In the Tradition of Dissent: Music at the New School for Social Research, 1926–33

SALLY BICK

In his 2002 *Reflections of an American Composer*, Arthur Berger recalls that during the 1920s and 1930s, the musical landscape in New York appeared desolate for American art composers who found themselves "truly underground." Among such bleak conditions, Berger identifies one bright oasis, isolated from New York's mainstream concert scene: a place where one could not only hear and discuss the music of important American modernist composers, but also meet them.[1] Berger's oasis was the New School for Social Research, a small private educational institution tucked away in the bohemian community of Greenwich Village.

Berger was not alone in acknowledging the New School's significance. In the 1934 issue of *Trend Magazine*, for example, US composer Harrison Kerr praised the institution's commitment to modernist American music, defining the New School as "a laboratory" for composers and audiences alike. Here, the public could learn and develop an appreciation for the newest musical trends and hear recent performances of "our best native composers." Few institutions, Kerr lamented, fostered American music with such intelligence, not even the League of Composers—an organization which, in his estimation, provided only a "feeble" attempt at supporting homegrown artists.[2]

The New School was unorthodox. Founded in 1919 amid political dissent and controversy over freedom of speech, its reputation was based upon a prestigious and progressive faculty, a curriculum motivated by political and communitarian goals that embraced almost exclusively contemporary issues, and an informal administrative policy offering courses but no degrees in the context of higher education. Until 1933, the School dedicated its efforts to adult education before including a small graduate program celebrated as the

I would especially like to thank Bruno Nettl, who read the material on comparative musicology and generously gave me an unpublished article of his; Judith Tick, who made available source documents on Charles Seeger; and Peter Burkholder, Leta Miller, David Nicholls, and David Paul, who have encouraged this project along. Jennifer DeLapp, Julia Foulkes, James Grier, Gayle Sherwood Magee, David Metzer, and Lisa Robinson all read segments of this article. I would also like to thank New School Librarian Carmen Hendershott and Archivist Wendy Scheir, as well as George Bosiwick and Channan Willner of the New York Public Library.

1. Berger, *Reflections of an American Composer*, 48.
2. Kerr, "Creative Music and the New School," 89–90.

Journal of the American Musicological Society, Vol. 66, Number 1, pp. 129–190 ISSN 0003-0139, electronic ISSN 1547-3848. DOI: 10.1525/jams.2013.66.1.129.

"University of Exile." Even then, adult education continued to be the mainstay of its agenda, with the institution priding itself on educating the educated.[3] When the New School for Social Research opened, it was proclaimed by the press as subversive and radical, a reputation it retained for decades.[4] Indeed, the New School's dissenting tradition became an emblem of its intellectual and artistic freedom, an ideal that bred unorthodoxies but also invigorated innovation.

The New School initially embraced the social sciences, philosophy, and economics; however, by 1923 it broadened its curriculum to incorporate the contemporary arts, and in 1926 introduced music as a significant part of that program. The institution's social-science perspective, its educational unorthodoxies, and its liberal philosophical ideals set a distinctive tone, nurturing an unfettered and accepting haven for a progressive community of musical personalities. Most prominent among them stood Henry Cowell, but Paul Rosenfeld, Aaron Copland, Charles Seeger, and others contributed to its vitality. From 1926 until 1933, the New School's faculty launched an innovative program of musical initiatives that included lectures, concerts, forums, and workshops dedicated to modernism and, most importantly, to the cause of contemporary American music. Due in part to the institution's adult student population, music was treated primarily as an intellectual and cultural pursuit that stimulated new spheres of musical inquiry. At the same time, the influence of the social sciences encouraged the study of music through the political and social lens of culture. The diversity and singularity of these approaches created a new context for music education.

In this article, I highlight the development of musical activities at the New School from 1926 to 1933, when the advent of the University in Exile brought new changes to the educational profile of the institution. The communitarian ideals of social progress, intrinsic to the School's social-science profile, placed the study and performance of contemporary and non-Western musics at the fore. By tracing these developments, their underlying ideologies, and their political implications to broader trends in US music, I show that the vitality of these projects stimulated new intellectual and creative ventures, which in turn helped to invigorate the growth of a strong national musical culture in the United States. The role of the New School as catalyst for such developments has gone largely unnoticed, a circumstance that this article hopes to rectify.

3. *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (1922–23), 6, (New School Archives, Fogelman Library, New York, NY [hereafter NSA]). On the founding of the "University in Exile," see Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 332–48; and Krohn, *Intellectuals in Exile*, 59–92.

4. See, for example, "Junior Leaguers Oppose Social Research School: Say Professors Are Unsuitable Teachers because of Affiliations among Radicals and I.W.W.'s," *Evening World* (New York), 7 February 1919; New School Scrapbooks 1919 (NSA). On the New School's image and reputation, see Vidich, *With a Critical Eye*, 371.

The New School's Lost Musical History

The narrative of the New School's musical and intellectual contributions emerges from the critical writings of the principal participants, their unpublished papers, and the published and archival records of the School's educational pursuits. In 2001, working in the New School's archives, I discovered several lost scrapbooks containing a chronological set of newspaper clippings that document the School's activities and its educational plans. For music, the scrapbooks reflect a forgotten past and expose the School's dissenting orientation both politically and administratively. This in turn has created troubling historiographical problems in the US reception of the New School and its musical legacy.[5]

The School's informal administration policy, which I discuss in more detail below, created a significant problem for the reconstruction of its history. Many concerts and lectures, for example, were arranged at the last minute in order to accommodate impromptu performances or unexpected guests. Such events left behind a scant documentary record, which can be reconstructed in part from the scrapbooks and personal letters. In addition, a significant cache of information about New School activities can be gleaned from the School's published *Bulletins* and course catalogues, yet their sporadic nature and inconsistency have led to problems in dating various activities.[6]

Later, beginning in the early 1930s, when the New School hosted meetings, lectures, and concerts that featured musicians closely associated with communist organizations (perhaps one reason why postwar historians of US music overlooked the New School), the School's standing became further obscured. Although not directly connected with the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA), the New School did support lectures on leftist topics and provided classroom and concert space for musical activities linked to CPUSA or Marxist-influenced organizations. For example, the New School

5. In 2001, documents contained in the NSA were for the most part unprocessed materials. Although the collection held several scrapbooks organized chronologically, many of the years were missing. In 2003, I was able to locate several lost volumes in a rusted filing cabinet in the New School's Fogelman Library stacks.

6. Until Winter 1931, the New School published their course catalogues under the title *Announcement* (the 1930 Spring Catalogue was the exception). These catalogues were issued each year and reissued, often in revised form, for the fall and spring terms (though not consistently). Beginning in Fall 1931, the New School redesigned the catalogues, dropping the term "*Announcement*." The New School also published a regular weekly leaflet entitled *Bulletin* (and numbered) to promote specific lectures, concerts, and workshops for that period. I have not been able to locate a full run of the *Bulletins* though some have been collected from the 1940s at the New York Public Library (hereafter NYPL). Aside from the *New School for Social Research Announcements* and *Bulletins*, there are source materials preserved in the NSA, but these materials, including the scrapbooks, though available, are not formally catalogued. The New School has recently (2012) begun digitizing and cataloguing the scrapbooks.

offered a seminar on the writing of political mass songs, hosted lectures on Soviet music, brought Soviet musicians to the School, and presented concerts affiliated with the Workers Music League, an arm of CPUSA.[7]

As Cold War anxieties began to envelop the New School after World War II, individuals were reluctant to see themselves linked to political activities of this nature and therefore concealed their associations by suppressing potentially incriminating evidence. Charles Seeger revealed, for example, that he shipped "subversive" materials to the Library of Congress for safekeeping, hoping to hide his Marxist affiliations. Those materials, now available and recently processed at the Library of Congress, hold programs and announcements from the New School that were politically sensitive.[8] At the same time, Henry Cowell's spouse Sidney Robertson Cowell, who was influential in controlling her husband's documents and legacy, tried to some extent to mask his political involvement in the 1930s.[9] Yet Cowell participated actively in communist-aligned organizations, including signing a document that openly supported the 1932 Communist presidential ticket along with fellow modernist intellectuals, some closely linked to the New School.[10]

7. Some of the lecture topics included:
—"The Use of Music in Russia," which explored among other issues music made by workers, and art music under Communism; see School's catalogue, *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (1932–33), 50.
—"Music and the People," and "Music and Politics," the latter focusing on Communist music, music in the USSR, and included discussions on contemporary Soviet composers such as Dmitri Shostakovich and Alexander Weprik; see *New School For Social Research, Inc.* (Spring 1938), 48.
—"Musical Composition," offered by political musician Hanns Eisler, which included instruction on "The New Type of Mass Song" and "Music as Commodity"; see *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Spring 1939), 49.
Part of Cowell's New School community included Russian musicologist/composers Joseph Schillinger, Nicolas Slonimsky, Léon Theremin, and Joseph Yasser, all of whom belonged to the "Russian Group of Musicologists of New York City;" see *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 1, November 1931. See also Leon Theremin, concert demonstration on 17 February 1931, in *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Winter 1931); and a concert given by the Composers' Collective, 12 May 1933, program housed in the Ruth Crawford and Charles Seeger Collection under "Composers' Collective," boxes 1 and 2, Library of Congress, Music Division, Washington, DC (hereafter "Composers' Collective, LC").

8. Charles Seeger, Oral History Transcripts, by Rita Mead (Henry Cowell Collection, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts; hereafter "HCC, NYPL"), box 81, folder 25. The Seeger documents are available in "Composers' Collective, LC," boxes 1 and 2.

9. Concerning Robertson Cowell's control over her husband's legacy and the documents housed at the New York Public Library, see Boziwick, "Henry Cowell at the New York Public Library," 52–58; and Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 3–6, 275–76. According to Robertson Cowell, her husband "was an activist in music, but not in politics; he often admired the expressed intentions of various radical groups among his friends, but he found them inept and foolish in their way of going about things" (HCC, NYPL, box 86, folder 13).

10. The complete title of this 32-page manifesto is *Culture and the Crisis: An Open Letter to the Writers, Artists, Teachers, Physicians, Engineers, Scientists, and Other Professional Workers of America*.

Consequently, scholars have found it difficult to grasp the impact of the New School on, and its implications for, US musical culture. It would be years before Arthur Berger recognized the New School's importance for his own training as a critic and composer. Aaron Copland, too, only later acknowledged the significance of the New School for his development, perhaps due to political self-preservation during the Cold War. In his 1984 autobiography, Copland reflected: "Looking back at my lecture notes fills me with renewed wonder and respect for the New School for the opportunity it gave me to explore such topics."[11] These recollections expressed decades later in Berger's and Copland's memoirs allude to an untold history of music at the New School, one that held significant implications for New York's cultural landscape and new developments in US musical culture.

The New School: Origins and Values

As in the other disciplines embraced by the New School, the pursuit of music emerged as a product of its contentious founding history, its ideological unorthodoxies, and the distinct educational principles it adopted, all of which set it apart from other institutions of higher learning. The founding of the New School originated in a conflict that took place at Columbia University in 1917. A small group of faculty hostile to the University's efforts to silence their opinions were fired or felt compelled to resign.[12] Although these disputes initially centered on faculty criticisms concerning the United States' involvement in World War I, the controversy escalated into a broader struggle over free speech. To these academics, the restrictions imposed by Columbia's administration in reaction to the expression of anti-war sentiments not only reflected a challenge to intellectual freedom but also revealed the erosion of free speech and American democracy itself. Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia, made the university's position clear when he proclaimed that "no faculty member would be tolerated who opposes or counsels opposition to the effective enforcement of the laws of the United States or who acts or speaks or writes treason."[13]

The repressive actions taken by the administration at Columbia were not isolated incidents but reflected a much broader climate of hostility toward

11. Copland and Perlis, *Copland*, 156–57.

12. In October 1917, Charles Beard resigned from Columbia's Department of History, followed by economist James Harvey Robinson in December, after President Nicholas Murray Butler led the board of trustees to dismiss Henry Dana, an assistant professor of comparative literature and a socialist, as well as pacifist James McKeen Cattell, a distinguished professor of psychology, for their outspoken opposition to the war in 1917, their campaigning against the draft, and their advocacy of conscientious objection. The primary documents associated with the dispute at Columbia are published in "Columbia University vs. Professor Cattell"; see also Lovejoy, Capps, and Young, "Report of Committee on Academic Freedom in Wartime."

13. Butler, *Annual Report for 1917–1918*, 43.

dissent and opposition to government policies within the country. The US government, economically weakened by World War I and fearful of Bolsheviks in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution, had taken a hard line toward political radicals, liberals, and those who opposed the nation's involvement in the war. To control public dissent, Congress passed the Espionage Act (1917), subjecting those speaking out against the war to imprisonment for up to twenty years; the Immigration Act (1918), authorizing Washington to target anarchists for deportation, under which Emma Goldman was famously deported; and the Sedition Act (1918), an amendment to the Espionage Act of 1917, prohibiting "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" in speaking about the flag, the armed forces, and the United States during wartime.[14] The New York State Government also initiated the infamous Palmer Raids (1919) on suspected radicals and organized the Lusk Committee (1919) to arrest and deport foreign radical citizens within the context of the Red Scare.[15] Not surprisingly, these legislative restrictions motivated the establishment of the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) in 1920, still today an important organization that defends and preserves the rights and freedoms embodied in the Constitution.

It was in this climate that historian Charles Beard, economist James Harvey Robinson, educator John Dewey—all Columbia faculty—as well as social critic Thorstein Veblen and Herbert Croly, editor of the progressive magazine *New Republic*, established the New School for Social Research in 1919.[16] Like many others who would later be associated with this institution, they were independently minded, iconoclastic, and leftist.[17] What they hoped to accomplish was to establish a school that would uphold the ideals of freedom and intellectual liberty, and promote an understanding of contemporary life as a means to modernize and restore what they believed optimistically to be a new period for US democracy.

In 1923, as the School began to flounder financially, the board appointed the economist Alvin Johnson to be the institution's first President. Johnson had taught at Columbia (1902–6) and was editor of the *New Republic* (1917). He would become one of the founders and the associate editor of the monumental *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, a principal publication for the dissemination of research in the social sciences (including developments in

14. Espionage Act, 15 June 1917; and Sedition Act, 16 May 1918. The Immigration Act was initially legislated in 1903 but in 1918 was expanded particularly in relation to the treatment of anarchists. On Goldman's deportation, see her *Living My Life*, 2:703–25.

15. See New York (State) Legislative Committee to Investigate Seditious Activities, *Revolutionary Radicalism*; Pfannestiel, *Rethinking the Red Scare*; and Finan, *From the Palmer Raids to the Patriot Act*.

16. Rutkoff and Scott, *New School*, 1–42. Numerous newspaper accounts of the conflict and ensuing opening of the New School in 1919 and its radical approach to education were published at the time; see New School Scrapbooks 1919 (NSA).

17. For a characterization of these men, see Vidich, *With a Critical Eye*, 371–72.

musical scholarship) published in fifteen volumes between 1930 and 1935.[18] Almost immediately after his appointment, Johnson hired Clara W. Mayer. A former student at the School during its first formative years, she was a staunch supporter both financially and intellectually and had significant influence on the institution's development, eventually becoming its Dean. As Kenneth Craven, a former New School faculty member proclaimed, Mayer emerged as "the heart, brain and soul of the New School."[19]

Under Johnson's leadership, the School made several significant changes to its educational agenda. Perhaps the most dramatic shift was the adoption of the contemporary arts as part of the School's social-science curriculum. He had support in Lewis Mumford, a student and later faculty member at the New School.[20] Social research, Mumford believed, was not bound by the disciplinary branch of social behavior but could also embrace the study of human transformation through the forms and symbols of art. Mumford's own eclectic academic scope focused primarily on urban culture, the fine arts, and architecture, which he viewed as cultural and intellectual barometers of society.[21] Johnson shared this view, observing that the modern arts were progressive modes of inquiry within the realm of the social sciences because they were among the fields "in which the forces of change are most significantly active."[22] For her part, Clara Mayer believed that artists were "concerned with the human dilemma" and that through their work "humanness becomes acceptable."[23] Consequently, the School would embrace music as a product of its social-science agenda shaped by the philosophical principles that governed its distinctive approach and unorthodoxies.

Foundational Principles and Unorthodoxies

In order to realize the School's progressive ideals of intellectual liberalism, social responsibility, and now a commitment to modern art, Johnson put into place a set of audacious initiatives that contravened many of the traditional notions embedded in institutions of higher learning in the United States. These included the decision to direct pedagogical attention toward mature educated

18. Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 151–68, 240–47, 305–15.

19. "Clara Mayer: She Coaxed a Dream into a Reality"; Craven, "Greenwich Village."

20. See Blake, "Art as Social Research." In his memoirs, Johnson suggested that the idea to include music as part of the School's offerings actually came from the students themselves, while Craven claimed that Mayer nurtured this new cultural direction; see Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 285–86; and Craven, "Greenwich Village."

21. Mumford's ideas concerning art and social renewal were presented in his *Golden Day*. See also Blake, *Beloved Community*, 215–19.

22. On Johnson's view, see *New School for Social Research, Announcement* (Spring 1927): 5 (NSA); and Johnson, *Deliver Us from Dogma*, 8 (NSA).

23. "Clara Mayer: She Coaxed a Dream into a Reality."

adults rather than young undergraduates, curb administrative control in order to encourage innovation and free thought, and cultivate a program devoted to the exploration of the modern world. These initiatives became a hallmark of the School's educational unorthodoxies that attracted a pioneering faculty, who in turn had the opportunity to generate new progressive strands of intellectual and creative inquiry and exploration.

Adult education represented a vital aspect of the School's philosophical mandate, one that appealed to its educational ambitions of civic engagement and social reform. And although in 1933, the New School established the University in Exile, a separate program conferring advanced degrees (MA and PhD), the school's preoccupation with adult education remained a priority and one that cultivated its progressivism particularly in relation to the arts. In every New School catalogue until 1943, Johnson defined the purpose of its adult educational program in this way:

> The students of the New School are in the great majority persons who have found their economic adjustment to life or are in the way of finding it. They come to the New School primarily to satisfy purely intellectual needs. The School therefore aims to draw to its lecture rooms, not primarily young men and women who find themselves in the college stage of development, but persons of maturity with an intellectual interest, graduates of colleges engaged in the professions or in business, and men and women who by reading and discussion have prepared themselves for the serious study of social problems. Until recently these educational needs were hardly recognized at all; even now the work of supplying them is in an experimental stage. But it has come to be widely understood that the process of systematic education can not be permitted to end with the college years.[24]

Founding member John Dewey had originally conceived many of the ideas expressed by Johnson here: "Conscious life is a continual beginning afresh," Dewey stated. "It is a moral obligation to instill in human beings the intellectual ability to gain knowledge and progress as part of a life process."[25] Rather than viewing education simply as vocational training to achieve material success, Dewey believed that education should be a lifelong intellectual pursuit, an exploration of new possibilities that could serve as a catalyst for social change.

Like Dewey, Thorstein Veblen (also a founding member) shared the commitment to adult education. His perspective, however, had been largely shaped by a distrust of university administrations. He believed such bodies held far too much power and their influence placed undue restrictions on both the freedom of faculty members and on academic issues. Columbia was a case in point. Outside the professional disciplines, which were directed toward vocational training, its administration felt compelled to insulate and protect

24. *New School for Social Research, Announcement* (1925–26), 6 (NSA).
25. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, v, 417.

young and inexperienced undergraduates *in loco parentis*. They saw it as their curricular duty to provide young students with basic training for life and citizenry through the ideals and traditions invested in their liberal arts degree programs. At the same time, these governing bodies also feared the influence that professors with radical ideas might have on the minds of young students. As Columbia's President Butler had proclaimed, universities had an obligation to be guardians of moral and ethical values by maintaining traditional pursuits of learning.[26]

To Veblen, teaching an undergraduate population under such constraints was limiting and hindered the potential for experimental research, free and open exchange, and the advancement of knowledge. By addressing an educated adult student population, faculty could explore innovative subjects, conflicts within contemporary society, and an unrestricted array of issues, approaches, ideas, and controversies.[27] At the New School, for example, music students were introduced to such novel subjects as "Philosophy and Music" or "Urban Music," and were exposed to experimental innovations like Léon Theremin's electronic instruments, the "theremin" and "rhythmicon," the latter commissioned by New School faculty member Henry Cowell.[28] At the same time, adult students seeking music studies were also potential concert audiences, a circumstance that the music faculty exploited in their educational pursuit of promoting an intellectual understanding of contemporary music.

