an impulse to represent the West as exotic "other," while within Europe exoticism has also been used in typically urban art forms as a language for depicting neighboring rural cultures.³⁴ The rural miniature, in the variety of its forms and functions across diverse cultural contexts, demonstrates how complex the boundaries had become in the racial and geographic imagination of modern Europe of the early twentieth century, even within a framework dominated by the reductive conceptual binaries of West and East, rural and urban, and self and other. The study of this genre, therefore, benefits from a focus on the notion of hybridity, a crucial and common though often overlooked element of composition, performance, and listening in the modernist period.

In his essay on hybridity in literature "Discourse in the Novel," Mikhail Bakhtin writes that language

becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language . . . but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own.³⁵

It is helpful to conceive of composition and performance as based upon a diversity of musical gestures, tropes, and idioms, analogous to the multiplicity of speech types for which Bakhtin develops the term “heteroglossia.” In creating music people appropriate and adapt elements from various musical styles and genres that are found in the prior work of other musicians.

As an amalgamation of what composers learned about rural musical traditions through collections, recordings, and transcriptions of folk music, and of what they absorbed of the elements of art music practice during their training, the rural miniature privileges musical heteroglossia. Rural miniatures constitute a hybrid genre that was frequently perceived and performed not simply as “classical” or “folk” music, but as a new form that exhibited elements listeners associated with both. Bakhtin discusses hybridity in the novel as a deliberate artistic device by which authors use language to “creat[e] the image of language”: “Hybridization . . . is a mixture of two social languages within the limits of a single utterance, an encounter, within the area of an utterance, between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor.”³⁶ He continues, “the novelistic hybrid is *an artistically organized system for bringing different languages in contact with one another*, a system having as its goal the illumination of one language by means of another.”³⁷ The rural miniature is likewise the product of musical encounters, and a genre that self-consciously foregrounds its hybridity. Works such as Achron’s “Hebrew Melody” and Bartók’s *Romanian Folk Dances* were performed on both didactic lecture recitals about the history of regional folk musics and classical concert programs alongside works by Bach and Beethoven. Pablo de Sarasate’s “Zigeunerweisen,” a virtuosic showpiece for accompanied violin based on the music performed by Rom musicians, entered the repertoire of some Rom ensembles after becoming well known in concert halls and being distributed internationally on professional sound recordings. And “Hebrew Melody,” “Zigeunerweisen,” and Jascha Heifetz’s “Hora Staccato,” already arrangements of religious and folk music for classical violin and piano or orchestra, were adapted as popular songs in the style of Tin Pan Alley during the 1940s.

Because the study of folk music and the composition of rural miniatures were typically undertaken by scholars and musicians who believed that folk music exhibited a unique purity that arose from its development in rural communities that had remained untouched by outside influences, some of these ethnographers and composers—including Bartók, in his early essays, as shown in Chapter 6—conceived of hybridity negatively in relation to the ideal of musical purity and as a potential result of the erosion of the supposedly unspoiled cultural artifacts of rural populations.³⁸ But the description of folk music as pure and authentic was often ideologically motivated; the music of rural communities in Hungary, for example, was in many cases more

directly influenced by traveling Rom ensembles than Bartók allowed in his earlier writings. Ethnographers, furthermore, often had as strong an impact on folk music performers at this time as the music had on their work.³⁹

From our current standpoint, with the recognition that purity was an aesthetic ideal that could never in fact be located, the term “hybridity” can be of assistance in establishing how new musical styles and genres emerge from cross-cultural encounter. This understanding of hybridity does not impede the recognition of the ways such encounters might also lead to essentialization. Because of the nationalist ideologies that were frequently behind the composition of folk music arrangements, and the fact that the notational and technological media in which they were composed, printed, and recorded were developed in cosmopolitan Europe, rural miniatures often displayed homogenizing and generalizing assumptions about ethnic groups and their music. “Hybridity” allows us to recognize, however, that the will to adapt elements from folk music into new compositions also frequently grew out of musicians’ positive intentions to define, clarify, and perform their national and diaspora identities through the study of rural and ethnic groups and the recognition of shared cultural characteristics.

