Transposition
Musique et Sciences Sociales

Hors-série 2 | 2020

Sound, Music and Violence

Son, musique et violence

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Electronic version
URL: http://journals.openedition.org/transposition/3213
DOI: 10.4000/transposition.3213
ISSN: 2110-6134

Publisher
CRAL - Centre de recherche sur les arts et le langage

Electronic reference
Luis Velasco-Pufleau (dir.), *Transposition*, Hors-série 2 | 2020, « Sound, Music and Violence » [Online], Online since 15 March 2020, connection on 13 May 2020. URL : http://journals.openedition.org/transposition/3213 ; DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.3213

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Introduction. Sound, Music and Violence

Luis Velasco-Pufleau

1 Lorsqu'au troisième chant de la première partie de la *Divine Comédie*, Virgile fait franchir à Dante la porte de l'Enfer, ce dernier est effrayé non pas par ce qu'il voit, mais par ce qu'il entend. « Pleurs, soupirs et hautes plaintes résonnaient dans l'air sans étoiles »[1]. L'horreur est telle que Dante commence à pleurer. Les lamentations des suppliciés dans « diverses langues » et « horribles jargons », les « mots de douleur » et « accents de rage », font un fracas tournoyant et assourdissant. Face à l'incompréhension de ces sons d'effroi et de douleur, Dante demande à Virgile : « Maître, qu'est-ce que j'entends ? »[2] Il ressent la douleur portée par les sons mais il ne sait pas qui les produit, ni pour quelle raison : il n'avait jamais entendu de pareils sons. Pour pouvoir attacher un sens global à ce nouveau monde sonore, il doit désormais écouter attentivement ; car l'écoute sera essentielle pour explorer l'espace, pour comprendre les situations et pour donner sens à sa progression dans les différents cercles de l'enfer. Ceci jusqu'aux derniers vers, quand Dante et son guide trouvent la sortie du bas monde grâce à l'écoute : ils reconnaissent le chemin caché par où ils vont sortir « non par la vue mais par le son d'un petit ruisseau »[3] qui creuse la roche. L'empruntant, ils reviennent au monde clair et peuvent enfin « revoir les étoiles »[4].

2 Le récit que fait Dante de sa traversée de l'Enfer pointe la complexité émotionnelle des phénomènes sonores et montre comment l'écoute peut devenir un outil d'exploration, d'engagement et de connaissance sensible du monde. Ce numéro hors-série de *Transposition* propose d'explorer ces sujets à partir de l'analyse des liens entre son, musique et violence. Il entend ainsi contribuer, six ans après le numéro 4 consacré à « Musique et conflits armés après 1945 »[5], à l'essor considérable des recherches interdisciplinaires qui se donnent pour objectif la compréhension de la violence collective et de la guerre à partir du son et de la musique. En effet, dans les champs de la musicologie, de l'ethnomusicologie, de l'histoire, de l'anthropologie ou encore des *sound studies*, de nombreux travaux se sont intéressés aussi bien aux répertoires

mobilisés en temps de guerre qu'aux expériences d'écoute de combattant.e.s et de civil.e.s en contexte de conflit ou post-conflit. Les travaux pionniers de Svanibor Pettan sur les guerres des Balkans[6] ont été suivis par des travaux sur les liens entre musique et violence[7], des recherches sur les pratiques sonores et musicales des soldats durant ou après l'invasion des États-Unis en Irak[8], de même que par un intérêt renouvelé pour les deux guerres mondiales[9] et les conflits armés des XIX^e^ et XX^e^ siècles[10]. Ces travaux constituent différentes entrées dans une « acoustémologie de la violence »[11]. Dans tous les cas, les sujets et les méthodes sont aussi divers que le nombre des chercheur.e.s impliqué.e.s.

3 Ce vaste projet scientifique est avant tout collectif et se place sous le signe du dialogue entre chercheur.e.s basé.e.s dans différents pays qui mobilisent des concepts et des méthodologies appartenant à plusieurs disciplines des sciences humaines et sociales. Ce numéro de *Transposition* paraît dans le contexte d'un mouvement social de grande ampleur, qui témoigne de nombreuses inquiétudes à l'égard des réformes néolibérales dans l'enseignement supérieur et la recherche en France. Pour parer au culte de la performance, au mythe de la réussite individuelle et aux injonctions à la compétition, il est important d'insister sur la dimension collective de la production des connaissances. Nous marchons sur des chemins qui ont été frayés par d'autres avant nous. Nos idées, aussi originales qu'elles puissent paraître, font toujours partie de constellations plus vastes et sont redevables de l'héritage de personnes qui nous ont précédées et avec qui nous les avons développées. Comme le soulignait récemment le sociologue Gary Younge dans *The Guardian*, « seuls les privilégiés et les naïfs croient que les réalisations des gens sont purement le produit de leur propre génie »[12].

4 Ce numéro est collectif à plusieurs égards. Les trois articles du dossier thématique sont issus des journées d'étude *Sound and Music in War from the Middle Ages to the Present*, que j'ai eu l'opportunité d'organiser avec Marion Uhlig et Martin Rohde à l'Institut d'études médiévales de l'Université de Fribourg les 12 et 13 novembre 2018.[13] La deuxième partie du numéro est composée d'un entretien et de trois commentaires critiques qui répondent et prolongent les propos énoncés. Enfin, la troisième partie est constituée de huit essais qui commentent certains textes du numéro ou développent des questions théoriques, éthiques et méthodologiques soulevées par la recherche sur la musique, le son et la guerre. Ces textes répondent à deux questionnements : de quelle façon l'étude du son et de la musique peut-elle aider à comprendre la violence collective et la guerre ? Comment l'étude de la guerre et de la violence collective peut-elle aider à comprendre l'importance des pratiques musicales et de l'écoute pour les êtres humains ?[14]

5 Toutefois, associer la musique à la violence, à la destruction et aux atrocités de la guerre ne va pas de soi dans la recherche en sciences humaines et sociales. Ainsi que le remarque l'ethnomusicologue Timothy Rice, les travaux dans le domaine de ce qu'il appelle « *ethnomusicology in times (and places) of trouble* » sont rares avant le début des années 2000[15]. Cela s'expliquerait selon lui, entre autres choses, par des imaginaires culturels dans lesquels la musique est forcément associée à des choses « bonnes » et par des présupposés scientifiques selon lesquels la musique ne peut être produite que dans des contextes socialement stables[16]. Les textes de ce numéro contribuent à la reconfiguration de ces croyances et, comme Morag J. Grant le suggère dans son essai, à l'exploration des fondements culturels de la guerre et de la violence collective.

Expériences d'écoute de la violence armée

6 Le récit sonore de *L'Enfer* de Dante évoqué au début de cette introduction nous rappelle que le son peut constituer un événement qui modifie de façon durable la perception qu'un auditeur peut avoir du monde qui l'entoure. Les pleurs et les plaintes qui résonnent dans l'air sombre de l'Enfer terrifient Dante tout en lui faisant comprendre qu'il entre dans un lieu inconnu. Cependant, le son peut aussi être un processus qui se prolonge dans le temps et qui, par les interactions sensorielles avec la personne qui écoute, transforme sa perception du réel.

7 Dante apprend à écouter et à évoluer dans ce nouveau monde sonore et, par ce biais, développe de nouvelles connaissances sur son fonctionnement et les relations de pouvoir qui sont en jeu. La violence et la guerre déplacent les limites et les seuils des paysages sonores habituels, transformant durablement les repères et les capacités acoustiques des auditeurs·trices[17]. Le développement de ces habitudes et aptitudes d'écoute constitue un nouveau « régime d'audition » : l'ensemble de techniques, de technologies, de régulations, de savoirs partagés qui donnent forme aux pratiques d'écoute d'une communauté donnée[18].

8 Est-il possible d'essayer de comprendre l'expérience de la guerre à travers les régimes d'audition ? Des recherches récentes ont exploré cette question, notamment à partir des récits de combattant.e.s[19]. L'essai signé par Michael Guida dans ce numéro met en évidence une facette peu étudiée de ces récits : l'expérience sonore de la nature que font des soldats britanniques mobilisés sur le front de l'Ouest durant la Première Guerre mondiale. À travers l'analyse de sources diverses – journaux intimes, poèmes et lettres – Guida montre comment les soldats attachent une importance particulière aux chants d'oiseaux, qui encadrent leurs expériences d'écoute des tranchées[20]. Pour sa part, John Morgan O'Connell discute les idées développées par plusieurs auteur.e.s du numéro en les mettant en perspective avec ses propres recherches autour de la bataille de Gallipoli (1915-1916). Il explore les liens entre musique et mémoire, notamment lorsque la musique est utilisée pour remémorer et oublier, pour célébrer la victoire ou commémorer la défaite[21].

9 L'analyse d'expériences d'écoute et de régimes d'audition a aussi permis d'étudier l'expérience de la violence armée de non-combattant.e.s[22]. Ce domaine de recherche est exploré par Nikita Hock dans son article sur les expériences d'écoute de Juifs de Varsovie et de Galicie Orientale dans des abris souterrains durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Hock réussit à étudier, à partir d'un vaste corpus de journaux intimes, les expériences des civils – notamment des femmes et des personnes âgées – qui ont enduré la violence et la persécution durant l'Holocauste[23].

À l'écoute des vestiges sonores de la violence

10 La question de l'accès aux sources et de leur analyse est centrale pour une acoustémologie de la violence. Comment interpréter les traces sonores de la guerre dans les sources écrites ? Ainsi que le souligne Annegret Fauser dans son essai, ces archives constituent des médiations d'expériences sonores du passé, des façons d'écouter et de mettre en récit. Prolongeant les travaux d'Ana María Ochoa Gautier, elle propose de suivre « une exploration accordée à l'acoustique [*acoustically tuned*] des

archives écrites »[24] afin d'explorer les vestiges sonores de la violence, tout en questionnant les archives en tant qu'entités historiquement construites et, de ce fait, privilégiant les voix de certains types de témoins[25].

11 Parce que la violence « est toujours une attaque à l'endroit de la dignité, du sens de soi, et du futur d'une personne »[26], elle bouleverse et opère une reconfiguration des frontières entre son, bruit et silence, entre ce qui est dicible et ce qui ne l'est pas. Ainsi que l'affirme Ana María Ochoa Gautier, « une des caractéristiques de la violence est la redéfinition de l'espace acoustique »[27]. Anna Papaeti explore les modalités et les enjeux pour la recherche en (ethno)musicologie de cette redéfinition dans le contexte de l'utilisation de la musique à des fins de torture. Elle réfléchit dans son essai aux conséquences du traumatisme infligé par le son et la musique dans des contextes de détention et à la dimension éthique inhérente à l'écoute du témoignage des victimes.[28] Les modalités de ce que la voix peut exprimer, et les frontières entre son, bruit et silence, sont aussi quelques-unes des questions examinées par Sarah Kay dans son article sur les *sirventes* composés par Bertran de Born, l'un des plus célèbres troubadours de la seconde moitié du XII^e^ siècle – qui figure d'ailleurs dans *L'Enfer* de Dante. Mobilisant le concept lacanien d'« extimité », Kay s'intéresse à la dimension sonore de ces chansons politiques d'amour et de guerre qui révèlent une médiation entre bruit et musique, et reconfigurent la transmission poétique des sujets de l'amour et de la mort[29].

12 Pour sa part, Martin Daughtry appelle à rompre avec une vision anthropocentrée de l'activité musicale ; il en questionne les cadres pratiques et théoriques qui contribuent à alimenter l'un des moteurs de la violence moderne : la dichotomie entre nature et culture[30]. Avoir séparé des êtres qui devaient demeurer ensemble, voilà justement le reproche que Dante fait au troubadour Bertran de Born, lorsque son spectre apparaît au huitième cercle de l'enfer tenant « sa tête coupée par les cheveux, suspendue à la main comme une lanterne »[31] : divisé lui-même pour avoir semé la discorde, sa peine est d'avancer avec son cerveau séparé de son corps. La réflexion sur les liens entre musique et violence donne à Daughtry l'opportunité de penser un dépassement de l'exceptionnalisme humain et d'appeler à une autre écoute des vestiges sonores de la violence humaine.

