

Archiving the audible debris of empire: on a mission between Africa and Britain

Erin Johnson-Williams

To cite this article: Erin Johnson-Williams (2023) Archiving the audible debris of empire: on a mission between Africa and Britain, *Postcolonial Studies*, 26:3, 360-385, DOI: [10.1080/13688790.2023.2243082](https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2023.2243082)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13688790.2023.2243082>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 08 Aug 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 146



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

Archiving the audible debris of empire: on a mission between Africa and Britain

Erin Johnson-Williams 

Department of Music, Durham University, Durham, UK

ABSTRACT

Derrida's work on 'archive fever' has prompted a great deal of academic reflection about the archive and what a critical 'archiving' of the past can imply for our understanding of the present. And yet, if the object of historical study is musical sound, what can a 'fevered' approach to the archive tell us through the silence of its dusty materials? When adding in the further complexity of a colonial context, the archiving of what Stoler has termed the 'imperial debris' of empire brings up a further conundrum: that of what I call here the 'audible debris' of empire: i.e. the sonic traces of power and resistance through musical sound that are otherwise absent from traditional historical narratives. In this article, I examine nineteenth-century British attitudes about music at the South African mission station of Lovedale in order to interrogate what a 'destabilised' archival awareness can bring to postcolonial musical scholarship. I ask how the structures of colonial archiving that created the imperial historiography of Lovedale (the 'archival imaginary') have influenced and reinforced the 'disciplining strains' of Lovedale's musical activities. In turn, I also consider how these 'disciplining strains' have created audible legacies that are themselves musical archives of imperial processes.

KEYWORDS

Colonial South Africa; hymn singing; Derrida; 'archive fever'; musical discipline

To keep the African always on the grindstone of work, or to be, as a non-missionary observer with more force than elegance remarked, always pounding Christianity into him, would be to defeat the object of the Mission, and render its success either limited or non-existent. Human nature is a curious thing. It will only stand so much of any process, occupation, or effort, within any given time ... Hence, though work rules the life of all who dwell at Lovedale, all rational relaxation and amusement are encouraged. And as all Africans are musical, there is a fairly good instrumental band.¹

– James Stewart, *Lovedale, South Africa* (1894)

From the moralizing rhetoric surrounding the 1890s tours of Black South African choirs in Britain, to the wide circulation of propagandistic material about the success of colonial missionary work, the idea of the Scottish mission station of Lovedale in the Cape Colony fired the imaginations of British reading and listening publics by the end of the

CONTACT Erin Johnson-Williams  e.johnson-williams@soton.ac.uk  Department of Music, Durham University, Durham, UK

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

nineteenth century. Victorian discourses about Lovedale, moreover, contributed to an archival narrative about mission station music in South Africa that is in need of destabilization. As has been explored in recent scholarship, the disciplinary structures of knowledge created by missionaries about colonial mission experiences were profoundly shaped by textual and temporal systems of information that informed a British-centric narrative about Lovedale's development.² Such written fantasies about the imperial message have long dominated discourses about Lovedale within both South Africa and the west.³ In this article, I examine late nineteenth-century British attitudes about colonial sound at Lovedale in order to interrogate what a 'destabilised' archival awareness might bring to postcolonial musical scholarship. I explore how the structures of colonial archiving that created the historiography of Lovedale – what I call here the 'archival imaginary'⁴ – have influenced and reinforced the 'disciplining strains' of Lovedale's musical activities. In turn, I also consider how these 'disciplining strains' have created audible legacies that are themselves musical archives of imperial processes.⁵

In approaching this topic, it is worth asking how the western reification of the colonial archive has impacted knowledge construction about music in nineteenth-century South Africa. For if we take the idea of the colonial archive to reflect something more porous than an institutional enclosure but, more broadly speaking, to be any collection of (constructed) cultural values about knowledge,⁶ then the archival object of a colonial mission station hymn, for example, may be a useful illustration of the gendered, racial and imperial disciplines of empire.⁷ If, moreover, we adopt Foucault's definition of the archive as 'the system that governs the appearances of statements',⁸ then there is conceivably no limit as to how flexible we might be in our definition of what constitutes an archive. While this flexibility potentially muddies the historiographical process, it also extends our options for identifying the various forces of imperialism possible in re-presentations of colonial music-making.

Here, Carolyn Steedman's concept of the archive as an 'idea rather than a place'⁹ is particularly applicable to music, which, by its transient nature, resists straightforward classification. In order to embrace this definition for musical archiving, however, historical musicology needs to acknowledge its tendency as a discipline to perpetuate biases towards western-centric forms of record keeping – i.e. in limiting 'old' archival objects to the written word or the printed score – and to explore how these biases have shaped, and continue to impact, our discipline. For example, the *Oxford Music Online's* definition of 'Archival Research' (itself only a subsection of the broader article on 'Musicology') still gives a strikingly narrow definition of the term: '[a]rchives are documents issued in the process of administration ... They are of interest to the historian for study of the institution to which the archives refer, or for study of people or objects or events associated with that institution'.¹⁰ The cultural history of archiving, the politics of access, and the structural legacies of western archival practices in the postcolonial world, are not explored.

How, then, can musicology broaden its definitions of archival possibilities at large, and enter into dialogue with the intellectual processes of what Jacques Derrida, in reference to Sigmund Freud, famously called 'Archive Fever'?¹¹ Furthermore, in our current neoliberal climate, where new archival research is mostly financed by elite research grants – which themselves are often applied for out of the pressure to produce the exemplary academic CV (one's own personal archive) – it stands the case today that entering the institutional archive has become a near-compulsory rite of passage for historical researchers. Many of

us will have experienced the professional pressure to participate in this ritual: the vocational validation of arriving at the hallowed architectural structures of Grand National Libraries; thrilling in our ability to walk in footsteps trod by generations of scholarly minds. Even if our post-modern, post-structural, post-colonial sensibilities remind us of the political, imperial and capitalistic heritages of many of these collections, we still delight at attaining access to their material in spite of ourselves; for this access alone reifies the signifying systems of belief about the value of our research as much as the archives themselves shape our written outputs. By the same token, if we are privileged enough to visit archives in faraway exotic locations, we, too, will appear to have participated in the neo-imperial creation of knowledge, entering the dusty colonial archive with research methods stemming from western modes of discourse. As historians, we often relegate ourselves to these archives, rather than talking to living individuals, even though the social processes that formed such collections were most likely created by many of the imperialist powers we seek to debunk. Eventually, all going well, we receive adulation from academic advisors and colleagues for having discovered 'original material', as if the sources found meaning only on our arrival. We then publish our findings and count ourselves Professional Authorities, comforted that we, too, 'did our time'.

The scholarly prestige of this 'archival time' – a ritual that Derrida equates to being under 'house arrest'¹² – continues, despite the increased digitization of so many historical sources. We must then ask ourselves whether the condition of 'house arrest' is productive to deep critical thinking about knowledge construction. Derrida's state of 'house arrest', indeed, risks becoming even more of a totalizing force in light of COVID-19 quarantine measures, where issues of access have only intensified the economic disparities between those who are able to access information and those who are not. While today entire dissertations may be written from material accessed only or primarily via digital platforms, the systems that produce the algorithms and accessibility of academic information on the internet are still generated by western monopolies of power, only reinforcing the façade of user-friendliness behind paywalls that in turn expose the privilege of the researcher. Indeed, the lure and appeal of putting in one's 'archival time' is reinforced by the presence of data at our fingertips, such that many writers consciously detox from this information saturation in order to create 'deep work' at all.¹³ Such is the state of Derrida's 'fever' in the present day.¹⁴

And so, whether entering the British Library, the Library of Congress, the archive of a colonial government, or the login page of an academic search engine, the process of critically interrogating the value systems that have made the existence of these collections possible reinforces Steedman's claim that '[t]he fever, or sickness of the archive is to do with its very establishment, which is at one and the same time, the establishment of state power and authority'.¹⁵ Steedman suggests that this sickness is compounded by the researcher's own 'feverish desire [...]': the fever not so much to enter it and use it, as to have it, or just for it to be there, in the first place'.¹⁶ Thus, that there is one more page of search results, or one more obscure manuscript lying at the bottom of a special collections box, is enough to entice the researcher forward without encouraging critical thinking about what kind of power structures enabled this information to be created (and made available) at all.

Such 'archival fevers' were, moreover, intrinsic to a nineteenth-century British perception of empire. Indeed, the archival drive to 'possess' knowledge was fundamental to a

nineteenth-century imperialist conception of the world. The ontological context of what lies behind Archive Fever – the very Victorian quest to possess knowledge of the world’s origins, classified into historically-convenient beginnings – is what interests me here, specifically regarding the knowledge systems that emerged about race and music on mission stations in late nineteenth-century South Africa.¹⁷ Who created these new forms of knowledge, and how did colonial mission station agents conform to or resist these narratives? And were the objects or residues of colonial music – hymns, or descriptions of musical sound, real or imagined – ‘different’, or more ‘malleable’ in any sense than other archivable material?¹⁸ For if we agree with Derrida that the very word ‘archive’ is inextricable from power structures – *Arkhe*, its Greek root, translates as both *commencement* and *commandment*, pointing not only to a sense of origins but also to an establishment of authority¹⁹ – then it is important to consider the power structures that lie behind systems of colonial musical knowledge, and conversely, to ask where colonial musical agency can be found.²⁰ It is no coincidence, of course, that the exponential growth of the western archive over the last two centuries coincided with the Victorian systematizing of evolutionary history, which resulted in the mass cataloguing of biological and cultural stereotypes.²¹ But pigeonholing music simplistically into these systems overwrites and silences colonial musical agency, as well as the possibility of reading an archive of colonial experience against the grain. As Ann Laura Stoler has claimed, it is often the ‘imperial debris’ left behind by the traditional archive that can tell us a great deal about colonial experiences.²² In the remainder of this article I will extend Stoler’s notion of ‘imperial debris’ to propose a musicological framework for hearing ‘audible debris’, exploring how the Victorian perceptions of music associated with Lovedale can challenge, negotiate and above all reimagine what constitutes an archive of colonial experience.