THE RURAL MINIATURE AND THE “PERIPHERY”

The rural miniature predominated in communities often perceived as peripheral to those Central and Western European countries that had by the early twentieth century become widely associated with the central achievements in the field of classical music, principally Germany, Austria, Italy, and France. The notion of a musical center originated in the nineteenth century with the rising conception of German composers as the dominant, even universal upholders of the art form, in the quality, taste, and cultivation of their work. In response, musicians in countries peripheral to this growing “center” came increasingly to view themselves as musical “others,” and if they sought to work in the “universal” musical style, their surest ticket to an international audience was, increasingly, the adaptation of regional folk music into art music.⁴⁰ A composer in the musical periphery, by representing local cultures through the use of folk themes in his work, could present his music for the consumption of those with “cultivated” taste in the mainstream style of German art music.⁴¹ And through this process, out of the notion of national folk music, there emerged a new category of national art music, which typically involved the selection and adaptation of regional traditional music in new compositions.⁴² The rural miniature developed from this social and cultural delineation between “center” and “periphery” and the perceived necessity for musical self-representation, as well as from the increasingly “scientific” aims of accuracy and objectivity in the field of folk music collection that followed the invention of technology for recording sound. The rural miniature thus arose in part from the effort to showcase musical artifacts from areas perceived as peripheral—and this

meant both bringing rural musics to urban performers and presenting new compositions by artists in nations not generally viewed as centers of classical music to audiences both at home and abroad, as new contributions to the art music canon. In the context of the privileging of literacy and the “cultivation” of art music in Europe’s cosmopolitan centers, the transformation of melodies from the oral tradition to the written through transcription and harmonization for piano, as found as early as the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in England, Germany, and elsewhere (see Chapter 1), also served as a way of moving folk music from the periphery of modern life to the center.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, folk song arrangements and rural miniatures were composed internationally, as musicians and folklorists turned to traditional music in order to present artistic achievements in composition that were at once mainstream and regionally marked, able to represent specific national and racial identities on the world stage. A selective survey of arrangements of folk songs and dances shows the broad scope of folk music settings in Europe and beyond. French scholars of *chansons populaires* in the nineteenth century considered the repertoire they collected, particularly from rural areas in France, to be useful tools in promoting unity behind a French national identity.⁴³ In this spirit Bourgault-Ducoudray wrote, “a people who ignores its *chansons populaires* does not know its own ‘soul,’ whose spontaneous melodic inspiration is like the imitation or the living reflection.”⁴⁴ Weckerlin, Burgault-Ducoudray, Tiersot, Vincent d’Indy, and others arranged *chansons populaires* with piano accompaniment, often publishing these settings in collections that presented the songs as “pure” historical relics, shared cultural artifacts of a French national identity, and inspiration for progress in the field of composition. In his three-volume *Échos du temps passé*, which featured *chansons* by trouvères including Adam de la Halle, composers such as Machaut and Lully, French kings, and other historical figures in addition to religious songs and regional folk songs, Weckerlin introduced most of his arrangements with a few paragraphs about the original songs’ historical context and performance style. His description of a *Chanson Normande* sung to him by a “simple farmer,” for example, relates, “We have often heard the peasants of Normandy singing in the countryside; they produce their voices at the top of their lungs and sustain them on each note until their breath is extinguished. Their airs are almost always in minor, and resemble psalmody more than songs.”⁴⁵ Weckerlin sets the bucolic outdoor scene for the song that follows in its arrangement for the bourgeois indoor ensemble of voice and piano, and his depiction of the performance evokes an unrefined but intense mode of expression made to seem more transcendent by the identification of the song with characteristics of church music, despite its folkloric origins.

