



***THE CLASH OF DEFINITIONS¹: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF
FIELD AND FIELDWORK IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY***

***TANIMLARIN ÇATIŞMASI: ETNOMÜZİKOLOJİDE ALAN
VE ALAN ÇALIŞMASININ ELEŞTİREL BİR İNCELEMESİ***

Ferhat ARSLAN*

ÖZ

Geçtiğimiz yüzyıl boyunca alan çalışması kavramı ve bu kavramın antropoloji ve etnomüzikoloji gibi etnografik disiplinlerdeki uygulanışı çeşitli değişiklikler geçirmiştir. Belli siyasi, kültürel ve sosyal eğilimleri takiben, alan çalışması artık basit bir veri toplama yönteminden daha fazlası olarak kabul edilmektedir. Alanın özellikle *doğu* yönündeki ve karakteristik olarak *egzotik* konumlandırılması geçerliliğini giderek kaybetmektedir. Günümüzde alan kavramının coğrafi ve zihinsel olarak değişen özellikleri yeni ufuklar keşfedilmesine neden olmuş ve araştırmacıların yaklaşımlarını gözden geçirmelerini zorunlu kılmıştır. Bu yazı, yerleşik terminolojiyi ve yakından ilişkili kimlik politikalarını analiz ederek etnomüzikolojide alan çalışmasını ve aktörlerinin konumlandırılmasını eleştirel olarak incelemektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Alan, Alan Çalışması, Etnomüzikoloji, Terminoloji, Kimlik.

* University of Vienna, Faculty of Philological and Cultural Studies, Musicology Institute, ferhat.arslan@gmx.at, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7761-7207>. I would like to thank Alex Kreger and Zeynep Sarıkartal for all their invaluable effort, comments and contributions.

¹ This part of the title is taken from Edward W. Said's informative essay "The Clash of Definitions" (2000), which was written as a response to Samuel Huntington's "The Clash of Civilizations?" (1993) within the context of orientalism and moreover which constitutes the backbone of this survey.

* Makale Geliş Tarihi: 15.10.2017
Makale Kabul Tarihi: 27.12.2017

ABSTRACT

Over the last century, the concept of fieldwork and its implementation in ethnographic disciplines such as anthropology and ethnomusicology have undergone various changes. Following certain political, cultural and social trends, fieldwork is now considered more than a simple data collection method. The positioning of the field, which was mainly in the direction of *east* and characteristically *exotic*, gradually loses its validity. Today, geographically and mentally shifting characteristics of the field concept leads the discovery of new horizons and forces researchers to correct their approaches. Through analyzing the established terminology and closely related identity politics, this paper critically reviews ethnomusicological fieldwork and the positioning of its actors.

Keywords: Field, Fieldwork, Ethnomusicology, Terminology, Identity.

I can never romanticize language again
 never deny its power for disguise
 for mystification
 but the same could be said for music
 or any form created
 painted ceilings beaten gold
 worm-worn Pietàs reorganizing victimization
 frescoes translating violence
 into patterns so powerful and pure
 we continually fail to ask are they true for us.²

INTRODUCTION

Ethnomusicology is a relatively new discipline among the social sciences. As in others, its definition, methods and scope have become a matter of debate not only for ethnomusicologists, but also for scholars from different spheres. Through these debates, ethnomusicology made use of ideas and methods incorporated from disciplines including anthropology, folklore, linguistics, archeology, and history and built organic ties with these disciplines in varying densities. For instance, at some point “applying anthropological approaches to musical performances” (Seeger, 1987: 491) has become the norm in ethnomusicology. Fieldwork, one of the most prominent and widely implemented methods in ‘ethnographic disciplines’ (Schechner, 2003), was also

² Rich, Adrienne (1981), “The Images”, A Wild Patience Has Taken Me This Far: Poems, 1978-81 (New York: Norton).

a direct transport from archeology and anthropology; although ethnomusicology is laden with this method by its nature. Examples regarding such borrowings and approaches can easily be multiplied. In this sense, Alan P. Merriam begins his cornerstone essay *Ethnomusicology Discussion and Definition of the Field* by referring to archeology and admits that “it may seem strange that a paper which proposes to discuss and define the field of ethnomusicology should begin with a quotation concerning American archaeology” (Merriam, 1960: 107). Merriam knew that while ethnomusicology was growing into something other than its earlier form, i.e., comparative musicology, fresh ideas, approaches and methods were needed and the above-mentioned disciplines were useful sources for that purpose.

What was there before the introduction of new methods and why did ethnomusicologists need to modify it through borrowing? Our recent ancestors of comparative musicology from the late 19th century were applying ‘the armchair ethnomusicology’ method (Merriam, 1964:38-39; Nettl, 2005: 9). In this method scholars were waiting for the collected data from around the world to be brought to them. These data were in various formats: they were, for example, the semi-fictitious travel books written by missionaries and colonial officers, often falsely understood musical notes taken by travelers, depictions of instruments drawn by painter-adventurers, or bought/stolen goods such as instruments, music-related sculptures, or anything can be carried. The task of the scholar was to analyze, compare, and comment on the data at hand and to create a new body of information which was considered scientific enough. As the name of the discipline suggests, the scientific information extracted from this data was primarily based on comparison. The scholar was comparing the freshly collected data with other available data to build a theory. However, failing to take part in the data collection process actively, the armchair theorist is now considered to be an archaic character in academia. This was a time before even the current name of the discipline, ethnomusicology, was offered by Jaap Kunst in 1950’s.