An imperial act? Sounding the colonial music archive

Is entering the archive, by its nature, an imperial act? Steedman’s provocation about the researcher’s desire for control and possession of knowledge suggests that there is merit to this question, when she argues that ‘[t]o want to go to the Archive may be a specialist and minority desire (only a Historian’s desire after all), but it is emblematic of a modern way of being in the world nonetheless, expressive of the more general fever to know and to have the past’.²³ Thus, has the task of the contemporary scholar not really evolved that far from that of the nineteenth-century ‘imperialist’²⁴ – in that one enters the archive to enact a process of ideologically-driven ordering and storytelling? As Stoler claims, ‘the archive was the supreme technology of the late nineteenth-century imperial state, a repository of codified beliefs that clustered (and bore witness to) connections between secrecy, the law, and power’.²⁵ The idea of the archive as a technology of power might be productively linked to the ‘prestige’ of the ritual entering of the archive that has existed in various forms from the nineteenth century until today. Brian Keith Axel has discussed this ritualization directly, noting that:

whereas the arrival of the historian into the archive is often seen as a rite of passage constituting the historian as such, the monumentality of the archive’s space – with its speciality inhabitants and its looming architectural distinctions – must be understood as a crucial element in constructing the ambivalent desire of history to seek in its documents authoritative embodiments of a past authenticity, or an authentic past.²⁶

The physical structure of the archive thus exists in an authorial relationship to the researcher, and renders the researcher captive to its conventions before the act of research has even taken place. While Axel's statement might seem more easily applicable to grand state libraries rather than *ad hoc* private or small colonial archives, such a sentiment can be extended to any archival act, whether one is entering the colonial archive in the physical body of the privileged western researcher or gliding easily behind corporate paywalls to access academic articles via an elite institutional login.

A critical debunking of re-presentations of 'authenticity' more broadly is not a new task for musicologists. One productive step, going forward, would be to place discussions about music archives into dialogue with recent scholarship across the humanities that has challenged the archive's neutrality. Stoler, for example, urges us to see archival material as an opportunity for approaching ontologies of colonial knowledge construction, noting that documents in colonial archives 'were not dead matter once the moment of their making had passed'.²⁷ Stoler also encourages us to attend to matters 'not written' in conceptualizing the broader processes of colonial archiving.²⁸ Relatedly, E. Cram has argued that there is no such thing as a neutral archival experience, suggesting that '[e]ven the most sterile feeling and highly institutionalised archives are not passive holding places for primary documents', and, further, that '[a]rchives are rhetorical spaces on the basis of the aesthetic strategy of the built environment, how the archive is emplaced within its human and nonhuman surroundings, its ideological or affective relationship to regional and/or national identity, and its fluctuating sensory culture'.²⁹ For our purposes, then, musicologists may find useful the notion that archival construction and sensory experience can go hand in hand. This coalescence is explored by Steedman, who privileges the sensory experience of the literal 'dust' kicked up (and breathed in) during the archival act, rendering the condition of Archive Fever to be both about the physical experience of the archive itself and the ego's desire for knowledge possession.³⁰ Steedman also reminds us that falling for abstract archival metaphors can distract from the disorganized realities of the archive:

It is a common desire ... since at least the end of the nineteenth century – to use the Archive as metaphor or analogy, when memory is discussed. But the problem in using Derrida discussing Freud in order to discuss Archives, is that an Archive is not very much like human memory, and is not at all like the unconscious mind.³¹

These matters are made all the more complex today at a time where open-access pressures meet with ethical dilemmas of cultural ownership that have their own imperial legacies. This has been poignantly explored by historian Aaron Fox, who notes that:

the more utopian visions of open access also entail a throwing up of hands at historical facts and political realities that will not be so easily converted to archival objects of contemplation, and not just from those who profit economically from keeping the price of knowledge high. Those of us who are gatekeepers to ethnographic archives containing documents of formerly colonised people, and of Indigenous or Aboriginal people and communities in particular, have lately been driven by the opposite ambition. We wonder if we might somehow reduce access, further restrict unfettered circulation of things that have been allowed to leak out of archives for decades, limit or control digital circulation, and enforce archive policies and interpret questions of legality not only as representatives of science for our employing institutions – as keepers of an asset for research – but as advocates for the cultural rights and sensibilities and feelings of Indigenous people.³²

Fox's statement reflects the ethical dilemmas of the postcolonial researcher, posing questions that are as true for the researcher today as they were for the Victorian missionary who was attempting to curate a teleological narrative of mission success: does one self-censor one's writings from sensitive materials that one feels uncomfortable about 'displaying' in a published format, or does one negotiate and/or expose the complex issues of ownership that are deeply embedded in the creation of every archive?³³

With regard to colonial contexts, Hoffmann and Mnyaka have claimed that '[t]he colonial archive is all but quiet',³⁴ despite the silencing forces of imperialism. Tony Balantyne has explored similar issues when examining the concept of missionary-curated 'Indigenised space' and representations of the body in the historiography of the South Pacific.³⁵ Further, Ried and Paisley's 2017 *Sources and Methods in Histories of Colonialism: Approaching the Imperial Archive* has given sustained treatment to the topic of imperial ideology and censorship in the historiography of empire. They encourage contemporary scholars to view the history of archives as an integral component of their historical work, calling for a view of the 'ever present-ness of the past' to help us to 'think critically and analytically about the archives in which we work as well as our research methods, our choice of sources and our conceptual approaches'.³⁶

This growing body of literature is useful for how scholars can address the history of representing institutional and cultural power, and the fact that archival work itself rarely leads to any clear point of origin.³⁷ In reality, as Steedman has noted, scholars are more often confronted by the impossibility of the archive; by the gaps left open by institutional selection and censorship.³⁸ The point, of course, is that until the rise of recent academic discourses around the 'archival turn',³⁹ academic research outputs have habitually omitted reference to the institutional mechanisms shaping these dusty legacies: to the days when the quality of one's research was inhibited by exhaustion from long-distance travel; by fatigue from the bureaucracy of research permissions; or by discomfort at being the 'wrong' race, class or gender of researcher for the archive in question.⁴⁰ In the process, we have risked limiting wider critical reflection about the mechanisms by which the colonial archive was first constructed – processes closely intertwined with histories of race, class, and political history.

Archives containing information about musical sound, moreover, carry an auditory dimension that further complicates post/colonial power structures. Kofi Agawu has picked up on this, noting that: '[f]or unlike political history, with its kingdoms and wars, migrations and inventions, music – an art of sound and a performing art in an oral culture – leaves different, more complex and elusive traces on the historical record'.⁴¹ Thus, where does the musicologist, in homage to Derrida and Stoler, find sonic traces of archival 'dust' or 'debris'? The conventional hush of the reading room can seem particularly at odds with the once-sounding subjects of our enquiry. Indeed, there seems to be no small irony that a profession dedicated to recovering musical sound renders its members mute. Our aural imaginations in the archive are thus pressingly compelled – if not bound – to wander to the realm of auditory imagination as our eyes scan source after source. Perhaps we should then pay due consideration to archival silences, and the disciplinary imperative of these silences to be filled by imaginative constructions of musical sound that stemmed from colonial contexts.⁴²

As such, the equivocal place given to music in the British archive of Lovedale – whether in the form of depicting a mission band as a metaphor for racial harmony, or

in the mixed reception of the Black singers in the 1890s tours of the South African Choir – is indicative of the contradictory role of music and sound in the construction of a colonial ‘civilising mission’. And here it is as important to examine what is left out of the archive as to acknowledge what appears in it. As Giordano Nanni has argued in the *Colonisation of Time*, one of the most effective modes of missionary discipline in colonial South Africa was to generate authority via the imposition of a seven-day working week, and through regular sessions of work, worship, study, and meals, all marked by the disciplining soundscape of a bell from a mission station clocktower.⁴³ In this construction, British timekeeping is associated with regularity, and ‘African time’ is associated with irregularity and laziness. Thus, although accounts of ‘African time’ were not rigorously archived by the mission station records or by the press, the imposition of civilizing ‘time’ and the seasonal church calendar resulted, in Nanni’s view, in the entrenched trope of ‘African time’ carrying racially-charged connotations of disrespect and laziness.⁴⁴ By extension, although the soundscape of the *bell itself* was largely left out of the archive of Lovedale, the implication that the bell is there at all speaks to white settler values of sonic ordering, under which the Black convert is made subordinate.

By extension, this framework could be applied to the process of notating Xhosa Christian singing in western forms of musical notation – even, or especially if, the actual act of notating was done by the Black Xhosa residents of Lovedale.⁴⁵ For like the imposition of the 24-hour clock, the use of the western scale implied, for the missionaries, a conceptual sonic regularity in contrast to (racial perceptions of) African musical improvisation. In a Victorian mission framework, this type of sonic regularity was also something that could easily be archived: bell timetables or notated hymns could be printed, disseminated and catalogued. Thus, the archival traces left of hymn-singing at Lovedale became documented in western forms of signification (i.e. the tonic sol-fa notation that was used by the working classes within Britain and was therefore ‘apt’ for colonial Black converts); these are archival formats that, by the same token, are still only accessible to musically-literate researchers.