According to Johnson, educated adults bore the greatest responsibility in society because they could influence social, cultural, and political action. Governmental attempts to stifle controversy during World War I, for example, convinced Johnson of the need for a strong educated public that could respond with a critical voice. He amplified this ideal in respect to his pedagogical approach when he stated in 1931, "The adult, when he seeks to continue his education, needs, not so much a body of acceptable conclusions as a series of opening vistas. He needs instruction that is unsettling, rather than authoritarian and quieting."[29]

Johnson expected that mature students with experience in life could engage the learning process as equals with the professor, in essence as participant learners and contributors. At the same time, to stimulate this kind of free exchange, Johnson also upheld Veblen's founding idea to remove conventional administrative constraints associated with degree-granting institutions. Rather than being bound by a set of moral, political, or ethical concerns or the

26. Butler, *Rise of a University*, 2:29.

27. Veblen, *Higher Learning in America*, 15–21. Johnson confirmed Veblen's viewpoint years later in his "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Address," 2: "There was a great din of complaint against college and university professors who were supposed to be infecting the immature minds of the youth with new and strange doctrines of liberalism and internationalism" (NSA); see also Rutkoff and Scott, *New School*, 14.

28. Montague, "Rediscovering Leon Theremin"; Glinsky, *Theremin*.

29. Johnson, *Deliver Us from Dogma*, 39; idem, *Pioneer's Progress*, 274.

dictates of a degree program, the New School could provide new and progressive educational opportunities on an array of innovative and challenging topics outside the mainstream. The School therefore eliminated entrance requirements, examinations, and regular attendance in an idealistic attempt to pursue these goals, although by 1931, eligible students could receive teaching credits on a per-course basis, an arrangement made individually with the instructor. For most, however, the School's open administrative approach suited the nature of the adult student and the ideals expressed in Johnson's maxim "of satisfying purely intellectual needs."[30]

The School's open administrative non-degree policy also permitted individual faculty to offer courses in subjects that were closely aligned to their own interests. Almost all the music faculty at the New School from the late 1920s and early 1930s explored topics—some successfully, some less so—that reflected their own personal idiosyncrasies. When Cowell returned from Russia, he offered a lecture on "The Paradoxical Musical Situation in Russia," and when he came back from Berlin after working with German comparative musicologist Erich von Hornbostel, he introduced courses on American indigenous music.[31] Charles Seeger presented a course on systematic musicology that included lectures on "Music and Language and Scientific Method in Music," an area that had occupied his intellectual interests but that he had not yet presented in the classroom.[32] As Copland articulated in his memoirs, there were many exceptional topics that faculty were able to explore at the New School, some of which would eventually blossom into mainstream areas of study in the United States offered at institutions of higher education after World War II.

Student participation also defined the nature and character of the New School's environment. Following lectures or concerts, audiences could mingle with faculty or artists in order to discuss what they had just seen and heard. To encourage this interaction, the School designed social spaces to foster dialogue. At the same time, the School also established a cooperative system that gave students some authority over choosing scholars and artists.[33] It was through this participatory system, in part, that the New School sustained its program in the fine arts.[34] The student cooperative also organized discussion groups and, together with the administration, promoted social activity and

30. On the School's implementation of teacher credits, see the catalogue, *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Fall 1931), 8 (NSA). Based upon the available enrollment lists from 1933–35, most students taking Cowell's music courses did not apply for teacher's credits (see HCC, NYPL, box 163, folder 11).

31. *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Spring 1930); and *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Fall 1931), 23, 37–38, respectively (NSA).

32. See for example, Seeger, "On the Principles of Musicology," esp. 248–49.

33. *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Winter 1927–28), 8 (NSA); and Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 276 and 284.

34. Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 285–86.

dialogue. Anyone in the New School community could use the School's facilities for a variety of events. In January 1933, for example, the Young Composers Group, an informal composers' organization under the general supervision of Aaron Copland, organized their initial concerts at the New School through Cowell's encouragement and help, as did the Composers' Collective, a music organization associated with the communist-linked Workers' Music League, whose membership included a number of New School faculty and students. Charles Seeger reported that in 1931 and 1932, when students at the Juilliard School (formerly the Institute for Musical Arts) became more politically engaged and were blacklisted from professional jobs because of their opinions, they used the New School as a safe haven to meet, discuss, and organize.[35] These activities, as well as an array of other less formal concerts and lectures, demonstrated an openness and freedom not reflected in other institutions of higher learning during the period.

To accommodate the adult-student clientele, many of whom were working professionals, the New School offered classes only in the late afternoon and evening. Likewise, this scheduling permitted the School to draw on prestigious faculty who were engaged elsewhere. For professional musicians, such flexibility proved to be invaluable for their career development, while it allowed the school to renew itself continually, keeping pace with changing developments, emergent opportunities, and faculty needs.[36] And rather than sustaining a permanent faculty, the New School allowed its staff to be free agents so that they could maintain other professional commitments. Cowell, for example, divided his time during the year between his work at the New School and his activities in Northern California.[37] He was also able to invite many illustrious musicians to give courses or lectures when they happened to be passing through New York. During the late 1920s, Copland, on the other hand, taught at the New School as an alternative means to generate extra income alongside his compositional work.

In music, as in other fields, the New School's core mandate was to explore contemporary society. Unlike traditional modes of education in the humanities and the arts, which turned to studies of the historical past, the New School upheld the foundational precept that it was more productive to address the conflicts of the modern world through an engagement with the present, in essence, exploring the here and now as a progressive stimulus for change. It

35. "Young Composers Group," 16 January 1933, documented in several newspaper clippings, New School Scrapbooks 1933 (NSA). Seeger stated: "[Students] wanted a place to meet, frankly, where they could organize, and the Institute would not allow them to meet in the building. . . . I had started to teach at the New School for Social Research. I put the matter up to Alvin [Saunders] Johnson, the director, and he said, 'Why, sure, let 'em come down here and meet.' So they met at the New School." Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 182–83.

36. Rutkoff and Scott, *New School*, 22.

37. On Cowell's activities in California, see Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco*, 183–207; see also Sachs (*Henry Cowell*, 63), who titles one his chapters "Beginning Bi-Coastal Life."

was an agenda that spoke to the "exigent circumstances" at hand and the School's underlying ambition of progress toward reforming society.[38] Indeed, Johnson believed that the New School curriculum would generate the "makings of a liberal useful for our time," and that this ideal would not necessarily be "contained in the hundred best books of the ages." Johnson refers here to the Great Book movement that had transformed liberal arts curricula, like Columbia's, during the 1920s.[39] Such programs validated an "Arnoldian cult of the best," sanctioning great historical works as a source of enduring moral and inspirational insight, and became a fundamental component of undergraduate liberal arts education in the United States.[40]

Like the Great Book movement, musical studies at established universities embraced a related corollary, a canon of great master composers. As Columbia, for example, stated in their university catalogues they advocated music "as an element of liberal culture," by embracing a curriculum that primarily focused on history and theory courses, which sanctioned "master" composers and their styles.[41] This type of canonization is documented in Columbia's course descriptions (published in their university calendars) and reinforced by the required textbooks used in these courses. *The Study of the History of Music* by Edward Dickinson, for example, focuses on the accomplishments of composers from Bach to Liszt. The book also includes a few paragraphs on music in the United States where Dickinson briefly praises Daniel Gregory Mason (a Columbia faculty member) but suppresses the work of other composers in the nation, stating they lack tradition and originality inherent in a master composer.[42]

The same history course also relied on *Great Modern Composers* (1916) authored by Columbia's own Daniel Gregory Mason, which, as the title reveals, devotes individual chapters to important composers from Schubert to Debussy, and which includes no American composers.[43] In conjunction with these courses, Columbia students were also offered courses in applied theory, species counterpoint, and common-practice harmony, all of which reinforced an understanding of the high technical craft and therefore historical legitimacy of the European canon and the master composer. In contrast to Columbia's

38. The reference to "exigent circumstances" appears under the subheading, "The Purposes of the New School," published perpetually in the New School *Announcements* from 1919 to 1926; see for example, *New School for Social Research, Announcement* (1922–23), 5 (NSA).

39. Johnson, *Liberal Education* (not paginated).

40. Hutchins, *Great Books*. The Arnoldian cult of the best is a concept developed by Victorian culture critic Matthew Arnold (1822–88); see Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, 37.

41. *Columbia University Bulletin of Information, Department of Music, Announcement 1925–26* (New York: Columbia University, 1925), 4. Theory and History courses of this nature at Columbia were offered in their Bachelor of Arts program, taught for men at Columbia College and for women at Barnard College, and their Bachelor of Science program offered in the university's teacher's college.

42. Dickinson, *Study of the History of Music*, 402.

43. Mason, *Great Modern Composers*.

musical curriculum, the New School's open-ended curricular agenda emphasized contemporary musical issues, with a concomitant emphasis on a burgeoning American musical culture. In other words, the New School valued innovation over tradition because it addressed the immediacy of the present while simultaneously contributing to society's advancement.

The novelty and difficulty of presenting something as unfamiliar as modernist or experimental music stimulated new questions about the nature and meaning of these materials, encouraging what Johnson prescribed as "opening vistas," that were "unsettling," "new," and "unexplored."[44] In order to comprehend such unfamiliar territory, the music faculty approached these materials scientifically through scholarly and intellectual pursuits. This strategy echoed the approach adopted by the social sciences at the New School, whose faculty modeled their work on the methods employed in the natural sciences.

Although the New School offered courses that addressed amateurs (though not exclusively), the music faculty also focused on more academic spheres of inquiry, supported musical exploration in the area of pure learning, and held courses on specialized compositional studies in twentieth-century techniques. Beginning in 1933, the School initiated advanced workshops in modern music that were addressed to a select group of students. These courses were directed toward students with professional aspirations in composition or were geared toward the adult student with higher intellectual goals. In both cases, the integrity of the materials would embrace the realm of pure learning.[45]

Introducing Music at the New School

Although the School's commitment to music began in earnest in 1931 with the opening of its new building, starting in the fall of 1926 several notable members of the musical community had been invited to give lectures, each representing diverse and competing points of view concerning the value, place, and identity of contemporary music in American society. The first, delivered by music critic Paul Rosenfeld, was a talk presented as part of a course on "Modern Art" organized by historian and literary critic Waldo Frank. Among the contributors to this lecture series were Edmund Wilson speaking on literature, Johns Howard Lawson and Norman Bel-Geddes on theater, Alfred Stieglitz on painting, and Charles Whitaker on architecture.[46] Frank himself had explored ideas about the nature of the arts already in an earlier series of

44. See Johnson's prefatory notes (December 1929) for the New School weekly *Bulletins*, which were published as a book entitled *Deliver Us from Dogma*, 39.

45. "Workshop in Modern Music," *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Fall 1931, Spring 1932), 38, 29, respectively (NSA).

46. *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (1926–27), 19 (NSA).

lectures at the socialist Rand School of Social Science entitled "The Revolution in the Arts."[47]

The purpose of the course was to survey the modernist art movements by exposing common trends not only within the allied artistic fields, but also within the disciplines of the social sciences. Through an understanding of the forms and symbols of artistic achievement, Frank and his colleagues would unpack the seemingly chaotic appearance of modern art to explore its novel ideas and their potentially transformative impact on society.[48] In essence, it was an approach that corresponded to Mumford's ideas about the inclusive and interdependent nature of the arts, an emphasis on the intersection of individuality, culture, and modern society, and in turn, a desire to revitalize a democratic community in opposition to capitalism with its relentless and lethal damage to the human spirit.[49] Frank examined such notions in his monograph *Our America* (1919), which became influential to Rosenfeld's own perspective in his examination of US musical culture in *An Hour with American Music* (1929).[50]

Frank's course was harshly criticized in the press for its arcane discourse. The fine arts and music should be consumed at exhibitions or in the concert hall, not through discussion or explanation, stated the unnamed critic in the *New York Daily Telegraph*, ending the article by sarcastically berating the lecturers: "Not only do we suffer the bores gladly, but we are willing to pay them for the suffering that they inflict on the rest of the world."[51] It was clear that scrutinizing the contemporary arts as an educational and intellectual pursuit would be an ongoing challenge in the School's scholarly quest. Nevertheless, each of the artistic areas of discussion represented in Frank's "Modern Arts" course would be initiated as an independent field of exploration at the New School along with cinema and dance among others as part of the School's modernist arts curriculum.

Although Frank, an amateur cellist, held great interest in the new-music scene, Rosenfeld was the real music critic among the group: a champion of, advocate for, and prolific writer on modern music, whose influential writings beginning in the late teens had brought attention to an emergent group of US composers.[52] In the following semester (spring 1927), Rosenfeld initiated his

47. Frank, *Memoirs*, 108.

48. Ibid., 63.

49. Account based on two descriptions published in *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (1927–28), 26; and *Announcement* (Spring 1927), 19. On Frank and Mumford's ideas on art, community, and culture, see Frank, "Seven Arts," 20; and Blake, *Beloved Community*, 2–3, 219.

50. Frank, *Our America*; and Rosenfeld, *An Hour with American Music*; see also Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 306.

51. "Waldo Frank and Others," *New York City Telegraph*, 4 October 1926, New School Scrapbooks 1926–27 (NSA).

52. Frank, *Memoirs of Waldo Frank*, 64–66. For a list of Rosenfeld's books on music and music criticism, see Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 464. Rosenfeld also wrote music criticism for a

own course entitled "Modern Composers," geared to those "who seek to orient themselves in modern music as a vital element in the life of the time," once again a declaration of music's place as an integral aspect of modern culture and a reflection of "the life that surges about him."[53] His lectures were illustrated on the piano (presumably by Rosenfeld himself), exploring works from The Russian Five, Arnold Schoenberg, and Alexander Scriabin, as well as a roster of US American composers. As in his published critiques, Rosenfeld's lectures, according to the School's syllabus, offered a critically engaged approach to the work of contemporary composers by exploring their "modern tendencies," while tackling thematic issues that included "Bloch and the music of the Jew," and "nationalism in music," topics of social concern that were hotly debated at the time.[54]

Because Rosenfeld's outlook was internationalist, he advocated the idea that US modernist music must develop from the traditions set by European standards and values. Carol Oja characterizes Rosenfeld's thinking as "Darwinian," an evolutionary understanding of musical craft and style that envisions a progressive track.[55] To achieve greatness in art music, Rosenfeld believed, US composers would have to embrace this developmental line by adopting European technical craft and compete internationally while simultaneously bringing a new and distinctive value to their work. In the same vein, Rosenfeld perpetuated the idea of establishing a "school of American composition."[56] Consequently, he promoted favorites, those he believed would fulfill America's promise, such as Leo Ornstein and Edgard Varèse (both had emigrated from Europe). But he also championed a younger generation of

---

variety of periodicals including *Seven Lively Arts*, *Dial*, and *New Republic*. Although not trained as a professional musician, Rosenfeld was skilled as a pianist and always read scores at the piano in the service of his musical criticism; see Leibowitz, "Introduction to Paul Rosenfeld," in Rosenfeld, *Musical Impressions*, ix.

53. *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Spring Term, 1927), 21 (NSA). Rosenfeld discusses his ideas about the role of the composer's work and its relationship to society, in "American Composer."

54. *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Spring Term, 1927), Course No. 24, "Modern Composers," 27 (NSA). Concerning Jews, composers, and American nationalism during the 1920s, see Moore, *Yankee Blues*, 130–63. Oja discusses these topics in relation to Rosenfeld in *Making Music Modern*, 307. For Rosenfeld's published articles on Bloch and his Jewishness, see Rosenfeld, *Musical Portraits*, 281–95; and on American musical nationalism, idem, *An Hour with American Music*, esp. 25–27, and "View of Modern Music," 390.

55. Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 304. In *An Hour with American Music* (25), Rosenfeld draws this aesthetic genealogical line: "And for two hundred years, a succession of great musicians had the power to receive and move a technique onward: Philip Emmanuel Bach receiving it from his great father; Haydn from P.S. [*sic*] Bach, and Beethoven from Haydn; Wagner from Beethoven; and the newest men from the old demiurge of Bayreuth. And to-day a force related to theirs is at work in America."

56. Rosenfeld, *An Hour with American Music*, 25–27. In his obituary ("Memorial to Paul Rosenfeld," 148), Copland wrote: "He believed passionately in the emergence of an important school of contemporary American composers."

American composers that included Roger Sessions, Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, and Carl Ruggles, all of whom would play some part at the New School.[57]

Although Rosenfeld continued to teach at the New School on a few occasions until 1933, his organic conception of music in culture was a perspective that would soon lose some of its appeal, particularly after Henry Cowell joined the faculty in 1930. Rosenfeld's "impressionistic" interpretations, presented in lavish prose, betrayed a posture that seemed to point toward the past, especially when compared to what Cowell would bring to the School, with the composer's direct technical analytic thinking. Minna Lederman, editor of *Modern Music*, later described him as "the odd man out"; by the 1930s, his aesthetic position had become anachronistic.[58]

In 1927, Rosenfeld, who had begun to mentor Copland, invited him to give his own lectures at the New School. Over the next two academic terms, the composer offered a series of courses entitled "The Evolution of Modern Music" (1927), "Masterworks of Modern Music" (1928), and finally "Forms of Modern Music" (1929).[59] In comparison to Rosenfeld, Copland's intellectual scope was far more pragmatic and narrower, bounded by his own professional experiences and political concerns as a composer. Copland held similar aesthetic and political views, however, concerning musical developments in Europe as a prehistory to, and influence on, American composers.[60] Such values are encapsulated in the first two course titles—"The Evolution of Modern Music" and "Masterworks of Modern Music"—the latter course omitting works of US composers, presumably because they had yet to reach the stature of "masters." Copland later published a compilation of these New School lectures in *Our New Music*, where he clearly articulates these ideals, using words

57. For Rosenfeld's critiques of these composers, see his *Musical Impressions*, 263–69, 248–56, 285–88, and 269–85, respectively; and Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 305–6.

58. Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 309–10; see also Lederman, *Life and Death of a Small Magazine*, 46.

59. Copland's course "The Evolution of Modern Music" is announced in *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (1927–28), 28–29 (NSA); his lecture notes to the course are housed in the Aaron Copland Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress (hereafter "CCLC"), Writings and Oral Presentations, Lectures & Speeches, but under the title "Aesthetics of Modern Music, 1927," box 210, folder 8; for Copland's course "Masterworks of Modern Music," see *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (1928–29), 37; for "Forms of Modern Music," see *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Fall Term 1929–30), 25 (NSA). On Copland's response to his lectures, see Copland, letter to Nadia Boulanger, 16 October 1927 (CCLC, Digital ID: copland corr0094): "My lectures are going brilliantly. I have a class of about 125 people each week—which I find extraordinary and inexplicable. I have already played *Oedipus*, *Creation du Monde*, Hindemith op. 37 etc. etc. If I weren't a composer it would be very amusing."

60. It was only during the mid-1930s that Copland began to shift his aesthetic perspective and to look inward as a way to create a distinctively American idiom (Copland, *Music and Imagination*, 107–9). See also DeLapp, "Copland in the Fifties"; Bick, "*Of Mice and Men*," 432–35; Crist, *Music for the Common Man*, 5–13.

like "gestation" to describe European developments as they shifted to the American context:

> This means that instead of the war's making an end of all musical gestation, it has moved the center of creative activity to the Western Hemisphere. The future history of European music is henceforth closely allied to whatever course music takes in the Americas. This makes it more than ever imperative for us to take stock of what America has to offer in the contemporary musical scene.[61]

Both Copland and Rosenfeld were keen to establish an "American School of Composers." The idea reflected a political rather than stylistic goal and, according to Thomson, had gained some traction, in part through Copland's ventures at the New School.[62] If Copland could identify a critical mass of respected US composers, with himself at the helm, it would create a *de facto* nationalist presence and momentum. Previously, as Thomson explained, American composers had maneuvered independently in their professional careers; but Copland, influenced by Les Six, recognized the advantages of promoting oneself as part of a "school." In 1926, he articulated this ideal using the printed page as one way to raise the profile of an emergent modernist group of composers from the United States.[63] While at the New School, such efforts were articulated in Copland's 1927 course entitled "The Evolution of Music," in which he dedicated a lecture on "The Youngest Generation in America," a subject he would continue to emphasize in future talks at the New School.