13 L'écoute de ces vestiges peut soulever des questionnements éthiques importants quand les chercheur.e.s sont amené.e.s à s'entretenir et à travailler avec des personnes qui ont participé activement aux atrocités de la guerre. Quoique fondamentale, cette question reste relativement peu abordée de façon explicite dans les recherches sur les liens entre son, musique et violence. Hettie Malcomson développe cet enjeu, affirmant la nécessité de respecter l'humanité et la subjectivité des personnes impliquées, et d'éviter tout sensationnalisme dans le processus de production des connaissances[32].

Violence et agentivité du son et de la musique

14 L'ensemble des textes de ce numéro partagent une position scientifique qu'il est utile de rappeler : le son et la musique ne sont pas étudiés comme la *cause* de l'action violente, mais plutôt comme des *ressources symboliques* que les acteurs peuvent mobiliser dans des processus ou des dynamiques de violence. La différence est de taille et sous-entend le refus d'une ontologie du son et de la musique dans laquelle la volonté humaine serait subordonnée à leurs supposés pouvoirs. Il s'agit plutôt de comprendre

de quelle façon les personnes se saisissent de la musique et des phénomènes sonores pour donner sens à leur réalité dans des contextes de guerre ou pour justifier des actes de destruction et de violence.

15 La musique peut être un moyen de projeter, d'encadrer et de préparer l'affrontement avec l'ennemi. L'imaginaire qu'elle véhicule tout comme ses caractéristiques sonores peuvent être mobilisés par les acteur.e.s afin de s'engager dans une confrontation réelle ou imaginaire. Cette hypothèse est explorée par Victor A. Stoichita dans son article sur les expériences d'écoute des soldats étatsuniens et du terroriste norvégien Anders Breivik. Il montre de quelle façon la possibilité que le son et la musique se trouvent à l'origine d'une chaîne causale – la capacité que l'auditeur·trice donne aux sons de « transformer » le monde dans lequel il ou elle habite – est étroitement liée à celle de l'ontologie de l'expérience d'écoute[33]. Cornelia Nuxoll explore d'autres enjeux de l'agentivité de la musique dans son essai sur son travail de terrain en Sierra Leone avec d'anciens combattants du *Revolutionary United Front* (RUF). Ses observations pointent la complexité émotionnelle liée à la musique utilisée dans des dynamiques de violence tout comme dans des processus de désarmement[34].

16 L'entretien que j'ai réalisé avec Jean-Marc Rouillan, membre fondateur du groupe révolutionnaire armé Action directe (1977-1987), présente le point de vue d'un protagoniste d'une certaine violence politique. Il y raconte comment son engagement politique autour de 1968 a été précédé d'un engagement musical, dans l'attente d'un affrontement plus direct avec l'État. L'écoute de la musique rock et punk a servi de catalyseur pour fédérer des revendications de liberté et d'action politique autonome[35]. L'entretien est suivi de trois commentaires critiques de Matthew Worley (University of Reading)[36], Timothy Scott Brown (Northeastern University)[37] et Jeremy Varon (New School)[38]. Ces textes approfondissent, critiquent ou contextualisent des prises de position ou des faits exposés par Jean-Marc Rouillan. Qu'il s'agisse du rapport entre musique et mémoire de luttes politiques, de l'autonomie recherchée par le mouvement punk ou encore du lien entre rock et marchandisation, les commentaires apportent de précieux contrepoints pour saisir la complexité de la situation historique évoquée.

17 Comme le remarque Morag J. Grant, « bien après le cessez-le-feu, la musique continue de jouer un rôle souvent fondamental dans la célébration ou la commémoration de guerres et de guerriers, servant ainsi de boîte à outils pour la mémoire collective qui elle-même, bien trop souvent, est mobilisée au service des guerres à venir »[39]. Ainsi, en s'intéressant aux liens entre son, musique et violence, ce numéro de *Transposition* interroge les façons dont les sociétés humaines se pensent, construisent leur mémoire collective et se projettent dans le futur.

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14. Je voudrais remercier les auteur.e.s qui ont participé à ce numéro spécial pour leur générosité et leur patience. Merci aussi aux relecteurs et relectrices anonymes qui ont contribué à travers leurs commentaires et leurs suggestions à améliorer les textes de ce numéro. Enfin, je voudrais exprimer ma gratitude aux membres du comité de rédaction de *Transposition* pour leur soutien dans ce projet ainsi qu'aux collègues et ami.e.s qui ont accueilli mes recherches à l'Université de Fribourg, à la Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme (FMSH) et à l'Université de Berne.

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RÉSUMÉS

L'écoute peut devenir un outil d'exploration, d'engagement et de connaissance sensible du monde. La musique peut être un moyen de projeter, d'encadrer et de préparer l'affrontement avec l'ennemi. De quelle façon l'étude du son et de la musique peut-elle aider à comprendre la violence collective et la guerre ? Comment l'étude de la guerre et de la violence collective peut-elle aider à comprendre l'importance des pratiques musicales et de l'écoute pour les êtres humains ? Ce numéro hors-série de *Transposition* propose d'explorer ces questions à partir de l'analyse des liens entre son, musique et violence.

Listening can become a tool for exploration of, engagement with and sensorial knowledge of the world. Music can be a device for projecting, framing and preparing for confrontation with the enemy. How can the study of sound and music help us to understand collective violence and war? How can the study of war and collective violence help us to understand the importance of musical practices and listening for human beings? This special issue of *Transposition* explores these questions through an analysis of the links between sound, music and violence.

INDEX

Keywords : agency, auditory regime, Dante, listening, music, sound, violence, war
Mots-clés : agentivité, Dante, écoute, guerre, musique, régime d'audition, son, violence

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Introduction. Sound, Music and Violence

Introduction. Son, musique et violence

Luis Velasco-Pufleau

1 When, in the third *canto* of the first part of *The Divine Comedy*, Virgil leads Dante through the gates of Hell, Dante is frightened not by what he sees, but by what he hears: "Sighs, weeping, loud wailing resounded through the starless air".[1] The horror is such that Dante sheds tears. The lamentations of the tortured in "strange languages" and "horrible tongues", the "words of pain" and "accents of anger", make a deafening tumult. Faced with the incomprehension of these sounds of fear and pain, Dante asks Virgil, "Master, what is this I hear?"[2] He feels the pain of the sounds but does not know who makes them or why; he has never heard such sounds before. To be able to attach a meaning to this new world of sound, he must now listen attentively, because listening will be essential in order to know the space, to understand situations and to give meaning to his advancement into the different circles of Hell. This until the last verses, when Dante and his guide find their way out of the lower world through listening: they recognise the hidden path by which they will come out "not by sight, but by the sound of a little stream"[3] which erodes the rock. By following this path, they return to the bright world and can finally "look again at the stars".[4]

2 Dante's account of his journey through Hell illustrates the emotional complexity of sound phenomena and shows how listening can become a tool for exploration of, engagement with and sensorial knowledge of the world. This special issue of *Transposition* explores these subjects through an analysis of the links between sound, music and violence. Six years after the fourth issue was devoted to "Music and Armed Conflicts after 1945",[5] this special issue intends to contribute to the considerable growth of interdisciplinary research aimed at understanding collective violence and war through sound and music. In the fields of musicology, ethnomusicology, history, anthropology and sound studies, numerous works have focused as much on the repertoires mobilised in wartime as on the listening experiences of female combatants and civilians in conflict or post-conflict contexts. Svanibor Pettan's pioneering work on

the Balkan wars[6] was followed by research on the links between music and violence,[7] on the sound and musical practices of soldiers during or after the US invasion of Iraq,[8] as well as a renewed interest in the two World Wars[9] and the armed conflicts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[10] These works constitute different entries in an "acoustemology of violence".[11] In all cases, the topics and methods are as diverse as the many researchers involved.

3 This vast scientific project is above all a collective one and is based on dialogues between researchers working in different countries who mobilise concepts and methodologies belonging to various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. This issue of *Transposition* is published in the context of a large social movement which reflects many concerns about neo-liberal reforms in higher education and research in France. To counter the cult of performance, the myth of individual success and the obligation of competition, it is important to insist on the collective dimension of knowledge production. We are treading paths paved by others before us. Our ideas, no matter how original they may seem, are always part of larger constellations and are indebted to the legacy of those who have gone before us and with whom we have developed them. As sociologist Gary Younge recently observed in *The Guardian*, "Only the privileged and the naive believe people's achievements are purely the product of their own genius".[12]

4 This issue is collective in many ways. The three articles in the first part come from the international workshop Sound and Music in War from the Middle Ages to the Present, which I had the opportunity to organise with Marion Uhlig and Martin Rohde at the Institute for Medieval Studies of the University of Fribourg on 12 and 13 November 2018.[13] The second part of the issue consists of an interview and three critical commentaries that respond to and extend the statements made. Finally, the third part is comprised of eight essays that comment on certain texts in the issue or develop theoretical, ethical and methodological questions raised by research on music, sound and war. These texts answer two questions: how can the study of sound and music help us to understand collective violence and war? How can the study of war and collective violence help us to understand the importance of musical practices and listening for human beings?[14]

5 However, associating music with the violence, destruction and atrocities of war is not evident in research in humanities and social sciences. As ethnomusicologist Timothy Rice notes, research in the field of what he calls "ethnomusicology in times (and places) of trouble" was scarce before the early 2000s.[15] This is explained, among other things, by cultural imagination in which music is necessarily associated with "good" things, and by scientific assumptions that music can only be produced in stable social settings.[16] The texts in this issue contribute to the reconfiguration of these beliefs and, as Morag J. Grant suggests in her essay, to the exploration of the cultural foundations of war and collective violence.

Listening to experiences of armed violence

6 The sound narrative of Dante's Inferno evoked at the beginning of this introduction reminds us that sound can be an event that permanently alters a listener's perception of the world around him. The cries and complaints that resonate in the dark air of Hell terrify Dante, while at the same time making him understand that he is entering an

unknown place. However, sound can also be a process that lasts over time and, through sensory interactions with the listener, transforms their perception of reality.