In northern Europe, folk music arrangements of the early twentieth century grew out of an active and long-standing tradition of folk song collecting and arrangement. In the Preface of Edvard Grieg’s *Slätter*, Op. 72, a collection of

piano arrangements of seventeen folk tunes published in 1903, Grieg writes that these “Norwegian peasant dances,” originally played on the Hardanger fiddle and transcribed by Johan Halvorsen “in a manner reliable even for research-work,” were collected from the playing of Knut Dahle, a performer from the southern Norwegian region of Telemark.⁴⁶ Grieg, who had himself experimented with the transcription of Hardanger fiddle music a few years before composing *Slåtter*,⁴⁷ claims that this musical tradition achieves its authenticity in part because it originated in isolation, uninfluenced by surrounding cultures: it is “handed down to us from an age when the culture of the Norwegian peasant was isolated in its solitary mountain-valleys from the outer world, to which fact it owes its whole originality.” He describes the melodies in terms that would become standard in characterizations of folk music by composers and ethnographers during the modernist period, as combining earnest simplicity and barbaric violence: “Those who can appreciate such music, will be delighted at the originality, the blending of fine, soft gracefulness with sturdy almost uncouth power and untamed wildness.” As Bartók would soon argue about his own early rural miniatures (see Chapter 6), Grieg states that his aim in *Slåtter* “was to raise these works of the people to an artistic level, by . . . bringing them under a system of harmony.” A number of the arrangements are introduced with retellings of local legends, or provided with notes describing the tempo, instrumentation, or other attributes of their initial form.

In Britain, Cecil J. Sharp and others wrote rural miniatures based on folk music from various regions of the nation. His 1911 *Four Folk-Airs*, for example, featured settings of “Morris Dance Tunes Collected from Traditional Sources and arranged with pianoforte accompaniment.” Other collections were historical in nature; for example, in *Six Country Dances of the 18th Century* (1921), Ernest Newton produced piano arrangements of British folk songs, following their titles with the years they were first published in anthologies.

Rural miniatures were also composed outside of Europe, with the arrangement of folk music for piano in nations and colonized regions from America to Australia. Justin Elie’s piano adaptations of Haitian melodies transformed the island’s traditional music into miniatures for performance in cosmopolitan concert venues. A review of his 1923 Carnegie Hall performance of a series of dance arrangements, in which a dancer called Hasoutra performed as he played the piano, stated that the dancer’s “interpretation of these works is essentially original and absolutely authentic.”⁴⁸ Reviews of Elie’s three-part *The Ancient Mountain Legends* praised the composer for his authentic depiction of Haitian folklore; one critic wrote that the work, “built on genuine primitive themes,” demonstrates Elie’s skill at composing “a characteristic harmonization, however keeping the full value of the original mood of the songs.”⁴⁹ Moreover, Elie’s arrangements of the music of indigenous groups in Latin America were viewed as uniquely authentic due to his work as an ethnographer; thus Conrad

H. Ratner wrote in 1923 that Elie “has devoted ten years to concentrated investigation among tribes, living among them, at times at the very risk of his life, leading the simple and picturesque existence of a people so capricious, carefree and degenerate.”⁵⁰ Ratner overstates Elie’s encounters with Native American musicians, carried away by his attempt to depict Elie’s works as uniquely accurate in their representation of folk music, possessing an authenticity whose roots lie in Elie’s involvement in the field of ethnography.

In Clarence Elkin’s 1923 *Maori Melodies (with Words) Collected and Arranged for Pianoforte*, published in Australia, the Preface invokes ethnographic encounter in a description of the work’s composition: “The Compiler of these Maori Melodies was charmed whilst touring New Zealand, on several occasions, with the beauty of their Folk-Songs and Poi Dances.” The Preface acknowledges his ethnographic sources by name, thanking them “for assistance in collecting these sweet little melodies,” and follows with a brief retelling of a Māori legend, “The Story of Hinemoa and Tutanekai.”⁵¹ Song titles, written in Māori, are followed didactically by the English name of the original genre.

Arthur Farwell’s *American Indian Melodies*, first published by the Wa-Wan Press in 1901, featured ten miniatures, most of which are based on melodies written down by the ethnographer Alice C. Fletcher or transcribed directly from the wax cylinders she compiled during fieldwork; each is introduced by a short excerpt of Fletcher’s interpretation of the song’s original text.⁵² In the Introduction, Farwell describes the songs he has chosen as providing evidence of the transcendence and authenticity of music in Native American religious practice: “Song, an invisible agent, is to the Indian the direct means of communicating with his invisible god.”⁵³ The Introduction proceeds to relate Fletcher’s fieldwork experience and methodologies. Farwell offers suggestions to enable the performer to imbue each song with its corresponding ethos. His explanation refers to German art music in order to distinguish his arrangement from these “cultivated” and “universal” genres, but at the same time also to compare Native American folk songs favorably with the works of “the masters”:

“Inketunga’s Thunder Song” would sound ridiculous interpreted after the style of a nocturne, moment musical, impromptu, or any purely musical form with which we are familiar, but gains an exalted and beautiful significance the moment we bring to its interpretation the knowledge that it stands for the direct communication of a human soul with its god, and a deeply-felt assurance, to its fellow man, of that communication. Thus it will be seen that a seriousness no less than that which we accord the works of the masters, must be brought to the interpretation of these songs, the spontaneous utterance of a people whose every word, action or tone invariably bears a deeply vital significance.⁵⁴

The simple, cross-cultural understanding of religious conviction, therefore, is all that is needed to perform these ancient melodies with the authentic spontaneity and seriousness they demand. In works such as Elkin’s, Elie’s, and

Farwell's, the music of native populations of Polynesia, the Caribbean islands, and the Americas, having been transformed from the oral tradition to the literate through ethnographic transcription, were brought even further from the "periphery" toward the "center" of art music culture through the arrangement, publication, and performance of rural miniatures.

Rural miniatures appealed not only to members of the national and ethnic groups they represented through their adaptation of folk themes but also beyond their borders toward the modern musical "center," where the "periphery," as a place of cultural "otherness" assumed to lack the cultivation of Central Europe, came to evoke stereotypes of musical authenticity, purity, and simplicity that were linked with romantic notions of the pre-modernized rural and the pre-hybridized folk. But it is also for this reason that while many rural miniatures did enter the canons of piano or violin pedagogy and recital repertoire, they generally failed to be adopted into the more general canons of Western music still dominated by Austro-German composers. Indeed, as Richard Taruskin writes, "Without the native costume, a 'peripheral' composer would never achieve even secondary canonical rank, but with it he could never achieve more."⁵⁵ While the use of folk themes became a way for the composers of the "periphery" to make themselves heard by broad international audiences, it nevertheless often restricted them from gaining a respected place in the highest ranks of the musical canon.

The rural miniature thus played an important role in the efforts of many musicians and listeners to construct national identities and negotiate processes of adaptation and assimilation in the face of displacement across the diaspora. It was a tool in the construction of personal and group identities among composers, performers, and listeners, and the hybrid origins, uses, and recontextualizations of works in the genre are testimony to the nuance and variability of such social negotiations. A compelling by-product of this complex role of the genre was the frequent use of rural miniatures as training vehicles, through which the unrefined young student could be taught to play with cultural sophistication, and also as encore pieces, in which a prominent performer could demonstrate the technical virtuosity popularly associated with both "high culture" classical training and the supposedly authentic, expressive emotionality of rural music.

MUSIC AT THE BORDERS: TRANSCENDING "HIGH" AND "LOW" IN THE PERIPHERY

This study of music and periphery brings to the fore questions of genre and the distinctions among "folk," "art," and "popular" music, and between "high" and "low" culture, by combining score-based readings with the study of music's manifestations in other media—such as sound recording and film

soundtracks—as well as the of discursive values that developed around music. In examining music's roles in peripheral cultures it becomes critical to consider musical functions, adaptations, and performances to understand the ways music reflects the processes of cultural encounter and exchange that occurred regularly in borderland regions and among diasporic groups.⁵⁶ In such communities, music often thrived at the borders between folk, popular, and artistic genres. The study of music among these groups can thus reveal the overlaps between the categories of “high” and “low” music, the prolific instances of cross-cultural musical adaptation and appropriation, and the freedom with which music was adapted between genres and styles in the early twentieth century, a period marked by rapid developments in nationalism and technology, and the increasing rate of migration from rural to urban spaces and across national borders.⁵⁷