Lectures at the New School provided one vehicle to promote the distinctions of an American School of Composers; concerts offered another. As a way to illuminate the repertory discussed in both Rosenfeld's and Copland's courses on modern music, Rosenfeld asked Copland (with Edgard Varèse) to arrange a series of six concerts (1927–28), the first of many public performances at the New School featuring American music.[64] Yet Copland's ability to use the School as a forum to promote an American School of Composers, as Thomson suggests, never really materialized, even though his efforts to do so continued. In 1935 for example, he organized a landmark series promoted as "one man concerts," featuring a single US composer each evening, which

61. Copland, *Our New Music*, 125.

62. Thomson, *American Music Since 1910*, 49–50; for Copland's concept of a "school," see "New 'School' of American Composers," in Copland, *Copland on Music*, 164–65. Thomson's remarks may relate to a series of "one-man concerts" organized at the New School by Copland in 1935; see note 65 below.

63. Copland, "America's Young Men of Promise."

64. "Six Concerts in Modern Music," *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Winter Term 1927–28), 27–29 (NSA). For a program of these concerts, see the Copland Collection, New York Public Library (hereafter "CC, NYPL"), box 166, folder 9. For reviews of the concerts, see Alfred Frankenstein, "America Stars in Modernist Concert," *Chicago Tribune*, 1 January 1928 (HCC, NYPL, box 156, folder 17; and CCLC, box 349, folder 12); see also Smith, *Aaron Copland*, 100–101.

had never been done before. The roster included Copland, Harris, Thomson, Sessions, and Walter Piston, composers whom Copland believed represented the "preeminent" of his so-called school.[65] While such performances coincided with the New School's commitment to US modernist music, such a school of composition never happened quite as Copland had imagined. Instead, this evolutionary construct would prove a contradiction to the eclectic and unorthodox musical culture that was eventually cultivated at the New School and that, ironically, became the established norm.

Henry Cowell at the New School: Shifting Directions

On 28 December 1927, the American ultramodernist composer Henry Cowell performed four of his piano pieces at the New School in front of what the composer described as a "wildly enthusiastic crowd of several hundred."[66] Before appearing at the New School, Cowell had achieved considerable notoriety both in Europe and in the United States.[67] And like Copland, he actively sought to promote contemporary American music in a variety of ways (predating many of Copland's efforts). In 1925, for example, he established the New Music Society, a concert series initially staged in Los Angeles until 1926

65. Thomson, *American Music Since 1910*, 50–51. In January 1935, Copland proposed to Cowell (by then in charge of music) five one-man concerts of American composers. Given the School's limited financial resources and his concern that Copland's concerts would take away students from his own lectures and concerts, Cowell involved Johnson. Johnson responded: "I have your note on Copland's proposal. . . . I agree that the one-man concerts are out of the question unless they are subsidized." In April, Copland came back to Johnson with $1,000 of funding (given indirectly by Mary Lescaze) as well as support from the Victor Broadcasting Co. Johnson recognized that "it looked to me too valuable an opportunity to miss." See letters from Johnson to Cowell, 21 January 1935 and 27 April 1935 (CC, NYPL, box 19, folder 11). On Lescaze's subvention, see Copland, letters to Lescaze, both dated March 1935 (CCLC, Digital ID: copland corr0709 and copland corr0710); and Anna Bogue, letter to Copland, 6 April 1935, CCLC, box 349, folder 12. Simultaneously, Copland also taught a course entitled "Music of Today: Seven concerts of recorded music by contemporary composers with analyses, commentaries and piano illustrations"; see *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (1935–36), 54–55 (NSA).

66. Cowell, letter to Harry and Olive Cowell, dated 1927 with no more specific date (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 23). The concert, organized by Copland, is mentioned in a letter from Henry Cowell to Harry and Olive Cowell, 9 December 1927 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 23); announced in "Program of Modern Music," *New York Herald Tribune*, 18 December 1927, see New School Scrapbooks 1927 (NSA); and reviewed in Frankenstein, "America Stars in Modernist Concert," *Chicago Tribune*, 1 January 1928, and as "A Cross Section of Modern Music," in *Musical Leader*, 7 January 1928. Cowell's letter also suggests that he had previously performed at the New School and that his string quartet would be included in a January 1928 concert organized by Copland at the New School. The performance of Cowell's string quartet is mentioned in the *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Winter 1927–28), 28, and announced in their *New School Bulletin* 13 (6–10 Feb.) (see HCC, NYPL, box 166, folder 9).

67. On Cowell's career, see the primary sources collated in the scrapbooks, Books I–II and III–IV (HCC, NYPL, boxes 179 and 180); Mead, "Amazing Mr. Cowell"; Hicks, *Henry Cowell*; and Sachs, *Henry Cowell*.

and then in San Francisco from 1927 to 1936, while he wrote extensively about modern music in a variety of professional and nonprofessional publications. And just prior to his New School concert, Cowell published the first issue (1 Oct. 1927) of his *New Music: A Quarterly of Modern Compositions*, a unique magazine that issued musical scores of modernist American composers.[68]

Unlike Copland and other American composers who hoped to establish a career within mainstream musical circles, Cowell had circumvented a traditional European education involving study in Germany or France—a customary prerequisite for American composers. Both his contemporaries and scholars who later wrote about Cowell considered him to be unconventional, eclectic, ultramodern, a musical explorer, radical, experimental, a technical innovator, musical inventor, and, to use the term coined by Michael Hicks: "a bohemian."[69] Cowell was not the product of a traditional education, nor could one label him within such mainstream boundaries.[70] His unorthodox musical upbringing as an autodidact, according to Seeger among others, and his independent character removed him to some extent from the conventional boundaries of US musical culture.[71]

In view of Cowell's unusual background, it is not surprising that he held an entirely different perspective on American music from that of Copland and Rosenfeld. Rather than embracing the stylistic legacy of European mainstream traditions, Cowell understood the origins of American music as a direct reflection of his own society. To him, the indigenous music of the United States (for that matter North America) comprised a multifaceted culture that encompassed an array of ethnicities and cultures. He believed that "to be American was to honor difference," and that American music should include "the experimental, the fresh and the new."[72] Cowell's student, the musicologist Takefusa Sasamori, succinctly put it this way: "His idea on American music was 'freedom': independent of any rigid styles, free from [the] shackles of any traditions, and courage to explore [a] new world."[73]

68. Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music*; Saylor, *Writings of Henry Cowell*; and Manion, *Writings about Henry Cowell*. For an overview of Cowell's NMS concerts, see Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco*, 185–94 (esp. the table on p. 193).

69. Those who describe Cowell in these terms include: Copland, "America's Young Men of Promise," 16; Rosenfeld, *By Way of Art*, 77–80; John J. Becker, "Henry Cowell: Musical Explorer," *Northwest Musical Herald* (November 1932): 4 (NYPL, Music Division, John J. Becker Papers, box 54, folder 26); Nicholls, "Henry Cowell," esp. 1; and Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 1–2.

70. Nicholls, "Henry Cowell." Nicholls also makes the point that Cowell has often been neglected in part because he shunned the conventional European compositional traditions in favor of more trans-ethnic musical materials.

71. On Cowell as an autodidact, see Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 99–105; and Copland, "America's Young Men of Promise," 16. On his independent character, see Slonimsky, "Henry Cowell," 57–59; and Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco*, 184.

72. Cowell, "Introduction," in his *American Composers on American Music*, vii–viii.

73. Oral History Transcripts, Takefusa Sasamori, 1987 (HCC, NYPL, box 81, folder 21).

Copland's (and Rosenfeld's) concept of a mainstream school of American composition stood in diametrical opposition to Cowell's promotion of US values of diversity and individuality as embodying the country's own particular social fabric. According to Otto Luening, Cowell never wanted to cultivate a "school" of musical composition but rather encouraged composers to seek their independence.[74] This ideal certainly reflected the values of other experimentalists such as Charles Ives, Varèse, and those tied to the International Composers Guild (ICG), whose mandate "denies the existence of schools; recognizes only the individual."[75] Like Ives and the ICG composers, Cowell valued an open and inclusive eclecticism that did not owe its allegiance or legitimacy to European cultivated music. It was a position that spoke not only to the aesthetics of music, but also to the politics of class consciousness, in other words, a rejection of art music's dependency upon European elitist traditions.[76]

As an experimental composer, Cowell also brought a fresh perspective to the meaning of contemporary music and its materials, especially in comparison to critics like Rosenfeld and even Copland. Cowell's technical and analytic approach to musical phenomena—what Rosenfeld described as the composer's "obsession with the means of music"—contrasted dramatically with Rosenfeld's. Cowell, for his part, believed Rosenfeld's literary understanding of music made him ill equipped to assess the technical complexities of modernist trends. In essence, Cowell felt Rosenfeld could not provide audiences with an understanding of "the real nature of the music."[77] Even Copland eventually characterized Rosenfeld as a "music lover," a term that invokes the amateur rather than the expert.[78]

These intellectual distinctions became a pivotal issue for Alvin Johnson, who was initiating plans to expand the New School's musical offerings (as well as those in the other artistic disciplines) in conjunction with a new building. Cowell had continued to have his work performed at the New School, as did Copland over the next two years. In her draft memoirs, Robertson Cowell reported years later that Johnson asked both Copland and Cowell to propose ideas that would contribute to the School's expansion plans with an eye to appointing someone who might take overall responsibility for its musical activities.[79] Copland, not unexpectedly, proposed that the New School offer care-

74. Oral History Transcripts, Otto Luening, 1977 (HCC, NYPL, box 81, folder 13).

75. Morgan, "Things Our Fathers Loved," 3–4; the ICG mandate is published in Varèse, *Varèse*, 166–67.

76. Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 119–20.

77. On Rosenfeld's criticism of Cowell, see his *Discoveries of a Music Critic*, 280. Cowell on Rosenfeld's "vague impressions" and "the real nature of the music" is given in his *American Composers on American Music*, viii.

78. Copland, "Memorial to Paul Rosenfeld"; see also Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 100.

79. Robertson Cowell, "Memoir," "Chapter XVI, 1929" (HCC, NYPL, box 77, folder 8); Sachs corroborated this information in a conversation with Robertson Cowell; *Henry Cowell*, 532n14.

fully chosen performances, using the institution as a place to launch a leading American school of composers. Cowell, in contrast, felt the School should foster a variety of musical activities that would not necessarily receive support elsewhere. Why duplicate what other mainstream concert or educational institutions had already done when the New School could provide a different context for American contemporary composers to explore new possibilities for music and musical thinking?[80] Johnson hired Cowell.

To choose Cowell over Copland may have seemed bold, but his individualism fit in well with the School's unconventional approach to education, foundational ideals, academic goals, and counterculture tendencies. In January 1930, Cowell was formally announced as a regular faculty member at the New School. He wrote enthusiastically to his stepmother Olive, who had been a supportive contributor to Cowell's career, "I have the series in my own hands. Copland did not wish to continue."[81] Cowell's statement on Copland is significant because Copland did not participate again at the New School until 1935, a situation that may have reflected his desire to focus on composition rather than teaching. Joel Sachs, Cowell's biographer, suggests that Copland might have resented Cowell's New School appointment, a feeling that could have contributed to the tensions that existed between the two composers.[82]

Cowell was excited about his new opportunities. The initial terms of his appointment included a generous monthly salary of $400 (today's equivalent of about $5,500) and his own private office.[83] In the aftermath of the 1929 New York Stock Exchange crash, however, the School faced serious financial hardship, and over the next few years it set up a far less lucrative arrangement

80. Robertson Cowell, "Memoir," "Chapter XVI, 1929"; and Clara Mayer, introductory "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Address" honoring Henry Cowell: "It was no use duplicating at the New School what was being done elsewhere. Cowell was bent on doing things not being done elsewhere" (HCC, NYPL, box 163, folder 23).

81. Letter from Cowell to Olive Cowell, 30 January 1930 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 2). On the details of Cowell's appointment, see Robertson Cowell, "Memoir," "Chapter XV" (HCC, NYPL, box 77, folder 7). On Olive Thompson Cowell's support to Cowell and his career, see Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco*, 188; and Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 110, 135, 145.

82. Pollack (*Aaron Copland*, 161) has documented some of the strains between the two composers but omits any reference to the New School; see also Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 260. I have been unable to find documentation regarding Copland's perspective and the possibility of a more permanent position at the New School as Robertson Cowell describes in her memoirs. Copland's own attitude toward teaching at the New School ran hot and cold. At times, he was enthusiastic, while at others he lamented that it took time away from composing (see letter from Copland to Boulanger, 19 December 1927, in his *Correspondence of Aaron Copland*, 57–58). Copland made great use of his experience teaching at the New School, however, and published *What to Listen For in Music* (1939), based upon lectures he gave in 1936 and 1937, and *Our New Music*, which integrate many of the ideas he delivered at the New School. Some of Copland's activities and reactions are discussed in Copland and Perlis, *Copland*, 138–40, 155–57.

83. Robertson Cowell's "Memoir," "Chapter XVI, 1929" (HCC, NYPL, box 77, folder 7). Henry's office address at the New School was at 66 West 12th St. The calculation for Henry's salary was done at http://www.minneapolisfed.org

for its faculty. Cowell received a smaller salary until June 1934, when he reported, "I am not to have any salary, but am to receive the gross proceeds from income derived from students!"[84] Yet money, often a problem at the New School, did not seem to concern Cowell as long as he could be funded well enough to benefit from the professional advantages it afforded him. With the blessing of Johnson, the New School served as Cowell's home base in the East, with office, stationery, a concert facility, promotional apparatus, and the sponsorship and institutional legitimacy that the New School could bring.

Cowell delivered his first formal course at the New School in the spring of 1930, consisting of four lectures entitled in the New School's *Announcement* as "A World Survey of Contemporary Music."[85] The course not only provided a provocative glimpse into Cowell's musical interests and values, but it also reflected the composer's audacious tendencies. Compared to lectures offered by Rosenfeld and Copland as described in the New School catalogues, Cowell's course was not a generalized musical survey. Instead, he presented on topical issues that were politically and artistically daring. Although notes for these New School talks are no longer extant, Cowell had previously lectured and published on these subjects, allowing us to draw inferences about his views on them.

The first lecture in the series, "The Paradoxical Musical Situation in Russia," gave insight into Cowell's experiences as an ultramodernist composer in a Communist country. He had just returned from a momentous trip to Russia, the first American composer to travel there since the 1917 October Revolution. The visit in itself provided a dramatic context since the United States had not yet established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and little was known about the musical landscape in Russia. The paradox, it seemed, was that although the Soviet Union cultivated conservative styles of classical music for the workers (not unlike music written for American middle-class audiences), the compositional attitudes expressed by students and faculty at the State Conservatory emerged as the most progressive of any Cowell had experienced.[86] Moreover, the state supported the creation of new instruments under the aegis of a department of musicology, which focused upon the scientific exploration of sound and musical systems.[87] Such musical concerns held

84. On the changing salary benefits at the New School, see Cowell, letter to Ives, 30 June 1934 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 29).

85. The course is announced in *New School for Social Research*, *Announcement* (Spring, 1930), 23 (NSA). Cowell reports, "I am to give four lectures at the New School in New York" (letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 4 December 1929). He elaborates: "I have a course of lectures during February and March at the New School for Social Research. This School, which is of University rating, has a department for new music, art, and drama, by the way." (Letter to John Becker, 16 November 1929). Both letters in HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 1.

86. As Cowell explained in "S. F. 'Radical' Wins Russia with Music": "It is a land of extravagant ups and downs. In that land of revolution and experiment we have this paradox, that in order to keep revolutionary, art has turned conservative."

87. Cowell, "Playing Concerts in Moscow."

great intellectual interest for experimental composers like Cowell, who were in search of new methods and novel materials on which they could base their own compositional work. For a composer from the US, where music was sponsored privately (if at all), it must have seemed a luxury, that a national government cultivated such progressive musical concerns.[88]

Cowell's second lecture, ironically entitled "Europe Proceeds Both Forward and Backward," addressed his compositional angst over neoclassicism. In Cowell's words, neoclassical music was, "Easy to compose, easy to understand, easy to forget."[89] The lecture in essence, was a searing attack on Copland and his circle, composers who had studied with the French composition teacher Nadia Boulanger and consequently were influenced by European models. In private correspondence, Cowell sarcastically called them "the opposition": they did not represent what he believed was truly American.[90] Perhaps more frustrating to Cowell was that neoclassicists were beginning to receive attention within the mainstream American musical community. Rather, Cowell identified the new vocal styles embraced by such political musicians as Hanns Eisler as forward-looking, because such compositions represented a complete departure from traditional modes of vocalization.[91]

The third and fourth lectures in the series were dedicated to two closely intertwined topics: "Newly Discovered Oriental Principles" and "American Composers Begin Breaking Apron-Strings." The former tackled the composer's deep interest in non-European (Cowell's term) musical ideas, which he saw as synonymous with his philosophical views of what constituted American music. He believed indigenous music held significant potential resources for experimental composition, a perspective he would embrace throughout his life. Once again, he drew on his experience in the Soviet Union, observing that, unlike their American colleagues, Russian musicologists had addressed a variety of tonal issues through scientific research, an issue that Cowell would pursue in his own work at the New School.[92] The final talk

88. Cowell documented his experiences in Russia during this 1929 trip in several articles: "Conservative Music in Radical Russia"; "A Musician's Experiences in Russia"; "Adventures in Soviet Russia"; and "Playing Concerts in Moscow"; also in a letter to Blanche Walton (his New York patron), 1 June 1929 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 30). I would like to thank Dr. Elena Dubinets, who generously provided her unpublished paper entitled "Henry Cowell and Russia: Connections and Influences," in which she reconstructs Cowell's 1929 trip to Russia. Sachs suggests that Cowell's published articles are prone to embellishment and exaggeration; *Henry Cowell*, 162.

89. Cowell, "Towards Neo-Primitivism," 150.

90. Cowell, letter to Ives, 29 May 1931; and idem, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 30 November 1931 (HCC, box 19, folders 8 and 11, respectively).

91. Cowell outlined these ideas in "Vocal Innovators of Central Europe." The label "political musician" stems from Eisler's so-called *Kampflieder*, which were celebrated in socialist and communist circles around the world; Betz, *Hanns Eisler*, 82–93.

92. Cowell, letter to Walton, 1 June 1929 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 30). He enthusiastically describes one of the discoveries made through the Russian musicologists: "The Russians demonstrate a direct proof of the physical existence of the undertone series." His discussion with

continued his criticism toward American composers and their dependency upon European traditions, a perspective that he integrated in his 1933 book, *American Composers on American Music*.[93] According to the syllabus, Cowell traced this dependency and its problems, and demonstrated the alternative approach of integrating indigenous materials into today's music. To enliven the discussion, Cowell invited his colleagues Ruth Crawford, Adolph Weiss, and Dane Rudhyar to illustrate these principles by performing selections from their own compositions.[94] Indeed, Cowell's ideological stance distinguished him from the flock of newly emerging "mainstream" American modernist composers. At the same time, his national self-consciousness with its proclaimed diversity and his appreciation of the more scientific methods of musical analysis seemed to fit in well with the New School's intellectual and cultural agenda. To Johnson, this was exactly the kind of alternative perspective he believed would serve the purpose and goals of the School. Simultaneously, the New School seemed to suit the very nature of Cowell's personality and his "bohemian" ideals.[95]

As Cowell began to make preparations for his forthcoming courses and concerts, the New School was arranging to move from its modest dwellings in Chelsea to a newly designed contemporary building in Greenwich Village, scheduled to open in January 1931. Modernist architect Joseph Urban created a building that was recognized as a monument to contemporary culture. It emphasized simplicity in its aesthetic lines and offered unique architectural solutions for the diverse artistic activities that were planned for the School's ambitious arts program. The new building featured a dramatic oval auditorium housing approximately 650 persons, with a stage that protruded into the audience, bridging the traditional separation of audience and performers (or lecturers) while permitting a setting for musicians in smaller chamber contexts (Fig. 1).[96] The seating was designed to be flexible in order to facilitate differ-

---

Russian scholars on the undertone series is documented in Cowell, *New Musical Resources*, 21–23. Joscelyn Godwin, who includes notes in this edition, suggests that the idea of the undertone series is "fallacious," 150.