7 Dante learns to listen and to evolve in this new world of sound and, through this process, develops new knowledge about how it works and the power dynamics at play. Violence and war shift the limits and thresholds of the usual soundscapes, permanently transforming the listeners' acoustic landmarks and capacities.[17] The development of these listening habits and skills constitutes a new "auditory regime": the set of techniques, technologies, regulations and shared knowledge that give shape to the listening practices of a given community.[18]

8 Is it possible to better understand the experience of war through auditory regimes? Recent research has explored this question, particularly through the testimonies of combatants.[19] Michael Guida's essay in this issue highlights a little-examined facet of these narratives: nature's sonic experience by British soldiers mobilised on the Western Front during the First World War. Through the analysis of various sources—diaries, poems and letters—Guida shows how soldiers attach particular importance to bird songs, which frame their listening experiences of trench soundscapes.[20] In his essay, John Morgan O'Connell discusses the ideas developed by several of the issue's authors, putting them into perspective with his own research on the Battle of Gallipoli (1915–1916). He explores the links between music and memory, particularly when music is used to both remember and forget, to celebrate victory or to commemorate defeat.[21]

9 The analysis of listening experiences and auditory regimes also made it possible to study non-combatants' experience of armed violence.[22] This field of research is explored by Nikita Hock in his article on the listening experiences of Warsaw and East Galician Jews in underground shelters during World War II. Through a large body of diaries, Hock succeeds in studying the experiences of civilians—especially women and the elderly—who endured violence and persecution during the Holocaust.[23]

Listening to the sonic remnants of violence

10 The question of access to sources and their analysis is central to an acoustemology of violence. How to interpret the sonic traces of war in written sources? As Annegret Fauser points out in her essay, these archives constitute mediations of sound experiences from the past, ways of listening and narrating. Drawing on the work of Ana María Ochoa Gautier, she suggests following "an acoustically tuned exploration of the written archive"[24] in order to explore the sonic remnants of violence, while questioning archives as historically constructed entities, thus privileging the voices of certain types of witnesses.[25]

11 Because violence "is always an attack upon a person's dignity, sense of selfhood, and future",[26] it upsets and reconfigures the boundaries between sound, noise and silence, between what is sayable and what is not. As Ana María Ochoa Gautier states, "One of the characteristics of violence is the redefinition of acoustic space".[27] Anna Papaeti explores the modalities and issues for (ethno)musicological research of this redefinition in the context of the use of music for torture. In her essay, she reflects on the consequences of the trauma inflicted by sound and music in detention contexts and on the inherent ethical dimension of witnessing testimonies of victims.[28] The modalities of what the voice can express, and the boundaries between sound, noise and silence,

are some of the issues examined by Sarah Kay in her article on the *sirventes* composed by Bertran de Born, one of the most famous troubadours of the second half of the twelfth century, who is also featured in Dante's Inferno. Mobilising the Lacanian concept of "extimacy", Kay is interested in the sonic dimension of these political songs of love and war that reveal a mediation between noise and music, and reconfigure the poetic transmission of the subjects of love and death.[29]

12 In his contribution, Martin Daughtry calls for a break with an anthropocentric vision of musical activity; he questions the practical and theoretical frameworks that contribute to fuelling one of the motors of modern violence: the human / nature dualism.[30] To have separated beings that should have remained together is precisely the reproach that Dante makes to the troubadour Bertran de Born when his spectre appears in the eighth circle of Hell: "His severed head he was holding up by the hair, dangling it from his hand like a lantern";[31] divided for sowing discord, his punishment is to proceed with his brain separated from his body. Reflecting on the links between music and violence gives Daughtry the opportunity to think beyond human exceptionalism and to call for a different kind of listening to the sonic remnants of human violence.

13 Listening to these remnants can raise important ethical questions when researchers are required to talk and work with people who actively participated in the atrocities of war. Although a fundamental topic, explicit examination of it remains largely absent in research on the links between sound, music and violence. Hettie Malcomson discusses this issue, stating the need to respect the humanity and subjectivity of those involved, while avoiding any kind of sensationalism in the process of academic knowledge production.[32]

Violence and the agency of sound and music

14 All the texts in this issue share a scientific position that is worth recalling: sound and music are not examined as the *cause* of violent action, but rather as *symbolic resources* that actors can mobilise in processes or dynamics of violence. The difference is significant and involves the rejection of an ontology of sound and music in which human will is dominated by their supposed powers. Rather, it is a question of understanding how people use music and sound phenomena to give meaning to their reality in contexts of war or to justify acts of destruction and violence.

15 Music can be a device for projecting, framing and preparing for confrontation with the enemy. The narratives it conveys as well as its sound characteristics can be mobilised by the actors in order to engage in a real or imaginary confrontation. This hypothesis is explored by Victor A. Stoichita in his article on the listening experiences of American soldiers and the Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik. He shows how the possibility that sound and music are at the origin of a causal chain—the ability that the listener gives sounds, to "transform" the world in which they live—is closely linked to the ontology of the listening experience.[33] Cornelia Nuxoll explores other issues of musical agency in her essay on her fieldwork in Sierra Leone with former fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Her observations point to the emotional complexity of music used in the dynamics of violence as well as in disarmament processes.[34]

16 The interview I conducted with Jean-Marc Rouillan, a founding member of the armed revolutionary group *Action directe* (1977–1987), presents the point of view of a protagonist of a kind of political violence. In it he tells how his political engagement

around 1968 was preceded by a musical engagement, in anticipation of a more direct confrontation with the state. Listening to rock and punk music served as a catalyst for bringing together demands for freedom and autonomous political action.[35] The interview is followed by three critical commentaries by Matthew Worley (University of Reading),[36] Timothy Scott Brown (Northeastern University)[37] and Jeremy Varon (New School).[38] These texts deepen, criticise or contextualise positions or facts presented by Jean-Marc Rouillan. Whether it is the relationship between music and the collective memory of political struggles, the autonomy sought by the punk movement or the link between rock and capitalism, the commentaries provide valuable counterpoints in grasping the complexity of the historical situation evoked.

17 As Morag J. Grant asserts, "Long after ceasefire, music continues to play an oftentimes fundamental role in celebrating or commemorating wars and warriors, thus functioning as a fundamental toolkit for collective memory which itself, all too often, becomes mobilised in the service of wars yet to come".[39] By exploring the links between sound, music and violence, this special issue of *Transposition* questions the ways in which human societies see themselves, build their collective memory and envisage their futures.

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14. I would like to thank the authors who have contributed to this special issue for their generosity and patience. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers who contributed with their comments and suggestions to improve the texts of this issue. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the *Transposition* editorial board for their participation in this project as well as to the colleagues and friends who supported my research at the University of Fribourg, the Fondation Maison des sciences de l'homme (FMSH) and the University of Bern.

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ABSTRACTS

Listening can become a tool for exploration of, engagement with and sensorial knowledge of the world. Music can be a device for projecting, framing and preparing for confrontation with the enemy. How can the study of sound and music help us to understand collective violence and war? How can the study of war and collective violence help us to understand the importance of musical practices and listening for human beings? This special issue of *Transposition* explores these questions through an analysis of the links between sound, music and violence.

L'écoute peut devenir un outil d'exploration, d'engagement et de connaissance sensible du monde. La musique peut être un moyen de projeter, d'encadrer et de préparer l'affrontement avec l'ennemi. De quelle façon l'étude du son et de la musique peut-elle aider à comprendre la violence collective et la guerre ? Comment l'étude de la guerre et de la violence collective peut-

elle aider à comprendre l'importance des pratiques musicales et de l'écoute pour les êtres humains ? Ce numéro hors-série de *Transposition* propose d'explorer ces questions à partir de l'analyse des liens entre son, musique et violence.

INDEX

Keywords: agency, auditory regime, Dante, listening, music, sound, violence, war
Mots-clés: agentivité, Dante, écoute, guerre, musique, régime d'audition, son, violence

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Articles

Affordance to Kill: Sound Agency and Auditory Experiences of a Norwegian Terrorist and American Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan

Affordance de tuer : agentivité sonore et expériences d'écoute d'un terroriste norvégien et de soldats états-uniens en Irak et en Afghanistan

Victor A. Stoichita

Introduction: The loss of agency

1 The assumption that specific sounds have special "powers" appears in all human societies (albeit not about the same sounds). Unusual agency is what makes "music" a distinct auditory phenomenon which stands apart from the normal workings of language and daily ecological semiosis.[1] The "powers" of music depend on specific ways of listening and, in this respect, arise as a result of listener agency. That is to say that music has "effects" not because of intrinsic meanings or forces, but "because it offers specific materials to which actors may turn when they engage in the work of organizing social life. Music is a resource—it provides affordances—for world building".[2]

2 The "affordance" theory is elegant because it is, at the same time, parsimonious and powerful. With little hypotheses about music (nothing "intrinsic" in it anymore), it explains most of what people do with it. By putting the accent on listener agency, sound becomes a medium for distributed cognitive moves. Music is "a persistent environmental resource supporting the development of various experiences and embodied practices", something like an "emotional scaffolding", writes Krueger.[3] The affordance theory of music is also interesting, in another respect, because it does not start by reproducing the "basic ontological fallacy: that music is essentially a *thing*

which refers to another *thing*".[4] By viewing music as a resource for action, it avoids many pitfalls of classic semiotic approaches.

3 Where it falls short, however, is in also explaining why people persist in putting more agency in sound than what it really should have. When they talk about their musical experiences, even the most rationalist listeners report feeling an external force, a "drive", which affects them in various ways *from the outside.*[5] An affordance, in Gibson's original terms, should be something more inert than that. The affordances of an environment "are what it *offers* the animal, what it *provides* or *furnishes*, either for good or ill".[6] An affordance is neither "objective" nor "subjective". It cuts across that dichotomy and "points both ways, to the environment and to the observer".[7] Yet an affordance does not require consciousness, not even some kind of understanding. It is a low-level feature of daily perception, shared by all sentient beings. It starts as "an invariant combination of variables, and one might guess that it is easier to perceive such an invariant unit".[8] Our world is full of affording objects, but we do not attribute agency to all of them.

4 To account for this, DeNora refers in short to actors' tendency to "erase the work they do of configuring objects and their social implications (...) Indeed, it would seem part of the natural attitude (...) to 'forget', paraphrasing Marx, that we are oppressed by the things we have helped to produce. This 'forgetting' is the cognitive practice of reification".[9] By this account, the "reified" musical agent is a kind of collective and systematic mistake. It results from a cognitive bias, thus it cannot be amended through mere knowledge (contrary to the proletarian's mistake). I find it difficult to adhere to this scenario, at least without a precise explanation of how—for so many people in so many cultures—the illusion arises that music "has" powers and agency of its own.

5 The present paper does not provide a general solution for this. Instead, it contrasts two ways in which listeners took advantage of musical affordances—or were they agencies? —as a source for "motivation". The action for which they wanted motivation was armed violence. This might seem a strange topic; it is, indeed, a rather peculiar way to use music in social life. But precisely because of this, it encourages listeners and researchers alike to clearly explain how music comes in handy in the accomplishment of the purported action.

6 There are at least two very different ways to listen to music as a motivator for armed violence. One is reflected in the practices of American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. [10] A number of them had "battle playlists" to motivate them before going on a mission. The other is reflected in the "manifesto" produced by Norwegian terrorist A. B. Breivik during the preparation of his attacks in 2011. In this complex document, Breivik repeatedly stated that specific music helped him to sustain his motivation.

7 Breivik belongs to the same generation as the American soldiers and grew up in roughly the same type of media environment. Like them, he reported using his iPod intensively as a tool to help him "tune in" to different kinds of cognitive activities. He was explicit about the influence that popular movies and video games had on his worldview. A similar influence has often been discerned in the "battle playlists" of American soldiers,[11] even though the terrorist's and the soldiers' motivational music sounded very different.

8 In a previous work, I suggested that this difference was coherent with a significant divergence in their framing of danger and violence.[12] The terrorist acted alone, of his own will, and placed great emphasis on notions of "martyrdom". The soldiers were paid

as professional fighters, in a situation "where individuals were required to overcome their own opinions and emotions in order to go forth and do what was demanded of them".[13] Here, I propose to analyse more precisely how music actually "worked" in practice, for these two kinds of listeners. What did it "afford" to them?

9 I will review various proposed explanations of Breivik's and the soldiers' motivational tastes. Then, expanding on a hint from Wilson,[14] I will argue that for the US troops and for the "lone wolf" terrorist, motivation was primarily an exercise in imagination. Music helped them to project an ideal kind of confrontation which, in effect, hardly ever took place. This links the current paper to broader discussions of "global war"[15] and of the increased porosity between military and civilian ideals of violence. We will also see that while Breivik's music provided him with a mere scaffolding for his daydreams, soldiers' "battle playlists" instantiated an agentive force which they could confront.