Agawu has raised similar concerns about privilege and access when discussing the imperial legacies of archiving of African music, arguing that ‘African students are now aware of the holdings abroad in such locations as the Library of Congress in Washington D.C., the New York Public Library, the British Library, or the Musée de l’Homme in Paris’.⁴⁶ While these institutions are indisputably valuable repositories of sources on colonial African music, they are locations that most African students and academics do not have the resources to access. However, the historical explanation for why these collections are owned by so many western institutions is because imperialism happened in the first place. Furthermore, due to the imperial legacies of the disciplines of comparative musicology and ethnomusicology,⁴⁷ archives that hold transcriptions or recordings of colonial musics also tend to be held in geographical locations that many African scholars cannot easily reach. As Agawu observes: ‘[t]he written part of the archive we have been discussing exists mainly in Euro-American libraries, not in Africa. And this disparity requires that we comment briefly on the material realities that have shaped and continue to shape the archive of African music’.⁴⁸ Agawu points out, additionally, that African scholars are usually not paid enough to afford archival trips to the west: ‘African music scholarship belongs to the rich, or at least to the well-to-do’.⁴⁹ The same may be applied to African students and scholars being able to afford institutional

logins for academic search engines and access to costly academic books.⁵⁰ This difficulty might be extended to many postcolonial music archives, and is relevant to any critical study of colonial knowledge construction; for as the archival institutions themselves will be conditioned by contextual ideologies, so will the sources within them.⁵¹ Gavin Steingo, for example, notes that in the 1890s colonial music critics ‘claimed to identify traits of “South African Native” music where none were to be found, making excessively vague and even erroneous observations about Black-composed Victorian music’.⁵² Thus, the process of archiving colonial Black South African music resulted in the reinforcement of western constructions of colonial music-making that were based on racial stereotypes and imperialistic agendas, without admitting as much.

Curating the archival imaginary: censoring resistance

In applying the ontological legacies of imperialism to nineteenth-century South Africa, I now turn my focus to the role of sound in the written archive of Lovedale. Just as protest through song is integral to the history of South Africa in the twentieth century,⁵³ colonial protest – with all of its sonic accompaniments – is endemic to the nineteenth-century story of South African mission stations. Lovedale – the archival object here – was an evangelical nondenominational mission station and educational institute in the Eastern Cape of South Africa. Founded in 1824 by the Glasgow Missionary Society (GMS), Lovedale was named after GMS secretary Dr John Love. Although nondenominational, Lovedale always retained its association with the Church of Scotland, and many of its promotional materials were printed or distributed in Glasgow and Edinburgh.⁵⁴

Lovedale’s history saw many changes and struggles that could have easily risked a scandalous image for reading audiences back in Britain. For example, in 1834 the original buildings were destroyed by the local Xhosa population, provoking fear amongst the missionaries, and resulting in the station being moved several miles north. Through periods of persistent unrest, the archive of Lovedale in the cultural memory of British missions thus needed to be framed as a rustic haven of Christian moral reform, resulting in several promotional materials being published specifically for British readers during the second half of the nineteenth century. All of these publications emphasized Lovedale’s bucolic serenity and the supposed contented peacefulness of its inhabitants, downplaying moments of unrest or disruption.⁵⁵ Such promotional materials, which dominate the holdings on Lovedale held in the British Library, constitute a carefully inscribed history of the tranquillity of the mission station at a time when, as historian Clifton Crais has claimed, ‘violence racked the social world of the Eastern Cape’.⁵⁶ As Liz Stanley has also explored, a legacy of protest was a central component of Lovedale’s history, even if it was largely censored from its nineteenth-century archiving. Indeed, all of the ‘official’ recorded protests take place in the twentieth century, when on-site inquiries produced the extensive Lovedale archives now present in the Cory Library at Rhodes University.⁵⁷

The nineteenth-century image of Lovedale as portrayed to the British public, however, focused primarily on the success of the mission station. In 1870, Dr James Stewart, who had travelled with the famous missionary and explorer David Livingstone, took over as principal, by which time Lovedale’s programme of education had expanded to include female students, who were taught separate reading, theology and domestic work.⁵⁸

Among many of Stewart's writings was his book *Dawn in the Dark Continent* (1903), which extolled the impact of missionary work in southern Africa; specifically, that Black Africans would reach a state of 'civilisation' through the help of white evangelization.⁵⁹ Stewart depicted a peaceful image of the workings of Lovedale, where the Black students knew their place and were grateful for a Christian education. While the mission station classes were initially mixed with white and Black students, acts of worship, sleeping and eating were almost always segregated by race.⁶⁰ Students learned farming, printing-works, English, history and religion. There was a hospital on the campus, as well as a printing press, which produced the first Xhosa bible and the first Xhosa-language hymnbooks, consisting of Victorian-style hymns printed in tonic sol-fa notation.⁶¹

Lovedale, as was the case for many colonial mission stations, also had its own library: an archive of the west (Figure 1). As its mission was the evangelization and westernization of local African cultures, its holdings consisted of many British educational materials donated by the Glasgow Mission Society, and the music taught at the mission station was, on the surface, entirely western – Victorian tonic sol-fa hymn singing for services, drill marches for disciplined exercise routines, and brass band music for 'healthy recreation'.

Figures 1 and 2 contain images taken from 1894 Lovedale promotional publications, and can be read as visual signifiers of the archiving of 'ordered' colonial mission: first, the quiet hush of the library that in its interior design looks little different from a library in Britain, and second, the disciplining order of the tonic sol-fa hymn that, while composed in Xhosa by a Black composer, is still inscribed in the colonizer's notation. Both images also imply curation. Notably, there is no one studying in the library; instead, the image invites (literate) readers in, without having to display any Black bodies, just as the tonic sol-fa notation invites (musically-literate, although non-elite) singers to voice its musical strains. The reassuring contour of the top melody line in Figure 2 – a straightforward descending C major scale that rises to an applied dominant by the bottom of the page, backed by the warm texture of four-part harmony – does little to destabilize the notion that Black converts at Lovedale were leaving behind Indigenous forms of singing for the harmonic and rhythmic regularity of the Victorian hymn. One might even argue that Bokwe's musical style here almost plays it 'too safe' in creating this 'archive' of Black South African hymnody, thus raising complex questions about his own compositional agency.

Despite the circulation of these two 1894 publications within Britain as a promotion of mission success, Lovedale's supposedly idyllic borders would be disturbed from the inside repeatedly – a fact about which these Victorian publications remain conspicuously mute. It was not until recently that South African historian Graham A. Duncan labelled Lovedale a site of deeply 'coercive' evangelization.⁶² Duncan, who worked at Lovedale in the late twentieth century, utilizes both British and South African archives, and works against the grain of the glossy promotional 'British' Lovedale archive by incorporating local Xhosa perspectives. For example, the Xhosa suspicion of the mission stations was that they were 'centres of immorality, havens for the dissolute, criminals and ne'er-do-wells' because the British evangelicals worked to convert and give a home to those accused of witchcraft, those who had run away from their husbands, and those who were disabled'.⁶³ From a Xhosa perspective, therefore, because Lovedale embraced local outsiders, it was seen as a breeding ground of debauched behaviour, as well as



IN THE LIBRARY, LOVEDALE





THIS interior shows one of the rooms of the main educational building used as the library. It contains over 7000 volumes. One half is filled with recent books in general literature, and the other with older standard works, chiefly theological. The newer books come from Mudie's twice or three times a year. The library is supported by subscriptions, by an annual grant of thirty pounds from the Cape Government, and by a small endowment by the late Miss MORRISON of Glasgow.

The foundation of the library was made very many years ago by the gift of nearly 2000 volumes from friends of the Mission in Scotland. It has been more than once well weeded since then, and though not large, contains a much greater selection of really good books than can be found in the libraries of many colonial towns. All have free access, even the European residents of the district, on payment of a small annual subscription, which varies according to the number of volumes, from ten shillings upwards.

63

Figure 1. 'In the Library, Lovedale', *Lovedale, South Africa: Illustrated by Fifty Views from Photographs* (Lovedale, 1894), p 63. British Library General Reference Collection 4765.18.

being home to suspicious forms of discipline such as refusing to let sick students go home to their villages for the missionaries' fear of Indigenous medical practices.⁶⁴ Moreover, repeated instances of internal Black resistance are palpable from Duncan's perusal of local police reports, such as a riot in 1920 when buildings were damaged and set on fire by students, and a case in 1922 when a Lovedale sports team played at a rival mission station and ransacked its premises, storming the dormitories and strewing orange peels across the grounds – leaving the white managers of the institution deeply

 AFA!  AFA  -  KULULI.

THE SAVIOUR DIED.

REV. TIYO SOGA. JOHN KNOX BOKWE.