With the passing of time the new discipline matured. Ethnomusicology, as known today, faced some difficulties in making itself accepted among the other social sciences. Because of its inquisitive interest in wide and complex subject matters, ethnomusicology –especially right after the formative years– reached a certain condition of vulnerability. During its early development years ethnomusicology had to lean on the already established disciplines, which had relatively more solid basis than this immature discipline. Following that, in the second phase, it adapted their theories and methods to develop its own. However, together with the methods and theories various social, material, cultural, and cognitive paradoxes and problems of these disciplines have also been transferred to the sphere of ethnomusicology. This caused drastic discussions and eventually regulations in ethnomusicology’s methods of knowledge production, representation, and interpretation.

In this paper I will address one of these problems that is the conventional relation between the ethnomusicologist and fieldwork. To guide the discussion, I will follow Anthony Seeger's advice and "focus on general questions rather than specific answers" (Seeger, 1987: 494). Therefore, one main question will lead this paper:

How do we conceptualize and locate the field in fieldwork?

By focusing on this question, I aim to address identity-related issues in ethnomusicology and other ethnographic disciplines putting the method of fieldwork into practice. Through self-critical reflections, similar questions have been asked by a variety of scholars to reorient themselves and find out better ways to approach their topics. As Timothy Cooley puts it, "ethnomusicologists are in a unique position to question established methods and goals of the social sciences, and to explore new perspectives" (Cooley, 1997: 3). That is why, without necessarily aiming to give final answers, I take the advantage of Cooley's claim and investigate some topics covering my question.

1. PARADOXES OF TERMINOLOGY

Countless scholars have attempted to define what ethnomusicology is, what exactly an ethnomusicologist does, and how.³ In the early years of institutionalized ethnomusicology, when "studies were marked by an emphasis upon the analysis of melodic and pitch phenomena, including the study of scales, intervals and tonal systems" (Merriam, 1960: 107), the common practice and focus was on 'non-Western' music and its classification, analysis and comparison. As time passed new definitions for ethnomusicology have been suggested and some of them were accepted, which expectedly influenced the way the scholars approach their study subjects.

Following the footsteps of our ancestors, if we compared ethnomusicology and medicine in the context of their formation processes, we could say that both actually had plural formations in different places of the world. A common approach in medicine, namely medical pluralism⁴, judiciously reveals the fact that the establishment of medicine cannot be attributed to the one part of the world or to just one society. The same view may be applied to ethnomusicology as well. That is to say, even though the extant definition and methodology have been provided by the institutional ethnomusicology, when we consider the example of medical pluralism, we reach the probability that there might be other possible and even earlier versions, definitions and usages of ethnomusicology,

³Many early examples of these attempts can be found in Alan P. Merriam's essay "Ethnomusicology Discussion and Definition of the Field" (1960) and in its references part.

⁴ For further information: Leslie, Charles (1980), "Medical pluralism in world perspective", *Social Science & Medicine. Part B: Medical Anthropology*, 14 (4): 191-195.

utilized by ‘the subjects’ of the institutional ethnomusicology, to be more precise, by non-Western circles.

This might sound presumptuous, however, Euro-/ egocentric approaches of comparative musicology and the other ethnographic disciplines have also been similarly brought into question and criticized by the second generation (or post-war generation) of ethnomusicologists. The question of who established ethnomusicology is not the main concern of this paper nor is it possible to answer without doubts. For that reason, I will focus on a relevant question: how is ethnomusicological fieldwork understood and done today? I believe an investigation of this question can provide us insight into the positioning of the self and the other in ethnomusicology and related ethnographic disciplines. For instance, the metamorphosis of comparative musicology into ethnomusicology throughout the 20th century with the adoption of fieldwork as a new method is a demonstration of ethnomusicologists’ changing positions vis-a-vis their study subjects.

Establishing a discipline comes indispensably with its founders. These founders are generally the trend setting scholars with their own viewpoints, cultural as well as social backgrounds, and more importantly certain aims, which eventually influence the nature of the discipline and create behavioral patterns to follow or deny for the subsequent generation. In this regard, it is not surprising that the popular approaches of comparative musicologists were upgraded by the subsequent generation. Various ethnomusicologists including Alan P. Merriam, Mantle Hood, Bruno Nettl, Mieczyslaw Kolinski, and Jaap Kunst frequently discussed new definitions and ways to approach their study subjects. Kolinski, for example, refused an ethnomusicology “as the science of non-European music” as early as 1957 (Kolinski, 1957: 1-2), while Hood and Kunst were mainly busy with the “ethno-” prefix and its potential scope (Kunst, 1955: 9; Hood, 1957: 2). By the end of the 1950’s Kunst was explaining “the study-object of ethnomusicology,” as in the early years of the discipline, as the study of “*traditional* music and musical instruments of all cultural strata of mankind, from the so-called primitive peoples to the civilized nations” and “all tribal and folk music and every kind of non-Western art music” (Kunst, 1959: 1). Gilbert Chase, on the other hand, highlighted an emerging trend of ethnomusicology as “the musical study of contemporary man, to whatever society he may belong, whether primitive or complex, Eastern or Western” (Chase, 1958: 7). Even though there are still alarming terms in the quotations above, the focus of ethnomusicology was eventually changed in such a way that the scholar was supposed to deny an eastern vs. western dichotomy.

The change did not come only from inside; the external circumstances of the postwar period have led scholars to review their position and perspectives.

However, as was the case before, the way the discipline was defined was also the primary determinant and indicator of its methods and approaches. Melville J. Herskovitz in this context has creditably pointed out that “the relation between research design and theoretical terms of reference in shaping ethnographic studies is of the utmost importance” (Herskovitz, 1954: 3). From the 1960s on, the discussions in ethnomusicology were expanded to new areas. Along with the study topics, scholars started to inspect their methodologies, approaches, and definitions up to the point of self-criticism. It then became possible to question the validity of their representations of the other. As one of the results, the topic of identity was brought to the discipline. Especially the introduction of *reflexivity* into ethnographic disciplines has brought new ways of approaching the self, subject of study, and people in general during the research process.