A terrorist's motivational music

10 Anders Behring Breivik[16] has been described as a "lone wolf" killer, a person "carrying out mass violence in an individual capacity".[17] On the 22nd of July 2011, he blasted a bombed van in the centre of Oslo, killing eight people. He then proceeded to the island of Utøya where he shot 69 others, mostly teenagers. Right before embarking on what he called his "mission", Breivik sent a document of over 1500 pages to around 100 email addresses, in which he mentioned music as an important ally in sustaining his motivation and performing what he called "self-indoctrination":

> I simulate/meditate while I go for a walk, playing my Ipod in my neighbourhood. This consists of a daily 40 minute walk while at the same time philosophising ideologically/performing self-indoctrination and the mental simulation of the operation while listening to motivational and inspiring music. I simulate various future scenarios relating to resistance efforts, confrontations with police, future interrogation scenarios, future court appearances, future media interviews, etc. or I philosophise about certain articles in the book. This daily mental exercise or ritual keeps me fully motivated and charges my batteries.[18]

11 Breivik's compendium enabled many conjectures about what might have been the terrorist's mental evolution. It was actually by analysing this document, with special focus on its writing style, that the second team of forensic psychiatrists who assessed Breivik found him to be responsible for his actions, overturning the conclusion of a previous assessment.[19] The second team concluded that Breivik had clear delusions of grandeur, but also demonstrated an "understanding of the potential emotions his reader would be feeling".[20] Moreover, the team found that he did not have "false, fixed beliefs that could not be modified".[21]

12 A major difficulty in assessing Breivik's mental soundness was that his world was replete with imagination and virtuality, along with self-posing and deception tricks. He presented himself as a "justiciary knight of the templar order" and for that purpose created a uniform "which looked like a fusion of the Crusades and a character out of the PC game Assassin's Creed".[22] At his trial, he declared having spent an average of 7 hours a day over the previous years playing *World of Warcraft*. In the aftermath of his arrest, he made a number of counterfactual declarations about non-existing threats, including the pretence that he had swallowed a detonator meant to blow up several other locations.[23] In general, Breivik was very consciously committed to "the creation

of a fantasy world created and controlled by [his own] vision".[24] For this effect, which he called "self-indoctrination", he used specific music.

13 The tunes which he mentions as allies in sustaining his motivation were of three kinds:

14 Music by Swedish singer Saga. Breivik understood the lyrics, transcribed some of them in his compendium and recommends learning them by heart.

15 Music composed by Knut Avenstroup Haugen, featuring Norwegian singer Helen Bøksle. Breivik states that the lyrics are in old Norse, but gives no further indication of their relevance to him (it is uncertain whether he understood them at all). He relates the music to the video game *Age of Conan*.[25]

16 An instrumental piece by Clint Mansell. The original composition was entitled "Lux Aeterna", which is also how Breivik refers to it. However, he recommends listening to its adaptation for the movie Lord of the Rings II.[26] This piece was of special importance to Breivik. He described it as the suitable soundtrack to play on repeat on his iPod during his "mission" (it is uncertain whether he actually listened to it or not). He also recommends it as a starting point for the anthem of the conservative European federation he wished for.

17 This media file cannot be displayed. Please refer to the online document http://journals.openedition.org/transposition/4065

18 Stroud suggested that music helped Breivik to feel part of a larger community despite the fact that he had to conceal his preparation and act in complete isolation.[27] This analysis is supported by his insistence on the inspirational potential of Saga's music (1). According to Stroud, she was already a "high-profile figure in the extreme-right music scene which promotes the ideology of white nationalism and supremacism".[28] Teitelbaum argued however that Saga's lyrics were actually not coherent with Breivik's ideology, being closer to neo-Nazi and skinhead movements (which Breivik despised).[29] Breivik could have found interest in Saga's music because it "may have presented him a safe domain in which to experiment with ideologies he otherwise condemned".[30]

19 Apart from their content, the linguistic pragmatics of Saga's lyrics—at least those cited by Breivik—are very listener-inclusive. Their use of personal pronouns is usually limited.[31] Many verses simply chain impersonal statements, loosely coupled with an occasional first person in the singular ("I") or plural ("we"), and occasionally shifting between the two. In effect (ideological content excepted), the singer could be anyone, and the song could be an impersonal hymn.

> Life is a struggle in these changing times
> Thoughts once natural now classed as hate crimes
> Those now in power they fear no one but one
> a man with open eyes and a sober mind so strong
> It's been said before - but still we do not heed...no!
> To free the enslaved minds of the sleeping mass
> We must cast away the yokes ignore status and class
> [Beginning of "One Nation Arise", the first lyrics quoted by Breivik under the heading "The best vocal English tracks [from Saga]".]

20 The views expressed come with few references to Saga's autobiographical self. Nothing in her songs resembles the highly agentive and personalized "I" of rap lyrics to be discussed hereafter. In general, the listener can readily identify him or herself with the position of the song's utterer.

21 If Saga's music may have helped Breivik imagine emotional connections with a larger right-wing community, it is more difficult to extend this argument to his other motivational tracks. Nothing indicates that they were important to other people sharing his political views, or that he had any grounds to think that they were. What is immediately striking in these pieces of music (2. and 3. above), is that they are "tragic" in mood, but of a relatively "ambient" musical making. They contrast in this respect with the more "aggressive" styles that motivated American soldiers (typically rap and heavy metal, as we shall see). In (2) and (3), no guitars, no distortion, no screaming voices. In (2), the main "feature" is a solo female voice. It is surrounded in reverb, giving the feeling that she sings from some distance. There are few lyrics, few consonants, mostly stretched vowels. The strings (probably synthesized) play long drone-like notes in the lower range. The harmonies are mostly stable, with few, slowly changing chords. Drums can be heard only on two of the three tracks mentioned by Breivik. They sound like large, low-pitched, double-headed drums (no snares, no cymbals). A heavy reverb effect is applied to them as well. This general description applies to the three tunes mentioned by Breivik, but not to the overall soundtrack of the video game.[32] Breivik seems to have focused on those parts which were both "heroic" and relatively devoid of salient musical features. One could describe them as tunes but also as soundscapes.

22 "Lux Aeterna" (3) would seem to elicit a rather different description. Breivik wrote that it was "very inspiring and invokes a type of passionate rage within you".[33] According to musicologists Bjorøy and Hawkins:

> Something foreboding lies in the deep-layered density of textures in the music; the score is rife with passionate rage and menace (...) With full sonic force, the listener or shooter is bombarded by a flood of powerful gestures, all of which build up into a feeling of anxiety that verges on the frenetic. Combat and war are sensationalized by the musical clichés of the scoring—lush, sweeping strings, glossy production, and intense musical processes that include pompous and gradual crescendos, fast-paced rhythms, and rich harmonic devices.[34]

23 Yet "Lux Aeterna" is also, in a sense, rather minimalistic. It is built around one nostalgic motive which in turn revolves around one tonal centre (3 degrees up, 3 degrees down). It remains in the same minor key throughout. Layers of instruments are simply added to the initial motive with occasional short variants. A choir sings one open syllable (no lyrics). Drums mostly punctuate the beat. The rhythm might seem "fast-paced" compared to (2), but it is still slower than the common tempos in the soldiers' rap and heavy metal. Overall, "Lux Aeterna" uses many cinematic effects, as Bjorøy and Hawkins point out, but it also maintains throughout a sort of "availability" typical of film soundtracks. Without the filmed images, the listener is left with considerable room to supply his own.

24 Both (2) and (3) fall within the range of "honorable duty" soundtracks to violence. The term was coined by Pieslak to capture the spirit of the main approach to creating soundtracks for war and adventure scenes prior to the 1980s.[35] During the 1980s, drumbeats, distorted guitars and high-energy voices started to take over, in line with a general come-back of heavy-metal in Euro-American musical tastes.[36] According to Pieslak, these new sonorities shifted the focus of war scenes from heroism to action and adventure. However, "honorable duty" soundtracks remained favourites for battles located in historical or mythical pasts, like those in *Lord of the Rings*, or *Age of Conan*. In addition to these fantastic legendary worlds, their values of heroism, bravery and

destiny probably appealed to Breivik. Right after providing a link to "The Dreaming Anew", he wrote:

> Imagine the following; at the end of your mission, when you have completed your primary objectives - imagine fighting for your life against a pursuing pack of system protectors ([...]also referred to as the police). You try to avoid confrontation but they eventually manage to surround you. You hear this song as you push forward to annihilate one of their flanks, head shooting two of your foes in bloody fervor trying to survive. This angelic voice sings to you from the heavens, strengthening your resolve in a hopeless battle. Your last desperate thrust kills another two of your enemies. But it isn't enough as you are now completely surrounded; your time is now. This voice is all you hear as your light turns to darkness and you enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. This must surely be the most glorious way to claim the honour of martyrdom in battle.[37]

25 Like many users of personal stereo devices, Breivik "soundtracked" his thoughts with music during his daily walks. The "cinematic" aspect of his experience is common.[38] What is interesting is that the scene above goes on post-mortem, suggesting that Breivik occupied not so much his own part, as perpetrator of the mass killing, but the part of the director, watching the whole movie from posterity.[39] This was possible because "The Dreaming Anew", like all of Breivik's motivational music, affords a move to a third-eye position. Tracks (2) and (3), in particular—being virtually devoid of lyrics and maintaining minimum melodic content, rhythmic complexity and chord progressions—end up merely creating "ambiance". Their dominant minor key is culturally compatible with a variety of thoughts ranging from nostalgia to heroic tragedy. Their wide reverbs are ecological markers of large spaces.[40] They leave a lot of "room" for the listener's mental projections ("room" which might initially have been left for the visual actions of the film or play).

26 Breivik used "The Dreaming Anew" along with a slide-show of still text and images to make what he called the "marketing movie trailer" of his compendium.[41] When that video was projected during his trial, he was visibly moved to tears.[42] One might guess that listening to that music while watching his image and thoughts on screen might have re-enacted his narcissist fantasies of being a martyr. For the rest of the hearings in court, his facial attitude remained remarkably emotionless.[43] Breivik was tragically successful at killing unarmed civilians, but never fired a single shot at an armed "system protector".[44] During his trial, he nonetheless referred repeatedly to himself as a martyr. In 2014, he sued the penitentiary administration on the grounds that he was being "tortured" in prison. Amongst other grievances, he explained that he was only allowed to own an obsolete Play Station 2 and was denied the right to choose the games himself.[45]

27 Breivik seems to have used (2), (3), and possibly (1) as well, as extensions of his mental horizon. They provided him with additional space, to step outside his mind and take a third-eye view of himself. In those musical daydreams, he managed to view himself as a martyr, and that certainty seems to have stayed with him ever since. Of course we cannot know where his "simulations" and "self-indoctrinations" would have taken him had their soundtrack been different. One might suspect, however, that heavy metal and rap, which many American soldiers found motivational, would not have worked for him. Breivik wrote that he "hated" heavy-metal for its violence and found rap (produced after the 1980s) too "brutal".[46] It is not uncommon for perceived violence and brutality to turn some people away from these musical genres, but in the mindset of a person preparing to perpetrate mass murder, these grounds for distaste might

seem paradoxical. It is clear throughout Breivik's compendium that he had no problem with violence in general, and that he accepted brutality as an unfortunate but, in his view, necessary aspect of his project. His distaste for rap and metal might have arisen not so much from their symbolic *references* to violence, but from the ways in which they instantiated and brought to the *present*, in the here and now of listening, a kind of agentive force which opposed his own imagination. As we shall now see, confrontation seems to be precisely what some American soldiers sought in listening to rap and metal prior to their missions.

Soldiers' motivational music

28 Various sources indicate that a number of American soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan consciously used music as a motivator to "pump themselves up" before their missions:

29 A number of studies on the subject of soldiers' listening practices all mention the existence of "battle playlists".[47] These studies were all based on first-hand interviews with the soldiers. None had direct access to the deployed troops. Some of them also included additional input from the soldiers' "military blogs" and from the other types of sources listed hereafter.