KEY C. *With feeling.*

<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> $d' : - \quad \quad s : - \quad \quad .l$ $m : - \quad \quad m : - \quad \quad .f$ </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding-left: 10px;"> $s : - \quad \quad s : -$ $m : - \quad \quad m : -$ </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> 1. Wa - fa! 2. Ha - y'i - - 3. E - si </td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;"> wa - fu nce - ba si - ku - - </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> $s : - \quad \quad d' : -$ $d : - \quad \quad m : -$ </td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;"> $d' : - \quad \quad s : -$ $s : - \quad \quad d : -$ </td> </tr> </table>	$d' : - \quad \quad s : - \quad \quad .l$ $m : - \quad \quad m : - \quad \quad .f$	$s : - \quad \quad s : -$ $m : - \quad \quad m : -$	1. Wa - fa! 2. Ha - y'i - - 3. E - si	wa - fu nce - ba si - ku - -	$s : - \quad \quad d' : -$ $d : - \quad \quad m : -$	$d' : - \quad \quad s : -$ $s : - \quad \quad d : -$	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> $s : f \quad \quad m : r$ $m : r \quad \quad d : t_1$ </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding-left: 10px;"> $d : - \quad \quad d : -$ $d : - \quad \quad d : -$ </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> u - Mku - - i - nga - - mbu - zo </td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;"> lu - li! pe - li! sa - ko </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> $s : l \quad \quad s : f$ $f_1 : - \quad \quad s_1 : -$ </td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;"> $m : - \quad \quad m : -$ $d : - \quad \quad d : -$ </td> </tr> </table>	$s : f \quad \quad m : r$ $m : r \quad \quad d : t_1$	$d : - \quad \quad d : -$ $d : - \quad \quad d : -$	u - Mku - - i - nga - - mbu - zo	lu - li! pe - li! sa - ko	$s : l \quad \quad s : f$ $f_1 : - \quad \quad s_1 : -$	$m : - \quad \quad m : -$ $d : - \quad \quad d : -$
$d' : - \quad \quad s : - \quad \quad .l$ $m : - \quad \quad m : - \quad \quad .f$	$s : - \quad \quad s : -$ $m : - \quad \quad m : -$												
1. Wa - fa! 2. Ha - y'i - - 3. E - si	wa - fu nce - ba si - ku - -												
$s : - \quad \quad d' : -$ $d : - \quad \quad m : -$	$d' : - \quad \quad s : -$ $s : - \quad \quad d : -$												
$s : f \quad \quad m : r$ $m : r \quad \quad d : t_1$	$d : - \quad \quad d : -$ $d : - \quad \quad d : -$												
u - Mku - - i - nga - - mbu - zo	lu - li! pe - li! sa - ko												
$s : l \quad \quad s : f$ $f_1 : - \quad \quad s_1 : -$	$m : - \quad \quad m : -$ $d : - \quad \quad d : -$												
<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> $r : - \quad \quad s : -$ $t_1 : - \quad \quad r : -$ </td> <td style="width: 50%; padding-left: 10px;"> $fe : - \quad \quad s : -$ $d : - \quad \quad t_1 : -$ </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> Wa - fa E - we, So - ku - - </td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;"> nge - nxa yo - na si - hlau - - </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border-right: 1px solid black; padding-right: 10px;"> $s : - \quad \quad t : -$ $s_1 : - \quad \quad t_1 : -$ </td> <td style="padding-left: 10px;"> $l : - \quad \quad s : -$ $r : - \quad \quad s : -$ </td> </tr> </table>	$r : - \quad \quad s : -$ $t_1 : - \quad \quad r : -$	$fe : - \quad \quad s : -$ $d : - \quad \quad t_1 : -$	Wa - fa E - we, So - ku - -	nge - nxa yo - na si - hlau - -	$s : - \quad \quad t : -$ $s_1 : - \quad \quad t_1 : -$	$l : - \quad \quad s : -$ $r : - \quad \quad s : -$							
$r : - \quad \quad s : -$ $t_1 : - \quad \quad r : -$	$fe : - \quad \quad s : -$ $d : - \quad \quad t_1 : -$												
Wa - fa E - we, So - ku - -	nge - nxa yo - na si - hlau - -												
$s : - \quad \quad t : -$ $s_1 : - \quad \quad t_1 : -$	$l : - \quad \quad s : -$ $r : - \quad \quad s : -$												

Figure 2. 'The Saviour Died', Composed by John Knox Bokwe, in *Amaculo Ase Lovedale: Lovedale Music* (Lovedale, 1894), p 13. British Library Music Collections B.967.

embarrassed at the raucous and disorderly contamination of the supposedly 'civilised' mission station atmosphere.⁶⁵ The archival debris of unrest, in the form of scattered orange peels and the trace of uncomfortable raucous 'noise', was then curated out of

much of the British archive of Lovedale until revisionist historians such as Duncan came along to look at sources like police records. These local perspectives, suggesting coercive practices, are conspicuously absent from the western imperial archive (such as in the materials about Lovedale in the British Library), where there is little trace of the simmering unrest discussed above. For in the highly-curated re-presentations of mission education that were sent to nineteenth-century British readers, the harmoniousness of the institution was promoted above all else, with the metaphor of (westernized) musical consonance presented as evidence of Lovedale's serene community.

An example of such 'harmonious' metaphorization can be found in the image entitled 'Black and White in Harmony', taken from James Stewart's promotional publication for Scottish audiences, *Lovedale, South Africa: Illustrated by Fifty Views from Photographs* of 1894 (Figure 3). This photograph, accompanied by Stewart's written description, reflects not only a hybridity between muscular militarism and Christian mission, but also provides a rare space in the archive for musical desegregation. As the first recreational brass band at the mission station, the group contained a mix of white and Black students and staff members, with the 'fun' of band participation justified as being a release from the 'grindstone of work' in 'always pounding Christianity into' the African student.⁶⁶ As Stewart then claims, since 'all Africans are musical, there is a fairly good instrumental band'.⁶⁷ Here, music is a conduit for the races to socialize in a way that even transcends the segregated hymn singing of chapel services: 'Black and white mingle in the band, as they do elsewhere and in the classes, though they sit at separate tables and have separate rooms. Many of the Europeans, from this contact, gain a lasting sympathy with the natives and acquire an interest in missions'.⁶⁸

Music here enacts a conceptual performance of western, civilized harmoniousness that even the mission station's sporting activities could not achieve, for, as was noted in the Lovedale Reports of 1891: '[i]n games they are usually separate, being allowed to please themselves ... It will be seen ... that they are not mixed up'.⁶⁹ The recreational band thus allowed for the (ostensible) mingling of the races under the proviso that the musical instruction provided by the white band leader was beneficial to both the Black and white band members. 'All Africans' might be musical, but the bigger implication is that they played British brass band music in Victorian dress and effectively aspired towards (musical) whiteness. This implied, for the British reader back home, a potentially exotic soundscape that was still tightly controlled under the moralizing force of western instruments.

As Thomas Richards writes at the opening of *The Imperial Archive*, 'an Empire is partly a fiction'.⁷⁰ And the fiction, indeed, of the harmonious mixed band quickly dispersed in actual musical practice. As the decades wore on, and far more Black than white students attended Lovedale, these musical groups came to consist of Black students only, as can be seen from an image of the Lovedale band published in 1971, at a time when the imagined soundscapes of the British reader would have sounded quite different, and the band was less a site of imperial success and more at risk of student revolt.⁷¹ Only eight years later, Lovedale was closed down by the government, and later opened in a different guise as an agricultural training college in the town of Alice.⁷² After the 1970s, effectively, the archive of Lovedale's 'Black and white' students and staff members playing in 'harmony' was discontinued. In the archive of Lovedale,



BLACK AND WHITE IN HARMONY

To keep the African always on the grindstone of work, or to be, as a non-missionary observer with more force than elegance remarked, always pounding Christianity into him, would be to defeat the object of the Mission, and render its success either limited or non-existent. Human nature is a curious thing. It will only stand so much of any process, occupation, or effort, within any given time. A change to something else is then necessary. Hence, though work rules the life of all who dwell at Lovedale, all rational relaxation and amusement are encouraged. And as all Africans are musical, there is a fairly good instrumental band. M. Germond, the son of a worthy French missionary in Basutoland, takes the musical responsibility as a relief from his other duties, and appears prominently in the centre of the group above. Black and white mingle in the band, as they do elsewhere and in the classes, though they sit at separate tables and have separate rooms. Many of the Europeans, from this contact, gain a lasting sympathy with the natives and acquire an interest in missions.

80

Figure 3. 'Black and White in Harmony', Lovedale, South Africa: Illustrated by *Fifty Views from Photographs* (Lovedale, 1894), p 80. British Library General Reference Collection 4765.18.

then, this 1894 fiction of mission harmony risks reinforcing a nostalgia for the actual and/or imagined soundscapes of the mixed-raced nineteenth-century band.

Hearing Lovedale in Britain

The migration of mission station hymnody in the 1890s beyond South Africa provides an additional case study in the soundscapes of the memory of empire – the singing of Lovedale students in Britain itself. From 1891 to 1892, the tour of the South African

Choir to Britain was never going to be an event that was straightforwardly archived, as it immediately caused a stir in the Victorian press as well as deep consternation at Lovedale. The ensemble had been inspired by the African American Virginia Jubilee Singers (a spinoff of the Fisk Jubilee Singers), who had undertaken almost five years of touring time in South Africa between 1890 and 1898.⁷³ The Virginia Singers had a mixed experience of 1890s South Africa. Their leader Orpheus MacAdoo noted uncomfortably that ‘the native to-day is treated as badly as ever the slave was treated in Georgia’.⁷⁴ Their concerts, however, were mostly well received, and ‘[e]veryone seemed captivated with the singing; never heard such singing in all their lives ... they said, “and just to think that black people should do it”’.⁷⁵ As Laura Chrisman has pointed out, the hierarchies of musical, racial and cultural prestige here were highly complex: ‘the Americans enjoyed more social, cultural, and economic standing than their black South African counterparts. This has encouraged the perception that black Americans were more “modern” than black South Africans’.⁷⁶ In this sense, was it even possible for Black South African choirs, on the model of the Fisk/Virginia Jubilee Singers, to gain the same kind of respect – musical or otherwise – particularly if they were touring to Britain itself? White South Africans, to be sure, were suspicious of the impact that the African American singers might have on local Black South Africans. An editorial entitled ‘The Negro Spirit’ in the *South African Outlook* in April 1900, for example, complained that:

the [American] negro spirit ... is decidedly anti-white ... to bring such a spirit, and to propagate it in this country will not be only the height of folly but also the ruination of the people ... If the [American] negro comes to this country we advise him ... to leave all his grievances behind him when he leaves the States, and especially to act the part other than that of a political agitator.⁷⁷

In this context, nineteenth-century African American hymn texts such as ‘Go Down Moses’ risked being perceived by white South Africans as musical acts of political resistance, and, while they could be framed as ‘entertainment’ for white South African audiences, the implications of Black political strength behind African American gospel hymns created a large degree of unease.

