

BACKGROUND



Colonialism has had an inherent impact on the development of cultures, and within that, imposed specific musical traditions and narratives, which is highlighted by the case of Taiwan.

Taiwan is an epicentre for colonialism with changes to Taiwanese native musical traditions a result of both Chinese and Japanese occupation.

We questioned to what extent Western understanding of musical cultures impacted by colonialism misrepresent or indirectly perpetuate a further colonialist perspective, and how this can be altered to present a more effectively decolonised curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS



The decolonisation of the music curriculum should be approached in a 2-fold manner:

A greater focus on indigenous musical traditions while resisting isolating them from their colonial past. We should highlight how colonialism shaped these cultural traditions within the curriculum itself.

A more nuanced and critical teaching of the wider research and scholarship that frames musical style and traditions within former colonies. We should particularly consider Eurocentric branches of this scholarship which support this curriculum and fails to acknowledge the extent of colonialism's impact.

How do Western scholars understand Taiwanese music?

What can we learn from native perspectives of national style?

Should colonialism influenced cultures be viewed in isolation of colonialism?

Decolonising Music Global Perceptions of National Style in Taiwanese Music by Amelia Awan and Harriet Nevin

SCAN ME!

Here is some native Taiwanese music we found while researching!



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DISCUSSION



There is a tendency, particularly for European scholars, to perpetuate a narrative more closely aligned to colonisers than colonies, and as such fails to recognise the nuances of their cultural and musical history.

We should also recognise that musical "legitimacy" stems from colonialism and the "superiority" of colonists - and therefore place greater emphasis on colonies', like Taiwan, perspectives which consider every aspect of their cultural history both in academic writings and in their music.

Taiwan has a rich, indigenous musical culture that presents itself in many forms and takes influence from its own folk scene, along with other countries such as the USA.