30 One documentary filmed in Iraq in 2003-04 was entirely devoted to music at war. It dealt extensively with the motivational uses of music (*Soundtrack to War*, by George Gittoes). Motivational music also appears incidentally in other documentaries filmed amongst the troops in Iraq (like *Gunner's Palace* by M. Tucker, and *Occupation Dreamland* by Ian Olds and G. Scott).

31 Audiovisual pieces with scenes of combat and motivational soundtracks were produced by the soldiers themselves and distributed over the internet. These "war videos" were discussed by Pieslak,[48] and their aesthetics was analysed in detail by Sumera.[49] Many of them are still available on the internet. It is noteworthy that some of these videos were also shown to new recruits during basic training, and that the US Navy produced images in the same musical spirit for its recruitment commercials.[50]

32 These sources jointly indicate that the use of music as a motivational resource by US soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan was not an isolated individual phenomenon but indeed a technique shared by many. The accounts converge on the particular significance of two musical genres for motivating soldiers before action: gangsta rap and heavy metal.

33 These styles of music had already been a topic of controversy in civilian life for their "negative" and "violent" features. Their prominence in the "battle playlists" of American soldiers led some media to portray the latter as "brutes listening to brute music to be even more brutish".[51] Interestingly, not all soldiers resisted this qualification. The most shared and commented "war videos" posted on the internet were made of chosen combat images carefully synced to *nü metal* tracks. Then, some soldiers—especially amongst those endowed with more bureaucratic tasks—would stage images of themselves according to this aesthetic of power. "Even soldiers like to play soldiers", concludes Sumera.[52] One former soldier to which this aesthetics did not appeal puts it similarly to Gilman: "[For] some of them, it was like playing GI Joe everyday".[53]

34 The salience of "battle music" has tended to overshadow the many other ways in which American soldiers listened to many other types of music. Generally, the iPod was a

conspicuous feature of soldiers' equipment.[54] They used it to listen to a wide array of music "depending on their emotional and social needs at any given moment".[55] Soldiers were generally quite explicit about the fact that "music was a technology of the self that enabled [them] to fine-tune their mental and emotional states".[56] Collectively, they had music that helped them to relax, to sleep, to think of home, to alleviate feelings of sadness, to party and bond together, to think of their beloved, to escape a hyper-masculine environment, to live through their frustrations with the hierarchy... and to motivate them before their mission. How exactly did rap and metal come to seem particularly fitted for this latter purpose? Several answers have been proposed.

Does "aggressive" music motivate?

35 Maybe gangsta rap and heavy metal are intrinsically "aggressive". Gangsta rap is known for its "explicit" lyrics delivered in "angry", "punchy", "up in your face" vocal styles. Heavy metal is known for its loud, noisy distortion, its screaming voices, its high speed drumbeats. Visual icons of warfare are frequent in its iconography. Generally, "heavy metal is war" is a kind of cliché about the genre. In their testimonies, several soldiers reversed this into "war is heavy metal". According to J. Pieslak:

> The violent expression of power associated with firing a gun becomes sonically replicated in the rhythms of the music. Because these rhythms are articulated in ways that resemble gunfire, soldiers may feel empowered by the music that, for them, evokes the sounds of combat.[57]

36 Timbre could also work as a motivator:

> The heavy guitar distortion characteristic of metal songs "pumps up" soldiers by timbrally conveying feelings of intensity and aggression. The distortion psychologically empowers soldiers by communicating an energized aggressor's mindset.[58]

37 In support of the timbre hypothesis Pieslak quotes Whiteley:

> Naturally produced sound waves have only a few harmonics, but these (distorted) "clipped" waves have many, especially at a high level, and this is what gives off the piercingly painful effect.[59]

38 Now let us suppose that Whiteley's analysis is correct and that distortion does have the psychological properties described. How does one feel "empowered" by listening to something that has a "piercingly painful effect"? Why would a sonic replica of a firing machine gun motivate the listener for combat? One can readily understand how "aggressive" music would result in the listener feeling "aggressed" (this is indeed tautological), but certainly not all aggressions communicate to the victim "an energized aggressor's mindset". Another argument must be supplied to explain how "aggressive" music becomes, for some people, motivator of violent actions.

39 If the "affordance" view is right, music should be, generally speaking, "a medium for removal from and refurnishing of social environments so as to make existence habitable, hospitable, better".[60] The quote might seem misplaced in the context of "battle music", but even in DeNora's book, it appears just a few pages after a depiction of American soldiers in Iraq motivating themselves with music in their armoured tank.[61] Listening to "war" before going to war is really a good test for affordance theories because it raises the question: how did it help? How did it make things any better?

Are metal and rap modern equivalents of historical battle music?

40 A comparison with motivational music used in previous wars only highlights the question. Historical battle music typically valued notions of heroism, God and the homeland. This is not what rap and metal are about. If anything, they would rather oppose their "negativity"[62] to the classic values that motivated the patriot warrior. Historical battle music often adapted popular dance tunes which the soldiers would link to a sense of collective wellbeing.[63] It provided comfort and reassurance *in contrast* with the battle to come. They were precisely *not* "war".

41 American soldiers also had music to remind them of their homeland and patriotism, generally falling within the range of "country music",[64] but "country music" never appeared on their "battle playlists". Soldiers did not seem to find it adequate when they were preparing for combat. In fact, some of them consciously chose motivational tunes that would not remind them too much of "home".[65] This is a significant difference with previous battle music.

Is motivation like trancing?

42 Some soldiers stated that music would take them out of their normal selves and motivate actions beyond their own personal will.

> ["Go to Sleep" by Eminem] is a very negative song, and I'm almost even embarrassed to say it was our theme song. But hey, that's what happens in war. You've got to become inhuman to do inhuman things. And by that I just mean, shooting a weapon in the direction of a living person.... The worst part is that I didn't used to use profanity, but at some point I snapped. Now that I've returned to normal, I can't listen to this song.[66]

43 Taken literally, Grisham's assertion would mean that music could lead one beyond one's "humanity", nearly against one's will. Trance, and its quieter corollary of "deep listening",[67] are experiences where the subject feels that musically induced emotions "take control" of his or her actions. Pieslak then proposed a parallel:

> Metal and rap can create a deep listening experience for some soldiers in which they adopt attitudes about violence and dehumanization not typically associated with their autobiographical self. Music in this circumstance induces an aggressive mindset and operates as a pretext for the possibility of violent action.[68]

44 Echoes of this idea did not always reflect Pieslak's cautious tone as well.[69] But caution is key here, as there is a crucial difference between soldiers and trancers: soldiers do not use music as an accompaniment for action. The logics of trancing and deep listening are that music works as an immersive media which enables the listener to live another reality while it lasts.[70] On the other hand, whatever "deep listening" soldiers engaged in, it was a *pretext* for violence, as Pieslak precisely states.

45 Music typically accompanied actions like putting on bulletproof vests, checking backpacks and ammunition, and possibly driving and waiting for long periods in armoured vehicles. Many soldiers actually turned the music off when they went "outside the wire".[71] But by all accounts, even if music was going on and the soldiers were attacked by surprise, they stopped hearing it to concentrate on the fight:

> As soon as guns start firing and you're fighting your way out of an ambush, or those tanks starts going off, or those RPGs start going off, you don't fuckin' hear that

> music. It's all just instinct, man. It's all what you got inside of you that starts coming out.[72]

46 Or to rephrase slightly: as soon as one faces an actual threat, musical motivation becomes irrelevant.

Is motivational music a soundtrack to violence?

47 Since the 1980s, rap and heavy metal have often been used to soundtrack violence in popular American media.[73] This observation has been presented to explain music's later motivational uses by the soldiers.

> For a generation that grew up with filmic depictions of battle and first-person-shooter video games, both of which tend toward music-heavy soundtracks, it is no surprise that the experience of live combat was at times interpreted through the prism of war movies or games.[74]

48 As we have seen, people of the same generation were exposed to at least one other standard way of soundtracking violent actions. In theory, American soldiers could have turned to "honorable duty" music, as Breivik did. Another difficulty is that, also like Breivik, they could have included actual soundtracks in their playlists. Instead, the tracks the soldiers deemed motivational were full-fledged, stand-alone musical pieces. They merely *belonged* to the same musical genres as movie soundtracks. I suggested above why this could make a difference for the listener: soundtracks are often composed to be flexible and leave "room" when needed for the visual action and the occasional replicas of the script. There is no such requirement for stand-alone tracks, which can freely catch and occupy the listener's attention with their auditory features.

49 But the most important aspect is that, in fact, contrary to what Daughtry seems to suggest, the battle playlists were *never* used as a soundtrack to an actual "experience of live combat". Heavy metal was used as a soundtrack to *images* of conflict, on "war videos" for instance. Before a mission, rap and metal would accompany, at most, the experience of *thinking* in general terms about it. But in their testimonies, soldiers do not actually depict motivational music as a realm in which to imagine with some precision what they are about to do (nothing like the mental simulations familiar to Breivik). Rather, music offered the benefit of suspending unneeded interactions and helping one focus on one's task:

> For some reason, when we had the music on in the truck, there was less talking and more you were paying attention to your sector. You were on your guard a little bit more, because you were able to sustain your horizon, and you didn't have to keep up with the conversation. You just focus on the music, and focus on your sector, and make sure that you weren't getting shot at.[75]

50 As a soundtrack, music afforded a continuous sense of interaction, but not with one's colleagues, and not with a visible enemy either. It helped focus on an otherwise "empty" sector. When an enemy eventually surged, as we have seen, the music stopped.

Is motivational music a substitute for violence?

51 Music was then, in significant ways, *not* a "soundtrack to war". It was certainly a way through which the soldiers could "frame" their engagement in specific actions (like watching an empty sector, waiting in a van, or putting on a bulletproof vest). In DeNora's terms, "[M]usical framing occurs when music's properties are somehow

projected or mapped onto something else, when music's properties are applied to and come to organize something outside themselves".[76] The cognitive product of musical framing belongs to the wider category of metaphors. In Lakoff and Johnson's classic definition, "[T]he essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another".[77] One of their first examples is, precisely, the metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR.[78]

52 "His claims are *indefensible*", "his criticisms were *right on target*", "I've never *won* an argument with him"... All such utterances are, according to Lakoff and Johnson, instances of this metaphor. It structures the concept of ARGUMENT by mapping onto it the properties of WAR. The mapping is constitutive of the target concept since, in the end, an argument is little more than a discussion understood as a kind of war.[79] One interesting point for our purpose is that the cognitive usefulness of the metaphor depends on the concept of WAR being more structured and clear, to start with, than the concept of ARGUMENT. Only then can WAR serve to understand ARGUMENT. This structure does not depend on experience (people typically encounter more arguments than wars in their lives). What people map onto arguments is not their *experience* of war, but their *knowledge of the concept* of WAR.

53 As a metaphor, HEAVY METAL IS WAR parallels ARGUMENT IS WAR. It uses the concept of WAR to understand the experience of HEAVY METAL. Then when American soldiers reverse it into "war is heavy metal", they in effect bring closer to their prototypes a confuse experience of violence which is not quite WAR. Two armies clashing together would probably have been prototypical of WAR. But what about a state army of professional soldiers opposing "terrorists", "insurgents" or civilian resistance?[80] In that situation, rap and metal could have motivated the troops not as soundtracks to WAR, but as substitutes for it.

54 This hypothesis was proposed by S. Wilson:

> Heavy metal, as the musical illusion of massacre, is also the cultural compensatory repetition of the trauma that for many American combatants may have been essentially missed. In war, metal seals off Americans from the real world of their own un-making in another world of pleasurable sonic madness and pumpin' aural carnage—a world of their own.[81]

55 Maybe motivational music worked for the soldiers as it did for Breivik: not as a means to connect them to forthcoming dangers or violence, but quite the opposite: as a tool to *disconnect* them from the most uncomfortable aspects of their mission. Wilson's intuition might also explain why the soldiers were motivated by "aggressive" music, while a mass killer like Breivik was not.