Nevertheless, despite the lack of support from Stewart as Lovedale principal, the South African Choir, consisting of several students from Lovedale, set sail for Britain in April 1891.⁷⁸ Although the tour met with disastrous managerial problems, a similar tour was launched in 1893 to North America, meeting with the same fate, where the singers were abandoned by their white managers once the finances became complicated.⁷⁹ The colonial ‘archiving’ of these tours demonstrates the complexities faced by the choir in the west. Firstly, in terms of audience expectations, it was going to be difficult for the South African Choir to simply slip into the same genres that made the Fisk Jubilee singers successful. That an African American choir could fill concert halls and tour internationally was the direct inspiration for the South African Choir in one sense, but in reality there was little crossover between the ensembles in musical style. The Virginia Singers had created the hallmark of an early gospel/spiritual sound that would not influence Black South African choral styles for another several decades.⁸⁰ And while not officially affiliated with Lovedale, the South African Choir consisted of several Lovedale graduates, many of whom had

grown up on the mission station and had been musically trained in Victorian hymns that were not intended for performative concert hall displays. British audiences were therefore surprised and at times disappointed with a repertoire that consisted partly of the kinds of hymns that they would have sung in their own churches rather than something more musically exotic. Moreover, the purpose of the South African Choir tour was, perhaps unglamorously (for the British audiences at least), to raise funds for Black theological education. The tour as a whole was therefore deeply embarrassing to Stewart in his capacity as Lovedale's principal, as he worried that if the singers were seen as musical Africans in their own right – separate from the influence of mission education – it might reflect badly on the credibility of his institution as effectively 'civilising' them into white Christians.

Within Britain, although the South African Choir performed to several packed audiences and even sang privately for Queen Victoria on the Isle of Wight, reviews were mixed and finances were dire.⁸¹ Thus, the archiving process of the choir tours stemmed from a racialized perception that was curated by their white managers (who later abandoned the choir while still in Britain), and British newspaper editors. This positioned the South African Choir tours in what Erlmann has described as a new, Eurocentric 'global imagination' by the end of the nineteenth century – one in which imperial exhibitions and commodity spectacle became far more prevalent forms of entertainment. The expectations of exotic spectacle on the London stage then placed the oddity of the 'performance' of mission education – the pedagogical purpose of which was to render the Black convert to effectively 'act white' – in a challenging position. Namely, if the South African Choir was effectively performing its aspirations towards 'whiteness' through the reflection of Christian missionization and theological education, then it did not fit easily into the categories of orientalist commodity fetishism that had habitually framed the displays of Black bodies on the Victorian stage.⁸² British audiences, indeed, were not expecting to be presented with this variety of musical and evangelical hybridity, but instead anticipated performances of what they perceived to be 'untouched' African culture – such as would have been on display at the many international exhibitions that took place in nineteenth-century Britain. Moreover, the imperial spectacles seen at British international exhibitions had also been more easily 'archivable'. These exhibitions, in the tradition of the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851, reflected the power of British imperial culture to display and to archive the contents and the peoples of the world.⁸³ Prior to the arrival of the South African Choir, indeed, most of the Africans 'on display' in London were presented in terms of their (classifiable) 'origins', rendering them immune to the progress of time and change. By contrast, what was new for British audiences about the South African Choir was not that they were Black performers on a British stage, but rather that they were singing British-influenced choral music to raise funds for the purpose of Black Christian education in Africa. In other words, the members of the choir were themselves involved in a process of perpetuating western knowledge (a highly complex process in dialogue with Homi Bhaba's theorization of colonial mimicry)⁸⁴ – and they confused audiences by preferring to fashion themselves after white, Victorian, Christian practices.

At the same time, the South African Choir still sang several token 'native' songs in their British concerts. For commentators, the choir's programmes constituted a perplexing

potpourri of musical genres. The choir's explicit fundraising objective gained them a certain degree of Victorian moral respectability, despite the fact that the tour did not sit well with the white mission station managers back in South Africa. Indeed, the academic staff of Lovedale expressed explicit concerns about how the tour would impact the reputation of the institution. Stewart, for example, referred to the initial 1891–1892 tour as 'a heartless swindle, perpetrated at the black man's expense',⁸⁵ despite the fact that the choir afterwards embarked on a second tour in 1893 to Britain, the USA, and Canada. For Stewart, however, the tours risked generating too much sensationalist press – particularly with regard to the objectification and sexualization of the female singers as lusty commodities⁸⁶ – and thus risked negating the success of missionization. There was also the mission station's ambivalence about Black African musical agency, with many of the British missionaries claiming that while Africans were 'musical', proper melodious worship music was not something that Black South Africans could themselves 'possess' at all. For example, the Rev. W. J. B. Moir, editor of the *Christian Express* and on several occasions the acting principal of Lovedale, opposed the choir tour on the grounds that, unlike African Americans, 'South African Bantu lacked characteristic music', and had no real tunes of their own, excepting Ntsikana's hymn and John Knox Bokwe's music.⁸⁷

John Knox Bokwe (1855–1922) was a Xhosa nonconformist minister who spent much of his lifetime working at Lovedale, where he composed and arranged many Xhosa-language hymns in tonic sol-fa notation.⁸⁸ Bokwe's allegiance to the civilizing aspects of the mission station, and to the idea of self-improvement through British protestant education, ran deep. Thus, in singing his hymns the choir members were performing a Xhosa success story of missionization. However, while some reviewers lauded the choir tours as an example of the success of the mission project,⁸⁹ others still seemed disappointed by the lack of spectacle when Bokwe's hymns sounded, to British audiences, surprisingly 'un-African'. As one critic lamented, '[t]he value and interest of the pieces performed are considerably reduced by the inevitable European harmonies ... suggestive rather of an English tonic sol-fa class than of savage strains'.⁹⁰ The *Musical Standard* likewise noted that: '[i]t is pretty obvious that the South African singers have in the process of civilisation adopted more or less the European scale, to say nothing of European harmonies'.⁹¹ Notably, the longest interview of the choir members in Britain, printed in the *Review of Reviews*, focused heavily on their aspirations to western civilization rather than on their musical interests or musical abilities.⁹² Given the ambiguous question of whether the singers, as Black Christian fundraisers, could be recognized as performers at all, reflects the fact that, in order to gain respectability, the choir essentially 'performed musical whiteness'⁹³ as a means of 'performing British Christianity', which in turn entailed a loss of their own hybrid musical identity.

The rhetoric that shaped the 'archiving' of the choir tour in the British press, therefore, struggled to reconcile and classify the choir's performances as either a symbol of mission success or as an example of what Erlmann has termed 'spectatorial lust'.⁹⁴ Erlmann's concept of 'spectatorial lust' is also notably applicable to the process of nineteenth-century imperial archiving, because the drive (or 'fever') in Britain for what became imagined as 'authentic' performances of racial otherness was in dialogue with 'a network of public spaces and events like museums, world fairs, and concerts', through which 'the disjointed data were to be reordered and the waning confidence in some notion of an

overarching order of things rekindled'.⁹⁵ Thus, the fetishization of international exhibitions and minstrel shows in nineteenth-century Britain reinforced a drive in the Victorian marketplace to essentialize and exoticize performers from the British colonies. Along these lines, many British critics who reviewed the South African Choir were disappointed when the choir did not appear entirely in so-called 'native' dress, which they wore for one half of each performance, many of them reluctantly so, as they did not dress in such attire either on or off the mission stations back home.⁹⁶ In South Africa, the mission press had even warned that wearing 'native' dress would be 'physically and morally dangerous', as it would imply that the singers were uncivilized.⁹⁷ Erlmann argues that these disputes help to show that the emerging written record of the choir tour was not just about 'musical grammar alone', noting that, '[v]oiced though it mostly was from within more openly antimissionary and antiliberal factions of the metropolitan press, the disappointment bespoke a more deep-seated ambiguity', which he relates to Renato Rosaldo's concept of 'imperialist nostalgia'.⁹⁸

Thus, when the South African Choir sang Bokwe's arrangements of 'Singamawele' ('We are Twins'), 'A Plea for Africa' and the 'Kaffir Wedding Song' in Britain, as well as several hymns and part-songs, they struck a unique – and at times uncomfortable – balance between performing Lovedale's values of loyalty to the educational opportunities of empire as a means to fundraise for western education, and the British audiences' expectations that the concerts would provide a voyeuristic opportunity to view displays of musical savagery.⁹⁹ The incompatibility of expectations here helps to explain why the choir tours – and broader imperialist perplexities about performances of colonial evangelicalism – were so difficult for the British press to categorize. As the *Musical Herald* noted, the music did not 'differ much from European music'.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, Erlmann has claimed that '[a]lthough all of these [hymn] titles were unmistakably South African', and many of Bokwe's texts were in Xhosa, 'none could in fact be described as "native" in any sense. Rather, these songs were classics of a repertoire called *makwaya* (choir songs), a genre that was largely based upon the Western Baroque hymn'.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, an emerging genre of Black South African religious song did not conform to the aural imaginary that the audiences in London had constructed for themselves about colonial South Africa. As a result, Erlmann notes, 'most critics and the English public seemed rather disconnected, if not by the quality of the performances, by the apparent lack of an "exotic," "indigenous" element in the shows'.¹⁰² Thus, in the Victorian archiving of the choir tour, the only way that the singers gained a level of respectability as exotic Black bodies on display was to reconfigure themselves as devout Christians seeking funding for western education, but this meant that they did not and could not 'identify' as musicians first and foremost, which effectively stripped them of their musical agency. This was how Stewart would have viewed it – and it helps to explain the lack of space given to Black musicianship in his own archiving of Lovedale.¹⁰³

Audible debris

Dusting off Lovedale's imperial past is not a one-sided or straightforward story. Music in particular has the potential to both resist and enact imperial control. There is thus no easy answer as to whether, for example, an imperial hymn in the context of nineteenth-

century South Africa is a piece of music that is easily one of oppression or resistance, as it can and continues to be both. Furthermore, the hymnbook's location in an imperial or colonial archive is only one part of the story, as the hymn's sonic legacy in practice creates its own living cultural archive. It is thus incumbent upon musicologists to tackle music's particular colonial potencies.

