Chapter 3
Music and Historical Encounter: The Wabenaki and Other Eastern Algonquian Nations
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Online Instructor’s Manual: J. Bryan Burton

Map Skills

On a map of the eastern North America, locate the nations discussed in this chapter. Refer to such resources as *Atlas of the North American Indian* by Carl Waldman (Checkmark Books, 2000) and web pages managed by specific Nations.

On a map of Canada and the eastern United States, label home areas of singers, groups, and nations discussed in this chapter.

Vocabulary

nikamuna/nikamun, teueikan, waltes, mawiomi, ji’kmaqn

“The eastern seaboard of North America is a region where First Peoples encountered Europeans at the earliest stages of exploration and colonization. The first encounters were with transient fishermen from various nations. Settlers and fur traders were not far behind. Native Americans were generous in helping the newcomers survive and enabling them to find resources, such as furs, that they sought. The coureurs de bois of the northern fur trade companies, for instance, were undoubtedly First People or Metis who knew the waterways and the rugged wooded terrain. Native North Americans were integral partners in the emerging economies of the New World” (page 60).

After reading pages 60-63, the following questions and activities may serve to stimulate class discussion.

AA = 1-5, 7 #S, C/U = 5a-5c, 6

1. Discuss how the rigid boundaries between distinct nations drawn in older history do not represent the reality of First Nations in the Northeast. Include, as part of this discussion, sharing of land and resources, intermarriage, and collaborations.
2. Which modern nations may have been part of the historical designation “St. Lawrence Indians”?
3. Who were the Nations in the Wabenaki Confederacy?
   3a. When was this confederacy established?
   3b. What were the primary purposes for the founding of this group?
4. Briefly describe the complexity of the genetic heritage of many families in Atlantic Canada.
5. Why were First Nations in the Northeast forced to move from their traditional homelands?
   5a. Which Eastern tribe challenged Indian Removal laws, finally reaching the U.S. Supreme Court?
   5b. What name did the Cherokees give to the forced removal from their Eastern homeland to Indian Territory? Search tribal websites to discover other names given to
this period of removal. (For example, the actual Cherokee term was “Nunna dual Tsuny”—“The trail where they cried.”
5c. Identify groups who were able to remain in or near their traditional homelands. How did they avoid removal? What other forms of resettlement did some of these Nations endure?
6. Advanced students may wish to conduct internet and print research to explore issues of Native Rights that continue to be unresolved today. Consider land claims, treatment of sacred or ceremonial sites, lost languages, lost cultures, and confusion between nations forced to share reserves or reservations.
7. List and define three ways in which song and dance traditions were/are used for renewal, mediation, and survival.

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Retaining Precontact Forms of Traditional Knowledge (pages 63-71)

Spaces Beyond Colonial Control

“One of the means by which traditional knowledge was maintained in spite of the extensive disruption effected by colonization was to find spaces that were beyond colonial control. These might be remote physical locations or psychic ones that were inaccessible to outsiders” (page 63).

After reading pages 63-66, the following questions and activities may serve to stimulate class discussion.

S, C/U

1. Explain how Innu maintain a hunting culture that relies upon a traditional knowledge and relatively private spiritual practices.
   1a. Why is the Innu religion considered a “practical” religion?
   1b. How do Innu balance traditional beliefs and Christianity?
2. “In virtually all First Nations communities, dreams (and related phenomena such as visions that are beyond conscious control) are taken seriously as a form of knowledge, a means of contacting the spirit world or acquiring a personal power”(page 64).
   2a. Describe and discuss examples of how dreams serve as a form of prophecy among Innu.
   2b. Conduct an Internet and print search to explore other examples of dreaming as a source of power or prophecy among Native Peoples.
3. How are dreams a source of songs and authority to perform these songs? What instrument may an Innu play only after receiving the authority in a dream?
4. Describe the teueikan (drum). Discuss the symbolism of decorations on the instrument. How may they be used to predict success in hunting?
5. How does a hunter reconnect with a specific dream?
6. What are the differences in a nikamun performance before and after a hunt?
   6a. What is the connection of the accompanying rhythm patterns to the dream?
   6b. What is the significance of the slight dip to one side in the dancer’s step?
   6c. With what are women associated in dream interpretation and dance?
7. Why are there few, if any, audio recordings of nikamuna?

Rituals of Renewal
“As in most indigenous cultures, the gifts of the environment—the waters, the earth and the air—are honored in song and dance of the Atlantic coastal First Nations” (page 67).

After reading pages 67-68, use the following questions and activities to stimulate class discussion.