"It seems they don't want our help"

56 The conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan opposed highly asymmetrical powers. American soldiers could be targeted, wounded or killed, but the risks were largely higher on their opponents' side. American airplanes were virtually invulnerable and could drop highly efficient guided bombs nearly anywhere. Consequently, airborne soldiers described most of their missions as "routine".[82] Soldiers on the ground came in closer contact with the local populations, and often expressed ethical concerns about the rationale of an operation where they seemed to be invading another country.

> We're dumping so much money into this country... For what ? Just to have these people shoot at us, kill us, blow us up by whatever means they can... I don't

> understand it. We're trying to help these people and it seems they don't want our help.[83]
>
> I can't really blame these people for not wanting us to be here. You know, I wouldn't want some other country to come in and just take over our country and... drive through our streets and... I guess we're pretty intimidating when we roll in, you know, get fucking weapons pointed out every which way, and... I'm sure it scares the shit out of these people and I guess I'd figure they have to fight back.[84]

57 In line with the feeling that they could be invaders, soldiers also had trouble understanding who their enemy actually was. They were soldiers, willingly enrolled, paid to fight and to incur the corresponding risks. But after defeating the Iraqi army, and throughout the operations in Afghanistan, they faced "insurgents". That these "hostiles" were not professional fighters, and that they had deep ties with the civilian population could not be overlooked:

> It's difficult because you're trying to sell to these people that you're here to help them out and you know... what are you doing for them ? And if you say... well I'm gonna bring in [arrest] bad guys, I'm gonna bring in terrorists, they gonna say 'yeah, that was my brother'.[85]

58 Metal and gangsta rap on the other hand instantiate very clear antagonists to the listener's agency. Let us consider for instance "Go to Sleep", which appears in Grisham's quote above as a kind of "anthem" for his unit. The voices are recorded close to the microphone with dentals and plosives (t, d, p, b) left to saturate, as if the rappers were speaking or shouting directly in the listener's ears. Voices are also thoroughly compressed, levelling out their dynamics and bringing up their softer parts. Reverbs are kept to a minimum, preserving a sense of closeness. Eminem's voice is doubled throughout, in two takes. He says that he comes alone ("Me do this one all by my only, I don't need fifteen of my homies..."), but his voice speaks double. Ambient sounds are added on the chorus to give it more "punch". Gunshots and other weapon-related samples coincide precisely with specific syllables, building a complex polyrhythm:[86]

> So go to sleep bitch [*what?*] Die, motherfucker, die / Uh, time's up bitch, close your **eyes**
> * Go to sleep, bitch [*what?*] / Why are you still alive? / How many times I gotta say, close your **eyes**?
> * Go to sleep bitch [*what?*] / Die, motherfucker, die. Bye, bye, motherfucker, bye, bye
> * Go to sleep, bitch [*what?*] / Why are you still alive? / Why? Die motherfucker, ha ha ha
> Key: gunshot / **explosion** / *loading a gun* / *: gunshot between words

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59 journals.openedition.org/transposition/4065

60 "Voice as a weapon" is a recurring theme in rap. The lyrics here stage a confrontation between "I" (first person) and "you" (second person). "I" is clearly identified and personalized. It refers to the biographic self of the rapper. "You" could be anybody beyond the microphone, the headphones or the loudspeaker. If it were normal speech, it would be "you", the listener. But songs are special linguistic artefacts. They also afford the listener's identification with the first person (the "I" in the lyrics). This is how soldiers can sing along with Eminem, like Grisham (quoted above) and his squad before going on a mission.

61 Compared to other genres however, gangsta rap is rather challenging in this respect. Correct delivery of rap lyrics requires specific skills. The "I" in rap lyrics is also a virtuoso speaker, a master of language.[87] The first-time listener is typically left trying to keep up, grasping to make out the meaning of the words, always a bit behind. The words come quickly and numerously, are hardly ever repeated, and the meter and rhyme patterns are always changing. Breivik could advise his potential followers to learn Saga's lyrics by heart; the same advice for Eminem would significantly raise the level of difficulty. By default, the listener is in the position of the assaulted, dominated patient of the rapper's flow—only gradually able to move closer to the first-person position, and then only for certain parts of the song (typically the chorus).

62 Heavy metal is also replete with tropes of power and madness.[88] Pieslak's analysis is probably right: metal affords direct contact with (and possibly insight into) "an energized aggressor's mindset". But here again, the listener is by default in the position of the dominated patient of the aggressive force. In a discussion with B. Joseph about the use of music in torture, S. Cusick argues that any music—and in fact any environmental feature—might be "pushable across an invisible line [beyond which] ordinary experience becomes extraordinary, horrible, and capable of breaking your very subjectivity".[89] Many types of music were used by American soldiers to "break" their captives. However, in reports on musical torture, heavy metal appears more frequently than any other genre. This could be because it was indeed used more, or it could be that it was overrepresented in the subsequent descriptions. In any event, heavy metal stood out with respect to other genres, perhaps because its ideal of "madness" came with an aesthetic tendency to push things across the "invisible line" anyway. This tendency could have increased its perceived effectiveness, while also mitigating the soldiers' moral discomfort. With metal, there seemed to be at least some porosity between music's recreative and punitive uses.[90]

63 In their introduction to a book called *Virtual War and Magical Death*, Whitehead and Finnström argued that war is now always global, in the sense that "there is a seamless continuity between virtual and material war, or more properly between war online and offline".[91] In their analysis, "[T]he actual killings on the battlefields, wherever they happen to be located, are intimately linked to an emerging virtual space created by news and cinematic and gaming media as well as the mediating and mapping technologies of contemporary military violence".[92] In the management of this virtual space, one might find that music is, generally speaking, a useful asset. Compared to other immersion technologies, it is remarkably low-cost and portable. It has probably always been so, and mobile listening devices merely enhance the listener's options to flexibly "furnish" his or her environment through music.[93] In theory, such devices have also levelled accessibility, since anyone with access to the internet can now pick from the same global pool of downloadable music. In relation to the pervasive space of "global" war, different musical choices still nevertheless point to different imaginaries of armed violence.

64 As a mental experiment, let us imagine a swap: Breivik listens to rap and heavy metal, and the soldiers listen to "Lux Aeterna". How would this work? Nothing would prevent the terrorist from still plotting the massacre. But his attempts to look upon himself as a martyr would probably be at odds with the strong tropes of personified agency in the music. The virtuoso "gangster" poet, or the "mad" metal guitarist, do not quite "afford" that kind of emotional indulgence. On the other hand, if American soldiers

were to seek motivation in "honorable duty" soundtracks like "Lux Aeterna", it would probably bring their focus onto aching considerations about the rationale of their action. C. Coker argued that the development of war technologies that mediate violence and provide asymmetric safety to the soldier resulted in a corollary decrease of the ethics of "sacrifice". War then became ethically questionable, because "without sacrifice or the willingness to risk death oneself, war cannot be 'sacred', and if it cannot be that it cannot be ethical".[94] Soundtracks like "Lux Aeterna" or "The Dreaming Anew" were suitable workspaces for simulations that would take advantage of their tragic or nostalgic moods. Accordingly, their potential to motivate disenchanted soldiers who did not quite believe in the rationale of their war would be low.

Conclusion

65 The comparison proposed in this paper has limits which should be highlighted. Firstly, it relies on testimonies rather than on direct observations. Breivik's compendium is a first-hand "ego document", but clearly not all of it was written with factual accuracy in mind. Soldier testimonies were mediated by research and documentary projects which did not necessarily seek to address the workings of motivation through music. On the soldier's side, the comparison is moreover at risk of unduly homogenizing listening practices that were probably diverse. Not all soldiers had "battle playlists", and those who did used them in various ways (collectively, individually, before leaving the base camp, in the tank, etc.).

66 Despite these limits, I hope to have shown that the comparison reveals at least a contrast: the terrorist's motivational music contrasts with that of the soldiers. This can hardly be attributed to generational or cultural divergences, especially as video games and films of roughly the same fabric play a significant role in both cases. My point was that the observed divergence was not just a matter of random "taste", either. There is a kind of logic in the fact that American soldiers "pumped themselves up" with aggressive music while Breivik found inspiration in soundscapes of epic nostalgia.

67 One might say that different affordances in the music constituted different pathways to motivation. The terrorist's playlist indeed afforded imaginary pathways and mental navigation. Its relative emptiness enabled the listener to project his agency in a world of fantasy. A "predator kind of music", on the other hand, left little room for that.

68 Breivik was all about controlling his body, his thoughts and his mission. The soldiers, however, wanted their "battle playlists" to transform them from the outside. Music was to them an external source of energy. This was not because it was intrinsically "energetic": at least, an American listener would probably use this label for many other types of music that American soldiers would have ruled out of their "battle playlists".[95] If the analysis presented here is correct, the primary usefulness of "battle music" to these soldiers was its oppositional character. Gangsta rap and heavy metal instantiated highly agentive forces which engaged the listeners in direct confrontation. It was this sense of confrontation which some soldiers found energizing. Their "battle music" gave them, like no other music before, a close taste of what a prototypical battle should feel like. It contrasted with the situations that soldiers on the ground typically encountered during their missions: sporadic violence and diffuse opposition from underequipped and poorly trained "hostiles" who might even turn out to be civilians.

69 If heavy metal and gangsta rap made possible a kind of violent encounter, the next question is: with whom? Battle playlists were eclectic and sampled from a wide range of artists. There is little evidence that the artists' biographies mattered in any way to the soldiers.[96] One might also observe (with Walser, Pieslak and others), that heavy metal is particularly *not* about giving transparent access to the "humanity" of its makers. It strives more often to convey a sense of monstrous "insanity", to which effect it employs various kinds of *distortion*: electronic distortion on the guitars, vocal distortion of the lyrics, drums that oscillate between rhythm patterns and "power blasts". On stage and in video clips, it is not uncommon for musicians to hide or to distort their human faces by using heavy make-up or masks. While agency, in general, pervades the sounds of heavy metal, it is also set apart in various ways from the agency of "normal" human beings.

70 Then does it mean something, after all, to talk about sounds having an agency of their own? I have argued elsewhere with B. Brabec de Mori that distinct postures of listening indeed led to different understandings of auditory agency.[97] Agency, more generally, is not a property of the objects themselves but "a culturally prescribed framework for thinking about causation".[98] From a cognitive point of view, an agent is an object which occupies a special kind of position in an observer's understanding of a causal network. Agency in this sense is always abducted.[99] In theory, chains of cause and effect could be pursued to the infinite (every effect has a cause and so on). In practice, brains always stop short and consider that some entities just act "by themselves". Those beings are agents (for the time they occupy that position). In Gell's words, an agent is "the source, the origin, of causal events, independently of the state of the physical universe".[100]

71 This definition has some interesting consequences. Firstly, agency is not a stable property of particular kinds of objects. It merely has prototypes: kinds of beings which are more often than others considered agents. A human for instance can be an agent now and not be an agent later (the "lone wolf" terrorist and the obeying soldier are not equally agentive when they kill, a distinction that has juridical consequences, for example). Secondly, agency is not an optional "belief" but a low-level requirement of human cognition. Something is always needed at the end of the causal chain. It could be a human, a tree, a dog, a stone, a sound, or an unseen being whose existence is abducted from its effects (a spirit or a virus for instance). What is the agent affects how the observer understands the situation, but not the nature of agency: that being "acts" because the observer holds it to be an autonomous source of causation. Lastly, agency is distinct from intentionality. An agentive being appears to have the intrinsic capacity to initiate actions "by itself". The observer abducts an autonomous force in it. It does not follow that the observer also assigns to it intentions, mindfulness or will.