Even the simplest rural miniature—as an adaptation of a folk melody into a work of art music, an original composition based on preexisting material, and a transposition of the oral tradition into the written—demonstrates that musical styles during this era can be more accurately characterized as points along a fluid continuum than as distinct and easily differentiated cultural forms. But as so many of the rural miniatures explored in this book demonstrate, the genre was rarely this straightforward. In the case of “Eili, Eili,” as Judge Knox concluded, the rural miniature Seidel published as a simple folk tune arrangement was more likely a composition for the popular genre of operetta that had become folklorized and then assimilated into the canon of violin recital music at the same time that it became a standard religious song in the repertoire of celebrated cantors. But that was not the end of the story. Later still, the piece was performed by artists known for their work in far different styles, from the crooner Johnny Mathis to the *klezmer* clarinetist Dave Tarras to the big band trumpeter Harry James. This book's discussions of “Hora Staccato,” “Zigeunerweisen,” “Hebrew Melody,” and other rural miniatures further demonstrate how common it was that works in the genre reached fluidly across a continuum of musical styles typically conceived of as popular, folk, and art, and moved between national and ethnic idioms as diverse as rural folk music, urban Rom numbers, European classical repertoire, and American swing.

The rural miniature complicated the constructed distinctions between “folk,” “art,” and “popular” music, not only in its composition but also in its reception and performance. Like many of the violinists of his and the preceding generation, Heifetz recorded and performed adaptations for violin of songs and dances associated with folk and popular traditions while always remaining devoted to the standard works of the violin repertoire and the new compositions of his peers.⁵⁸ In a 1946 article in the *New York Times*, he boasts of his broad-minded musical taste for the folk and popular song of his adopted country:

I have never hesitated to play Stephen Foster's "Jeanie With the Light Brown Hair." . . . It's a fine song, American to the core. Why should I go hunting for its Viennese or Parisian equivalent and try to palm that off as art because it has a foreign name? Foster's tune is art in its class. So are the songs of Kern, Gershwin and Berlin. I think Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" is a grand tune, and it pleases me to play it in concert or on the radio.⁵⁹

As is shown throughout this book, similar statements arise in the writings of Bartók, Falla, and members of the St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Folk Music when they argue that their representations of musical identities raise folk song and dance, through arrangement and adaptation, to the level of art music.

By employing the genre of the rural miniature in part to "elevate" folk and popular melodies to the prestige of art music, musicians displayed their reliance on these entrenched stylistic categories while at the same time they undermined this taxonomy, highlighting the fractures in the supposed barriers between musical genres. The rural miniature thus carved out its space at the perceived borders between musical genres and styles. It acts as a lens through which to view the fluidity of the music of the early twentieth century along a stylistic continuum, and it allows us to consider the dynamic effects of cultural encounter and appropriation in communities at the peripheries of art music culture during this period.

THE RURAL MINIATURE FOR VIOLIN IN SPAIN, THE JEWISH DIASPORA, AND HUNGARY

Rural miniatures were written for numerous instrumentations; most were arranged for solo piano—an instrument that because of its omnipresence in bourgeois culture and its ability to incorporate both melody and harmony was an obvious candidate for "elevating" folk music to the level of cosmopolitan high art while recontextualizing it with Western harmonies or experimenting with the modes and scales of traditional musics. Many others were arranged for accompanied string instrument, and some were for clarinet, chamber ensemble, or chamber orchestra. This book focuses in particular on rural miniatures for violin with piano or orchestral accompaniment. In works in the genre for string instruments, composers and performers often sought to achieve a quality of musical realism, taking advantage of the violin's common association with international folk musics, which provided the sense of a direct correlation between rural miniatures and the traditions on which they were based. With its durable frame and portable size, the violin was a typical member of folk and popular music ensembles throughout Europe, as well as one of the most ubiquitous instruments in the art music canon; thus Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote of the violin in his *Dictionnaire de musique* in 1768, "There is

no instrument from which one obtains a more varied and universal expression.”⁶⁰ For this reason, in the rural miniature the violin could act as a perfect medium for bringing together the musical “periphery” and “center,” for staging an encounter between rural and urban spheres and traditional and classical repertoires. It also became a common symbol of national, religious, and cultural identities for a number of Europe’s rural and minority groups. Its timbre was often described as imitative or evocative of the voice, and therefore as able to communicate human sentiments without the requirement of language, a universalizing quality that allowed people to perform and listen to the folk music of the world’s ethnic and national groups without the necessity of understanding the languages in which they communicated. The rural miniature’s popularity was propelled in large part by prominent violinists including Heifetz, Szigeti, Elman, and Zoltán Székely, who edited violin arrangements of works in the genre for solo piano and frequently performed them. Rural miniatures based on Spanish, Jewish, and Eastern and East Central European melodies dominated the recital and recording repertoires of these violinists, becoming most widely known among international audiences. For this reason, this book focuses primarily on rural miniatures originating in these settings.