93. Cowell, "Trends in American Music"; especially poignant is Cowell's final paragraph (p. 13) where he states that "American composition up to now has been tied to the apron-strings of European tradition."

94. On Cowell's compositional guests for the final lecture, see *New School Bulletin* 12, 17–21 February [1930]. For two other interpretations of Cowell's lecture, see Carwithen, "Henry Cowell," 49–51; and Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 125–26.

95. Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 125.

96. Urban's building for the New School received international recognition as a New York modernist icon; see Beals, "Social Research School to Have New Building," *New York Times*, 16 February 1930, 147; and Juley & Son, "Research School Speeds New Home," *New York Times*, 7 September 1930, N3. Some articles were critical; see "This Looks Like a Factory Rather Than a Schoolhouse," *Omaha World-Herald*, 16 August 1932; New School Scrapbooks 1931 (NSA).

Figure 1 The Auditorium at the New School, designed by Joseph Urban. Photo from the Joseph Urban Papers, courtesy of the Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

ent performance configurations.[97] For Cowell and the musical community he was about to foster at the School, the theater would provide a unique professional concert and lecture space, and a venue in New York for more intimate music performances. With its new auditorium and the expansion of the music program, the New School launched a publicity campaign in the New York newspapers announcing "Music to have important place in New School."[98]

Cowell and Seeger: Intellectualism and the Science of Music

When Cowell arrived at the School, he promoted a progressive agenda by staging musical events that reflected his own eclectic ideals. By using his remarkable organizational talents, Cowell would also create a community of

97. Rutkoff and Scott, *New School*, 49.

98. The announcement was published in a variety of local New York newspapers in August 1931; see New School Scrapbooks 1931 (NSA). In correspondence, Cowell refers to delays in the construction of the building, which had an effect on concert dates planned for January 1931; see Cowell, letter to Slonimsky, 11 April 1930 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 3).

like-minded music intellects and artists. As Michael Hicks has observed astutely, Cowell depended on this type of artistic kinship to thrive; his communities always reflected the composer's preoccupations and, above all, the influence of his bohemian upbringing. At the New School, the qualities embedded in Cowell's bohemianism would be played out through a variety of innovative intellectual and aesthetic initiatives that, in turn, would hold broader implications for the wider US musical community.[99]

One of Cowell's first acts was to recruit Charles Seeger. Seeger had been Cowell's teacher (at Berkeley 1914–16), a mentor and close friend, while Cowell had been Seeger's first brilliant student.[100] The decision to bring Seeger into the fold satisfied needs for both of them. On the practical side, Seeger would take over courses when Cowell returned to California for part of the year. And like Cowell, once Seeger became involved at the School, he used the institutional support as a haven and catalyst for his individual pursuits, all of which nourished his own distinctive scholarly path in music.[101] Simultaneously, Cowell, whose ideals coalesced with Seeger's own, could depend upon Seeger to support the extensive plans he wanted to implement.

The unusual bond and friendship between Cowell and Seeger held important implications for their work at the New School. It was a relationship that might be described as symbiotic in which one invigorated the other, as in the case of dissonant counterpoint, for example, a compositional method initially conceived by Seeger, taught to, then developed and disseminated by Cowell.[102] Although Seeger complained over the years that Cowell appropriated many of his ideas and rarely gave him credit, each drew upon the other in a partnership that promoted innovative fields of musical inquiry.[103]

99. Hicks defines Cowell's Californian Bohemianism as "an eclectic and often elitist subculture that tried to mix leftist politics, mysticism, scientific experimentation, and multiculturalism." With the exception of mysticism, the characteristics listed in Hicks's gloss provide an uncanny description of Cowell's environment at the New School; Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 3.

100. Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 103; see also Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 64–72; and Sachs, *Henry Cowell* 60–62.

101. Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 202. Seeger must have been happy with the offer, since, according to Tick (*Ruth Crawford Seeger*, 182), Seeger and his wife "sank into poverty."

102. Spilker, " 'Substituting a New Order,' " 18–23.

103. In a letter to Crawford (7 February 1931) concerning her appropriation of his ideas and the ensuing issue of credit, Seeger wrote: "Appropriate all you can. All may not be fair in love or war—but in art it is; if you can take another person's idea the situation is very easy to evaluate. The originator's presentation and the appropriator's stand eventually side by side. The best is the best. Who should bother about the origin? How can we tell that the 'originator' did not swipe somebody else's idea anyway? . . . The idea of patenting musical ideas. Naturally I feel badly when Henry almost goes out of his way to omit my name from the list of those to whom he owes much of his stuff—even the titles, form and character of definite works. But he acknowledges it even more by concealing it." See Tick, *Ruth Crawford Seeger*, 154n49. In a 1940 article published in *Magazine of Art*, Seeger also stated that Cowell "swiped many of his best (and some of his worst) 'ideas' from me, and occasionally acknowledges it"; Miller, "Henry Cowell and John Cage," 50n7. See also Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 89–90. Cowell, on the other hand, acknowledged Seeger's

Both men for example, shared the conviction that music be understood through an intellectual and scientific lens. It was an ideal Seeger had initially instilled in Cowell when he was a student at Berkeley.[104] Seeger for example, advocated a systematic approach to music, that is: a consideration of the technical materials filling musical "space and time."[105] Cowell developed this line of inquiry in a theoretical treatise exploring the overtone series that he conceived under Seeger's mentorship in 1916, but which he later revised independently (1919) and published as a highly influential monograph entitled *New Musical Resources* (1930).[106] It was a manifesto that helped to define him as an experimental composer, as Cowell acknowledged in the preface:

> My interest in the theory underlying new materials came about at first through wishing to explain to myself, as well as to others, why certain materials I felt impelled to use in composition, and which I instinctively felt to be legitimate, have genuine scientific and logical foundation.[107]

Whereas Cowell primarily applied these critical ideas to his compositions, Seeger, who shifted his attention away from composition during the 1920s, used them to challenge academic preconceptions about music. And although Cowell's and Seeger's professional ventures resided in different disciplinary fields of inquiry—Cowell in composition, Seeger in the nascent discipline of musicology—these shared intellectual perspectives would help shape the pedagogical and creative activities at the New School. In fact, Seeger believed Cowell's professional métier might be better served "in experimental and speculative musicology," revealing his appreciation for Cowell's inquisitive and challenging nature.[108] Such methodological ideals offered a distinctive shift in thinking about music, particularly as applied to contemporary trends. These

---

influence in a variety of publications. On 15 January 1932, for example, Cowell wrote an emphatic article praising Seeger's influence and contributions generally; see "Charles Louis Seeger, Jr." See also Pescatello, *Charles Seeger*, 67–68.

104. According to Robertson Cowell ("Charles Seeger," 305–6), "Seeger made two clear contributions to Henry's view of himself as a composer; 'First of all,' Charlie told him, 'if you have new concepts for music, you have an obligation to create a full body of work with a systematic theoretical basis for each of them. Then, you yourself are responsible for disseminating your ideas.' "

105. Seeger defines the "systematic" in his *Reminiscences*, 184, but published the ideas in his "On the Principles of Musicology," 248–49; "Systematic and Historical Orientations in Musicology"; and "Systematic Musicology."

106. Later repr. in 1969.

107. Ibid. (1969), xxi. Cowell's first theoretical tract was published (over three issues) as "Harmonic Development in Music," *Freeman* 3, no. 55 (30 March 1921): 63–65; 3, no. 56 (6 April 1921): 85–87; 3, no. 57 (13 April 1921): 111–13; according to Hicks (*Henry Cowell*, 106), the ideas, though uncredited, were influenced by Seeger. In 1928, Cowell was promoting himself as "a scientist of sounds, a successful discipline of research in the domain of musicology"; see Wilbur W. Wiswall, "Cowell, Scientist of Sounds," in *Santa Fe New Mexican*, 22 Dec. 1928 (HCC, NYPL, box 156, folder 18).

108. Seeger, letter to Ruggles, 3 March [no year], given in Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 195.

ideals coalesced with the progressive values that the social sciences were embracing from the natural sciences, a posture found in modern American research universities and valued at the New School.[109] Like the notion of the professional expert as academic researcher, whose scientific work became the driving force behind cultural progress, so too did Cowell's and Seeger's critical and scientific approach to music impart a progressive agenda at the New School.

New Strands of Musical Inquiry

On 11 December 1931, Cowell wrote a letter to his father Harry and stepmother Olive, outlining a blueprint of educational objectives he hoped to carry out at the New School.

> As to the plan of the New School work, there is one, and it is the same as the plan for the foundation. The idea is to investigate, without fear of intelligence, (1) musical history of our music, with a view of how it applies to what music has become today. (2) our music of new tendencies studied philosophically, psychologically, physically, mathematically, and anthropologically employed, in rhythm, sound, melody, harmony, counterpoint, etc. (3) other musical cultures of the world (oriental) (4) primitive music of all peoples. (5) the relation between all of these elements (6) the sociological import of music, and its position in the activities of the peoples of the world.[110]

The letter highlights two central educational priorities. The first was to focus on contemporary American music—in Cowell's terms the "musical history of our music" and "our music of new tendencies"—and the second called for the investigation of "other musical cultures of the world" and "primitive music of all peoples." The agenda not only embraced new intellectual strands of musical inquiry, a fulfillment of Cowell's original proposal to Johnson that he cultivate activities not supported elsewhere, but also stood as a declaration of the critical and systematic ideals of scientific and sociological inquiry for music, a scholarly notion that accords directly with the progressive and communal aims of the New School and its orientation toward the modern research university.

109. This shift is documented in Strunk, "State and Resources of Musicology." Seeger began to present ideas concerning these changes in "Toward an Establishment of the Study of Musicology in America," manuscript (1913), printed in Pescatello, *Charles Seeger*, 54–56; Cowell also addressed the value of more scientific approaches to the study of music in university curricula; see undated paper "Music in Adult Education" (HCC, NYPL, box 149, folder 20).

110. Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 11 December 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 12; punctuation as in original). The "foundation" to which Cowell is referring may have been a reference to the Guggenheim Foundation. Cowell received a grant from the Foundation to study in Berlin and was hoping to extend his Fellowship for another year, but his application for a renewal was declined; Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 197.

Cowell followed the ideas in this informal blueprint with a more detailed plan he wrote after having completed one semester of teaching at the school, entitled "Projects for the Advancement of Music." The document has been dated and identified by Robertson Cowell, who added in pencil "July 1932 for the New School." It provides a fascinating account of Cowell's long-range educational and creative ambitions, many of which came to fruition at the School.[111] Among Cowell's (and Seeger's) more dramatic projects that encapsulate several ideas listed in the "Projects for the Advancement of Music" was the establishment of a center for the appreciation of modern music (labeled in the School's *Announcements* as "Workshop in Modern Music"). The goal of the center was to nurture a community of devotees dedicated to contemporary music educated through a variety of lecture and work courses. The "work courses" provided a more practical program of instruction, which subscribed to higher standards of technical training than some of the other lecture courses announced in the catalogue. They were designed to appeal simultaneously to composition students who might want to follow a professional career path, and to inquisitive laymen who, as the promotional flyer announced, "have a desire to live in the musical present."[112] To encourage students to participate, Cowell approached his friend Ives to provide six scholarships, a contribution Ives would continue to make over the next several years for a variety of courses Cowell offered at the New School.[113]

Because Cowell planned to be out of town for half of the academic year, he enlisted Seeger to direct the program and asked several colleagues within his experimental compositional circle to participate in the "work courses." These included Wallingford Riegger, Adolph Weiss, Joseph Schillinger, and Ruth Crawford, a group that Cowell included in other New School concerts and lectures. Ives was also asked by Cowell to take part by giving "moral support" to the venture, beyond the scholarships he was already providing.[114] Cowell

111. "Projects for the Advancement of Music" (HCC, NYPL, box 162, folders 2–8).

112. The "Workshop in Modern Music" was announced in *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Spring 1932), 29, but a more detailed explanation of the course was given on separate flyers with the heading "The New School Presents Work Courses in Contemporary Music," New School Scrapbooks 1932 (NSA).

113. Cowell, letter to Ives, 10 January 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 6). Among the students listed as receiving funding was Riegger; Cowell, however, had asked Riegger to participate in the workshop, so the money may have been used to support Riegger's teaching efforts. Gayle Sherwood Magee described the Cowell/Ives collaboration was "symbiotic." While Cowell promoted Ives as the "quintessential American" composer, Ives provided "steady financial support"; Magee, *Charles Ives Reconsidered*, 155–56.

114. Cowell, note to Ives, 1932: "to allow your name to be used in connection with the 'Work Shop for Music' at the New School. Nothing but moral support would be required, although if you felt like cooperating by examining the manuscripts of young composers, and offering suggestions about them, this would be gratefully received. That is what the course is for . . . . We seek you and Ruggles to add to the list, with understanding that neither of you will be necessarily active" (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 20). Cowell also had asked Copland, but he "refused

envisioned a seminar-style experience: "The idea is for students to sit in a friendly conference with several more mature composers about a table, and discuss their works, and similar subjects."[115] The "work courses" characterized the unorthodox approach often employed at the New School: the lessons were flexible, supervision was carried out through a committee of composers "of which some members may be out of town for a large part of the year," and to which "more names may be added as time goes on," while the intellectual approach was open-ended, "adapting its procedure to whatever needs it finds worthy of satisfying."[116] Lectures on a variety of contemporary subjects would be delivered in conjunction with these "work courses" so that both would complement each other under the umbrella of this new center for modern music.

Although planning a roster of courses each year was a central pedagogical responsibility for Cowell at the New School, he also organized correlating concerts, an important feature of the School's musical culture. Newspaper accounts show that the New School performances were publicized widely in New York and often attended by critics.[117] Yet the character of these performances separated them from other rival organizations in New York, in part because of their dedication to both non-Western and American ultramodern musics. As in the case of other representative arts at the New School, such as dance, theater, sculpture, and painting, concerts as public manifestations became part and parcel of the School's progressive image, where New Yorkers came to expect the unexpected. From 1930 to 1934, most art-music concerts at the New School subscribed to a variety of experimental trends, focusing predominantly on composers within Cowell's American compositional circle, whether those at the early stages of their careers or seasoned veterans of the American ultramodern styles.

During the New School's 1931 inaugural season—marking the opening of the new building—Cowell organized concerts that included Ruth Crawford's *Preludes for Piano* performed by the Swiss pianist Oscar Ziegler (6 January 1931); a concert demonstration of Theremin's new electronic instrument (17 February 1931); a concert by the Pan American Association of Composers with Rudhyar's *The Surge of Fire*, Riegger's *3 Canons for Woodwinds*, Weiss's *Kammersymphony*, that also included works by Latin American com-

---

to allow the use of his name among the composers who sponsor the New School Music Workshop courses"; Cowell, letter to Slonimsky, 24 October 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 5).

115. Pamphlet: "The New School Presents, Work Courses in Contemporary Music, Under the Direction of Charles Seeger"; see New School Scrapbooks 1931–32 (NSA).

116. The documents outlining the terms and descriptions of the center are contained on both a single-leaf flyer as well as a pamphlet archived in the scrapbook (see note 115); the "Workshop Courses" are also listed with a short and modified description from those archived in the Scrapbooks, see *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Fall 1931), 38 (NSA). On the lecture courses offered simultaneously, see "Appreciation of Modern Music," in ibid., 37.

117. New School Scrapbooks 1930–31, 1931–32, 1932–33 (NSA).

posers Pedro Sanjuan and Amadeo Roldán (10 March 1931); a solo recital of Cowell's piano works performed by the composer himself (31 March 1931); concerts conducted by Nicolas Slonimsky, and the Chamber Orchestra of Boston in performances of Henry Brant's *Variations for Chamber Orchestra*, Ives's *Three Places in New England*, Ruggles's *Men and Mountains*, and Cowell's *Marked Passages* (7 February 1931). In the following month the group appeared again to present Varèse's *Octandre for Seven Wind Instruments and Double Bass*, Carlos Salzedo's *Concerto for Harp and Seven Wind Instruments*, as well as Colin McPhee's *Concerto for Piano and Wind Octet* at the New School (11 April 1931).[118] Although these concerts were not the only ones Cowell arranged at the New School during the 1931 spring season, they nonetheless reflected his particular aesthetic and political choices and largely featured colleagues closely tied to his compositional circle.

From 1929, when Cowell became surrogate President of the Pan American Association of Composers (PAAC), most of the Association's New York concerts, such as the one on 10 March 1931 cited above, were staged at and sponsored by the New School.[119] The New School provided rehearsal space, printed programs, made funds available for performers as well as instrument rentals, and promoted these events in all the New York newspapers.[120] For Cowell, this arrangement gave the PAAC a political edge, allowing the group to compete on the same New York turf with rival musical organizations as the League of Composers and the Copland-Sessions Concerts.[121]

With a foothold in New York established at the New School, Cowell and his colleagues from the Pan American Association were no longer outsiders to the city's musical landscape. Moreover, they became closely aligned with

118. For a review of Crawford's recital see "Oscar Ziegler Heard: Swiss Pianist Inaugurates New Concert Hall," *New York Herald Tribune*, 7 Jan 1931. Reviews for the 7 and 17 February concerts appear in Colin McPhee, "Winter Chronicle, New York," *Modern Music* 8, no. 3 (March–April 1931): 43–44; and 31 March and 11 April concerts reviewed by Marc Blitzstein, "Spring Season in the East," *Modern Music* 8, no. 4 (May–June 1931): 34–35. Léon Theremin's demonstration concert is reviewed in the *New York Herald Tribune*, 18 Feb. 1931, "Theremin Demonstrates 'Microtone on Devices,' " as well as Slominsky's 7 Feb concert; see New School Scrapbook 1931 (NSA).

119. Root, "Pan American Association," 62–66; Stallings, "Collective Difference," 81–92.

120. On the terms regarding sponsored performances at the New School, see Cowell letter to Slominsky, 25 February 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 7). Cowell also solicited funding for the Pan American Association from Charles Ives; letter to Ives, 16 February 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 7). Although Varèse initiated the Pan American Association of Composers in 1928, Cowell, Varèse, and Emerson Whithorne incorporated the Organization (in February), while Cowell was a member of its executive board and President of the North American Section. By March he was voted its Secretary; letter from Cowell to Olive Cowell, 23 February 1928 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 24), and became its Acting President (documented on PAAC's formal stationery), but ran the organization *de facto* when Varèse (who then became Honorary President) left for France in October 1928.

121. Oja discusses and compares the rival modernist musical organizations in New York in *Making Music Modern*, 177–200 (on the PAAC, see esp. 193–96).

the community at the New School, whether through other concerts staged there, as lecturers themselves, or featured as the subject of discussion in lectures given in Cowell's contemporary music courses. Cowell's compositional circle—especially those linked to the Pan American Association—shared common aesthetic and political ideals about music, not the least of which was to promote composers of the Western Hemisphere and to counterbalance the aesthetic authority and influence of the Europeans, particularly such competing neoclassicists as Copland and his côterie, who were often showcased by the League of Composers or in the Copland-Sessions Concerts.