72 Non-human agencies can then be conceived in sound without resorting to the "mysterious rhetoric of music-as-magic of times bygone".[101] Causal chains must end somewhere, and sometimes ending them in the auditory realm is just what people do. To place agency in sounds, an observer must adopt a specific posture of listening.[102] Sounds then appear to cause each other through a kind of intrinsic logic, instead of just being caused (as the observer still knows) by their physical sources. Agency refers to the additional fact that some of these "enchanted" sounds do not seem to just result from each other, in a causal sense, but also appear to the observer as autonomous sources of causation. These are prototypical agents, whose effects tend to propagate into the non-auditory social world (starting usually with the listener's own self). To

paraphrase Gell, sounds are social agents when they are the direct "other" of social interactions.[103]

73 Sound agency is related to the ontology of auditory experience: what beings exist for the listener and what properties they have. To say that the terrorist and the soldiers listened to (different kinds of) "music" is therefore not enough. What they listened to was in effect as different as an emotionally charged "soundscape" can be from a "mad aggressor". The former enables self-conscious wanderings in which a mass murderer can come to think that he is a martyr. The latter suggests a direct encounter with a social "other" in a context of considerable boredom and general mistrust.

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NOTES

1. STOICHITA Victor A. and BRABEC DE MORI Bernd, “Postures of listening. An ontology of sonic percepts from an anthropological perspective”, *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines*, 2017, http://journals.openedition.org/terrain/16418.

2. DENORA Tia, *Music in Everyday Life*, Cambridge; New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 44.

3. “Musicing, Materiality, and the Emotional Niche”, *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, vol. 14, no. 3, 2015, pp. 43-62.

4. CLAYTON Martin, “Introduction: Towards a Theory of Musical Meaning (In India and Elsewhere)”, *British Journal of Ethnomusicology*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2001, p. 4.

5. DeNora’s own argument frequently resorts to shortcuts like “music’s power” and syntactic structures in which music is an autonomous agent. For example, if indeed “music may take actors unaware” (DENORA, *Music in Everyday Life*, p. 162), then their agency in this process is at best disputable.

6. GIBSON James J., *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*, London, Taylor & Francis, 1986, p. 127, emphasis in the original.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 129.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

9. DENORA, *Music in Everyday Life*, p. 40.

10. I follow Gilman in using "the term 'soldier' generically to refer to those in the military in any branch, understanding that 'the soldiers' officially refers only to those serving in the U.S. Army", GILMAN Lisa, "Grounding the Troops: Music, Place, and Memory in the Iraq War", *Volume ! La revue des musiques populaires*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2013, p. 174.

11. PIESLAK Jonathan R., *Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2009, p. 31sqq; DAUGHTRY J. Martin, *Listening to War. Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq*, Oxford; New York, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 232.

12. STOICHITA Victor A., "Musicopathies. La musique est-elle bonne pour la santé ?", *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines*, no. 68, 2017, pp. 4-25.

13. GILMAN Lisa, "An American Soldier's iPod: Layers of Identity and Situated Listening in Iraq", *Music and Politics*, vol. IV, no. 2, 2010, p. 7, https://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0004.201.

14. WILSON Scott, "Jonathan Pieslak, Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War," *Volume ! La revue des musiques populaires*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2012, pp. 243–245.

15. WHITEHEAD Neil L. and FINNSTRÖM Sverker, *Virtual War and Magical Death: Technologies and Imaginaries for Terror and Killing*, Durham (NC), Duke University Press, 2013.

16. Anders Behring Breivik changed his name to Fjotolf Hansen in 2017. He signed his compendium as Andrew Berwick. Here, I use Breivik throughout to refer to the man, and his pen name to cite his compendium in accordance with bibliographical conventions.

17. BEYDOUN Khaled A, "Lone Wolf Terrorism: Types, Stripes, and Double Standards", *Northwestern University Law Review*, vol. 112, no. 5, 2018, p. 1218.

18. BERWICK Andrew, "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence", London, 2011, p. 845.

19. LEONARD Cecilia H., ANNAS George D., KNOLL James L. and TØRRISSEN Terje, "The Case of Anders Behring Breivik - Language of a Lone Terrorist", *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, vol. 32, no. 3, 2014, pp. 408-422.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 416.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 417.

22. RANSTORP Magnus, "'Lone Wolf Terrorism'. The Case of Anders Breivik", *Sicherheit & Frieden*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2013, p. 89.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

25. Breivik mentions three tracks which for him "surpass almost anything [he's] heard before" (Berwick, "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence", p. 849) : The Dreaming - Ere the World Crumbles / Nighttime journey through the Eiglophian mountains (Ascending Cimmeria) / The Dreaming Anew - Memories of Cimmeria.

26. This version can easily be found on YouTube. It is more difficult to find it in the film, however Breivik writes that it was "performed during the most intense fighting of one of the central battles" (*Ibid)*. According to Stroud (STROUD Joe, "The Importance of Music to Anders Behring Breivik", *Contemporary Voices: St Andrews Journal of International Relations*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2013, p. 10, https://doi.org/10.15664/jtr.620), it was used only in the trailer of *Lord of the Rings*. However, fans of the movie have used it extensively to soundtrack their home-made resamples of their favourite scenes of the film. Such resamples abound on YouTube.com. Only there can the soundtrack version be heard in full length. This soundtracking of battle scenes closely resembles the "war videos" produced by American soldiers.

27. STROUD, "The Importance of Music to Anders Behring Breivik".

28. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

29. "'The Path of Dreams': Breivik, Music, and Neo-Nazi Skinheadism", KNUDSEN Jan Sverre, SKÅNLAND Marie Strand and TRONDALEN Gro (eds.), *Musikk etter 22. juli [Music after 22 Juli]*, Oslo, Norwegian Academy of Music, 2014, pp. 119-138.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 136.

31. A thorough analysis of these lyrics would be beyond the scope of this article. It should be mentioned however that some songs cited by Breivik deviate from the general enunciative strategy described here. For instance, in Hypocrite, the second person is prominent and the tone accusative: "You complain about the politicians but still you vote them in / You've lost your soul, you coward; to sell your pride is a sin." The listener could here identify with the second person in a kind of self-bashing or, more probably, he or she will join the utterer and accuse others of hypocrisy. My general point is that the lyrics to which Breivik seems receptive easily allow the listener to move into the first-person agentive position.

32. For a detailed musicological analysis of "The dreaming anew", see BJORØY Karl-Magnus and HAWKINS Stan, "'When light turns into darkness': Inscriptions of music and terror in Oslo 22 July 201," KNUDSEN Jan Sverre, SKÅNLAND Marie Strand and TRONDALEN Gro (eds.), *Musikk etter 22. juli [Music after 22 Juli]*, Oslo, Norwegian Academy of Music, 2014, pp. 139–161, p. 155.

33. BERWICK, "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence", p. 849.

34. BJORØY Karl-Magnus and HAWKINS Stan, "'When light turns into darkness': Inscriptions of music and terror in Oslo 22 July 201", KNUDSEN Jan Sverre, SKÅNLAND Marie Strand and TRONDALEN Gro (eds.), *Musikk etter 22. juli [Music after 22 Juli]*, p. 141.

35. PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 26.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 47; WALSER Robert, *Running with the Devil. Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*, Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 1993, p. 11.

37. BERWICK, "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence", p. 249.

38. See BULL Michael, *Sounding Out the City: Personal Stereos and the Management of Everyday Life*, Oxford, Berg, 2000, p. 85sqq.

39. STOICHITA, "Musicopathies. La musique est-elle bonne pour la santé ?".

40. On the uses of reverb as an acoustic index of space in American popular musics, see DOYLE, *Echo and Reverb: Fabricating Space in Popular Music, 1900-1960*, Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 2005.

41. STROUD, "The Importance of Music to Anders Behring Breivik", p. 9; BJORØY and HAWKINS, "'When light turns into darkness': Inscriptions of music and terror in Oslo 22 July 201", p. 155.

42. PIDD Helen, "Anders Behring Breivik cries during own propaganda film", *The Guardian*, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/apr/16/anders-behring-breivik-cries-own-propaganda-film, 04/16/2012.

43. RANSTORP, "'Lone Wolf Terrorism'. The Case of Anders Breivik", p. 90.

44. Breivik did kill an unarmed policeman upon his arrival on the island of Utøya. He later surrendered without resistance to the special forces deployed to intercept him.

45. This complaint was reported in various newspapers. See for instance SAUL Heather, "Anders Breivik: Mass murderer demands better video games and threatens hunger strike over jail 'hell,'" *The Independent*, 02/15/2014. For more context on Breivik's relation with the media after his incarceration, see DESHAYES, *La lettre de l'assassin*, https://making-of.afp.com/la-lettre-de-lassassin, consulted on 8 July 2019.

46. BERWICK, "2083 - A European Declaration of Independence", pp. 631, 1390.

47. DAUGHTRY J. Martin, *Listening to War*; PIESLAK, *Sound targets*; GILMAN, "An American Soldier's iPod"; GILMAN, "Grounding the Troops"; VOLCLER Juliette, *Le son comme arme. Les usages policiers et militaires du son*, Paris, La Découverte, 2011.

48. PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 42sqq.

49. SUMERA Matthew, "The Soundtrack to War", WHITEHEAD Neil L. and FINNSTRÖM Sverker (eds.), *Virtual War and Magical Death: Technologies and Imaginaries for Terror and Killing*, Durham (NC), Duke University Press, 2013, pp. 214-233.

50. *Ibid.*; PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 27 sqq.

51. GILMAN, "An American Soldier's iPod", p. 6.

52. "The Soundtrack to War", p. 234.

53. Eric, quoted by GILMAN, "An American Soldier's iPod", p. 9.

54. DAUGHTRY, *Listening to War*, pp. 220-225.

55. GILMAN, "An American Soldier's iPod", p. 5.

56. DAUGHTRY, *Listening to War*, p. 20.

57. PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 150.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

59. WHITELEY Sheila, "Progressive Rock and Psychedelic Coding in the Work of Jimi Hendrix", *Popular Music*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1990, p. 86 quoted in Pieslak 2009 p. 169.

60. DENORA Tia, *Music Asylums: Wellbeing Through Music in Everyday Life*, Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT, Ashgate, 2013, p. 138.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 113.

62. WILSON Scott, *Great Satan's Rage: American Negativity and Rap/metal in the Age of Supercapitalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015.

63. For a precise historical example see GRANT Morag Josephine, "Bagpipes at the Front: Pipers and Piping during Combat in the Great War", SCHRAMM Michael (ed.), *Militärmusik und Erster Weltkrieg*, Bonn, Militärmusikzentrum der Bundeswehr, 2015, pp. 35-67. The Scottish Highland regiments of the British Army used bagpipe music as an incentive during the battle until after World War I. Grant's analysis of historical sources shows that the role of the piper's music on the battlefield was not to promote aggression or the willingness to kill. Instead, "the piper provided reassurance and a focal point in an essentially inhumane and chaotic environment". To that effect, he would play popular songs, dance tunes and regimental marches. These were drawn "largely from the wider repertoire of Scottish songs and tunes, supplemented with newer tunes written specifically for the pipes and often commemorating certain campaigns, events or persons." In effect, piper's music at war stood for ideas of homeland and social bonding, rather than for the battle as a violent encounter. Other examples of pipers' military repertoire and its reception are analyzed in GRANT Morag Josephine, "Music during Battle: Representation and Reality", JARDIN Étienne (ed.), *Music and War in Europe from the French Revolution to WWI*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2016, pp. 29-44.