Sounding Authentic is divided into two parts. The first is devoted to the aesthetic and theoretical aspects of the composition and performance of folk music arrangements for accompanied violin. Part II opens with a consideration of the precursor to the rural miniature in the *style hongrois* and continues with several case studies in the genre of the rural miniature, viewing realism’s development in the contexts in which it was most widespread: the composition and performance of works based on traditional music from Spain, the Jewish diaspora, and Hungary.

Chapter 1 explains the identification and labeling of the genre and explores the concept of realism in music. It examines the types of melodic, harmonic, formal, and rhythmic elements that produce the effect of realism, referring to excerpts from a range of works in the genre in order to compare how composers from different regions and cultures represented rural traditions in their works. The chapter also investigates the ways composers developed the aesthetic mode of realism to achieve what they considered to be authenticity in music. It provides a stylistic analogy and context by viewing nineteenth-century examples of realist representation in painting, literature, and photography, and discusses musical realism in relation to early twentieth-century methods of folk song collection and transcription, and beliefs about and uses of recording technology.

Chapter 2 considers the performance and recording of rural miniatures during the first half of the twentieth century. The chapter first addresses the contexts in which violinists played rural miniatures in recital programs, radio broadcasts, and performances for commercial recording studios, and it explores the ways performers actively took part in the composition of rural miniatures,

focusing in particular on a historical and analytical case study of Heifetz and Grigoraș Dinicu's "Hora Staccato." The chapter addresses the performance style that many prominent violinists developed in playing rural miniatures, characterized by the combination of a variety of aural tropes to evoke the sounds urban listeners typically associated with folk and ethnic performance traditions. The rural musician, as an ideological construction in the urban imagination, was not professionally trained, and played an instrument weathered from outdoor use in an emotionally authentic manner that evoked the ethnic soul of the community. Common gestures that violinists used to project this sonic character were rough timbres, heavy downbeats, slides, accented bowings, and ornaments including trills and grace notes.

Part II opens in Chapter 3 with a consideration of the nineteenth-century virtuosic repertoire for violin in the style hongrois, which provided an important precedent to the rural miniature and the realist representational mode, both as a model and as a genre that later musicians reacted against. The chapter addresses the history of the style and its roots in mythologies of Rom culture throughout Europe. Roms were victims of racism and abusive government policies and were often depicted in anthropological and fictional writing as well as in the visual arts, with some variation, as wild, pre-literate denizens of bucolic areas, and as natural musicians who played with expressive passion and authenticity and danced sensuously. Stereotypes about Rom music were first disseminated in the eighteenth century in the writings of Heinrich Grellman, and were further propagated in Franz Liszt's *The Gipsy in Music*. The chapter investigates Sarasate's "Zigeunerweisen," analyzing the score as well as recorded performances by Sarasate and Heifetz, to suggest how the work acted as a predecessor to the rural miniature.

Chapter 4 explores rural miniatures based on the traditional music of Spain and Hispanic cultures by composers and violinists from Spain and Paris. It deals especially with Manuel de Falla's works for piano and their arrangements for accompanied violin. Falla showed great interest during an early period of his career in the study of Spanish folk music, and his personal library contained numerous anthologies in which he made extensive marginal notations. The chapter considers Falla's relationship with the Spanish musicologist and nationalist Felipe Pedrell, and examines the rhetoric about Spanish traditional music that can be found in the collections in Falla's library and in his own writing on flamenco *cante jondo* (deep song). The chapter turns to a discussion of Paweł Kochański's arrangement for violin and piano of "Jota," from Falla's *Siete canciones populares españolas*, and analyzes recordings of this movement by Manuel Quiroga and Jacques Thibaud.

Chapter 5 reviews the role of the rural miniature in the work of members of the St. Petersburg Society for Jewish Folk Music, who shared a belief that the genre offered a crucial method of representing Jewish musical traditions