2. LOCATING THE FIELD

It is now generally accepted that “retaining a spatialized understanding of the field imposes limitation and biases that are unproductive in contemporary anthropological research contexts” (Caputo, 2000: 29); however, there is still an ongoing perception of a ‘spatial field’ in ethnomusicology. If we ask where or what the field is, the answer is still essentially a place, a location. This is not a surprise because, while musicology primarily focused on European art music or recently perhaps popular music in the West, ethnomusicology was supposed to focus on folk genres in the west and every other style in the non-west. Here the prefix *ethno-* distinguishes two musicologies and refers to all musical traditions in the world except European art music, which makes the separation between the two musicologies spatial in its construction. Though there have been successful attempts to bring a temporal dimension to the field in ethnomusicology (Shelemay, 2001), the ‘spatialized understanding’ of the field is still valid. In strict relation to this, there is a continuing tradition in ethnomusicology that is solely based on geography, where non-Western ethnomusicologists mainly focus on their own societies’ musical production and certain neighboring ‘familiar’⁵ musical traditions, while researchers from the West have limitless options to study the musics of the world. The same applies to anthropology as well, which was observed as the “monopoly of anthropologists from a few countries” in the early 1980’s (Fahim and Helmer, 1980: 648). During the 1980’s “doing ethnomusicology ‘at home’” or conducting a research project “in your own rural hinterland” (Nettl, 2005: 186) became a rising trend among the ethnomusicologists of the West, although it has been the only option for almost all non-Western researchers. At first sight, this might not bother

⁵ As there can be no %100 insider of a given culture, I chose to use the adjective familiarity. I believe it does give the meaning of being in an uncertain, ever-changing position of a person with regard to culture.

anyone, because gaining information that is 'authentic enough' through "native ethnomusicologists" (Pian, 1992; Krüger, 2009: 87) has been customary since the making use of 'informants' by the missionaries. However, regarding ethnomusicology, while making these native ethnomusicologists' or the so-called insiders' views available for us, we may be consciously or unconsciously limiting their potential to bring new insights into various musical traditions across the world.

Due to various political, monetary, and/or even racist reasons a non-Western ethnomusicologist has always had a reduced opportunity to study the music of different cultures through the fieldwork method. Partially following Jeff Todd Titon's "poststructuralist challenge to fieldwork" (Titon, 2008: 36-37), my assertion is that the main imperative is caused by asymmetrical power relations (Barz and Cooley, 2008: 7) between the researcher and the researched, in other words, between the so-called the outsider researchers and the insider researchers belonging to "the researched." Emerging from this asymmetry, it is generally expected from non-Western ethnomusicologists that they bring data from their 'own' culture where an outsider would fail to do so. This means that these native ethnomusicologists (or anthropologists) function as complementary agents or "as feedback for existing Western anthropological knowledge" (Fahim and Helmer, 1980: 649) rather than as the producer of the knowledge, since this knowledge must be validated and published first in the West or certain "rules set in the West must be followed to be recognized" (Wong, 2006: 110). It is therefore needed to find ways to change this accepted norm, so that it could be possible to create new forms of human relations instead of one-way, parochial research habits. When this restricted potential of non-Western ethnomusicologists is unfolded it might bring fresh insights and solutions to the problem of Eurocentrism in ethnographic disciplines.

An example can help us to see the situation clearly. If we briefly look at the Final Programme of the 44th ICTM World Conference (2017), it is possible to get an idea about who studies which topic in recent times. I will not go into the details, but a pattern is obvious, which is operative since the institutionalization of ethnomusicology. While American and west/central European ethnomusicologists study a wide variety of topics from around the world, the rest or 'the others' mostly study the topics of their own region. There are indeed exceptions. However, a Chinese ethnomusicologist studying Chinese (and neighboring) musical traditions or a Bulgarian one joining a conference with a study of Balkans-related music, is not marginal, but rather a norm for ethnomusicology. Similar examples regarding the other non-European regions and ethnomusicologists from these regions can be found easily. Now, is this the only option for native ethnomusicologists to contribute to ethnomusicology? Is it possible, where "the disciplinary bias towards the distantly exotic as more valid

sites for fieldwork continues to shape training and hiring practices” (Amit, 2000: 4), for a Kurdish ethnomusicologist to study a topic that is not related to Kurdishness, such as Schlager music in Germany, or the representation(s) of Verdi operas in Wiener Staatsoper? In our ongoing globalization era the answer is surely yes, but how applicable is this in reality? In relation to this we must also ask how our personal, social or cultural identity affects our study topics in ethnomusicology.

In ethnomusicology we have meticulously discussed whether we are competent enough, first to explain and represent (through ethnography), and then to experience and understand the music of the other cultures. On the other hand, we generally ignore the fact that ‘the others’ never or rarely have chance to represent the culture of Westerners. This unbalanced organization or “the world system” (Kuwayama, 2004) of ethnographic disciplines inevitably creates issues that need to be addressed, especially considering that such unbalance is generally recognized as the continuation of colonial attitudes, particularly when doing fieldwork in places with histories of colonization.

3. DEFINING THE FIELD

Having a good deal of problems, fieldwork as a method in ethnographic disciplines is a popular matter of debate. It has been critically addressed numerous times, but while we are mostly content with a better implementation of fieldwork as part of ethnographic methodology, we generally tend to ignore one main issue hidden in its name. The word ‘fieldwork’ has been in use for a long time and it is still being used without any considerable challenge. What is this issue?

