



## **Using a Computer to Transcribe Monophonic Melodies: An Introduction to Praat Speech Analysis Software**

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Recent research has shown that Praat, “a computer program with which you can analyse, synthesize, and manipulate speech, and create high-quality pictures for your articles and thesis” (Boersma and Weenink 2014), can be adapted for effective use in transcribing and analyzing monophonic melodies. Suvarnalata Rao and Wim van der Meer (2013), for example, have used Praat to create groundbreaking motion transcriptions of Hindustani vocal music; Renee Timmers (2007) has made notable use of the software to compare vocal expression in recorded performances of Schubert songs; and Paolo Bravi (2016) has recently argued that digital tools like Praat can be very useful for “investigating the relation between the objective tracking of the fundamental frequencies of singing and the subjective perception and musical interpretation of a transcriber” (3).

In this workshop I will show participants how to use Praat as a tool for (ethno)musicological transcription and analysis. I will begin by highlighting some of the more interesting implementations of Praat showcased in recent publications. I will then conduct a simple tutorial: I will introduce the navigation and basic functions of the software, and I will show participants how to create transcriptions of melodic segments. I will describe how users can manipulate various parameters in the software to suit different purposes, explaining relevant theoretical concepts related to pitch recognition and rendering as they arise. I will conclude with a short discussion about the state of the art of automated transcription, briefly introducing other tools (Tony, Melodyne, etc.) and contemplating the advantages and limitations of mechanical and software-enabled approaches for music scholarship in general.

Participants can visit <http://aaronpettigrew.com/files/aawm/> for downloads, including Praat (for Windows, Mac OS, or Linux), installation instructions, and sample music files they can use to follow along on their own laptops.