In this collaboration between a music theorist and an ethnomusicologist, we explore how periodicity—a term we will discuss and define—is used in musical structures worldwide. We are teaching the course together because we feel that the topic is significant to our respective fields, and because we want to benefit from each other’s insights and expertise and move toward a synthesis. We also want to encourage you to cross boundaries and explore new repertories.

Periodicity in the general senses of regularity, repetition, or recurrence, is clearly a central, perhaps even definitive characteristic of music, yet for a variety of reasons it has rarely been approached as a specific concern within Western music scholarship. A good definition of periodicity that can encompass the diversity of ways it appears in the world’s music is something we hope to develop this term. Other goals include building analytical approaches to periodicity with cross-cultural potential, and sketching a supracultural categorization of ways that music structures and manipulates periodicity. To move towards these goals we will consider a broad repertoire of musics and styles, and consider dimensions of periodicity beyond the specifically musical.

From a music theory perspective, the course will examine how existing concepts and methods for analyzing rhythm and meter in Western music can be adapted and applied to other repertoires. From an ethnomusicological one, the hope is to stimulate a new kind comparative musicology within the discipline, with an eye for ultimately being able to describe all music of the world in terms of a unified set of temporal features.

Course work includes readings and listening (it is assumed that you will actively participate and prepare), 3 assignments in transcription and analysis (15% each), and a final research project and presentation (55%).

Your Final Projects: Must deal with a specific repertoire item, involve transcription or score analysis, must represent and analyze periodic structures present using techniques developed in the course, possibly address ethical or philosophical dimensions. If your final project includes transcription, we will consult to discuss what is a fair amount of work to be done vis a vis a project that is based on analysis of a pre-existing score. Criteria for grading also include:

1) Clarity of and presentation, visuals and writing
2) Sophistication of analysis
3) Address issues raised by readings and in class
**Intended learning outcomes:**

1. Increased awareness and ability to discern, represent, and discuss periodic structures in a variety of musics.
2. Develop a working knowledge of concepts and techniques for analyzing meter and grouping.
3. Increased ability to think, discuss and write about rhythm and time. Also important is creativity in transcription and other kinds of visual representation.
4. Develop a sensitivity to the limits of our perceptions in the absence of insider musical knowledge.

**Course Text:** *Analytical Studies in World Music [ASWM]* (Oxford 2006). Available at the UBC bookstore.

**Schedule of Seminars:**

(some readings still TBA)

- **January 11** Symbolic and Cultural Dimensions of Musical Periodicity, Periodicity and Time (MT); Introduction to Meter and Grouping (JR)
- **January 18** Transcription, Notation and Analysis (MT); Tempo salience, possible meters, and interactions of meter and grouping (JR).
  - Read: ASWM Introduction
  - Kramer 1988, Ch. 1-2
  - London 2004, Ch. 1-2
  - Temperley 2001, 23-26, 30-39, 48-51
  - Lerdahl & Jackendoff 1983, 36-52
- **Jan. 25** Isoperiodicity I
  - Read: ASWM chapter 5 (Furniss) (optional: Arom 1991 3-44; 179-228)
  - Ellingson (in Myers 1992)
- **February 1** Isoperiodicity II
  - Read: ASWM chapter 6 (Tenzer)
  - Larson 2006
- **February 8** Sectional Periodicity I
  - Read: ASWM chapter 3 (Manuel)
- **Feb. 15** Sectional Periodicity II
  - Read: Caplin 9-21, 35-58
  - ASWM chapter 4 (Moore and Sayre)
- **Feb. 22** Reading break
- **March 1** Linearity and other discursive techniques I (MT away)
  - Read: TBA
- **March 8** Linearity and other discursive techniques II (JR away)
  - Read: ASWM chapter 10 (Benjamin)
- **March 15** Non-periodic or a-periodic musics
  - Read: Widdess 1994
  - Horlacher 1995
March 22  Multiple Concurrent Periodicities; wrap-up  
Clayton Ch. 2  
Roeder 2004  
Rowell 2002  
Rahn 1993

March 29  Student Presentations  
April 5  Student Presentations  
April 12  Student Presentations

References

http://www.societymusictheory.org/mto/issues/mto.00.6.1/mto.00.6.1.anku_frames.html


http://mto.societymusictheory.org/issues/mto.06.12.4/mto.06.12.4.butterfield.html