Returning to my opening questions about destabilizing archival awareness, and how the fetishization of a Derridian 'Archive Fever' impacts our interpretation of the colonial music archive, it is important to ask what we can usefully do with the 'audible debris' that Lovedale's archive has left behind, whether this be through imagining the unsettled soundscapes of protest that left scattered orange peels on the grounds of a rival mission station, or the audience's mixed and at times uncomfortable reception of the South African Choir in Britain when their Xhosa hymns sounded too white for the 'archival imaginary' that has been constructed about the choir. This is not the kind of archival debris found in official Lovedale institutional records, but constitutes, rather, the more ambiguous modes of knowledge that are created by fragments of obscure press reception or revisionist histories.¹⁰⁴

The case study of imagining how the soundscapes of colonial Lovedale were presented to readers and audiences in Britain is but one example of how the Victorian imperial imagination was shaped by both the censorship *and* exoticization of sonic dissent. These tensions were compounded by the importance given to representing the sober devoutness of the Black convert, which ran counter to the expectations of an unchanging 'original' portrayal of performative Africanness that had hitherto dominated the culture of imperial spectacle in western Europe. In the context of 'performing missionization', the Black African convert was allowed little individual musical agency in order to achieve an image of Christian 'respectability'. This, in turn, entailed a silencing of Indigenous musicality in order for British audiences to be able to view the members of the South African choir as virtuous fellow Christians rather than as exotic performing bodies. Effectively, for the mission station converts to be taken seriously, they could not frame their music-making as entirely their own.

So, what do we do with the silencing of audible debris *as* an archive of empire? Is musical archiving really the opposite of musical silencing, or is it endemic to a disciplining process that is inherently imperial? Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan have argued that the imperial command to silence grew from an effort to organize, enclose and contain the din – the noise of the "Negro," "Chinaman," and "lazy native" – commonly portrayed in European travelogues over four centuries, together with those interior, domestic forms of irrationality and difference within emerging empires: the hysteria of women; the clatter of the rabble'.¹⁰⁵ Such efforts to organize resulted in the so-called 'traditional' collections of knowledge that persist today in the form of archival institutions; holdings that, as noted by de Kock, have been culturally inscribed as authoritative repositories of 'events that are supposed to have occurred'.¹⁰⁶ However, a more thorough recognition of the history of the 'universalising' tendencies of the western-educated scholar, and the impact of this history on how institutions and written documents serve particular interests, will be of considerable use for appreciating the complexities of colonial musical objects in their historical contexts.

The hymns and songs composed and sung in and beyond Lovedale reveal a highly complex process of acknowledging conformity to British missionization, while also performing a version of perceived Blackness 'on display' for the British public. Although the

‘official’ imperial archive is silent about these processes, the traces of ‘audible debris’ that have remained are themselves archives of the complex gaps that have been created through colonization and religious conversion. While there may be little in Bokwe’s music ‘itself’ to depart from the harmonic traditions of western hymnody, the ‘difference’ of including a Xhosa hymn text at all is enough to give a degree of agency back to the African singer who reclaims the mission hymn as their own. Of course, this critique does not denigrate the colonial archive’s usefulness, nor its ongoing appeal. However, we might recall that, through our scholarly desire to see the archive as a collection of revealing factual documents rather than as a reflexive system of cultural reception, we too can be implicated in reifying ‘authoritative’ knowledge rather than creating space for the subjectivity of complex cultural memory.

Derrida would come to comment specifically on the question of the South African archive. After speaking out directly against Apartheid,¹⁰⁷ he was invited in August 1998 to give a lecture on the postcolonial archive at the University of Witwatersrand, where he reminded the audience that *forgetting* the history of discord – something that we find implicitly in the Lovedale promotional materials – is both the risk and the redemption of creating an archive in the first place:

So, suppose that one day South Africa would have accomplished a perfect, full archive of its whole history – not simply Apartheid, but what came before Apartheid, and *before* before, and so on and so forth, and a full history – suppose that such a thing might be possible – of course it is impossible ... everyone in this country, who is interested in this country, would be eager to put this in such a safe that everyone could just forget it ... And perhaps – perhaps, this is the unconfessed desire of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. That as soon as possible the future generation may have simply forgotten it ... Having kept everything in the archive, meaning the libraries, in the hands of remarkable archivists ... just let us forget it to go on, to survive. That’s what we are doing – just archiv[ing] against memory.¹⁰⁸

‘Archiving against memory’ continues today, perhaps compounded by the data saturation of digital technology – an inundation of information that may only raise the temperatures of our archival fevers, gathering new kinds of dust on our hard drives, where images of and notes pertaining to music-making in the distant past are catalogued by criteria ever further removed from transparent contextual discourse. And so, when confronting the auditory dimension of colonial archives – in searching for the ‘audible debris’ of empire – it might be productive to promote a contextualized framework for critiquing archival access and cultural value. As Stoler has noted, ‘[i]mperial ruins are less sites of love and lament for the bygone than vortexes of implacable resentment, disregard, and abandonment’.¹⁰⁹ In the end, we might conclude that the colonial archive can at once limit and inspire the aural imaginary. Like the Victorian readers who may have struggled to comprehend a Xhosa experience of the 1894 Lovedale mission station band, our readings of the curated sources in former-imperial archives are restricted – but also probed – by the cultural parameters of what the colonial archive, in all of its various manifestations, enables us to hear.

Notes

1. James Stewart, *Lovedale, South Africa: Illustrated by Fifty View from Photographs*, Edinburgh: A. Elliot, 1894.

2. See, for example, Graham A Duncan, *Lovedale, Coercive Agency: Power and Resistance in Mission Education*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster, 2003; Giordano Nanni, 'Lovedale: Missionary Schools and the Reform of "African Time"' in *The Colonisation of Time: Ritual, Routine and Resistance in the British Empire*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012, pp 185–216; Leon de Kock, "'History", "Literature", and "English": Reading the Lovedale Missionary Record within South Africa's Colonial History', *The English Academy Review*, 9(1), 1992, pp 1–21; Liz Stanley, 'Protest and the Lovedale Riot of 1946: "Largely a Rebellion Against Authority"?', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 44(6), 2018, pp 1039–1055; and Philip Burnett, 'Music and Mission: A Case Study of the Anglican-Xhosa Missions of the Eastern Cape, 1854–1880', PhD: University of Bristol, 2020.
3. de Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, p 6.
4. The term 'archival imaginary' has been increasingly used by scholars seeking to be critical about archival knowledge construction. See, for example, Anne J Gilliland and Michelle Caswell, 'Records and Their Imaginaries: Imagining the Impossible, Making Possible the Imagined', *Archival Science*, 16(1), 2016, pp 53–75; Susan Stryker, 'Introduction: Bodies of Knowledge: Embodiment and the Archival Imaginary', *Australian Feminist Studies* 25 (64), 2010, pp 105–108; and Michael Sheringham, 'Michel Foucault, Pierre Rivière and the Archival Imaginary', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 8(2–3), 2011, pp 235–257.
5. While the critical study of the colonial archive is still an emerging field within musicology, musical scholars who have started to approach these issues include: Kofi Agawu, *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Positions*, New York and London: Routledge, 2003; Mhoze Chickowero, *African Music, Power, and Being in Colonial Zimbabwe*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015; Anette Hoffmann and Phindezwa Mnyaka, 'Hearing Voices in the Archive', *Social Dynamics: A Journal of African Studies*, 41, 2015, pp 140–165; Anette Hoffmann, 'Introduction: Listening to Sound Archives', *Social Dynamics: A Journal of African Studies* 41, 2015, pp 73–83; and Mary Caton Lingold, 'Peculiar Animations: Listening to Afro-Atlantic Music in Caribbean Travel Narratives', *Early American Literature*, 52(3), 2017, pp 623–650. See also Erin Johnson-Williams, 'Enclosing Archival Sound: Colonial Singing as Discipline and Resistance', in *Intersectional Encounters in the Nineteenth Century Archive: New Essays on Power and Discourse*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, pp 115–136.
6. Most relevant to this topic, de Kock's "'History", "Literature", and "English"', pp 1–21, cited above, examines the conflicting and overlapping ways in which missionaries in colonial South Africa operated according to liberal evangelical principles that were heavily steeped in text-based semiotics. Thus, Lovedale's written record becomes an archive of textual symbolisms that inscribed the 'civilising' processes of missionization, whether or not they were written by white or Black residents of Lovedale.
7. See Hal Foster, 'The Archive Without Museums', *October*, 77, 1996, pp 97–119.
8. Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, New York: Harper Books, 1969, p 129.
9. Carolyn Steedman, 'After the Archive', *Comparative Critical Studies* 8(2–3), 2011, pp 321–340.
10. Vincent Duckles and Barbara H Haggh, 'Musicology: 4. Archival Research', in *Grove Music Online: Oxford Music Online* www.oxfordmusiconline.com (accessed 14 May 2019).
11. Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
12. For a helpful discussion of Derrida's 'Archive Fever', see Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002, p 11.
13. This trend can be seen by the large popularity of books such as Cal Newport's *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*, London: Platkus, 2016.
14. See Michael J Paulus, 'Reconceptualizing Academic Libraries and Archives in the Digital Age', *Libraries and the Academy*, 11(4), 2011, pp 939–952.
15. Steedman, *Dust*, p 9.
16. Steedman, *Dust*, p 9.
17. On the Victorian quest for evolutionary 'origins' as relevant to a musicological context, see Bennett Zon, *Evolution and Victorian Musical Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