One recent opposition to the term came from Michelle Kisliuk, who suggests that we should “look for a term other than ‘fieldwork’ (field research, field experience?)” (Kisliuk, 2008: 184). Her point is that the ‘field’ is “inseparable from who we are” (Kisliuk, 2008: 184) and it should be designed as part of the researchers’ life. This is an important step towards a better understanding and application of the method. Apart from Kisliuk, there are also other scholars suggesting that “fieldwork must be reassessed” (Barz and Cooley, 2008: 12). My point is, however, that we should also reassess the word ‘fieldwork’, especially its ‘field’ part. The field is loaded with certain meanings that evoke negative connotations in ethnographic disciplines. This is why it needs to be addressed, since these connotations eventually give shape to our perceptions.

According to Oxford Online Dictionary, the word ‘field’ originates from the “old English *feld* of West Germanic origin; related to Dutch *veld* and German

*Feld*⁶. The term has various meanings and is used in different contexts; however, there are also shared features among these contexts. In Oxford Online Dictionary the first meaning of the term is “an area of open land, especially one planted with crops or pasture, typically bounded by hedges or fences”⁷. A second meaning of the ‘field’ is “a place where a subject of scientific study or of artistic representation can be observed in its natural location or context”⁸, and a third is “a space or range within which objects are visible from a particular viewpoint or through a piece of apparatus”⁹. The current understanding of the ‘field’ in ethnomusicology involves a combination of the above explanations. In short, the field is still an exotic place, a kind of wilderness away from home, where we work to cultivate it by using certain tools and with specific viewpoints. As it goes in the beginning of The Beatles’ well-known song “Strawberry Fields Forever”, field is somewhere ‘to be taken down’, a lower level than the protagonist’s standpoint. In relation to that, we ethnomusicologists generally ignore the fact that many, within and outside the academy, view the field with disdain. It is considered a place where the researcher goes into a sort of initiation rite, since the field with its embedded dangers challenges the researcher in various ways. A ‘proper’ researcher is expected to get his/her hands dirty in the field and stand up to the difficulties of this process in order to gain scientific data. In the past, the gain was not just the scientific data, but also some land or trade goods mostly bought or stolen from the locals.

Apart from the nomenclature, my criticism also extends to the ways we apply the fieldwork method. The way we construct our ethnographic field inevitably frames “the questions that are pursued and also the style, rhetoric and form of the presentation of the ethnographic account” (Madden, 2010: 43). As it was said above, fieldwork is an import from archeology and particularly anthropology. What was imported from anthropology was Bronislaw Malinowski’s model of fieldwork with its new role for the researcher as participant-observer. This was a turning point in anthropology. After its popularization by Malinowski, this new method of collecting data, which stands against the ‘armchair anthropology’, became the milestone of the discipline in a short span of time. In this model, the researcher is supposed to spend a minimum of one year in the field, where he/she lives with locals, participates in local events with or without invitation, and simultaneously observes the happenings around. This part of the research also requires certain knowledge of the local language, with which the researcher benefits from the opportunity of thinking in local terms and categories. During this process the researcher is

⁶“Field” <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/field> (18.07.2017).

⁷ibid.

⁸ibid.

⁹ibid.

considered to be in seclusion, as if there was no one around to communicate with. Moreover, in order to avoid potentially problematic perceptions, “(he) should distinguish himself from his fellow countrymen” (Salamone, 1979: 49). Even though it has lately been criticized in the academic environment, from a scientific viewpoint this approach is still partly valid and notably useful to gain new perspectives and levels of understanding. However, due to the rising popularity of *reflexivity* in the social sciences of the last decades ‘distinguishing the self from fellow countrymen’ in the field is not expected anymore.

Following the publication of Malinowski’s diaries, the perception of field and its actors have become the main topic of discussions in ethnographic disciplines. As a result, it became clear that what has been written as ethnography and what has been taught at the universities differed from what has been actually felt and experienced by researchers. In other words, people realized that there is difference between the academy and the real world, a “gap between the experience and archetype” of fieldwork (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997 quoted in Amit, 2000:2). From the 1960s on, new questions and perspectives related to the position of researchers (emic-etic standpoints and the insider-outsider debate), their self-designated role as the savior of a cultural practice, and where/what the field actually is have been inserted into the debates. As one of the many results, the notion of field has gained new meanings other than as a ‘non-Western’ piece of land and/or community, which is distant, “away from the researcher’s ordinary place of residence and work or ‘home’” (Amit, 2000: 2), “isolated, rugged, with radically different and ‘turbulent human material’” (Madden, 2010: 41), “the most important moment of our professional life (...) our *rite de passage* (that) transforms each of us into a true anthropologist” (Condominas, 1973: 2 as quoted by Salamone, 1979: 2); “sine qua non of the state of being an ethnomusicologist” (Rice, 2008: 46), and as an experience to be defined according to the Enlightenment norms of western epistemology. Even though this re-orientation helped us to realize what we are actually doing and with which identities, in the background the depreciatory attitude and othering continued their existence. Regarding this common connivance, Salamone for example underlines the key feature of “the typical field society” as “small, structurally rather simple in comparison with the fieldworker’s society” (Salamone, 1979: 50). Similar approaches and formulations can also be observed in various methodology books and ethnographies of numerous anthropologists and ethnomusicologists of the last decades. For instance, Girtler still considers fieldworkers as “adventurers” and “conquerors” in 2001, even though he claims that these terms are used in their “positive meaning” (Girtler, 2001: 11).