Kerr and Berger devotedly reviewed the various rival concerts, drawing comparisons between concerts presented at the New School by the Pan Americans and those performed by the League in other competing venues. Whereas, the New School "in the course of its short establishment, has been host to many artists of the ultramodern vanguard," the League's concerts, in comparison, were given to "fashionable and even mediocre American works," a comment undermining the League's emphasis on the mainstream compositional guard and their meager attempts to promote homegrown American composers.[122]

Perhaps one of the more troubling manifestations of the rivalry that separated the two groups was the contempt expressed by Cowell's circle toward associates of the League of Composers who were Jewish. The evidence of such severe anti-Semitism can be drawn from letters among members of the circle. Some of the more virulent attacks came from Ruggles, a known anti-Semite, but Cowell shared some of these opinions, too. Referring to Pan American concert given in Berlin under the aegis of the Internationale Gesellschaft für Neue Musik on 8 December 1931, Cowell reported, for example: "This concert of several composers, served to offset the concert of all Jews—Copland, Gruenberg, etc. recently given here [in Berlin]. They really do band together, and have made every effort to be taken for the only composers existing in America."[123] And: "We have very few Jews in the Pans, and that is, I think, a good thing, as the general tendency among them is to lack fundamental seriousness in the music itself; but I would be in favor of accepting any exception to this. The reason the League has dwindled in importance is because they present so many works by minor and untalented composers, bad mixtures of style with no direction, and of more and more conventional nature. Mostly by

122. See A.V.B. [Arthur Berger], "Ruggles Work Performed," *Sunday Mirror* (New York), 24 Jan. 1932 (Extra Edition), 28; "Music," *New York Daily Mirror*, 29 Jan 1932 (Arthur Berger Papers, NYPL, box 8, folder 18); and Kerr, "Creative Music and the New School," 89–90. For a critique of the League's concerts in comparison to those of the PAAC, see Rossiter, *Charles Ives and His America*, 223; Broyles, *Mavericks*, 136–37; and Magee, *Charles Ives Reconsidered*, 153–55.

123. Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 11 December 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 12).

Jews, of course."[124] And from Ruggles: "I agree with Adolph [Weiss] and Salzedo that it is a great mistake to have that filthy bunch of Juilliard Jews in the Pan American. They are cheap, without dignity, and with little, or no talent. That Berger is impossible. They will double cross you Henry—I'm sure, in every possible way. My advice is to promptly pluck them out, before its [*sic*] too late."[125] The irony is that such anti-Semitism completely contradicted the ideals of the New School, particularly since Johnson made it his mission to safeguard Jewish scholars and musicians from Hitler's racial policies in 1933 with the creation of the University of Exile.

One of the most provocative demonstrations of Cowell's progressive educational efforts at the New School was exemplified in a series of twelve evenings he organized under the title "Contemporary American Music" (1933). His idea was to bring together composers of differing modernist stripes in the context of a forum in order that they speak about, illustrate, and defend their ideas. The notion so appealed to the forty-five participants whom Cowell approached that they enthusiastically took part for free. The event featured lectures dedicated to a variety of trends in American music alongside chamber concerts by several contemporary music organizations such as The Young Composers Group, the Pan American Association, and selections from the Yaddo Festival of American Music (a festival organized principally by Copland).[126] As Cowell confided to Ives in a letter:

> For my series at the New School next season, I will have some very good fights. I am getting D[avid] S[tanley] Smith from Yale, and [Richard] Donovan also, and D[aniel] G[regory] Mason, R[ubin] Goldmark and H[oward] Hanson—all the enemies (and they all accepted!) to come down to the school and give their views on American music. Ten at the same forum, there will be some young blood to show up their point of view! I think the fur will fly. It should be a healthy exposé.[127]

124. Cowell, letter to Weiss, 28 October 1932 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 19).

125. Ruggles, letter to Cowell, 21 June 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 12, folder 8). On the issue of anti-Semitism within the rival groups, see also Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 186, 217–18; and Rossiter, *Charles Ives and His America*, 223; Rossiter states that the League "was sometimes privately called the 'League of Jewish Composers.' " Ironically and disdainfully, Rossiter cites the source for his statement as "private information," seemingly condoning and disseminating the prejudice. According to Anthony Tommasini, the phrase "League of Jewish Composers" was coined by Virgil Thomson; see Tommasini, *Virgil Thomson: Composer on the Aisle*, 301.

126. On the Young Composers Group, see Rossiter, *Charles Ives and His America*, 244; Berger, "Young Composers' Group," *Trend* 1 (April–May–June 1933): 26–28; and Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 184–87. On the Pan American Association, see Root, "Pan American Association," 49–70. On Yaddo, see Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 167–68. Other groups participating included the League of Composers, the International Society for Contemporary Music, the New Music Society of California, the Composers' Protective Society, and faculty members of Vassar College, St. Thomas College, Columbia, Yale, Harvard, and New York Universities; see *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (1933–34), 41 (NSA).

127. Letter from Cowell to Ives, 16 May 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 20).

In her memoirs, Robertson Cowell, who presumably heard about the forum from her husband, reported that tensions "ran high"; whatever the response, Cowell's idea was original and daring, so much so that in 1935 composer Ashley Pettis appropriated the concept for his own "Composers' Forum," which he ran under the auspices of the WPA's Federal Music Project.[128]

Cowell's "Whole World of Music" at the New School[129]

The other branch of investigation that Cowell pursued at the New School and outlined in his "Projects for the Advancement of Music" focused on the study of non-European music.[130] On the surface, Western modernist art music and the music of indigenous cultures appear as disparate fields of inquiry, yet to Cowell they were part and parcel of his creative exploration.[131] In essence, non-European music was an area of investigation that opened a wealth of alternative resources from which experimental composers like himself could draw. Yet, more than just an aesthetic appeal for new resources, Cowell's pursuit of non-European and folk musics appealed to his own political and nationalist sensibilities by undermining the dominant traditional authority of European art music as the only legitimate compositional legacy.

In 1963, Cowell expressed this position in terms of a progressive national order, interpreting American outsiders, that is, non-European immigrant cultures, as insiders.

> Most people who live in the middle and eastern parts of this country don't realize that Japanese and Chinese music is part of American music. As an American composer I would like to point out that oriental music has influenced me a great deal. I feel that we have laid too much emphasis on the music that comes from continental Europe.[132]

Here, Cowell urged his readers to acknowledge local Asian immigrant communities as part of a rich American cultural mosaic, calling upon US composers to widen their musical horizons and to embrace the variety, diversity, and richness that ethnic music might offer. It was a political stance he had adopted in part because it validated the circuitous route of his own training

128. On Sidney's observations see HCC, NYPL, box 77, folder 8; on William Schuman's reference to Cowell's Forum in relation to his account of Pettis's Composers' Forum, see "25th Anniversary Survey: The Composers' Forum, 1961" (William Schuman Papers, NYPL, box 165, folder 1). On the Forum concerts, see De Graaf, *New York Composers' Forum Concerts, 1935–1940*.

129. This title is a reference to Cowell's statement, "I want to live in the *whole world* of music." Quoted in Weisgall, "Music of Henry Cowell," 498.

130. The term "non-European" is Cowell's own reference to indigenous music.

131. Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 126; see also Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco*, 195–96.

132. Cowell, "Music of the Orient," 25.

as an art-music composer, while it also reflected his position as an American musical outsider.[133]

Cowell repeatedly stated that non-European and folk music was a central aspect of his musical upbringing. His mother and her relatives, for example, exposed him to ballads and songs from the Ozarks and Kentucky regions, and his father introduced him to Irish music, an influence later fostered by his relationship with the eccentric poet John Varian.[134] Cowell also professed that growing up in the immigrant neighborhoods of San Francisco where he was exposed directly to East Asian music, was a prime aspect of his musical and cultural formation. This claim, which Cowell repeatedly emphasized in print, must also be balanced against his Western art-music background and may not have been as dominant as Cowell would have us believe.[135] W. Anthony Sheppard, for example, argues that the composer's East Asian encounters provided a more "philosophical" than musical influence.[136] This characterization is well taken, because it helps us understand Cowell's unusual openness and passion toward non-European music particularly in relation to his nationalist inclinations to subsume it as part of US culture. True to these political and aesthetic convictions, and just as he did in the case of- contemporary American music, Cowell consequently explored non-European music at the New School.

133. Cowell, "Composer's World." Scholars have interpreted the degree to which Cowell's music embraces non-European techniques and styles; see for example, Rao, "American Compositional Theory"; idem, "Henry Cowell and His Chinese Music Heritage"; Nicholls, "Henry Cowell's United Quartet"; idem, "Reaching Beyond the West"; and idem, "Transethnicism." Cowell's attitudes toward non-European or "other" musics is treated in Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism*, 105–10; Schimpf, "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 176–218; and Lechner, who focuses on Cowell's understanding of musical difference and its implications for his compositions, "Composers as Ethnographers," 31–41, 161–67.

134. His childhood exposure to the folk songs is reported by Cowell in "Reminiscences of Henry Cowell," interview by Beate Gorden for Oral History Research Office, Columbia University (1962–63), 2–3, 5 (HCC, NYPL, box 93, folder 9); and discussed in Johnson, "Henry Cowell," 2–5, 9–10.

135. Nicholls cites Bruce Saylor's account that "Cowell was fully aware of 'the rich variety of oriental musical cultures that existed in the San Francisco Bay area [and] grew up hearing more Chinese, Japanese, and Indian classical music than he did Western music' " ("Transethnicism," 571); Saylor's account ("Henry Cowell," 520) relies on Robertson Cowell's memoirs. Hicks accurately states that the influence of non-European music on Cowell is better understood through his desire to value exoticism; Hicks, *Henry Cowell*, 20, 30. Cowell recalled in "Music of the Orient," 25: "By the time I was nine years old, the music of these oriental people was just as natural to me as any music." See also idem, "From Tone Clusters to Contemporary Listeners," and "Oriental Influence on Western Music," the latter quoted in Godwin, "Music of Henry Cowell," 228. For a list of Cowell's teachers and the varied musical systems he learned, see "Undated Typescript List" (HCC, NYPL, box 143, folder 5), repr. in Schimpf, "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 289.

136. Sheppard carefully chronicles Cowell's relationship to East Asian music in "Continuity in Composing," 469, 497–503, and believes Cowell's East Asian perceptions were Orientalist in conception, 497–98. In comparison, Rao, in "American Compositional Theory," 626–27, sees Cowell's East Asian exposure privileged in his experimental approaches and at the heart of his musical formulation.

By 1932, comparative musicology was still a nascent field of study in the United States. The discipline had yet to acquire independence within the academy; instead it resided vicariously within anthropology departments where faculty investigated music as part of a wider cultural phenomenon. Thus far, scholars who have documented the history of comparative musicology in the United States from the early 1930s have rarely acknowledged Cowell's participation in, and his contributions to, the burgeoning field.[137] Part of the reason may have been that Cowell pursued his research interests more often in the service of his compositional ambitions than as a professional scholar. At the same time, his thinking often went against the grain, following a more progressive line that challenged the academic status quo.

Although Cowell was not a field collector, he accompanied several European ethnographers to observe the process, and he participated in recording traditional Irish folk songs. He was also responsible for bringing a wide-ranging collection of field recordings to the United States with the intent of building an archive at the New School.[138] Furthermore, he published articles on subjects that addressed musical notation, methods of analysis, and studies on particular musical cultures outside the occidental canon.[139] Cowell's commitment to non-Western musics also prompted him to study with several master teachers on indigenous instruments, learning through performance practice, and anticipating a much later trend led by ethnomusicologist Mantle Hood in the 1950s to become bi-musical.[140] In essence, Cowell

137. Few monographs on the history of ethnomusicology (or comparative musicology) mention Cowell, and those that do dedicate only a sentence or two, crediting instead Seeger with the initiation of courses at the New School; see for example Myers, "North America," 401; and Nettl, *Nettl's Elephant*, 95.

138. Robertson Cowell claims that Cowell went on field trips with Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály; Self-Interview Transcripts 1977 (HCC, NYPL, box 87, folder 26). During his 1926 tour of Europe, Cowell visited the Moravian countryside. These musical exploits are documented in a letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 15 April 1926 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 20); and his experiences are published in his "Moravian Music." In 1933, Cowell did pursue limited fieldwork and rented a recording device to document performances of traditional Irish folk songs: "I have found a real Irish traditional singer in New York. And am taking records of her. The first such records in existence"; Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 8 January 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 22). The idea to establish a library of recordings as an aid to collectors is also listed on Cowell's "Projects for the Advancement of Music," unpublished document (HCC, NYPL, box 162, folders 2–8), and plans to organize a library are discussed by Cowell in a letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 12 January 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 22); by Seeger in *Reminiscences*, 232; and under "Miscellaneous Notices," in the *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 2 (1932–33).

139. Schimpf, "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 100–117. On notational issues, see Cowell, "Our Inadequate Notation"; on methods of analysis, see idem, "Scientific Approach to Non-European Music"; and idem, "Music, Oriental."

140. Bi-musicality is defined as fluency in a foreign musical language; see Hood, "Challenge of 'Bi-Musicality.' " Although Cowell did not use the term bi-musicality, he believed performance practice was an essential part of understanding a musical tradition; see Cowell, "Influence of Oriental Music on American Composers," undated (HCC, NYPL, box 149, folder 16).

brought to this inquiry a range of experiences that he accumulated early on through a diversity of educational opportunities that, like his compositional upbringing, were unique.

Cowell turned to Seeger for help delivering his blueprint for the exploration of non-European music at the School. Ethnomusicologists today have certainly acknowledged Seeger's importance in the history of their discipline as one of "the most influential leaders of ethnomusicology in North America."[141] Nevertheless, in a respectful but critical account, Bruno Nettl tried to reconcile Seeger's stature as "one of the giants of the history of our field" with his actual contributions to the field, particularly in relation to his "modest set of contributions to the specific understanding of musics and musical cultures."[142] Certainly Seeger's knowledge of the field in 1930 could be categorized as limited at best. Moreover, prior to his association with the New School, Seeger had dismissed the existence of true American folk music, disdained jazz, and knew almost nothing about non-European music.[143] Yet, his self-studies in anthropology, which he pursued earlier at Berkeley and continued during the 1920s, exerted a profound influence on his outlook concerning musical culture and the linguistic problems inherent in communicating about music, ideas that became influential to Cowell.[144]

Judith Tick has made the point that such influence could run in two directions. Seeger's relationship to his wife Ruth Crawford is a case in point. Although many scholars emphasize Seeger's influence on Crawford, Tick has shown the reciprocal quality of their association.[145] A similar relationship of mutual influence existed between Seeger and Cowell, not only in their shared critical and scientific approaches to music, but also in the case of their involvement in comparative musicology. Cowell could filter his own expertise in comparative musicology through Seeger and, in turn, Seeger his intellectual and anthropological perspectives through Cowell. At the same time, Cowell's energetic abilities to organize and build community worked hand in hand with Seeger's scholarly and administrative experiences within the academy, all of which fueled their collaborative work on non-European music at the New School.

141. Nettl, "Dual Nature of Ethnomusicology," 266.

142. Ibid., 268.

143. Seeger's introduction and evolving appreciation of American folk music is attributed to his meeting artist Thomas Hart Benton, a colleague, also a folklorist, whom he met within New School circles. Benton was commissioned to paint *America Today*, a mural for the New School's new building. During the unveiling, Seeger performed with Benton's musical folk group; see Richter, "Fiddles, Harmonicas, and Banjos." On Seeger's relationship to Amerindian music, ethnographic studies, and anthropology and his influence in these areas on Cowell, see Paul, "From American Ethnographer to Cold War Icon," 409–10.

144. On Seeger's self-studies, see his *Reminiscences*, 89, 163; and Paul, "From American Ethnographer to Cold War Icon," 409–10. Cowell discusses Seeger's conception of musical culture and its influence on him in "Scientific Approach to Non-European Music," 62.

145. Tick, "Music of American Folk Song," 110.

A clear indication of this symbiotic relationship is expressed in a letter Cowell sent to Blanche Walton, his New York patron and friend whom he had introduced to Seeger in 1929. That year, while Cowell was on tour concertizing in Europe, he made significant efforts to meet some of the most preeminent scholars in the emerging field of comparative musicology, a discipline that had yet to find any footing in the United States. Cowell enthusiastically reported to Walton in two letters:

> [W]e really must get Charley Seeger on the job, and the bunch of us continue to be in relationship. The Russians demonstrate a direct proof of the physical existence of the undertone series. This will interest Seeger.[146]

> It may interest Charlie Seeger to know that I am meeting a number of well-known musicologists, having a wonderful time with them. Hornbustle [Hornbostel] and Stumpf are the best known, but there is a real interest here in the subject, and I am telling them all about Seeger—I hope that the few people the world over who take an interest in this subject may be in some sort of communication, and as I am told that there are some in Russia, I will exchange addresses with all of them, and we may form some sort of International group. Please ask Seeger his thoughts about it. The result would be, that whenever the group worked out a new idea, or made a discovery, he would send a carbon copy to each of the different centers, which I judge would at first be Moscow, Leningrad, Berlin, Paris, New York and Stanford University.[147]

Seeger later admitted that he knew of Hornbostel, but nothing of comparative musicology as a formal discipline before hearing about it from Cowell.[148] In effect, it was through Cowell's contacts made during this trip combined with his enthusiasm for the field that prompted him to engage Seeger and collaborate on a variety of significant projects in comparative musicology. In turn, these activities were realized under the sponsorship and with the support of the New School.

Immediately following his return from this European trip, for example, Cowell eagerly proposed to Johnson in March 1930 that they invite Hornbostel to teach a series of twelve lectures and develop the program in compara-

146. Cowell, letter to Walton, 1 June 1929 (HCC, NYPL, box 18, folder 30).

147. Cowell, letter to Walton, [June] (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 1).

148. Seeger's recollection here appears somewhat unreliable. Cowell's letter to Walton was written during his 1929 concert tour rather than during the period he worked under Hornbostel in 1931 and 1932. ". . . my old pupil, whom I had sent to study with [Erich Moritz von] Hornbostel in Berlin and who had brought me back the astonishing news which I had no idea of before of the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv and of the small group of comparative musicologists that had been working in Berlin from about 1900. I knew that they were working, and knew that Hornbostel was the outstanding man, and that's one of the reasons that I sent Henry to him, but I had no conception of the emergence of a new discipline. I thought I was dreaming of it myself, but not knowing how to go about founding a musicology that was a worldwide musicology. I thought perhaps the best way I could do it would be through the little group in New York." Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 189.

tive musicology at the New School.[149] Hornbostel, then director of the Phonogramm-Archiv in Berlin, declined at that time (the invitation would later be extended again in 1933, at which time he accepted).[150] The episode nevertheless, reveals Cowell's efforts to establish comparative musicology at the New School as a serious intellectual discipline. In his place, Hornbostel recommended two of his students, Mieczyslaw Kolinski (who in 1930 had just completed his doctorate under Hornbostel) and George Herzog (who had been an assistant to Hornbostel in the Phonogramm-Archiv), but Johnson decided that, if they were to pursue comparative musicology in a substantive way (which they were not yet ready to do), they needed someone with the kind of "towering reputation" of Hornbostel.[151]

Instead of Hornbostel's coming to New York in 1930, within the year Cowell made preparations to work with him in Berlin, having earned the support of a Guggenheim Fellowship. According to Seeger, it was he who had encouraged Cowell to study with Hornbostel, and yet, Joel Sachs reports that Seeger wrote an unsympathetic letter to the foundation, a letter that was to serve as a recommendation.[152] The contradiction in attitude by Seeger reveals some of the complexity of the relationship between Cowell and his mentor. For Cowell's activities in Berlin held important educational implications not only for the work he did at the New School but also as an influence on Seeger's developing interests in comparative musicology.

The Foundation allowed Cowell to make two separate trips to accommodate his teaching commitments at the New School, the first in the fall of 1931 (October through December) and the second in 1932 (September through December).[153] Cowell's letters from Berlin reflect an intensive period of study with a variety of established performers such as Professor Sambamoorthy, a highly regarded teacher of Indian music from the University of Madras, as well as Raden Mas Jodjana and A. F. Roemahlaiselan, who taught him Javanese and Balinese gamelan respectively.[154] Cowell also had the rare opportunity to

149. Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 20 March 1930 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 3): "The plans for the new School include 12 lectures by me, . . . and then for the final 12, we are trying to get Dr. von Hornbostel, from Berlin."