18. The notion of non-western musical ‘difference’ has been given sustained attention in the collection of essays found in Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (eds), *Western Music and its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music*, Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2000. See also Jo Haynes, ‘World Music and the Search for Difference’, *Ethnicities*, 5(3), 2005, pp 365–385.
19. Derrida, *Archive Fever*, p 1.
20. It is worth noting that while Foucault had a lot to say about power structures, he did not comment at much length about the hierarchical processes of imperialism and colonialism *per se*. Thus, I take the utility of Foucault to this particular article with caution, although his work on power structures in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* are still helpful in theorizing the institutional mechanisms that have shaped colonial archives. For a helpful commentary on the applicability of Foucault to studies of race and colonialism, see Robert Young, ‘Foucault on Race and Colonialism’, *New Formations*, 25, 1995, pp 57–65; and Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit, ‘Racism in Foucauldian Security Studies: Biopolitics, Liberal War, and the Whitewashing of Colonial and Racial Violence’, *International Political Sociology* 13(1), 2019, pp 2–19.
21. See Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971, pp 1–28.
22. See Ann Laura Stoler, Chapter 10, ‘Imperial Debris and Ruination’, in *Duress: Imperial Durabilities in Our Times*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016, pp 336–379.
23. Steedman, *Dust*, p 75.
24. I would like to stress that in using the word ‘imperialist’ it is important to remember that we cannot pigeonhole what an ‘imperialist mindset’ at this time actually was into any simple definition. De Kock’s work on missionary ideology in South African mission stations, for example, demonstrates the wide divergences in imperialist approaches between British missionaries versus settler farmers in the Cape Colony. See de Kock, “History”, “Literature”, and “English”, pp 1–21.
25. Ann Laura Stoler, ‘Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance’, *Archival Science*, 2, 2002, pp 87–109.
26. Brian Keith Axel, ‘Introduction: Historical Anthropology and its Vicissitudes’, in Brian Keith Axel (ed), *From the Margins: Historical Anthropology and Its Futures*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002, p 20.
27. Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009, p 3.
28. Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, p 3.
29. E Cram, ‘Archival Ambience and Sensory Memory: Generating Queer Intimacies in the Settler Colonial Archive’, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 13(2), 2016, pp 109–129. For further critical work on the archive, see Charles E Morris, ‘The Archival Turn in Rhetorical Studies; Or, The Archive’s Rhetorical (Re)turn’, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 9(1), 2006, pp 113–115; Charles E Morris, ‘Archival Queer’, *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 9(1), 2006, pp 145–151; and Kelly Jacob Rawson, ‘Archiving Transgender: Affects, Logics, and the Power of Queer History’, PhD: Syracuse University, 2010. Also see Daniel Marshall, Kevin P Murphy, and Zeb Tortorici, ‘Editor’s Introduction: Queering Archives: Historical Unravelings’, *Radical History Review*, 120, 2014, pp 1–11.
30. As Steedman notes with regard to the translations of Derrida’s *Archive Fever* essay, particularly bearing in mind the Freudian, psychoanalytic context of Derrida’s thinking here, ‘[m]any English-speaking readers – this one, too – have assumed that “Archive Fever” has something to do with archives (rather than with psycho-analysis, or memory, or finding things)’. She then cautions against the self-congratulatory process of seeing archival research as ‘just one long exercise of the deep satisfaction of *finding things*’. Steedman, *Dust* pp 9–10. Emphasis original.
31. Steedman, *Dust*, p 68.
32. Aaron Fox, ‘The Archive of the Archive: The Secret History of the Laura Boulton’, Jane Anderson and Haidy Geismar (eds), in *The Routledge Companion to Cultural Property*, London: Routledge, 2017, p 196.

33. These are notions that have been critically considered in Sadiya Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011.
34. Hoffmann and Mnyaka, 'Hearing Voices in the Archive', p 140.
35. See Tony Ballantyne, *Entanglements of Empire: Missionaries, Māori, and the Question of the Body*, Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2015, pp 5–11.
36. Kirsty Reid and Fiona Paisley, *Sources and Methods in Histories of Colonialism: Approaching the Imperial Archive*, London: Routledge, 2017, p 1.
37. See Ann Laura Stoler, 'Archival Dis-Ease: Thinking through Colonial Ontologies', *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 7, 2010, pp 215–219.
38. Steedman constructs this legacy in terms of the 'debris' of archival dust: '[i]t is about dust. Dust is the immutable, obdurate set of beliefs about the material world, past and present, inherited from the nineteenth century, with which modern history-writing attempts to grapple; Dust is also the narrative principle of that writing'. Steedman, *Dust*, p ix.
39. For an interdisciplinary range of discourses on the 'archival turn' in the humanities more broadly, see: Cheryl Simon, 'Introduction: Following the Archival Turn', *Visual Resources: An International Journal on Images and Their Uses*, 18(2), 2002, pp 101–107; Jeannette Allis Bastian, 'Reading Colonial Records Through an Archival Lens: The Provenance of Place, Space and Creation', *Archival Science*, 6(3–4), 2006, pp 267–284; and Herman Paul, 'The Heroic Study of Records: The Contested Persona of the Archival Historian', *History of the Human Sciences*, 26(4), 2013, pp 67–83. More recently, Rachel Bryant Davies and Erin Johnson-Williams have coined a 'New Archival Turn' in interdisciplinary research that is necessarily intersectional: see 'Introduction: Encountering the Intersectional Archive', in *Intersectional Encounters in the Nineteenth Century Archive: New Essays on Power and Discourse*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, pp 1–30.
40. 'Actually, quite apart from anything written by Derrida, or anything reflected on by his critics, Archive Fever comes on at night, long after the archive has shut for the day. Typically, the fever – more accurately, the precursor fever – starts in the early hours of the morning, in the bed of a cheap hotel, where the historian cannot get to sleep', Steedman, *Dust*, p 17.
41. Agawu, *Representing African Music*, p 2.
42. An excellent example of a source that critically considers archival 'silences' is Britta Lange, 'Archival Silences as Historical Sources: Reconsidering Sound Recordings of Prisoners of War (1915–1918) from the Berlin Lautarchiv', *SoundEffects*, 7(3), 2017, pp 47–60.
43. Writing in reference to the regular use of the clocktower bell at Lovedale, Nanni claims that 'if the clock was an avatar of Western time, the bell was its amplifier, and next to the Bible it became one of the missionaries' most practical instruments for establishing centralised temporal control'. Nanni, 'Reform of "African Time"', p 16.
44. As Nanni argues, 'Having failed to enforce and induce the adoption of industrial-capitalist time, colonialism resorted to denying its limits by defining "irregularity" and compulsive "lateness" as innate racial defects ... Thus the myth of "African time" was immortalised in twentieth-century discourse as a stereotype of innate racial inferiority'. Nanni, 'Reform of "African Time"', pp 211–212.
45. On the classed and racial implications of the spread of tonic sol-fa notation within colonial South Africa, see the following publications by Grant Olwage: 'Discipline and Choralism: The Birth of Musical Colonialism', in Annie J Randall (ed), *Music, Power, and Politics*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp 25–46; 'Singing in the Victorian World: Tonic Sol-fa and Discourses of Religion, Science and Empire in the Cape Colony', *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa*, 7(2), 2010, pp 192–215; and 'The Class and Colour of Tone: An Essay on the Social History of Vocal Timbre', *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 13, 2004, pp 203–226.
46. Agawu, *Representing African Music*, p 23.
47. Ethnomusicology's historical susceptibility to the very imperialist discourses that it seeks to debunk have been challenged by Radano and Olaniyan, who argue that 'in its ambitions toward progressive leadership, the discipline has sometimes appeared naively oblivious to

its own culpability in imperial projects'. Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan, 'Introduction', in Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan (eds), *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2016, p 9. Moving beyond this, an interesting example of an article that has actively tried to take music out of the traditional context of its archives is: Noel Loblely, 'Taking Xhosa Music out of the Fridge and into the Townships', *Ethnomusicology Forum*, 21(2), 2012, pp 181–195. Loblely's approach is based on the idea that the ethnomusicological archive is a colonial archive, and that this must be challenged and transcended.

48. Agawu, *Representing African Music*, p 32.
49. Agawu, *Representing African Music*, p 32.
50. Agawu's provocation continues when he later asks, '[w]hoever thought that Euro-American publishers had African economies and consumers in mind when it came to books on their music?' Agawu, *Representing African Music*, p 33.
51. Another musicological approach to understanding colonial archiving is to examine colonial histories according to metaphors of musical and social communication and exchange – for example, David Irving, *Colonial Counterpoint: Music in Early Modern Manilla*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
52. Gavin Steingo, 'Producing Kwaito: "Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika" After Apartheid', *The World of Music*, 50(2), 2008, p 107.
53. See Stanley, 'Protest and the Lovedale Riot', pp 1039–1055.
54. Various letters pertaining to Lovedale are held in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. However, the fact that so many of these materials have now made their way to London archives offers further evidence of the centralization of knowledge in the British empire.
55. Principally, out of these glossy promotional materials I have drawn heavily upon the Lovedale retrospectives (all now available in the British Library) published between 1894 and 1971: Stewart, *Lovedale, South Africa*; J Lennox, *Lovedale, South Africa*, Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1903; and Robert H W Shepherd, *Lovedale, South Africa, 1824–1955*, Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1971.
56. Clifton Crais, *White Supremacy and Black Resistance in Pre-Industrial South Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p 2.
57. Stanley, 'Protest and the Lovedale Riot', pp 1042–1043.
58. See Nanni, 'Reform of "African Time"', p 195.
59. James Stewart, *Dawn in the Dark Continent, or, Africa and its Missions ... with Maps*, etc., Edinburgh: Oliphant & Co., 1903.
60. Lovedale held racially integrated classes until 1896, when the Cape Education Department no longer allowed white students in mission schools to sit exams for the teacher-training courses. After this point white students generally stopped enrolling, although some of the children of missionaries who were already living at Lovedale still studied there. Missionary A W Roberts was known to have taught a Latin class specifically for European students, since learning Latin was viewed as a waste of time for the Black students. See Keith Snedegar, *Mission, Science and Race in South Africa: A. W. Roberts of Lovedale, 1883–1938*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015, p 21.
61. The general history of Lovedale here has been summarized from Duncan, *Coercive Agency*, as well as the promotional materials cited in note 56.
62. See Duncan, *Coercive Agency*.
63. Duncan, *Coercive Agency*, p 18.
64. Duncan, *Coercive Agency*, p 346.
65. Duncan, *Coercive Agency*, pp 200–201; 322.
66. Stewart, *Lovedale, South Africa*, p 80.
67. Stewart, *Lovedale, South Africa*, p 80.
68. Stewart, *Lovedale, South Africa*, p 80.
69. Lovedale Reports, 1891, as quoted in Duncan, *Coercive Agency*, p 158.