It is now, in 2017, less acceptable to possess this viewpoint in ethnographic disciplines, for it will be crucified instantly. Out of academia, however, such perception of the field and its members, the “others,” is still prevalent. We are

now maybe using an educated terminology to explain our study topics to each other, but are we really aware of how such issues are addressed out of our secure academic environment? Describing any society with the terms such as small and/or simple, and the field as somewhere to *go down* can still be seen as the result of this problematic perception of the field.

After Malinowski's diaries came to light, the dilemma between 'the objective and biased scientist' has been revealed and thus, a novelty in the discipline was needed to avoid duplicity. As a result, problematic aspects of the terminology have been revised; terms like 'primitive' and 'savage' were abandoned and replaced with relatively smoother ones. Instead of describing the societies as 'simple' or 'underdeveloped', which were 'primitives' earlier, scholars from different areas tended to use descriptions like 'developing', 'recently developed' (Nettl, 1975) and 'third world' countries, as if there were any semantic differences between the old and new terminology. As Gunnar Myrdal puts it, this was simply a "diplomacy by terminology" (Myrdal, 1968: 1839-1942), without aiming at a radical change in perception.

The introduction of 'the third world' in social sciences, for example, presents the same attitude of its predecessors that is hidden behind the etymological history of the term. During the Cold War period the world was separated into two main parts; one of them, namely 'the first world' countries was represented by the United States, Western European nations and their allies, and the second part was represented by the Soviet Union, China, Cuba and the allies of these nations. Bearing a close resemblance to the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, this division has been visibly made *ex parte*. The rest of the nations of the world, which were considered to have no political or economic transformative power, were labeled as 'the third world' countries. This attitude frankly calls for a criticism against it as being "a category imposed as part of a specific First World way of seeing things" (Randall, 2004: 52). We can relate such formulation and hidden meanings with other scientific terminology. As in the case of the term 'field', some alarming derogatory associations of 'the third world' such as "backwardness" and "otherness" (Randall, 2004: 41) are still in effect. Even though within academia such connotations are avoided as much as possible, there is still a danger for their potential to cripple our perception. A preliminary look at the origin of the terms enables us to mark their problematic semantic load. For instance, regarding 'the third world', the term is generally attributed to a French historian and economist Alfred Sauvy, who used it in a French magazine *L'Observateur* in 1952 (Sandhu, 2006: 1542).

According to Wolf-Phillips (1987), Sauvy's usage of the term addressed an era before the French Revolution, the *ancien régime*. The term *tiers état*, which is the origin of 'the third world', referred to the lowest class (commoners) of the

three classes under the French *états généraux*. In comparison with the other two upper classes, *deuxieme état* (clergy) and *premier état* (nobility), *tiers état* had no particular privilege and anyone who was born within this class died also being part of it¹⁰. This social stratification system is clearly based on the physical and the spiritual exploitation of the lower class. From this view, we can now locate the implementation of certain terms such as ‘the third world’ and ‘field’ in ethnographic disciplines at the center of problems, as they inherently constitute a biased attitude. While the first is continuously losing its popularity and soon to be replaced with creative (or uncreative) terms for the sake of being politically correct, the latter is still in use. Even though some considerable paradigm shifts that took place in line with the developments in social sciences have ignited criticism against the old strategies and brought new ways of understanding and experiencing, the notion of field with all its problematic background still prevails.

4. THE FIELD AND ITS WORKERS

Following those paradigm shifts, today’s world conditions and the social sciences are offering (or imposing) new trends of relations between researchers and their study subjects. It is now essential to have an awareness of political, social, spiritual, and more importantly humanitarian aspects of our studies. This is why continuous self-reflection and correction of our potentially biased attitudes have become balancing mechanisms in ethnographic disciplines.

Vesna V. Godina’s work *Anthropological Fieldwork at the Beginning of the 21st Century: Crisis and Location of Knowledge* (2003), demonstrates a customary positioning of the field and the researcher in anthropology. In this essay Godina formulates “three typical types of fieldwork situation (...) combining different possible variables of place and agent” (Godina, 2003: 474) and reaches the following conclusion:

1. Field: non-European society; observer: an anthropologist from West Europe;
2. Field: non-European society; observer: a native anthropologist;
3. Field: West European society; observer: a West European anthropologist.

This classification of anthropological field and the observer exemplifies the main problem this paper aims to address, that is, the incomplete positioning of the researcher and the researched. As it should be, Godina at this point rightfully

¹⁰ For further information see: Kiser, Edgar and Linton, April (2002), “The Hinges of History: State-Making and Revolt in Early Modern France”, *American Sociological Review* 67 (6): 889-910; Wolf-Phillips, Leslie (1987), “Why ‘Third World’?: Origin, Definition and Usage”, *Third World Quarterly* 9 (4): 1311-1327; Berger, Mark T. (2004), “After the Third World? History, destiny and the fate of Third Worldism”, *Third World Quarterly* 25 (1): 9-39.

expands the list and includes a “fourth possibility (that) combines the non-Western European anthropologist with the West European field” (Godina, 2003: 482). This is important for a fair classification, since we almost never mention this form in our reference works and hence never see it in practice. Even though this fourth ‘possibility’ of fieldwork is still rare, it should be brought to the agenda of ethnographic disciplines.