150. The collection is described and discussed in Reinhard, "Berlin Phonogramm-Archive."

151. Johnson, letter to Cowell, 23 April 1930 (HCC, NYPL, box 163, folder 3). Like Cowell, Herzog did not complete a degree under Hornbostel, instead working as his assistant in the Phonogramm-Archiv; see Nettl, "George Herzog and the Study of Native American Music" (unpublished paper). I would like to thank Bruno Nettl for sharing this article.

152. Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 189. Sachs, in *Henry Cowell*, 189, quotes Seeger's letter to the Guggenheim Foundation of 7 January 1931. Sachs suggests (p. 188) that it was instead Stanford Professor Lewis M. Terman, an educational psychologist and mentor to Cowell, who encouraged Cowell to apply to the Guggenheim Foundation.

153. Cowell's proposal was entitled "A Study of Materials Used in Extra-European Musical Systems"; see Guggenheim Announcement, 16 September 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 73, folder 1). Sachs provides a summary and reveals fascinating information about the letters of recommendation that accompanied the Guggenheim application; *Henry Cowell*, 188–89.

154. Miller, "Henry Cowell and John Cage," 55–57; see also Schimpf, "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 33–35. On Cowell's teachers in Berlin, see his letter to Harry

play on instruments from the Staatliche Instrumentensammlung at Berlin's Hochschule für Musik, after meeting Curt Sachs, then director of the collection.[155] In essence, he learned through listening and doing.[156]

Cowell also gained exposure to the scholarly methods and approaches that Hornbostel and his disciples, known later as the "Berlin School," were developing. And though Cowell found their work fascinating (he wrote a critical assessment of the group and their methods in 1935 entitled "The Scientific Approach to Non-European Music"), he did not always find them compelling.[157] Cowell's independent nature led him to disagree with Hornbostel as he indicated to his stepmother Olive, "I have found things which completely upset all findings of Hornbostel, and the others here, but will not tell him—yet!" According to Robertson Cowell, Cowell did not regard his relationship with Hornbostel as a close mentorship, in ways reminiscent of his autodidactic work with Seeger, and he often worked in isolation with the "treasure trove" of recordings deposited at the Phonogramm-Archiv.[158]

The study of indigenous music through listening became one of Cowell's primary modes of inquiry. Consequently, recordings served as a pivotal educational tool for Cowell's world-music explorations, as it did for students of the Berlin School. And although Cowell's interest in using recordings as source materials did not differ greatly from that of his colleagues there, nevertheless, his investigative and analytical goals did.[159] In his letters, he excitedly described the variety and quality of music he encountered while working on recordings from various places such as Malacca, Central Africa, New Guinea, Carolina Islands, and from Colombian peoples, middle Brazilian Indians, African Pygmies, and Greenland Esquimos (Inuit).[160] Writing to Ives, Cowell reports:

---

and Olive Cowell, 11 December 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 12); Cowell described his experiences in Berlin years later; see Henry Cowell interviewed by Beate Gordon, 1962 (HCC, NYPL, box 93, folders 9, 26–27).

155. Cowell reported to his parents the meeting with Curt Sachs and his ability to use the collections' instruments, stating it was "a very rare chance"; see Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 30 November 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 11).

156. Cowell, "Influence of Oriental Music on American Composers" (undated), pp. 1–2 (HCC, NYPL, box 149, folder 16).

157. Cowell's critical assessment of Hornbostel and the practices of comparative musicology can be found in his "Scientific Approach to Non-European Music," 62–67.

158. Cowell, letter to Olive Cowell, 21 November 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 11). The characterization of a "treasure trove" is taken from Robertson Cowell, Transcripts (HCC, NYPL, box 77, folder 17).

159. For comparative musicologists of the period, transcriptions taken directly from recordings became a core method. Comparative musicologists, and later ethnomusicologists, equated this notational approach with that used in the Western art music tradition, whereby music is notated into scores, which are in turn used by scholars directly for study; see Nettl, "George Herzog."

160. On Cowell's reaction to these recordings, see Miller, "Henry Cowell and John Cage," 56–57; and Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 11 December 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 12).

> "The African Pygmy music with which I am working is really unbelievably attractive! It is based on a set of pipes tuned to the harmonic series from the 4th to the 14th . . . , and they play two or three part harmony, often very dissonant, and complex rhythms, often an apparent ostinato, but each measure of the repeat changed in rhythm."[161]

Such observations reveal Cowell's aesthetic appreciation for the music and suggest that he might potentially exploit these innovative materials in his compositions.

To find recordings of indigenous music from around the world, whether authentic (pure) or hybrid (the mixing of music from different cultures) was extremely rare, and in North America, such recordings were almost nonexistent in the early 1930s. Consequently, one of the significant acquisitions Cowell made from these trips was to purchase a large collection of recordings that would become an important educational investment for the New School. With $100 from Johnson, Cowell bought copies of 120 wax cylinders from the Berlin Archives known as the "demonstration collection," and the following year during his second trip another three hundred commercial recordings, which he discovered by chance through the International Talking Machine Company, a business that manufactured playback machines or "talking machines."[162] As a competitive marketing strategy, the company employed local agents throughout North Africa, Asia, and the Orient to produce and issue, under the trademark of Odeon, indigenous records as a way to appeal to local markets.[163] These recordings along with the Archive cylinders established the foundation for a library of recordings that would be used for Cowell's (and Seeger's) classes at the New School. The hope, as was indicated in Cowell's document "Projects for the Advancement of Music," was that they might build the first archive of its kind in North America at the New School, though plans for that later eroded.

After his initial three-month term with Hornbostel (October to December 1931), Cowell returned to inaugurate what would become a signature course at the New School, announced in the bulletin as "Comparison of the Musical

161. Cowell, letter to Ives, 14 November 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 11).

162. "I have received $100 from the New School to buy records, and obtained the difficult permission to buy the copies of the records in the archive here, and have taken 120 records of music of the world, for the first time to America." Cowell, letter to Olive and Harry Cowell, 11 December 1931 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 12); Cowell also purchased recordings and wax cylinders for himself and helped Carlos Chavez to obtain them; Cowell, letter to Chavez, 5 May 1932 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 17). The "demonstration collection" is now housed at Indiana University; in the 1950s, some of Cowell's cylinders were made into disc and integrated into an LP collection, produced by Cowell in conjunction with Moses Asch's Folkways label, entitled "Music of the World's People," for which Cowell wrote extensive liner notes.

163. On the International Talking Machine Company and Odeon records, see Vernon, "Odeon Records," http://www.mustrad.org.uk/articles/odeon.htm#top (accessed April 2011). See also Miller, "Henry Cowell and John Cage," 56n32.

Systems of the World," and scheduled to begin on 4 January 1932.[164] "Musical Systems of the World" was offered every year (sometimes twice yearly) under a range of titles, in varied forms, and delivered primarily by Cowell, who in turn asked Seeger to teach it in the fall of 1932 and the winter of 1934. It was among the few known classes in the United States at the time that made non-Western music the central subject of discussion. In 1932, only one other American scholar besides Cowell—George Herzog—had received direct training in comparative musicology from Hornbostel, who at that time defined the scholarly standards of the disciplinary field and whose methods dealt critically and scientifically with the sonic technicalities of the music.

When Herzog moved to the United States from Berlin in 1925, he began a PhD in anthropology at Columbia University under Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict.[165] By 1932, he had joined his colleague Helen Heffron Roberts (also a Boas student) at Yale University to undertake research.[166] And like Cowell, Herzog initiated a course that same year on "Primitive Music & Indian Music." Herzog drew on his anthropological background in discussing the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the people while also providing a comparative stylistic assessment and distilling the commonalities among the musics of these differing cultures.[167] In these analytical endeavors, transcription played a key role both in his professional scholarship (as it did for Hornbostel) and in his teaching. As one of Herzog's students reported: when he lectured, he simultaneously wrote transcriptions on the blackboard.[168]

Cowell, in comparison, designed his course at the New School as a broad survey presented with "rare phonograph recordings" that he had brought from Berlin, and he often featured local immigrant musicians who performed music from their representative communities. Arthur Berger documented some of these classes in the *New York Daily Mirror*, summarizing the composer's teaching style and his approach to the materials. Not unlike Herzog, Cowell discussed the music's sound, its pitch content, and scale systems.[169] Because of the advantages of live performance, Cowell focused upon issues re-

164. The catalogue, *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Fall 1931), lists "Comparison of the Musical Systems of the World," to be taught beginning 4 January 1932. The Spring 1932 issue records the same course with a slight modification to the title, listing it as "Musical Systems of the World" (both in NSA).

165. Nettl, "George Herzog."

166. Frisbie, "Helen Heffron Roberts," 100.

167. Siskin, "George Herzog."

168. On transcriptions and teaching, see ibid., 77. According to Nettl ("George Herzog"), Herzog believed the skill of transcription a distinguishing feature of the trained ethnomusicologist; whereas recordings preserved the gathered sounds, they also should be transcribed, and transcriptions should be used as exemplars.

169. Unfortunately, Cowell's New School lecture notes from this period are no longer extant. Berger's newspaper articles are housed in one folder but are separate reviews of different Cowell lectures from the same course; see Arthur Berger Papers, NYPL, box 8, folder 18; this is the source for both quotations from Berger given below.

lated to performance practice, drawing on the music's articulation and its timbral qualities, characteristics that if studied through transcriptions (as was conventionally done by comparative musicologists) would be lost, dismissed, or subordinated to less significant short stylistic descriptions. Cowell made this point in an unpublished critical account entitled "Method of Notating Extra-European Music." Here, he chastised some of the most prominent scholars in comparative musicology who relied on transcriptions based upon phonograph records for their analysis, suggesting that the inherent details of timbre, slides, and curves of sound cannot be properly notated.[170] As Berger reported in the *Daily Mirror*, for example, Cowell presented these details as an essential aspect of Chinese vocalization:

> As a manner of singing, the Chinese disapprove of the Western nasal manner of tone production, favoring a mode of falsetto (a rather strident but no less fascinating tone). They preserve the natural voice for folk song. These facts, and many others of singular concern, were made evident by the performance of the soloists.

About a different lecture from the same course, Berger reported:

> For the Oriental scale, as illustrated in the rare records brought from Java and Bali, is composed of intervals that exceed ours by such fractional units as the quarter tone or three-quarter tone, both of which are employed by Bloch, the lecturer himself, and other modern proponents.

Here, Berger noted that Cowell framed his observations about Javanese and Balinese music in relation to some of the shared techniques found in Western modernist music, citing Cowell's and that of Ernest Bloch as examples. It was a comparison that assumed both musics to be on equal aesthetic footing, revealed by highlighting their similarities rather than focusing on their differences. Such aesthetic and technical observations challenged the central interests of comparative musicologists like Herzog, whose fundamental intellectual motivation for comparative analysis was to understand how the music fit within theories of cultural evolution.[171] Evolutionary theory, espoused by Hornbostel and members of the Berlin school, established a hierarchical approach that categorized all music according to its complexity. Western art music represented the highest form and a more advanced stage in the evolutionary scale. All other music was classified as either "folk" or "primitive,"

170. Cowell, "Method of Notating Extra-European Music," unpublished, n.d. (HCC, NYPL, box 149, folder 19); and idem, "Scientific Approach to Non-European Music," 65; see also Schimpf "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 108. In "Cowell's Sliding Tone," Rao explores Cowell's sliding tones in relation to his theoretic ideas and raises the limitations inherent in western notation and modes of analysis.

171. Daniel Reed ("Innovator and the Primitives," 71) characterizes Herzog's work as a cross between Hornbostel's decontextualized sound analysis and comparative approach, and Boas's emphasis on field work and diffusionist perspectives.

both considered at lower stages of the evolutionary chain.[172] It was a Eurocentric theory that applied Darwinian principles to music. As in his own studies with recordings in Berlin, Cowell's intent to analyze and compare the aesthetic and intriguing qualities of the music revealed his compositional purpose: to explore the music as a repository for new ideas.[173]

Another central scholarly tenet employed by adherents of the Berlin school was to study indigenous music in its purist form, isolated and unaffected by the corruption of foreign influences.[174] Though Cowell respected these ideals to some point ("Most of us have a strong feeling for the preservation of folk and Oriental traditional music in as near pristine condition as it can be found"), he also challenged the idea that it was possible to find music that was purely indigenous. "There is very little music in the world of which one may say with certainty that it is completely indigenous to the region in which it may be found. And when, through integration, does a hybrid form cease to be hybrid?"[175]

Cowell's ability to question and accept hybrid forms of indigenous music not only spoke to his own personal and compositional connection to these materials, but it was also one reason why he had no hesitation to seek local immigrant musicians from the New York area (corrupted by the influence of American culture) to perform in his lectures and concerts at the New School. Already during the early 1920s, Cowell had sought out immigrant musicians in the surrounding San Francisco communities to perform when he initially began to lecture on non-European topics.[176] In New York, Cowell used immigrant musicians as early as 1924 at a symposium staged at St. Mark's in-the-

172. Schneider discusses and cite specific sources in, respectively, Herzog's and Hornbostel's writings regarding evolutionary trends in comparative musicology; "History to World War II: Northern and Western Europe," 81–82. On the various parameters assigned to the evolutionary categories of "folk" and "primitive," in the context of Hornbostel and Herzog, see Reed, "Innovator and the Primitives," 75–76. Schimpf explores Cowell's use of the terms "primitive" and "folk" in "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 10–12.

173. Cowell also valued and studied music within its cultural context; "Scientific Approach to Non-European Music," 67. Here, too, however, his outlook was influenced by his compositional goals; see idem, "Influence of Oriental Music on American Composers," undated (HCC, NYPL, box 149, folder 16).

174. On Herzog's perspective, see "Special Song Types in North American Indian Music." Nettl discusses this point in "George Herzog."

175. Cowell addressed hybridity in "Influence of Oriental Music on American Composers," typescript, undated (HCC, NYPL, box 149, folder 16). This manuscript may be an early version of Cowell's published article "Oriental Influence on Western Music"; see also idem, "Hybrid Music," typescript, undated (HCC, NYPL, box, 149, folder 13), later published in *Proceedings of the Music Teachers Association*, 39 (1945).

176. Robertson Cowell suggests that Cowell first presented the music of other cultures at Miss Wilson's settlement house in San Francisco in about 1920, using largely Asian performers from the community because recordings were unavailable at the time. She goes on to say that in New York, Cowell presented a few isolated programs of East Indian, Armenian, Yugoslav, and Greek musicians in isolated concerts at St. Mark's in-the-Bowery before teaching at the New School; see Robertson Cowell, Tape Transcripts (HCC, NYPL, box 87, folders 26, 44).

Bowery.[177] At the New School, he continued the practice, seeking musicians from the city's immigrant neighborhoods in their local restaurants or community organizations.[178] Seeger has described some of these adventures, citing an encounter Cowell had with a Croatian immigrant working as a stable hand in Hoboken. Though the Croatian could not speak English, he performed on a *gusla*, a single-stringed bowed instrument, and sang Serbo-Croatian epics for the class.[179] Such arrangements may have contravened scholarly notions of purism, but for Cowell, it not only fulfilled a practical function by providing musical examples to audiences, but also defined his transcultural understanding of American music and satisfied his aesthetic compositional interests.

As a consequence, Cowell's outlook led him to draw very different conclusions about non-European musics from those reached by other members of the small community of comparative musicologists at the time. Although many of Cowell's ideas anticipated trends that would later be valued and embraced in ethnomusicology, whether it was the question of the values of hybridity, bi-musicality, or equality, his views did represent a challenge to the field's methods of exploration, approach to analysis, and cultural values during the early 1930s, particularly in relation to Herzog, who had concerns at the time about professionalizing the field and establishing a more unified disciplinary arena in the United States.[180] Little is known about Herzog's professional impression of Cowell, and there is no correspondence between them in either the Herzog or the Cowell Archives.

"Music" in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*

When Cowell returned to Berlin for the second time in the fall of 1932 to continue his work with Hornbostel, Seeger repeated "Musical Systems of the

177. Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 129, 188.

178. See *New York Times*, 13 November 1934: "After a city-wide search for a player of traditional Southern Chinese Instruments to illustrate his lecture on music of China, Henry Cowell found and presented last night at the New School for Social Research a Chinese waiter in a Broadway restaurant, Chan Kei-Ping. Mr. Chan is one of the few Chinese in New York who plays the ancient instruments—the Hi Ch'in (Chinese violin), the Yeuh Ch'in (Chinese mandolin), and the Young Ch'in (Chinese dulcimer). . . . Mr. Chan is a member of a Chinese orchestra when not on duty as a waiter. But this was his first public appearance as a soloist." Cited in Schimpf, "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 93. In 1935, Cowell repeated the strategy of finding immigrant performers in San Francisco as, for example, the Japanese shakuhachi player Kitaro Nyohyo Tamada, who was a florist; see Miller, *Music and Politics in San Francisco*, 195.

179. Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 228–30. The musician to whom Seeger was referring was Sam Yokich. The concert was promoted in the *World-Telegram* (New York), 7 January 1932 (HCC, NYPL, box 154, folder 3). There are numerous documents reflecting Cowell's efforts to locate musicians for his lectures at the New School; see for example, *New York Times*, 13 November 1934, repr. in Schimpf, "Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer," 93n27.

180. Reed, "Innovator and the Primitives," 71. Reed also suggests that Herzog considered the early US ethnographies and early collecting of primitive music "amateurish," 71.

World," delivering it in much the same manner as Cowell had by using local performers, recordings, and guest speakers such as the highly respected American US ethnographer Helen H. Roberts, who introduced the New School audiences to Amerindian music.[181] Roberts had studied music in Chicago and earned her MA at Columbia University working with Boas. She would become a frequent guest and part of the small coterie of scholars on whom Seeger would depend at the New School, particularly when Cowell was absent.[182] For Seeger, the musical materials of non-European music presented a significant learning curve in a new field of inquiry that he would begin to make his own. As Bruno Nettl has suggested, Seeger probably never thought himself an ethnomusicologist, but his strong intellectual curiosity and anthropological outlook coincided with the challenges that would become important to the discipline.[183] Moreover, his formal academic training and wider intellectual interests as a musicologist helped to bridge the activities initiated through Cowell's tireless energies at the New School and bring them to the wider scholarly community.[184]

Perhaps one of the first steps in that direction included what would become a seminal article in the field of musicology and ethnomusicology. Seeger, Roberts, and Cowell, on the invitation of Johnson, contributed a collaborative article to the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, a new publication closely tied to the New School and its intellectual circle. The *Encyclopaedia* had been proposed originally by New School anthropologist Alexander Goldenweiser, a student of Boas, and it became a landmark publication bringing together ten learned societies that sponsored the project. Its scholarly goals reflected the School's own vision to gather a variety of disciplines (including the arts) under the umbrella of the social sciences, and thereby redefine the boundaries of the field as Mumford and others at the New School conceived.[185] Publication of this fifteen-volume set ran from 1930 to 1935, with the article on "Music" published in 1933. As associate editor, Johnson was central to the *Encyclopaedia*'s organization, helping to commission articles, and many scholars closely associated with the New School served on the publication's board, including Mumford and Boas. Johnson and the *Encylopaedia*'s editor, Edwin

181. The methods Seeger adopted to deliver the course are mentioned in *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (1932) (NSA).

182. When it was clear that Hornbostel would be unable to continue to teach at the New School due to illness, Seeger suggested they ask Roberts and Herzog to collaborate with him to teach "Musical Systems of the World"; see Seeger, letter to Cowell, 14 March 1934 (HCC, NYPL, box 14, folder 14): "Let us get in Roberts, Herzog and Hornbostel and give it ['Musical Systems of the World'] all together."