AA

1. Provide a brief overview of how gifts of the environment are honored in song and dance.
2. Discuss the Green Corn Ceremonies that are celebrated as major religious events in Eastern North America. How is land development threatening maintenance of these ceremonies?
3. Identify several means of purification that typically take place during the Green Corn Ceremonies.
4. What other activities may be incorporated into the Green Corn Ceremonies by different communities?
5. Why are some aspects of the Green Corn Ceremonies shared by the Haudenosaunee and Cherokee?

Narratives and Performances that Relate to Encounter

“Well before the arrival of Europeans in North America, the Atlantic First Nations had developed various forms of traditional knowledge that seem to have been particularly well adapted to make sense of outsiders and foreign intrusions” (page 68).

After reading pages 68-71, use the following questions and activities to stimulate class discussion.

AA

1. Identify and discuss forms of traditional knowledge particularly well-suited to make sense of outsiders and foreign intruders.
2. How are traditional images interpreted as teachings about encounters. Discuss several specific examples such as the “double-curve” motif found among northern Algonquian nations. What are their meanings?
3. How has clothing been adapted to maintain elements of traditional imagery?
4. Discuss the symbolism on Innu clothing. Why do modern dance troupes wear this traditional dress? Conduct an Internet search to obtain photographs of both older, traditional clothing and contemporary clothing incorporating traditional imagery.
5. Provide a brief overview of how games were used to maintain the balance between internal and external affairs of nations.
6. Briefly discuss the origins of games such as lacrosse. Conduct an Internet search to discover more detailed histories of such games. Advanced students may wish to compare the ball games of the Northeast with those of Central Mexico. Is there any evidence of contact between these distant cultures?
7. Describe and discuss the extended events occurring before, during, and after the ball game in Eastern Cherokee society.
8. How did the symbolism of colors in songs sung by male conjurers represent dualities within the overall culture?
9. Briefly describe waltes—the Dice Bowl Game—played by the Mi’kmaq. How was this game used to resolve conflicts?
Indigenous Uses of New Performance Traditions (pages 71-84)

Christian Hymns: “Christianity was introduced to Native Americans as early as the sixteenth century” (page 71).

After reading pages 71-79, the following questions and activities may serve to stimulate class discussion.

AA = 1-4, 9  S, C/U = 5-8,

1. Define “syncretism” as it relates to the strategic adoption of music from the European-American colonists by the First Nations.
2. Define “indigenization” as it relates to the strategic adoption of music from the European-American colonists by the First Nations.
3. Identify the different Christian groups who served as missionaries (Jesuits, Moravians, etc.) and the peoples among whom they worked.
4. In what role did First Natives often view missionaries?
5. Use chart 3.1 to identify parallels between Native religions and Christianity.

Chart 3.1 Parallels Between Native Traditions and Christianity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similar roles for shaman and priest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use of chant and heightened speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of words such as “alleluia” was similar to vocables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chants and prayers used for healing and exorcisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special repertoires for rites of passage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. How did music facilitate cultural encounters between Christian and traditional practices?
8. Discuss unique writing systems adapted for publication of Christian texts and hymns. Were any of these systems in use prior to European contact? Were any systems specifically developed by Native Americans for printed works?
9. Examine the two pages from Vetromile’s Indian Good Book. Identify which types of information were printed in a European language and which were printed in Peskotomuhkatiyik. Why do you think these decisions were made?
10. Provide a brief overview of the life/career of Mani Shan Nui. Supplement information provided in this text with materials obtained through an Internet and print media search.
11. Listen to CD track 9 while following the marked sequence of musical and textual events. Then listen a second time while following the text transcription, noting where singer begins and ends in the text.
12. Compare similarities and differences between the transcription in Figure 3.6A and the 1866 notation shown in Figure 3.6B.
13. How were performance spaces and uses of hymns indigenized? In what ways did Christian musical practices replace or substitute for traditional practices?
14. Describe the parallel between use of drum and tent wall to serve as a means of communication with the “outside world”.
15. In which ways was the use of Christian hymns parallel to the use of nikamuna?
16. Describe the St. Anne’s Day celebration, including all preparations for the celebration and both musical and nonmusical events.

Secular Repertoires and Contexts

“Outside of Christian church services, European music was heard and performed by First Nations musicians at social events both within and beyond the community” (page 79).

After reading pages 79-84, the following questions and activities may serve to stimulate class discussion.