Apart from these four possible fieldwork situations we must also mention a fifth form. In Godina’s formulation she fails to address a long-ignored character, who has been engaging in similar study subjects before the institutionalization of anthropology or ethnomusicology. This character is, according to Godina’s terminology, “non-West European” anthropologists/researchers working in “non-West” fields, but not in their “home” where they are “natives,” but rather in other “non-West European” places. This fifth form of fieldwork situation actually has a very long history that goes back to ancient times, but due to the institutionalization of the social sciences in the West we can hardly relate it with the current understanding of ethnographic fieldwork. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), Ibn Battuta (1304-1369), Dimitrie Cantemir (1673-1723), Al-Biruni (973-1048), and Komitas (1869-1935) can be seen as examples of these early anthropologists/ethnomusicologists whose works, having no disciplined methodology or theory, get evaluated as “proto-anthropology” (Eriksen and Nielsen, 2001) and therefore excluded from the narrative of the Western institutional anthropology.

There is one other terminology-related issue that needs to be addressed. According to Godina’s and many other social scientists’ classification the “native anthropologist” is supposed to work in a very limited area, preferably only her/his own culture. Moreover, when Godina makes such classification, she also differentiates between the two notions of “anthropology at home” representing “a combination of West European anthropologist and West European field” (Godina, 2003: 478), and “native anthropology” representing studies and fieldwork “done by native anthropologists in non-European cultures and societies” (Godina, 2003: 481). It is not clear why one form is named “anthropology at home” and the other “native anthropology”. There are indeed different dynamics shaping these two forms of fieldwork; however, the choice of terms here is alarming. The motivation and reason to make such differentiations can be variable, but when she continues to explain the shifting positions of fieldwork and the emergence of the “native anthropologist” as a “new player”, she writes: “The possessor of knowledge is, for the first time, a non-European” (Godina, 2003: 478). As is mentioned before, especially within the context of ethnographic disciplines, the possession of knowledge is open to interpretation. Therefore, claiming that the “native anthropologist” possesses the knowledge for the first time and attributing ‘home’ directly to a Western society can be seen

either as a result of inadequate prejudgment or disputable understanding of fieldwork.

5. CONCLUSION

Many scholars of ethnographic disciplines struggle to find proper ways to approach the cultures that are unknown to them. As mentioned in this paper, Barz and Cooley, for example, try to understand how former works shaped today's approaches in their *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (1997, 2008). Their purpose is "to historically and socially situate their (early scholars') work and to suggest how their shadows impact our own fieldwork" (Barz and Cooley, 2008: 8). The same applies to the current studies that we make today. If we continue to use the potentially troubled terminology, our shadows will surely affect the future studies accordingly. In this sense, certain words were excluded from our academic slang for being improper, we too are obliged to reconsider and challenge the existent terminology in search of a better one.

By writing "fieldwork is dead" (Barz and Cooley, 2008: 3), the editors of *Shadows in the Field* actually emphasized that fieldwork faced radical changes and utilizing it in Malinowski's way is no longer legitimate for ethnographic works. Throughout its historical development fieldwork was approached in different ways and gained a multilayered form, by which different levels of communication and interaction between the researcher and the host culture have been constructed. Moreover, with the introduction of new communication, recording, and transportation technologies the field as remote geography has become more and more accessible and consequently picturing it as a *rite of passage* for researchers has begun to tail away. But if a researcher continues to consider fieldwork a *rite of passage*, not only for her/his future career but also for a personal experience, any improvement in the discipline should not change or affect it. What a researcher has in mind concerning her/his field is considerably important; however, 'field' should be thought of as more than a piece of land to reach or just a certain community to study. It is rather a multilayered concept that "does not depend on geography, but on the self-constructed identity of the ethnographer" (Kisliuk, 2008: 192-193) and his or her aim. As Madden stresses, "ethnography turns someone's everyday place into a thing called a 'field'" (Madden, 2010: 54). This means that the field is also existent beyond the conceptions of the researcher. With this information in mind, the geographical position of the field, which was mainly in the direction of *east* and characteristically *exotic*, loses its importance or, to be more precise, it is revealed as the result of the researcher's construction. Starting from this point, we can assume that a *proper* fieldwork requires, apart from its technical imperatives and whatever the studied subject is, a "self-knowledge" (Dasilva et al., 1984: 2) and

an awareness of the aims, which are the main determinant of the end product, ethnography.

The geographically and mentally shifting characteristics of the field resulted in the discovery of new horizons. One of the most prominent novelties was the emergence of urban ethnomusicology, which was also “somewhat in tandem with the growth of ‘urban anthropology’” (Nettl, 2005: 185). The reflections of the anthropological field in ethnomusicology clearly manifest themselves here in Nettl’s statement. Just as Malinowski’s model determined the framework for ethnomusicological fieldwork, the same interplay occurred with the emergence of urban anthropology. Although Nettl states that “the tendency, in the period after 1985, for ethnomusicologists to look increasingly at their own musical culture has to do with the study of urban culture” (Nettl, 2005: 186), “anthropology—or ethnomusicology—at home” and ‘urban anthropology’ are not the same. The question arises here whether Godina’s formulation of “anthropology at home” as “a combination of West European anthropologist and West European field” applies to ethnomusicology or not. Nettl apparently makes this distinction to avoid such confusion and reasonably asks “what actually qualifies as your backyard (at home)” (Nettl, 2005: 186). Giving an answer to this question is not easy because, as Nettl and Slobin (1992) suggest, each person possesses various identities and numerous musical homes which makes the idea that one person represents a whole culture simply impractical.