70. Thomas Richards, *The Imperial Archive: Knowledge and the Fantasy of Empire*, London: Verso, 2003, p 1.
71. This image can be found in Robert H W Shepherd, *Lovedale, South Africa, 1824–1955*, Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1971, photographic inserts found after page 68. Note that, due to the dress of the musicians and the quality of the image, not to mention the date span of ‘1824–1955’ given in the publication’s title, this photograph would likely have been taken prior to 1971.
72. See <http://www.lovedalecollege.co.za/history.php>, accessed 19 October 2021.
73. See Veit Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination: South Africa and the West*, New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999, p 13. Erlmann notes that this spinoff choir was infinitely a more commercial enterprise. See also Viet Erlmann, “‘A Feeling of Prejudice:’ Orpheus M. McAdoo and the Virginia Jubilee Singers in South Africa, 1890–1898’, in *African Stars: Studies in Black South African Performance*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp 21–53; and Dale Cockrell, ‘Of Gospel Hymns, Minstrel Shows, and Jubilee Singers: Toward Some Black South African Musics’, *American Music*, 5(4), 1987, pp 417–432.
74. Quoted in Erlmann, ‘A Feeling of Prejudice’, p 26.
75. Quoted in Erlmann, ‘A Feeling of Prejudice’, p 26.
76. Laura Chrisman, ‘American Jubilee Choirs, Industrial Capitalism, and Black South Africa’, *Journal of American Studies*, 52(2), 2018, p 275.
77. ‘The Negro Spirit’, *South African Outlook*, 1900, as quoted in *Outlook on a Century: South Africa 1870–1970*, Francis Wilson and Dominique Perrot (eds), Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1973, p 160.
78. Erlmann’s extensive research on this topic notes that the choir was started by a small group of young people in Kimberley who were inspired by hearing the visiting Virginia Jubilee Singers. In looking for reinforcements, the group quickly gathered members from Lovedale. As Erlmann notes: ‘In January 1891, under the direction of the two white professional performers Walter Letty and John Balmer, the African Choir set out on a tour of the Cape Colony. Here, after a hurried series of performances in the eastern Cape, the group was enlarged by Johanna Jonkers and Sannie Koopman and, during a flying visit to Lovedale College, by a number of erstwhile students including Paul Xiniwe; his wife, Eleanor, son John; and nephew Albert Jonas, as well as Frances Gqoba, John Mbongwe, George McLellan, Samuel Konongo, and Neli Mabandla’. Following this, the choir’s promoters in Kimberley finalized the deal and enlisted government patronage, and ‘persuaded Josiah Semouse and the white pianist Lilian Clark to join the group and with their 15-piece ensemble left Kimberley again on April 15, 1891’. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, pp 13–14.
79. Within America, the singers were ‘once again abandoned by their white managers, although links were forged with the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) church in Cleveland, Ohio’. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 14.
80. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 50.
81. Erlmann notes that after the first tour to the United Kingdom the choir suffered losses of c.£1,000. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 14.
82. See Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, especially chapter 1, ‘Glimpsing Urban Savages’, pp 15–46; and Qureshi, ‘Displaying Sara Baartman, the “Hottentot Venus”’, *History of Science*, 42, 2004, pp 233–257. See also Bernth Lindfors, *Early African Entertainments Abroad: From the Hottentot Venus to Africa’s First Olympians*, Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2014; and Tiziana Morosetti, ‘Completing the Mosaic: Sara Baartman and the Archive’, in *Intersectional Encounters in the Nineteenth Century Archive: New Essays on Power and Discourse*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, pp 171–186.
83. On the culture of archiving and exhibitions in South Kensington following the Great Exhibition of 1851, see Tim Barringer, ‘Re-presenting the Imperial Archive: South Kensington and its Museums’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 3(2), 1998, pp 357–373.
84. Homi Bhabha, ‘Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse’, *October* 28, 1984, pp 125–133.

85. James Stewart, *Lovedale*, p 70.
86. Erlmann notes, for example, that many of the female singers in the South African Choir received sexual advances from British male audience members, including material gifts, verbal attentions, marriage proposals, and pressure to expose their breasts on stage, to which the singers, as mission station converts, were deeply opposed. See Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, pp 107–108.
87. Shepherd, *Lovedale, South Africa*, 241. Erlmann has noted that Ntsikana's hymn, which was a local Xhosa expression of ecstatic conversion transcribed by Bokwe, had a 'discursive [musical] logic', by 'certain classificational fantasies of [the] inclusion and exclusion' of colonial difference. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 126. However, it is worth noting that while a lot of attention has been given to this hymn, it is highly different in musical style from the usual four-part hymns that Bokwe composed, which generally conformed to the tonal and formal expectations of Victorian hymnody. Thus, it is worth seeing Ntsikana's hymn as 'exceptional' rather than 'typical' of nineteenth-century Black South African hymnody. For more on Ntsikana's hymn, see Dave Dargie, 'The Music of Ntsikana', *South African Journal of Musicology*, 2, 1982, pp 7–28; and Janet Hodgson, *Ntsikana's 'Great Hymn': A Xhosa Expression of Christianity in the Early 19th-Century Eastern Cape*, Rondebosch: Centre for African Studies, University of Cape Town, 1980.
88. See, for example, the hymnal by John Knox Bokwe, *Amaculo Ase Lovedale: Lovedale Music*, Lovedale: Lovedale Press, 1894. For more on Bokwe and his musical compositions in the context of British colonialism, see Erin Johnson-Williams, 'The Examiner and the Evangelist: Authorities of Music and Empire, c.1894', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 145 (2), 2020, pp 317–350; and Grant Olwage, 'John Knox Bokwe, Colonial Composer: Tales about Race and Music', *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 131(1), 2006, pp 1–37.
89. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 130.
90. *South Africa*, 4 July 1891, as cited in Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 130.
91. *Musical Standard*, 11 July 1891, as cited in Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 130.
92. *Review of Reviews* 4(2), 1891, p 256. An analysis of the interviews as recorded in this article has been given by Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, pp 13–14; and Erlmann, "'Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised": Local Culture, World System and South African Music', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 20, 1994, pp 165–179.
93. On the idea of 'performing whiteness' as endemic to a legacy of Victorian-British musical culture more generally, see Anna Bull, *Class, Control, & Classical Music*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2019, p 128.
94. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 86, identifies the British 'spectatorial lust' as the fetishization of the 'otherness' of the performing Black body as viewed in the cosmopolitan marketplace.
95. Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, 91.
96. As Erlmann notes, 'The singers appeared in the Victorian formal wear of their time, and alternatively and much against their own wishes, in a traditional garb of sorts, composed of blankets, leopard skins, shields and the like'. Erlmann, 'Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised', p 171. Notably, these audience expectations for perceived ideas of exoticism and authenticity were quite common: see Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, p 271. The legacies and commercial impact of these expectations may still be felt today in a variety of forms of 'western' entertainment that depict musical Africans: see, for example, Ken Cerniglia and Aubrey Lynch, 'Embodying Animal, Racial, Theatrical, and Commercial Power in *The Lion King*', *Congress on Research in Dance Conference Proceedings*, 2011, pp 3–6.
97. Erlmann, 'Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised', p 170.
98. Erlman, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination*, p 130. On Rosaldo's concept of 'imperialist nostalgia', see Renato Rosaldo, 'Imperialist Nostalgia', *Representations* 26, 1989', pp 107–122.

99. Erlmann has described this as the choir performing a view of Africa that was both ‘civilised’ and ‘uncivilised’, a phrase which he takes from a Dublin review of the choir in 1892 in the *Irish Times*, 15–16 March 1892, referenced in Erlmann, ‘Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised’, p 171.
100. *Musical Herald*, 1 July 1891, p 216. This is also quoted in Erlmann, ‘Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised’, p 171.
101. Erlmann, ‘Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised’, p 171. See also Austin C Okigbo, ‘Musical Inculturation, Theological Transformation, and the Construction of Black Nationalism in Early South African Choral Music Tradition’, *Africa Today*, 57(2), 2010, pp 42–65.
102. Erlmann, ‘Africa Civilised, Africa Uncivilised’, p 171.
103. For example, Stewart’s 1894 publication of *Lovedale*, the book from which [Figure 3](#) of this article is taken, is a prime example of a highly-curated reflection of how Lovedale students behaved. Music is only appropriate in Stewart’s archival framework if undertaken in the name of civilized conformity on the mission station itself, and not in a performative fashion that would verge on ethnic spectacle.
104. For examples of the latter, see Nanni, ‘Reform of “African Time”’, pp 185–216; and Duncan, *Coercive Agency*.
105. Radano and Olaniyan, ‘Introduction’, p 8.
106. de Kock, *Civilising Barbarians*, p 6.
107. On Derrida’s relationship with South Africa, see Brian Fulela, ‘Checking the Post: Derrida and the Apartheid Debate’, *Alternation*, 15(2), 2008, pp 11–37.
108. Jacques Derrida, ‘Archive Fever in South Africa’, in Carolyn Hamilton (ed), *Refiguring the Archive*, Dordrecht and London: Kluwer Academic, 2002, p 54. Emphasis original.
109. Stoler, *Duress*, p 376.

Notes on contributor

Erin Johnson-Williams is a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow in the Department of Music at Durham University. Her research focuses on decolonizing the nineteenth century, the imperial legacies of music education, trauma studies, gender and maternity, and biopolitics. Erin is co-editor of *Intersectional Encounters in the Nineteenth-Century Archive* (2022), and the forthcoming volumes *Hymns and Constructions of Race: Mobility, Agency, De/Coloniality*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Music Colonialism*. From September 2023, Erin will take up her new role as Lecturer in Music Education and Social Justice at the University of Southampton.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Erin Johnson-Williams  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-3305-5783>