AA

1. Discuss the music theater piece The Theatre of Neptune. Organize the class into small groups to consider the following issues:
   1a. What were the European elements in the music of this production?
   1b. What role, if any, did Native Peoples play in this production? What is the likelihood that Native music was incorporated into the production?
   1c. To what extent can any production—European or Native—be accurately assessed from a distance of over four hundred years?
2. Explain how performance was used in response to colonization and racism, in order to negotiate and construct social relationships.
3. Give examples of the intercultural roles played by Wabenaki women beginning in the late nineteenth century.
4. Conduct an Internet and print media search to explore the life of Santu Toney.
   4a. What were some of the cultural influences through family and marriage upon Santu Toney?
   4b. What ceremony may have “inspired” the label “red” Indian?
5. Listen to CD track 10.
   5a. Are the lyrics words, vocables, or a mixture of both? What are some reasons why making such determinations is challenging?
   5b. Why did Francis Densmore advise researchers not to allow a singer to “run songs together?” What experiences led her to make this recommendation?
   5c. If Santu did “run songs together,” what may have led her to do this?
   5d. Why may Santu have included European melodies?
   5e. Using Chart 3.2 and the author’s discussion of each section of “Santu’s Song,” note time of major events in the song and describe each section. Remember, the times on your playback device may differ from those given in the chart.

![](chart_3.2.png)

Chart 3.2 CD track 10: “Santu’s Song”
6. Conduct an Internet and print media search to discover more detailed information about other women performers who adapted to different social worlds yet retained a strong sense of their indigenous identity. Assign students to prepare class presentations discussing the lives and musical efforts of several. In particular, explore the “Indian vaudeville” style created by, among others, Molly Spotted Elk and Lucy Nicolar.

7. Why did Mary Spotted Elk perform in Plains-style regalia when appearing as “Princess Watawaso”?

8. Give examples of how “Princess Watawaso” drew attention to Native issues such as loss of lands and human rights.

**Contemporary Wabenaki Social Dance and Song Traditions (pages 84-94)**

After reading pages 84-89, use the following questions and activities to stimulate class discussion.

**AA**

1. Review reasons for the founding of the Wabenaki Confederacy.
2. Identify and describe typical social occasions for which Wabenaki people would gather. As part of this discussion, define “mawiom.”
3. Describe the typical format for a chief-making ceremony.
4. What types of songs and dances would be performed as part of a chief-making ceremony?
5. Using Chart 3.3 and the discussion on pages 84-89, identify and describe typical Wabenaki songs and dances.

**Chart 3.3 Wabenaki Songs and Dances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song/Dance</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming song</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snake dance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading song</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wedding song</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pine needle dance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Listening: “Mte’skmuey/Mi’kmaq Snake Dance, CD track 11

**AA**
1. When was the Snake Dance first recorded?
2. Discuss the layers of meaning the Snake Dance has for Mi’kmaq people in Nova Scotia.
3. What is the musical form of the Snake Dance? How is it related to dances from other Native Peoples?
4. Chart the various layers of meaning in this dance using Figure 3.1

![Figure 3.1 Layers of Meaning](image)

5. Using Chart 3.4, note time of major events in the song and describe each section. Take particular note of similarities and differences between call and response and changes in this relationship, melodic contours, vocal timbre, tempo and tempo changes, repetition of text. Remember, the times on your playback device may differ from those given in the chart.

**Chart 3.4, CD track 11: “Mte’skmuey/Mi’kmaq Snake Dance”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Description/Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00</td>
<td>Drums</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:12—1:15</td>
<td>Alternation between solo and group approximately every 3-4 seconds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>extended group section—increasing tempo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30</td>
<td>Resume original tempo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:45</td>
<td>Extended group section—increasing tempo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Listening: “I’ko,” CD track 12**

AA

1. What genre is “I’ko”?
2. From what source do some Mi’kmaq and waloastoqiyik believe “I’ko” was received?
3. When did Susan Hill first learn “I’ko”? What type of gesture does she attribute to the song?
4. Using Chart 3.5, indicate time of major events in the song and describe each section. Particularly note vocal timbre, tempo and tempo changes, accompaniment
and changes in accompaniment, melodic contours and phrase ending pattern. Remember, the times on your playback device may differ from those given in the chart.

Chart 3.5, CD track 12: “I’ko”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Description/Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00</td>
<td>Drum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:08</td>
<td>Solo voice; drum accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:36</td>
<td>Solo voice; drum accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:05</td>
<td>Solo voice; drum accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:35</td>
<td>Solo voice; drum accompaniment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:06</td>
<td>Solo voice without meter—no drum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:12</td>
<td>Add drum 0:tremolo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


6. Another well-known welcoming song is “Kwa’nû’té”.
   6a. Among which nations is this song commonly performed?
   6b. Briefly describe the film inspired by this welcoming song.
   6c. Who performed “Kwa’nû’té” in the film.