183. Nettl, "Dual Nature of Ethnomusicology," 266.

184. On Seeger's exploration of musicological issues, see his *Reminiscences*, 152–53, 184.

185. In a review of the publication's first volume, sociologist Ellsworth Faris raised the question of whether the social sciences had matured enough as a unified disciplinary field to warrant such a text and saw the function of the *Encyclopaedia* to further this goal; see Faris, Review of *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 1.*

Seligman, had begun exploratory preparations for the publication in 1924, establishing relationships with some prominent European scholars in the social sciences, a connection that would help clear a path toward the eventual appointment of Hornbostel at the New School in 1933.[186]

The bold inclusion of "Music" demonstrated the wide-ranging approach embraced by the editors signifying that art was considered a fundamental aspect of the social sciences. "No one who wishes to understand the operation of social laws in the modern world can afford to overlook the evidence offered by the arts," the editors of the *Encyclopaedia* noted in their concluding remarks following the *Encylopaedia*'s methodological statement.[187] Although the *Encyclopaedia*'s archives no longer hold the correspondence between Cowell and Roberts, a letter sent in November 1931 to Seeger from Johnson frames in detail the editor's goals and in turn reveals how the article on "Music" was shaped by the publication's scholarly orientation. Johnson writes:

> In an article of this kind we naturally make the social function the guiding thread, and our method is developmental and comparative. So far as the material is available we'd like a view of the functions subserved by music in primitive community life, in the great societies of antiquity, in mediaeval times, in the absolute monarchys [sic], in the liberal democratic states of the last hundred years. We'd also like some account taken of the initially parallel, later divergent streams of folk music and "art" music.
>
> Along with the social aspects we need a general treatment of the musical materials: the different scales, instrumentation; particularly the vast mushrooming out of "classical" music in its several main streams; latterday invasion of the heretics and the cosmopolitans.
>
> As if this weren't enough, we need also something on the position of music and the musician in the community: the musician's relation to the magician in primitive life, developing into religion; Tyrtaeus and martial religion; the alleged demoralizing effect in classical times of Lydian and other Oriental music (cf. the contamination of jazz); the effect of mechanical reproduction on the musician's position etc.[188]

In his memoirs, Johnson reveals that it was his practice to generate an outline for each article in order to motivate authors, keeping them focused on the scholarly task at hand within the boundaries defined by the *Encyclopaedia*'s intellectual scope.[189] What would become one of Seeger's most enduring intellectual ideas was thus grounded in Johnson's maxim to "make the social function the guiding thread."

186. Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 308; Vidich, *With a Critical Eye*, 374.

187. *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 1:7. Review by E. A. J. Johnson, *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 50 (1936), 355–66.

188. Johnson, letter to Seeger, 6 November 1931, Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Inc. (Records, Archives, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA, Manuscript Group 2, series 4, box 10, folder Seeger, Charles).

189. Johnson, *Pioneer's Progress*, 309.

Seeger wrote: "Music is a phenomenon of prolonged social growth—a culture. It is not only a product of a culture but one of the means by which the culture has come to be what it is and continues."[190] It is a theme that motivates Seeger's arguments and wove its way into the discussion, even in areas that Seeger had previously made his own in earlier publications. In this opening discussion, for example, he set forth the fundamental question of "how reliable language can be in presenting in words an understanding of the social function of music," and he responded to his own query by outlining new methods of music criticism, establishing categories of musical value including "the value of music to society," and enlisting musical science through the analysis of technical materials as an objective means to investigate musical phenomena.[191] Seeger's interests in anthropological approaches and social value have often been attributed to his indirect relationship to Boas's students Kroeber and Lowie, colleagues of Seeger's at Berkeley, and to his keen intellectual curiosity and independent study when he taught a course on myths and epics at the Institute of Musical Art (forerunner to the Juilliard School) beginning in 1921. Nevertheless, Johnson's dictum and its implications in the context of a published work suggest that Johnson and the intellectual culture at the New School provided a much more significant influence on his anthropological thinking.[192]

Roberts's portion of the article reflects her well-grounded training in anthropology with Boas; it continues the discussion by addressing the history and definitions of "primitive," offering a comparative summary of the field from instrumental to vocal descriptions of various cultures and an assessment of the contemporary state of research within the burgeoning field of comparative musicology. At the time, Roberts had been exploring the compositional melodic and rhythmic structures of "Primitive Music," an area she had pursued at Yale as a researcher.[193]

Cowell's contribution, entitled "Oriental," provides a cultural and comparative approach to the various types of music used in Asian cultures through a detailed discussion of their various scale systems and rhythms as well as a description of the instruments used. Because he wrote the contribution while still in Berlin, the discussion reflects the detailed work he had accomplished

190. Seeger, "Music," 148.

191. Ibid., first quotation, 143; second quotation, 145; and on the question of science, 146. For various interpretations of the ideas Seeger put forward in this article, see Zbikowski, "Seeger's Unitary Field Theory Reconsidered"; and Baranovitch, "Anthropology and Musicology." For a summary of Seeger's contributions to American musicology, see Palisca, "American Scholarship in Western Music."

192. On Seeger's introduction to anthropological thinking, see Pescatello, *Charles Seeger*, 53–54, 86; and Baranovitch, "Anthropology and Musicology," 155–56.

193. On Roberts and her contributions to ethnomusicology, see Frisbie, "Women and the Society for Ethnomusicology," esp. 249–51.

there, particularly his study with the specialists he encountered in Indian, Javanese, and Balinese musics.[194] Although Cowell reported to his parents that he had been gathering notes for a book on comparative musicology (it never appeared), the article "Music" nevertheless became a seminal piece for ethnomusicologists and musicologists because it conveyed, in a variety of ways, the relationship between music and society, an anthropological notion that would become fundamental to the study of music, while it exploited comparative and developmental methods, all of which were shaped by the *Encyclopaedia*'s social-science orientation. In January 1932, Cowell introduced a course on "Comparative Systems of the World," in which he presented many of the ideas he published in the *Encyclopaedia* article, while in the fall that same year, Seeger offered "Philosophy and Music," a course that drew on materials he presented in the *Encyclopaedia* article, which the *New School Bulletin* quotes verbatim.

Contributions to the *Encyclopaedia* and teaching at the New School were closely interwoven. Each activity motivated the other, creating an intellectual rapport that stimulated new institutional and scholarly possibilities, with broader ramifications for music scholarship. In January 1930, just after Cowell became a regular faculty member at the New School, a small scholarly group that included Cowell, Seeger, Otto Kinkeldey (Professor of Musicology at Cornell University), Joseph Schillinger (Russian composer and theorist), and Joseph Yasser (Russian musicologist and theorist) founded the New York Musicological Society (NYMS), predecessor to the American Musicological Society.[195] It was a community closely associated with the New School. In their published *Bulletin*, for example, the Society proclaimed that its members' interests were "systematic rather than historical, stressing speculative and experimental methods in close liaison with the vanguard of the living art of music," an agenda that almost replicated that of the New School.[196]

The exchange of ideas moved freely between the NYMS and the New School. On the one hand, activities at the New School were frequently duplicated in one form or another at Society meetings, likewise presentations at the NYMS were integrated into the courses at the New School. Seeger's talks at the NYMS on "Modern Neume Theory" (30 November 1931) and "Dissonant Counterpoint" (14 May 1931), for example, were integrated into his twelve-lecture course at the New School on "Philosophy and Music," given in

194. Cowell, letter to Olive Cowell, 19 November 1932: "I have finished the article on Oriental music for the *Encyclopedia* [*sic*] *of the Social Sciences*, which Alvin Johnson is compiling" (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 20).

195. On the origins of the NYMS, see Crawford, *American Musicological Society*; and from Charles Seeger's perspective, *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 1 (November 1931); and Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 221–26.

196. *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 1 (November 1931).

the fall of 1932. Several NYMS members also participated in lectures, demonstrations, or workshops at the New School.[197] Theremin's newly invented electrical instruments became the focus of a concert laboratory demonstration at the New School on 20 March 1931, and later he presented a version of the materials at the NYMS on 31 January 1932. In 1931, the Society held a meeting featuring Sarat Lahiri, a Bengali Indian (invited by Cowell), who offered a special demonstration on rhythm in the music of modern India after having given a formal concert the month before at the New School.[198] And when Cowell returned from his first trip to Berlin after having been exposed to Hornbostel's work, he gave a formal presentation entitled "Some Aspects of Comparative Musicology" at the NYMS, while simultaneously lecturing on "Musical Systems of the World" for the first time at the New School. While both platforms generated scholarly opportunities to present and exchange their innovative ideas, in comparison to the professional intimacy of the Society, the New School offered scholars a wider and diverse audience of students, which often included the general public and at times journalists who wrote about what they heard.[199]

Comparative Musicology at the New School

In a letter to Charles Ives, dated 14 February 1933, Cowell wrote, "The program of the New School is one of my 'Music of the world' series, which has been going strong, and on the strength of which we have organized 'Comparative Musicology' society, of which I sent you a circular."[200] This new society was the first professional organization in the United States dedicated to the research of non-European music. It reflected the initiatives that had been cultivated primarily at the New School, which included Cowell's popular course "Music Systems of the World" and its accompanying concerts series; the collection of recordings that were continuing to grow through the financial support of Johnson and New School Dean Clara Mayer; and the efforts

197. Rao has published a complete list of participants and paper titles presented at the NYMS over its four-year life; see "American Compositional Theory," 598–99.

198. *New School for Social Research, Inc.* (Fall 1931). On the subject of East Indian rhythm presented at the NYMS and at the New School, see Sargeant and Lahiri, "Study in East Indian Rhythm."

199. Among those who participated at the New School and NYMS were Seeger, Theremin, Lahiri, Weiss, Slonimsky, Roberts, Crawford Seeger, Schillinger, and Yasser. A group of Russian musicologists who had formed their own scholarly circle were also linked to the NYMS and, on Cowell's invitation, participated at the New School; see Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 228; and *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 1 (November 1931). On the exclusion of women from the New York Musicological Society, see Tick, *Ruth Crawford Seeger*, 121–22; and Cusick, "Gender, Musicology, and Feminism." In comparison, the New School's liberal agenda did not discriminate against women, they were included as lecturers and participants in all the school's activities.

200. Letter from Cowell to Ives, 14 February 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 23).

made by Cowell, Seeger, and above all Johnson to retain close ties with the European community of scholars in the social sciences and in comparative musicology.[201] This last point was significant because it was the cultivation of these international scholarly relationships (initiated by Cowell originally) that brought academic legitimacy to the Society, a point not overlooked by Johnson in his work on the *Encyclopaedia* and in his next endeavor.

In the 1932–33 *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, Seeger made an appeal that "A Society for Research in Non-European Musics" be created and that the society function "in harmony" with the Gesellschaft zur Erforschung der Musik des Orients in Berlin (founded in 1930). The plea was an attempt to confront the shifting political tensions that were mounting in Germany and their implications on the scholarly community there. Seeger called on those interested in saving the collection of recordings and the future of the Phonogramm-Archiv to join this new society and attend an organizational meeting, held at the New School in early 1933.[202] In February of that year, the American Society for Comparative Musicology was established under the organizing committee of Cowell, Herzog, Dorothy Lawton, Roberts, and Seeger.[203]

The timing for the formation of the Society and its agenda coincided with the efforts Johnson had begun to bring scholars imperiled by National Socialism to the New School through a program that he and the board devised, which they would call the "University in Exile."

> I propose to confine it to the social sciences—broadly interpreted—a field which is also the center of the battle. I have as the board to grant me authority to set up such an institution in the N.S. and have their enthusiastic authorization . . . 15 professors will be invited to the New School. Select their own Dean, arrange their own curriculum, establish a center where German university methods may be taught, with all the resources we have on the Encyclopedia [*sic*] staff, we can select as brilliant a group as were ever brought together in any institution.[204]

201. On the importance of Cowell's course "Musical Systems of the World" and the establishment of a society for research in Non-European musics, see "Miscellaneous Notices," *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 2 (1932–33).

202. *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 2 (1932–33).

203. *New York Musicological Society Bulletin*, no. 3 (1933–34); and Seeger, "Notes and News," 1–2. Seeger's recollections concerning the formation of the American Society of Comparative Musicology omit Cowell; see Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 233. Until 30 December 1932, Cowell had been in Europe gathering recordings, where he was in contact with Hornbostel. After the formation of the Society's Constitution, Cowell was made Vice President together with Harold Spivacke; see also Seeger, "Notes and News," 1–3.

204. Copy of a letter to Prof. E. R. A. Seligman (editor of the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*) from Alvin Johnson enclosed with a note from Clara W. Mayer who writes, "Will you let me have your reactions to the whole idea and your suggestion." 24 April 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 19, folder 11).

By May, Cowell was already on the West Coast, but Seeger was working to solicit funds to help bring Hornbostel to the New School as one of the fifteen professors. Clara Mayer wrote to Cowell with a copy of a letter from Johnson outlining the intensity of the situation in Berlin, while in her note she informed Cowell:

> I enclose a letter of Dr. Johnson's describing the University in Exile. Of course you have read of what is going on in Germany but probably you will realize more forcibly just how far it has gone when I say that von Hornbostel has been dismissed and has written to Professor Boas asking whether he knew of any opening for him. Seeger is bestirring himself in his behalf through Carl Engel with a view to reaching Mrs. Coolidge. Dr. Johnson will certainly invite him here if the money can be found.[205]

Hornbostel arrived at the New School in the summer of 1933 bringing his instruments and an extensive library. In the fall, he proposed to teach two courses, the first entitled "Comparative Musicology of Oriental High Cultures" and the second "Problems of Musicology." Although there is little information concerning the content of these courses, Seeger captured some of the details of Hornbostel's first seminar, which was attended by only two students.[206] Hornbostel spoke about the central importance and function of the Edison Phonograph, while later he presented recorded examples that became the basis for his discussion of the music. With Hornbostel's involvement in the New School, Seeger, Herzog, and Roberts (ironically, Cowell's involvement in these endeavors seems limited at that time as he was still on the West Coast), initiated plans to move the collection of recorded materials from the Berlin archive to New York with the idea that they could establish an Institute of Comparative Musicology under the direction of Hornbostel. These plans were frustrated, however, given Hornbostel's failing health, which finally led to his premature departure to seek medical attention in England. Both the American Society for Comparative Musicology and the plans for an Institute of Comparative Musicology were short-lived (Hornbostel stayed in New York for only one year, and the Society disbanded in 1936).[207] Nonetheless, through the collaborative efforts of Cowell and Seeger, the New School had become an intellectual and creative nexus, where a small nucleus of music specialists generated a variety of exploratory activities in support of the study, performance, and institutionalization of comparative musicology, a legacy that has yet to be fully acknowledged in the history of the discipline.

205. Mayer, letter to Cowell, 4 May 1933 (HCC, NYPL, box 163, folder 11).

206. Seeger, *Reminiscences*, 230–32.

207. I shall address the University in Exile as it relates to the music program elsewhere. On the American Society for Comparative Musicology (1933), see Seeger, "Notes and News," 1–3; and Frisbie, "Women and the Society for Ethnomusicology," 250–55.

By 1933, music had indeed attained the "important place at the New School" envisioned by Johnson. The extraordinary musical activities initiated by Cowell and the community he fashioned launched the institution as an alternative platform in contemporary culture. Though other New York institutions such as the League of Composers or Columbia University advanced creative and intellectual endeavors in music during the same period, the New School's political and administrative unorthodoxies and the musical culture it propagated became a catalyst for innovation. The potency of these activities also nourished parallel intellectual and creative ventures in New York that would in time evolve to become vital scholarly enterprises in mainstream American academic life—such as the American Musicological Society and, later, the Society for Ethnomusicology. Likewise, the initiatives fostered at the New School anticipated educational trends that would later be embraced in curricula of mainstream institutions. Only years later did universities in the United States begin to offer courses in the study of indigenous musics or pursue musicological studies in experimental or modernist musics as legitimate fields of learning. Moreover, the oasis (to return to Berger's portrayal) cultivated a cohort of modernist American composers, a contribution that helped to build a strong nationalistic musical presence in the United States. These varied accomplishments illustrate the far-reaching vision of the New School for Social Research in its mission to uphold the democratic ideals of intellectual liberty and promote an understanding of contemporary American life and culture.

Works Cited

Archives and Collections

Amherst, MA, Hampshire College, Archives
Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences, Inc., Records, bulk 1927–1934
New York, New School for Social Research, New School Archives and Special Collections (NSA)
Scrapbooks (http://library.newschool.edu/speccoll/kellen/findingaids/NS0801.html).
New York, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Music Division
John J. Becker Papers
Arthur Berger Papers
Henry Cowell Collection (HCC)
Sidney Robertson Cowell, Memoir
William Schuman Papers
Charles Seeger, Oral History Transcripts, by Rita Mead
Washington, DC, Library of Congress, Music Division
Aaron Copland Collection (CCLC)
Charles and Ruth Crawford Seeger Collection
"Composers' Collective," boxes 1 and 2 ("Composers' Collective," LC)

Government Documents

Espionage Act, 15 June 1917. Pub.L. 65–24, 40 Stat. 217
Immigration Act, 16 October 1918. Pub.L 65–186, 40 Stat. 1012
Sedition Act, 16 May 1918. Pub.L. 65–150, 40 Stat. 55

Printed and Manuscript Sources

Arnold, Matthew. *Culture and Anarchy*. Edited by Jane Garnett. Oxford World Classics. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Baranovitch, Nimrod. "Anthropology and Musicology: Seeger's Writings from 1933 to 1953." In *Understanding Charles Seeger, Pioneer in American Musicology*, edited by Bell Yung and Helen Rees, 150–71. Music in American Life. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

Beals, Clyde. "Social Research School to Have New Building." *New York Times*, 16 February 1930, 147.

Berger, Arthur. *Reflections of an American Composer*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

———. "The Young Composers' Group." *Trend* 1 (April–May–June 1933): 26–28.

Betz, Albrecht. *Hanns Eisler, Political Musician*. Translated by Bill Hopkins. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Bick, Sally. "*Of Mice and Men*: Copland, Hollywood, and American Musical Modernism." *American Music* 23 (2005): 426–72.

Blake, Casey Nelson. "Art as Social Research. " Lecture delivered in honor of the New School at 91, 12 November 2010. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-sVDZCBAEA. Accessed 15 September 2012.

———. *Beloved Community: The Cultural Criticism of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank & Lewis Mumford*. Cultural Studies of the United States. Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

Blitzstein, Marc. "Spring Season in the East." *Modern Music* 8, no. 4 (May–June 1931): 33–39.

Boziwick, George. "Henry Cowell at the New York Public Library: A Whole World of Music." *Notes* 57 (September 2000): 46–58.

Broyles, Michael. *Mavericks and Other Traditions in American Music*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004.

Butler, Nicholas Murray. *Annual Report for 1917–1918, Columbia University*. New York: Columbia University, 1918.

———. *The Rise of a University*. Vol. 2, *The University in Action*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1937.

Carwithen, Edward R. "Henry Cowell: Composer and Educator." PhD diss., University of Florida, 1991.

"Clara Mayer: She Coaxed a Dream into a Reality." *New School Observer* (April 1987), 3.

Columbia University. *Bulletin of Information, Department of Music, Announcement 1925–26*. New York: Columbia University, 1925.

"Columbia University vs. Professor Cattell." *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 8, no. 7 (November 1922): 21–41.

Copland, Aaron. "America's Young Men of Promise." *Modern Music* 3, no. 3 (March–April, 1926): 13–20.

———. *Copland on Music*. New York: Doubleday, 1960.