That is why we are expected to change our focus beyond what musical practice is being performed and which instrumentation or musical system is being used by the host society. These are essentials of ethnomusicology. We should pursue a deeper experience that puts light on the overlooked aspects of us and the host culture. What is deeper experience? It can change its meaning and scope according to the subject, viewpoint and aim. For example, having information about which book is popular among the host culture, prior relations between the host culture and the researcher’s own, which political party promises what to the host society or even whether the informant is vegan or not might be helpful in certain contexts. These questions might seem irrelevant for some ethnomusicologists but any information that deepens the experience will eventually be helpful to expand the possibilities of mutual relationships. Even though complex structures require widened studies and the usage of various tools from different disciplines, these chains of relationships have crucial roles for a legitimate ethnomusicology, since shifting positions between researcher and host culture constantly add more tasks to the ethnomusicologist’s to-do list.

To give a complementary example, if an ethnomusicologist had the chance to study soul music in the United States from the early sixties to the mid-seventies, when the political situation was of utmost importance in relation to

the music of that time, she/he could experience how Afro-Americans gained and expressed their political attitudes through music, which dynamics affected the structure of their politics, and what were the key elements of the *soul style*. Getting answers to these questions through fieldwork helps the researcher to construct a comprehensive understanding, not just for the sake of ethnomusicology but also for the benefit of other ethnographic (and non-ethnographic) disciplines. One can hardly comprehend the inner dynamics of soul music if one limits oneself to political, musical, or economic data. As Barbara Ann Teer, founder of the National Black Theater in Harlem, comments on soul, “(It is) the way we talk (the rhythms of our speech which naturally fit our impulses), the way we walk, sing, dance, pray, laugh, eat, make love, and finally, most important, the way we look, make up our cultural heritage. (...) It is uniquely, beautifully and personally ours and no one can emulate it” (Van Deburg, 1992: 192). Such a definition may not be appropriate for a scientific terminology, only maybe in *impressionist ethnography*¹¹, but it contains crucial data for an ethnomusicologist. With this insight, soul now becomes something more than a musical practice, generally represented by prominent names like James Brown and Marvin Gaye; it becomes a lifestyle with its fashions, slang, and production of cultural goods shared by certain people. Thus, some other musicians like Gil Scott-Heron or The Last Poets, who share the same characteristics with Teer’s definitions of ‘soul people’ but due to their political stance do not fit the mainstream Brown and Gaye style of soul, become a part of research in different terms. This stance was also accompanied by a politically organized sound phenomenon, e.g., the usage of African time-line patterns to highlight the African heritage, which can be a fruitful finding for an ethnomusicologist in the context of “African musical extensions in the new world” (Kubik, 1991).

Throughout this text I tried to address certain aspects of fieldwork-related problems in ethnomusicology. While some problems are stuck in a deadlock and remain dilemmas of communication between the self and the other, some others seemingly just need a reconsideration of our positions in the field and during the writing of ethnography.

As it was said at the beginning of this text, because of its inquisitive interest in wide and complex subject matters ethnomusicology and its scholars must pay attention to various aspects of their subjects, and do their researches by considering subject’s multifaceted links to human psychology, belief systems, history, fashion and even climate. During the last 60 years, ethnomusicologists began to show interest and question not just musical systems, including

¹¹ For further information: Van Maanen, John (2011), *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).

characteristic chord progressions, melismatic vocal styles or polyrhythmic structures, but also the human aspect of such systems. And this new multilayered structural change in discipline resulted in new perspectives, solutions and inevitably crises. But ethnomusicology as a discipline is gaining more experience each day by struggling with these new crises and therefore it starts to create new possibilities for itself and other disciplines to gain as well as promote an objective knowledge.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Amit, Vered (2000), *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World* (London, New York: Routledge).

Astuti, Rita (2017), "On keeping up the tension between fieldwork and ethnography", *Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 7 (1): 9-14.

Barrett, Stanley R. (1976), "The Use of Models in Anthropological Fieldwork", *Journal of Anthropological Research*, 32 (2): 161-181.

Barz, Gregory and Cooley, Timothy J. (1997, 2008), *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* (New York: Oxford University Press)

Berger, Roger A. (1993), "From Text to (Field)Work and Back Again: Theorizing a Post(Modern)-Ethnography", *Anthropological Quarterly*, 66 (4):174-186.

Caputo, Virginia (2000), "At 'home' and 'away'. Reconfiguring the field for late twentieth-century anthropology", Vered Amit (Ed.), *Constructing the Field: Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Contemporary World* (London, New York: Routledge): 19-31.

Chase, Gilbert (1958), "A Dialectical Approach to Music History", *Ethnomusicology*, 2 (1): 1-9.

Chiener, Chou (2002), "Experience and Fieldwork: A Native Researcher's View", *Ethnomusicology*, 46 (3): 456-486.

Dasilva, Fabio, Blasi, Anthony and Dees, David (1984), *The Sociology of Music* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press).

Eriksen, Thomas H. and Nielsen, Finn S. (2001), *A History of Anthropology* (London: Pluto Press).

Fahim, Hussein and Helmer, Katherine (1980), "Indigenous Anthropology in Non-Western Countries: A Further Elaboration", *Current Anthropology*, 21 (5): 644-663.

Freeman, L.C. and Merriam Alan P. (1956), "Statistical Classification in Anthropology: An Application to Ethnomusicology", *American Anthropologist*, 58 (3): 464-472.

Girtler, Roland (2001), *Methoden der Feldforschung* (Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau).

Godina, V. Vesna (2003), "Anthropological Fieldwork at the Beginning of the 21st Century and Location of Knowledge", *Anthropos*, 98 (2): 473-487.

Goffman, Erving (1959), *Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Doubleday Anchor).

Herskovitz, Melville J. (1954), "Some Problems of Method in Ethnography", Robert F. Spencer (Ed.), *Method and Perspective in Anthropology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press): 3-24.

Hood, Mantle (1957), "Training and Research Methods in Ethnomusicology", *Ethnomusicology Newsletter*, (11): 2-8.