7. Search for and download a recording of “Kwa-nu-te” (Among others, Free Spirit has recorded the song.) After listening to “Kwa’nu’té”, compare it to “I’ko.”

Listening: “Mi’kmaq Ko’jua”, CD track 13

AA

1. What is represented by the fast tempo and changing rhythmic groupings in “Ko’jua”?
2. Discuss other dances related to “Ko’jua.”
3. Conduct an Internet and print media search to explore other examples of the “Ko’jua” genre.
4. Using Chart 3.6, indicate the timing for events in “Ko’jua”, particularly noting vocal timbre, accompaniment, changes in lyrics/vocables. Remember, the times on your playback device may differ from those given in the chart.
Time | Basic | Description/Discussion
---|---|---
0:00 | Brief drum introduction followed almost immediately by solo voice |
0:12 | Solo voice |
0:20 | Solo voice |
0:26 | Solo voice |
0:34 | Solo voice |
0:30 | Solo voice |
0:40 | Solo voice |
0:47 | Solo voice |
1:02 | End pattern

**Listening: “Pine Cone Dance Song” (CD track 14)**

AA

1. Who or what is represented by the pine tips?
2. Describe the pine needle dance as documented by Frank Speck.
3. Describe the contemporary performance of the dance and compare it with the Speck version. Discuss how these changes may have occurred over time.
4. When listening to CD track 14, note that a pattern of solo (question), group (answer), group (chorus) recurs throughout the performance. Using Chart 3.7 below, indicate the time of the beginning of each pattern and describe changes of lyric/vocal from set to set, melodic contour (in particular, comparing the “question” and “answer” patterns), and the point at which the tempo change occurs indicating that the performance is nearing an end.
5. Listen to CD track 14 again and follow the transcription on page 90, note any differences in melody, lyric/vocables, etc. between CD track 14 and the transcription,

**Chart 3.7, CD track 14: “Pine Cone Dance Song”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Description/Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0:00</td>
<td>Drum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:10</td>
<td>Solo voice (question)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:18</td>
<td>Group (answer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:27</td>
<td>Group (chorus)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0:46</td>
<td>Pattern repeats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:22</td>
<td>Pattern repeats</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1:57  Pattern repeats
2:33  Pattern repeats
3:08  Pattern repeats
3:40  Pattern repeats
4:13  Pattern repeats
4:40  Group—speeds up

Wabenaki Cultural Revitalization

After reading pages 89-94, use the following questions and activities to stimulate class discussion.

AA

1. Which Wabenaki peoples had a drum tradition prior to the “recovery” of drumming beginning in the 1980s? Describe the use of drums in these groups and explain differences. Use additional information from Internet and print media research.
2. Describe instruments used in song accompaniment by northern nations such as the Mi’kmaq.
3. For those nations which lost an earlier drum tradition, list and discuss theories proposed for this loss of tradition.
4. Identify individuals and groups instrumental in bringing the drum and its associated traditions back to the Wabenaki nations. In addition to information in this text, conduct internet and print media research. (Individual websites, recording studio and publisher websites, and tribal websites may be of particular usefulness in this search. Include the following individuals and groups:
   * Margaret Paul and the Peskotomuhkatiyik and Wolastoqiyik women of St Mary’s
   * Tom Paul and the Birch Creek Singers
   * Free Spirit/Eastern Eagle
   * Indian Bay Singers
   * Paul Pike and Medicine Dream (Newfoundland)
   * Sarah Denny and other members of the Denny Family (Nova Scotia)
   * George Paul (New Brunswick)
5. What was the significance of George Paul’s cassette recording made in the 1980s.
6. What role was played by Paul’s introductory comments for each song?
7. Discuss the origin of the Mi’kmaq honor song “Kepmitetmnej.”
8. Describe the varied stylistic influences on “Kepmitetmnej.” How does the song’s structure differ from Mi’kmaq social songs? Which elements are clearly Mi’kmaq?
9. Listen to Eastern Eagle’s recording of “Kepmitetmnej” (iMix #4 or download through iTunes) and write a description of the performance noting details of vocal timbre, performance techniques, instruments used in accompaniment and arrangement.
10. How have recordings influenced the repertoire of Wabenaki drum groups and the importance of specific songs?