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Diversity and its Impact on Sustainability: Two Examples from Cantonese Opera in Hong Kong

In recent years, ethnomusicologists have suggested that diversity is important for the sustainability of musical genres and communities. However, this principle has been imported from ecology scholarship without careful ethnographic consideration of its applicability to musical contexts. This produces questions such as what types of diversity matter for musical communities? Do all forms of diversity equally strengthen sustainability? What methods can best examine diversity? This seminar offers some answers to these questions by exploring the impact of two processes of diversification on the sustainability of Hong Kong Cantonese opera. On the one hand, the diversification of early career pathways has relieved the worries of younger performers and improved the opera's sustainability. On the other hand, the proliferation of theatre networks has produced new challenges for the genre's survival. To investigate how these differing forms of diversity have presented contradictory results, Haywood applies a novel ethnographic method called *transferability* which entails examining the ease and impediments that social actors and their practices face when moving across the different parts of an intricate ecosystem. Subsequently, Haywood argues that diversity is beneficial for the sustainability of musical ecosystems, but also that its efficacy depends on the intricacies of the ecosystem's internal dynamics.

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PREDAVAČ

MATTHEW HAYWOOD is a recent PhD graduate of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. His PhD dissertation focused on the sustainability of Hong Kong Cantonese opera with attention to the diversification of its aesthetics, authenticity discourses, business practices, pedagogical processes, and performance venues. He has also published on affect theory and presented conference papers on a wide range of topics including Cantonese opera, Beijing opera, Japanese Buddhist chanting, and internet memes.