———. "Memorial to Paul Rosenfeld." *Notes* 4 (March 1947): 147–51.
———. *Music and Imagination*. Charles Eliot Norton Lectures, 1951–52. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1952.
———. *Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1941.
———. *The Selected Correspondence of Aaron Copland*. Edited by Elizabeth B. Crist and Wayne Shirley. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006.
———. *What to Listen For in Music*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939.
Copland, Aaron, and Vivian Perlis. *Copland: 1900 through 1942*. New York: St. Martin's/Marek, 1984.
Cowell, Henry. "Adventures in Soviet Russia," *San Franciscan* 5, no. 2 (December 1930): 16–17; 5, no. 3 (January 1931): 12.
———. "Charles Louis Seeger, Jr.: An Appraisal of a Local Composer." *Fortnightly* (15 January 1932): 5.
———. "Charles Seeger." In *American Composers on American Music: A Symposium*, edited by Henry Cowell, 119–24. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1933.
———. "The Composer's World." In *The Preservation of Traditional Forms in Learned and Popular Music of the Orient and the Occident*, edited by William Kay Archer, 99–100. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961.
———. "Conservative Music in Radical Russia." *New Republic* 69 (14 August 1929): 339–41.
———. "From Tone Clusters to Contemporary Listeners." *Music Journal* 14 (1956): 5–6.
———. "Harmonic Development in Music." *Freeman* 3, no. 55 (30 March 1921): 63–65; 3, no. 56 (6 April 1921): 85–87; 3, no. 57 (13 April 1921): 111–13.
———. "Hybrid Music." *Proceedings of the Music Teachers Association* 39 (1945): 22–23.
———. "Moravian Music." *Pro-Musica Quarterly* 5, no. 2 (June 1927): 25–29.
———. "Music, Oriental." In *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 11:152–55.
———. "Music of the Orient." *Music Journal* 21, no. 6 (September 1963): 25–26, 74.
———. "A Musician's Experiences in Russia." *Churchman* 140, no. 17 (26 April 1930): 10–11.
———. *New Musical Resources*. New York: Knopf, 1930. Reprint, New York: Something Else Press, 1969.
———. "Oriental Influence on Western Music." In *Music—East and West: Report on 1961 Tokyo East-West Encounter Conference*, 71–76. Tokyo: Executive Committee for 1961 Tokyo East-West Encounter, 1961.
———. "Our Inadequate Notation." *Modern Music* 4, no. 3 (March–April 1927): 29–33.
———. "Playing Concerts in Moscow." *Musical Courier* 102, no. 21 (21 May 1931): 6, 30–31.
———. "The Scientific Approach to Non-European Music." *Music Vanguard* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1935): 62–67.
———. "Towards Neo-Primitivism." *Modern Music* 10, no. 3 (1933): 149–53.
———. "Trends in American Music." In *American Composers on American Music: A Symposium*, edited by Henry Cowell, 3–13. New York: F. Ungar, 1962.
———. "Vocal Innovators of Central Europe." *Modern Music* 7, no. 2 (February–March 1930): 34–38.

Cowell, Henry, ed. *American Composers on American Music: A Symposium*. New York: F. Ungar, 1962.
Cowell, Sidney Robertson. "Charles Seeger (1886–1979)." *Musical Quarterly* 65 (1979): 305–7.
———. "Memoir." "Chapter XVI, 1929." Henry Cowell Collection, NYPL.
———. "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Address," honoring Henry Cowell, 1953. HCC, NYPL, box 163, folder 23.
Craven, Kenneth. "Greenwich Village and the Soul of a Woman." Unpublished pamphlet. New School for Social Research, Fogelman Library.
Crawford, Richard. *American Musicological Society, 1934–1984: An Anniversary Essay*. Philadelphia: American Musicological Society, 1984.
Crist, Elizabeth B. *Music for the Common Man*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
"A Cross Section of Modern Music." *Musical Leader*, 7 January 1928.
Culture and the Crisis: An Open Letter to the Writers, Artists, Teachers, Physicians, Engineers, Scientists, and Other Professional Workers of America. New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1932.
Cusick, Suzanne. "Gender, Musicology, and Feminism." In *Rethinking Music*, edited by Nicholas Cook and Mark Everist, 471–98. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
De Graaf, Melissa. *The New York Composers' Forum Concerts, 1935–1940*. Eastman Studies in Music. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press (forthcoming).
DeLapp, Jennifer. "Copland in the Fifties: Music and Ideology in the McCarthy Era." PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1997.
Dewey, John. *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. Textbook Series in Education. New York: Macmillan, 1916.
Dickinson, Edward. *The Study of the History of Music*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910.
Dubinets, Elena. "Henry Cowell and Russia: Connections and Influences." Unpublished paper.
Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences. Edited by Edwin R. A. Seligman. 15 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1930–35.
"Eva Gauthier Gives Recital of Contrasts." *New York Times*, 30 December 1927, 22.
Faris, Ellsworth. Review of *The Encyclopaedia of The Social Sciences*, vol 1. In *American Journal of Sociology* 35 (1930): 1112–13.
Finan, Christopher M. *From the Palmer Raids to the Patriot Act: A History of the Fight for Free Speech in America*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2007.
Frank, Waldo. *Memoirs of Waldo Frank*. Edited by Alan Trachtenberg. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1973.
———. *Our America*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1919.
———. "Symposium on the Little Magazine." *Golden Goose* 3 (1951): 20–22.
Frankenstein, Alfred. "America Stars in Modernist Concert." *Chicago Tribune*, 1 January 1928.
———. "A Cross Section of Modern Music." *Musical Leader*, 7 January 1928.
Frisbie, Charlotte J. "Helen Heffron Roberts (1888–1985): A Tribute." *Ethnomusicology* 33 (1989): 97–111.
———. "Women and the Society for Ethnomusicology: Roles and Contributions from Formation through Incorporation (1952/53–61)." In *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology*, edited by Bruno

Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman, 244–65. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991.
Glinsky, Albert. *Theremin: Ether Music and Espionage*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
Godwin, Joscelyn. "The Music of Henry Cowell." PhD diss., Cornell University, 1969.
Goldman, Emma. *Living My Life*. 2 vols. New York: Knopf, 1931. Reprint, Mineola, NY: Dover, 1970.
Herzog, George. "Special Song Types in North American Indian Music." *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Musikwissenschaft* 3 (1935): 23–33, with transcriptions on 1–6.
Hicks, Michael. *Henry Cowell, Bohemian*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002.
Hood, Mantle. "The Challenge of 'Bi-Musicality.' " *Ethnomusicology* 4 (1960): 55–59.
Hutchins, Robert Maynard. *Great Books: The Foundation of a Liberal Education*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954.
Johnson, Alvin. *Deliver Us from Dogma*. New York: American Association for Adult Education, 1934.
———. *Liberal Education Fact and Fiction*. New York: Graduate Faculty of Political and Social Science, New School for Social Research, 1945.
———. *Pioneer's Progress: An Autobiography*. New York: Viking Press, 1952.
———. "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Address" honoring Henry Cowell (1953). Unpublished pamphlet. NSA
Johnson, E. A. J. "The *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*." [Review in] *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 50 (1936): 355–66.
Johnson, Steven. "Henry Cowell, John Varian, and Halcyon." *American Music* 11 (1993): 1–27.
Juley, Peter A., & Son. "Research School Speeds New Home." *New York Times*, 7 September 1930, N3.
Kerman, Joseph. *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985.
Kerr, Harrison. "Creative Music and the New School." *Trend* 2 (March–April 1934): 86–90.
Krohn, Claus-Dieter. *Intellectuals in Exile: Refugee Scholars and the New School for Social Research*. Translated by Rita and Robert Kimber. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993.
Lechner, Ethan. "Composers as Ethnographers: Difference in the Imaginations of Colin McPhee, Henry Cowell, and Lou Harrison." PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008.
Lederman, Minna. *The Life and Death of a Small Magazine "Modern Music," 1924–1946*. I.S.A.M. Monographs, no. 18. Brooklyn: Institute for Studies in American Music, 1983.
Lovejoy, A. O., Edward Capps, and A. A. Young. "Report of Committee on Academic Freedom in Wartime." *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* 4, no. 2–3 (February–March 1918): 29–47.
Magee, Gayle Sherwood. *Charles Ives Reconsidered*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008.
Manion, Martha L. *Writings about Henry Cowell: An Annotated Bibliography*. Brooklyn, NY: Institute for Studies in American Music, Conservatory of Music, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, 1982.

Mason, Daniel Gregory (biographical sections by Mary L. Mason). *Great Modern Composers*. New York: H. W. Gray, 1918.

Mayer, Clara W. "Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Address," honoring Henry Cowell (1953). HCC, NYPL, box 163, folder 12.

McPhee, Colin. "Winter Chronicle, New York." *Modern Music* 8, no. 3 (March–April 1931): 42–45.

Mead, Rita H. "The Amazing Mr. Cowell." *American Music* 1, no. 4 (1983): 63–89.

———. *Henry Cowell's New Music 1925–1936: The Society, the Music Editions, and the Recordings*. Studies in Musicology 40. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1981.

Miller, Leta E. "Henry Cowell and John Cage: Intersections and Influences, 1933–1941." This **Journal** 59 (2006): 47–111.

———. *Music and Politics in San Francisco: From the 1906 Quake to the Second World War*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

Montague, Stephen. "Rediscovering Leon Theremin." *Tempo: A Quarterly Review of Modern Music*, no. 177 (1991): 18–23.

Moore, MacDonald Smith. *Yankee Blues: Musical Culture and American Identity*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985.

Morgan, Robert P. " 'The Things Our Fathers Loved': Charles Ives and the European Tradition." In *Ives Studies*, edited by Philip Lambert, 3–26. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Mumford, Lewis. *The Golden Day: A Study in American Experience and Culture*. New York: Horace Liveright, 1926.

Myers, Helen. "North America." [Introduction.] In *Ethnomusicology: Historical and Regional Studies*, edited by Helen Myers, 401–4. Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music. New York: Norton, 1993.

Nettl, Bruno. "The Dual Nature of Ethnomusicology in North America: The Contributions of Charles Seeger and George Herzog." In *Comparative Musicology and Anthropology of Music: Essays on the History of Ethnomusicology*, edited by Bruno Nettl and Philip V. Bohlman, 266–76. Chicago Studies in Ethnomusicology. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

———. "George Herzog and the Study of Native American Music." Unpublished paper.

———. *Nettl's Elephant: On the History of Ethnomusicology*. Urbana, Springfield, and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010.

New School for Social Research. *Announcement*. 1922–23, 1925–26, 1926–27, Spring 1927, Winter 1927–28, 1928–29, 1929–30, Spring 1930. Continued as *New School for Social Research, Inc*.

———. *Bulletin*.

New School for Social Research, Inc. Fall 1931, Winter 1931, Spring 1932, 1932–33, 1933–34, 1935–36, Spring 1938, Spring 1939.

New York Musicological Society. *Bulletin*. No. 1 (November 1931), no. 2 (1932–33), no. 3 (1933–34).

New York (State) Legislative Committee to Investigate Seditious Activities. *Revolutionary Radicalism: Its History, Purpose and Tactics, with an Exposition and Discussion of the Steps Being Taken and Required to Curb It, being the report of the Joint legislative committee investigating seditious activities, filed April 24, 1920, in the Senate of the State of New York*. Albany: J. B. Lyon, 1920.

Nicholls, David. *American Experimental Music, 1890–1940*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

———. "Henry Cowell: A Call for Restitution." *Newsletter: Institute for Studies in American Music* 24, no. 1 (1994): 1–2.
———. "Henry Cowell's United Quartet." *American Music* 13 (1995): 195–217.
———. "Reaching Beyond the West: Asian Resonances in American Radicalism." *American Music* 17 (1999): 125–28.
———. "Transethnicism and the American Experimental Tradition." *Musical Quarterly* 80 (1996): 569–94.
Oja, Carol J. *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Palisca, Claude V. "American Scholarship in Western Music." In *Musicology*, edited by Frank Llewellyn Harrison, Mantle Hood, and Claude V. Palisca, 87–214. Princeton Studies; Humanistic Scholarship in America. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1963.
Paul, David C. "From American Ethnographer to Cold War Icon: Charles Ives through the Eyes of Henry and Sidney Cowell." This **Journal** 59 (2006): 399–457.
Pescatello, Ann M. *Charles Seeger: A Life in American Music*. Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992.
Pfannestiel, Todd J. *Rethinking the Red Scare: The Lusk Committee and New York's Crusade against Radicalism, 1919–1923*. New York and London: Routledge, 2003.
Pollack, Howard. *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man*. New York: Henry Holt, 1999.
Rao, Nancy Yunhwa. "American Compositional Theory in the 1930s: Scale and Exoticism in 'The Nature of Melody' by Henry Cowell." *Musical Quarterly* 85 (2001): 595–640.
———. "Cowell's Sliding Tone and the American Ultramodernist Tradition." *American Music* 23 (2005): 281–323.
———. "Henry Cowell and His Chinese Music Heritage: Theory of Sliding Tone and His Orchestral Work of 1953–1965." In *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, edited by Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau, 119–45. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004.
Reed, Daniel. "The Innovator and the Primitives: George Herzog in Historical Perspective." *Folklore Forum* 26 (1993): 69–92.
Reinhard, Krut. "The Berlin Phonogramm-Archive." *Folklore and Folk Music Archivist* 5, no. 2 (Summer, 1962): 1–4.
Richter, Annett Claudia. "Fiddles, Harmonicas, and Banjos: Thomas Hart Benton and His Role in Constructing Popular Notions of American Folk Music and Musicians." PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2008.
Roberts, Helen H. "Primitive." In *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 11:150–52.
Robertson Cowell, Sidney. *See* Cowell, Sidney Robertson.
Root, Deane L. "The Pan American Association of Composers (1928–1934)." *Anuario Interamericano de Investigación Musical* 8 (1972): 49–70.
Rosenfeld, Paul L. "The American Composer." *Seven Arts* 1 (November 1916): 89–94.
———. *By Way of Art: Criticisms of Music, Literature, Painting, Sculpture, and the Dance*. New York: Coward-McCann, 1928.
———. *Discoveries of a Music Critic*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1936.

———. *An Hour with American Music*. Philadelphia and London: Lippincott, 1929.
———. *Musical Impressions: Selections From Paul Rosenfeld's Criticism*. Edited by Herbert A. Leibowitz. London: Allen & Unwin, 1970.
———. *Musical Portraits: Interpretations of Twenty Modern Composers*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Howe, 1920.
———. "A View of Modern Music." *Dial* 78 (November 1925): 375–96.
Rossiter, Frank R. *Charles Ives and His America*. London: Gollancz, 1976.
Rutkoff, Peter M., and William B. Scott. *New School: A History of the New School for Social Research*. New York: Free Press, 1986.
"S. F. 'Radical' Wins Russia with Music." *San Francisco News*, 17 December 1929.
Sachs, Joel. *Henry Cowell: A Man Made of Music*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.
Sargeant, Winthrop, and Sarat Lahiri. "A Study in East Indian Rhythm." *Musical Quarterly* 17 (1931): 427–38.
Saylor, Bruce. "Henry Cowell." In *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, edited by H. Wiley Hitchcock and Stanley Sadie, 4 vols., 1:520–29. London: Macmillan, 1986.
———. *The Writings of Henry Cowell: A Descriptive Bibliography*. Brooklyn NY: Institute for Studies in American Music, Dept. of Music, School of Performing Arts, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York, 1977.
Schimpf, Peter John. "A Transcultural Student, Teacher, and Composer: Henry Cowell and the Music of the World's Peoples." PhD diss., Indiana University, 2006.
Schneider, Albrecht. "History to World War II: Northern and Western Europe: Germany and Austria." In *Ethnomusicology: Historical and Regional Studies*, edited by Helen Myers, 77–96. Norton/Grove Handbooks in Music. New York: Norton, 1993.
Seeger, Charles. "Henry Cowell." *Magazine of Art* 33, no. 5 (May 1940): 288.
———. "Notes and News." *Ethnomusicology* 1, no. 6 (January 1956): 1–9.
———. "On the Principles of Musicology." *Musical Quarterly* 10 (1924): 244–50.
———. *Reminiscences of an American Musicologist*. Interviewed by Adelaide G. Tusler and Ann M. Briegleb. Los Angeles: Oral History Program, 1972.
———. "Systematic and Historical Orientations in Musicology." *Acta Musicologica* 11, no. 4 (1939): 121–28.
———. "Systematic Musicology: Viewpoints, Orientations, and Methods." This **Journal** 4 (1951): 240–48.
———. "Toward an Establishment of the Study of Musicology in America." Unpublished paper (1913; Charles and Ruth Crawford Seeger Collection, Library of Congress). Partially printed in Pescatello, *Charles Seeger*, 54–56.
Seeger, Charles, Helen H. Roberts, and Henry Cowell. "Music." In *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, 11:143–65.
Seligman, Edwin R. A., ed. See *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*.
Sheppard, W. Anthony. "Continuity in Composing the American Cross-Cultural: Eichheim, Cowell, and Japan." This **Journal** 61 (2008): 465–540.
Siskin, Edgar. "George Herzog: A Peerless Musicologist Remembered." *American Jewish Archives* 42 (1989): 77–83. Reprinted in *Studies in Socio-Musical Sciences*, edited by Joachim Braun and Uri Sharvit, 71–77. Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1998.

Slonimsky, Nicolas. "Henry Cowell." In *American Composers on American Music: A Symposium*, edited by Henry Cowell, 57–63. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1933.

Smith, Julia. *Aaron Copland: His Work and Contribution to American Music*. New York: Dutton, 1955.

Spilker, John D. "Substituting a New Order: Dissonant Counterpoint, Henry Cowell and the Network of Ultra-Modern Composers." PhD diss., Florida State University, 2010.

Stallings, Stephanie N. "Collective Difference: The Pan-American Association of Composers and Pan-American Ideology in Music, 1925–1945." PhD diss., Florida State University, 2009.

Strunk, Oliver. "State and Resources of Musicology in the United States." *Bulletin of the American Council of Learned Societies*, no. 19 (1932).

Taylor, Timothy D. *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World*. Durham, NC, and London: Duke University Press, 2007.

Thomson, Virgil. *American Music since 1910*. Twentieth-Century Composers 1. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971.

Tick, Judith. "Ruth Crawford, Charles Seeger, and 'The Music of American Folk Song.' " In *Understanding Charles Seeger, Pioneer in American Musicology*, edited by Bell Yung and Helen Rees, 109–29. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

———. *Ruth Crawford Seeger: A Composer's Search for American Music*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Tommasini, Anthony. *Virgil Thomson: Composer on the Aisle*. New York: Norton, 1997.

Varèse, Louise. *Varèse: A Looking-Glass Diary*. New York: Norton, 1972.

Veblen, Thorstein. *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Business Men*. New York: Huebsch, 1918. Reprint, New York, 1965.

Vernon, Paul. "Odeon Records: Their 'Ethnic' Output." *Musical Traditions: The Magazine for Traditional Music throughout the World*, http://www.mustrad.org.uk/articles/odeon.htm#top. Accessed 15 April 2011.

Vidich, Arthur J. *With a Critical Eye: An Intellectual and His Times*. Edited by Robert Jackall. Knoxville, TN: Newfound Press, 2009.

Weisgall, Hugo. "The Music of Henry Cowell." *Musical Quarterly* 45 (1959): 484–500.

Zbikowski, Lawrence M. "Seeger's Unitary Field Theory Reconsidered." In *Understanding Charles Seeger, Pioneer in American Musicology*, edited by Bell Yung and Helen Rees, 130–49. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

Recording

Cowell, Henry, compiler and ed. *Music of the World's People*. 5 vols. Folkways Records FE 4504–4508, 1955–61, LP.

Abstract

As an institution of higher learning, the New School for Social Research was widely regarded as unorthodox. From its inception in 1919, its guiding

principle was freedom: freedom of opinion, of teaching, of research, of publication. Initially focusing on the social sciences, by 1927 it introduced music as a significant part of that program. The School's social science perspective, its educational unorthodoxies, and its liberal philosophical ideals set a distinctive tone, nurturing an unfettered and accepting haven for a progressive community of musical personalities. Most prominent among them stood Henry Cowell, but Paul Rosenfeld, Aaron Copland, Charles Seeger, and others also contributed to the vitality of the School. From 1927 until 1933, Cowell presided over a program of lectures, concerts, symposia, and workshops dedicated to the cause of contemporary American music. In view of the School's adult population, music was treated primarily as an intellectual and cultural pursuit that stimulated new spheres of musical inquiry. At the same time, the influence of the social sciences encouraged the study of music through the political and social lens of culture. The diversity and singularity of these approaches created a new context for music and a significant contribution to the history of US musical culture.

Keywords: New School for Social Research, Henry Cowell, modernism, comparative musicology, Charles Seeger