Ingold, Tim (2017), "Anthropology contra ethnography", *Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 7 (1): 21-26.

Kiser, Edgar and Linton, April (2002), "The Hinges of History: State-Making and Revolt in Early Modern France", *American Sociological Review*, 67 (6): 889-910.

Kolinski, Mieczyslaw (1957), "Ethnomusicology, Its Problems and Methods", *Ethnomusicology Newsletter*, (10): 1-7.

Krüger, Simon (2009), *Experiencing Ethnomusicology: Teaching and Learning in European Universities* (Farnham: Ashgate).

Kubik, Gerhard (1991), *Extensionen afrikanischer Kulturen in Brasilien* (Aachen: Alano Verlag).

Kunst, Jaap (1959), *Ethnomusicology* (Leiden: MartinusNijhoff).

Kuwayama, Takami (2004), "The 'world-system' of Anthropology: Japan and Asia in the Global Community of Anthropologists", S. Yamashita, J. Bosco and J.S. Eades (Eds.), *The Making of Anthropology in East and Southeast Asia*, (New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books): 35-56.

Leslie, Charles (1980), "Medical pluralism in world perspective", *Social Science & Medicine. Part B: Medical Anthropology*, 14 (4): 191-195.

Madden, Raymond (2010), *Being Ethnographic: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography* (London: Sage).

Malinowski, Bronislaw (1922), *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (London: Routledge).

Malinowski, Bronislaw (1967), *A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Word* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World).

Merriam, Alan P. (1964), *The Anthropology of Music* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press).

Merriam, Alan P. (1977), "Definitions of 'Comparative Musicology' and 'Ethnomusicology': An Historical-Theoretical Perspective", *Ethnomusicology*, 21 (2): 189-204.

Merriam, Alan P. (1960), "Ethnomusicology Discussion and Definition of the Field", *Ethnomusicology*, 4 (3): 107-114.

Merriam, Alan P. (1963), "Purposes of Ethnomusicology, an Anthropological View", *Ethnomusicology*, 7 (3): 206-213.

Nettl, Bruno (1963), "A technique of Ethnomusicology Applied to Western Culture", *Ethnomusicology*, 7 (3): 221-224.

Nettl, Bruno (1975), "The Role of Music in Culture: Iran, A Recently Developed Nation", Charles Hamm, Bruno Nettl and Ronald Byrnside (Eds.), *Contemporary Music and Music Cultures*, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall): 71-100.

Nettl, Bruno (1986), "World Music in the Twentieth Century: A Survey of Research on Western Influence", *Acta Musicologica*, 58 (2): 360-373.

Nettl, Bruno (1983, 2005), *Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-Nine Issues and Concepts* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press).

Pian, Rulan Chao (1992), "Return of the Native Ethnomusicologist", *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 24: 1-7.

Randall, Vicky (2004), "Using and Abusing the Concept of the Third World: Geopolitics and the Comparative Political Study of Development and Underdevelopment", *Third World Quarterly*, 25 (1): 41-53.

Rice, Timothy (1997, 2008), "Toward a Mediation of Field Methods and Field Experience in Ethnomusicology", Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley

(Eds.), *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, (New York: Oxford University Press): 42-61.

Rich, Adrienne (1981), "The Images", *A Wild Patience Has Taken Me This Far: Poems, 1978-81* (New York: Norton).

Said, W. Edward (1979), *Orientalism* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing).

Said, W. Edward (1985), "Orientalism Reconsidered", *Cultural Critique*,(1): 89-107.

Said, W. Edward (1998), "The Myth of the Clash of Civilizations", Lecture by Edward Said at University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Media Education Foundation (transcription).

Salamone, Frank A. (1979), "Epistemological Implications of Fieldwork and Their Consequences", *American Anthropologist*, 81 (1): 46-60.

Sandhu, Amandeep (2006), "Third World", Thomas M. Leonard (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Developing World*, (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis): 1542-1546.

Schechner, Richard (2003), *Performance Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge).

Schmidt, Bettina E. (2004), "Mit der U-bahn ins Feld: Der Abschied von Malinowskis einsamer Insel: Feldforschung im 21. Jahrhundert", *Anthropos*, 99 (1): 215-222.

Schmitz, Walter H. (1976), "Zum Problem der Objektivität in der völkerkundlichen Feldforschung", *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 101 (1): 1-40.

Seeger, Anthony (1987), "Do We Need to Remodel Ethnomusicology?", *Ethnomusicology*, 31 (3): 491-495.

Shemelay, Kaufman K. (2001), "Toward an Ethnomusicology of the Early Music Movement: Thoughts on Bridging Disciplines and Musical Worlds", *Ethnomusicology*, 45 (1): 1-29.

Slobin, Mark (1992), "Micromusics of the West: A Comparative Approach", *Ethnomusicology*, 36 (1): 1-87.

Urciuoli, Bonnie (1993), "Representing Class: Who Decides?", *Anthropological Quarterly*, 66 (4): 203-210.

Van Deburg, William (1992), *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture*(Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

Van Maanen, J. (1988, 2011), *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press).

Wax L. Murray and Wax H. Rosalie (1980), “Fieldwork and the Research Process”, *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 11 (1): 29-37.

Wolf-Phillips, Leslie (1987), “Why 'Third World'?: Origin, Definition and Usage”, *Third World Quarterly*, 9 (4): 1311-1327.

Wong, Heung Wah (2006), “Eastern and Western Anthropologists Unite in Culture: A Personal Note”, J. Hendry and H. W. Wong (Eds.), *Dismantling The East-West Dichotomy: Essays in Honour of Jan Van Bremen*, (London: Routledge): 110-116.