64. GILMAN, "Grounding the Troops," pp. 4-7.

65. GILMAN, "Grounding the Troops", p. 9.

66. Sergeant 1st Class Grisham, quoted by PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 69.

67. A "secular" kind of trancing according to BECKER Judith, *Deep Listeners: Music, Emotion, and Trancing*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2004, p. 2.

68. PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 165.

69. For instance in SUMERA, "The Soundtrack to War," p. 218: "Trancing is exactly what these warriors engage in during practices of collective listening prior to going out on patrol".

70. See for instance the Balinese Rangda/Barong ritual in Becker, *Deep Listeners. Music, Emotion and Trancing*, p. 84, to which Pieslak also refers.

71. This was also the official regulation, see DAUGHTRY, *Listening to War*, p. 234.

72. Sgt N. Saunders, quoted by PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 56.

73. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-44.

74. DAUGHTRY, *Listening to War*, p. 232.

75. The same Grisham, quoted by PIESLAK, *Sound targets*, p. 55.

76. DENORA, *Music in Everyday Life*, p. 27.

77. LAKOFF George and JOHNSON Mark, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1980, p. 5.

78. I follow Lakoff and Johnson's typographical convention in capitalizing references to concepts and metaphors (as opposed to the actual things to which they refer in the world).

79. LAKOFF and JOHNSON, *Metaphors We Live By*, p. 5.

80. There is, in this respect, a difference between the war against the regular Iraqi army (March to May 2003) and the rest of the American intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan.

81. WILSON, "Jonathan Pieslak, Sound Targets".

82. BOWDEN Mark, *The Kabul-ki Dance*, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/11/the-kabul-ki-dance/302610/, accessed on November 8, 2018.

83. One soldier in a tank, in GITTOES George, *Soundtrack to War*, ABC Video, 2005 at 8:23.

84. Pfc Thomas Turner, in OLDS Ian and SCOTT Garett, *Occupation: Dreamland*, Rumur Releasing, 2005 at 25:02.

85. 1st Lieutnant Matt Bacik, *Ibid.* at 26:46.

86. The instrumental track is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DePcSUopqSw

87. WALSER Robert, "Rhythm, Rhyme, and Rhetoric in the Music of Public Enemy", *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 39, no. 2, 1995, pp. 193-217.

88. WALSER, *Running with the Devil. Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*.

89. CUSICK Suzanne G. and JOSEPH Branden W., "Across an Invisible Line: A Conversation about Music and Torture", *Grey room*, no. 42, 2011, p. 11.

90. There were of course important differences too. Perhaps the most significant, for a discussion of music's effects, is that, by all detainee accounts, music stopped sounding like music during sessions of loud and prolonged exposure to the same repeated track. It became just "banging", "hammering" on the head, and the unfortunate listeners lost any other sense of rhythm, harmony or melodic structure. In a recent investigation on the divergence between musical torture and musical possession (both of which would seem to dismantle an individual's normal self), Friedson pointed to another important difference related to the management of time. "The temporality of musical experience, its durée, has the uncanny ability, in both no-touch torture and shrine rituals, to bite into the very realm of existence not in order to dissolve it but in order to become it" (FRIEDSON Steven M., "The Music Box: Songs of Futility in a Time of Torture," *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2019, pp. 222–246, p. 236). Friedson goes on to say that in musical torture, entrainment is totally asymmetrical, imposed from above and unpredictable in both its occurrence and its duration. Its psychological purpose is "learned helplessness". At shrine rituals on the contrary, music's stable and prolonged repetition provides a predictable structure onto which the listener can latch in order to enter a "musical plane of multiplicity".

91. WHITEHEAD and FINNSTRÖM, *Virtual war and magical death*, p. 8.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

93. DENORA, *Music Asylums*, p. 63.

94. COKER Christopher, *The Future of War. The Re-Enchantment of War in the Twenty-First Century*, Malden; Oxford; Victoria, Blackwell, 2004, p. 130.

95. One might think for instance of "aerobic" music to which Western listeners also lend many energizing properties, see DENORA, *Music in Everyday Life*, p. 89sqq.

96. According to Gilman, the social position of the (often underprivileged) artists could have mattered to some soldiers who considered themselves as also subaltern and were "engaging similar negotiations of power and powerlessness" (GILMAN, "An American Soldier's iPod", p. 7). However, the same author elsewhere indicates that "many soldiers described selecting music because they considered the artists and genres to be far removed from their current realities" (GILMAN, "Grounding the Troops," p. 10). The types of music to which each of these comments refers is unclear.

97. STOICHITA and BRABEC DE MORI, "Postures of listening. An ontology of sonic percepts from an anthropological perspective". For a detailed discussion see DOKIC Jérôme, HATTEN Robert S, INGOLD Tim, KREUTZER Michel and TOLBERT Elizabeth, "Comments on 'Postures of listening' by Victor A. Stoichita and Bernd Brabec de Mori", *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines*, 2018, http://

journals.openedition.org/terrain/17547 and STOICHITA Victor A. and BRABEC DE MORI Bernd, "Response to comments on 'Postures of listening'", *Terrain. Anthropologie & sciences humaines*, 2018, http://journals.openedition.org/terrain/17579.

98. GELL Alfred, *Art and Agency. An Anthropological Theory*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, p. 17.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 15. Abduction is a kind of reasoning whereby causes are inferred from observing their (alleged) consequences. It is, strictly speaking, a syllogism because a consequence could have several different causes. Its validity therefore remains hypothetical, but it is nevertheless commonly used and usually efficient in orienting one's actions in practice. Gell made the point that whenever people consider that a being acts autonomously, "by itself", they abduct its agency from observed disturbances in its vicinity.

100. GELL, *Art and Agency*, p. 16.

101. DENORA, *Music Asylums*, p. 141. DeNora herself wants "a revised notion of music as magic, in particular what might be termed a 'magic realist' theory of how music helps, a focus on how music can convert us from one state of being or mode of consciousness to another, in ways that are produced through concrete and practical actions and on craft, a focus expressly devoted to what people do with and attribute to music in specific settings" (*Ibid*). What remains to be addressed in this program is what happens when people find in music not just affordances, but also autonomous causation and agency.

102. STOICHITA and BRABEC DE MORI, "Postures of listening. An ontology of sonic percepts from an anthropological perspective".

103. GELL, *Art and Agency*, p. 17.

ABSTRACTS

During the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, some American soldiers commonly listened to music in order to "motivate" themselves before action. Previous studies have shown that their most frequent choices to this effect pertained to two genres: "gangsta" rap and heavy metal. At another extreme of armed violence, Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik reported listening to a selection of tunes in the preparation of his 2011 massacre and possibly also during its perpetration. His musical choices sounded radically different from metal and rap. Yet, all of these styles of music had previously been associated with graphic violence throughout popular movies and video games. This paper asks how each type of music "worked" in motivating its listener for armed confrontation. The comparison requires going beyond the fact that mainstream media interact with common imaginaries of violence. The hypothesis here is that the differences between the terrorist's and the soldier's playlists reflect deeper contrasts in their engagements with the opponent. This case study of musical "motivation" leads to a broader discussion of the interplay between the agency of the listener, as opposed to the agency which he or she sometimes locates in the music itself.

Durant les guerres en Irak et Afghanistan, certains soldats états-uniens écoutaient régulièrement de la musique pour « se motiver » avant de partir en mission. Les études existantes montrent que leurs choix s'orientaient principalement vers deux genres : le « gangsta » rap et le heavy metal. À un autre extrême de la violence armée, le terroriste norvégien Anders Behring Breivik affirmait avoir fréquemment écouté de la musique pour préparer son massacre de 2011. Ses choix musicaux étaient radicalement différents de ceux des soldats états-uniens. Néanmoins, ses

musiques comme celles des soldats avaient été fréquemment associées à des scènes de violence dans l'industrie des films et des jeux vidéo. Cet article interroge la manière dont ces musiques purent s'avérer « fonctionnelles » pour motiver leurs auditeurs en vue de la confrontation. La comparaison proposée requiert de dépasser le constat que les médias grand public interagissent avec les imaginaires individuels de la violence. L'hypothèse envisagée ici est que les différences entre les choix musicaux du terroriste et ceux des soldats reflètent un contraste plus profond dans leurs manières d'envisager la confrontation. Les cas de « motivation » ici étudiés conduisent aussi à une discussion plus large de la qualité d'agent dont certains auditeurs investissent certaines des musiques qu'ils écoutent.

INDEX

Keywords: affordance, agency, soundtrack, war, terrorism
Mots-clés: affordance, agentivité, cinéma, guerre, terrorisme

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Songs of War: The Voice of Bertran de Born

Chansons de guerre : la voix de Bertran de Born

Sarah Kay

Introduction

1 The theme of this volume, *Sound, Music and Violence*, is an excellent opportunity—an incitement even—to reflect on what the relation might be between sounds we think of as "music" and sounds we think of as "noise". I do not expect to resolve the longstanding debates as to whether these terms are opposed, alternative or overlapping, or whether one becomes perceived as the other according to person, time or circumstance.[1] Nor, even, do I aspire to define either term in a satisfactory way. Appropriately to the theme of war, my paper is not so much a campaign on this topic, nor even a skirmish—more perhaps a kind of ambush, one led by an obscure detachment from Philology. That ambush takes place in a landscape that might be represented like the one Edvard Munch painted in a series of canvasses titled *The Scream*. Is the sound that we do not hear in this landscape music, or is it noise? Jacques Lacan, who commented several times on this image, stresses instead the interrelation in it of voice and silence. Or rather, he suggests that silence and the scream are the initial reality against which other sounds, whether music or noise, are subsequently produced and perceived.

Voice, silence and extimacy

2 In one of these commentaries, perhaps in response to the embryo-like appearance of the central figure, Lacan proposes, as the origin of the silent sound that reverberates across the painting, the very first cry of a newborn baby. The infant cries out at birth, he says, when its body is invaded for the first time by an entirely new and alien element, one for which its mother's womb had in no way prepared it, that is, air. This

shocking invasion of the inside of its body by its outside gives rise to what Lacan calls the "extimacy" of the voice: it is "extimate" by virtue of being at once intimate and external. Henceforth for Lacan "voice" is the earliest psychic object, tinged at once with familiarity and menace, since it is both deep within ourselves and diametrically *other*:

> Pause, then, to think how unbelievable this is—this strange leap by which living creatures leave their original environment and pass into that of the air ... this has been called the trauma ... the trauma of birth understood not as separation from the mother but as inhaling deeply into oneself an environment that is fundamentally alien.[2]

3 All subsequent vocalization carries the forgotten memory of this inaugural inhalation, this traumatic invasion of and by the air.

4 The scream, as a result, is voiced not against a background of silence, Lacan contends, but as its counterpart. This first cry is literally a life or death moment: it shouts out the entry into life in the world; it inscribes voice as the correlate of death. Even at its most physiological, the cry is the voiced exhalation of a silent inhalation, an exhalation that, once exhausted, would be deadly were there not another inhalation, and so on. The silent mortality of the body, Lacan says, is as much the outcome of the scream as it is its cause, and it is this silent counterpart of the scream, according to Lacan, that the painting depicts:

> What is this scream? Who might hear this scream that we do not hear except, precisely, in the way it imposes a regime of silence... This silence appears in some sense as the correlative whose presence distinguishes this particular scream from all other imaginable sounds. And yet what is palpable is that the silence is no mere background to the scream ... rather the scream is what seems literally to provoke the silence. As its sound dissolves in that silence, we feel that the scream is its cause. It makes the silence rise up, enables it to hold its pitch. It is the scream that sustains the silence, and not the other way around.[3]

5 Not just the vocal cry, but also perceived sound in general, participates—though less acutely—in this equivocal status of extimacy, and for a similar reason: that it penetrates from the outside while resonating deep inside us. Music, historically the art of the Muses, has its origin in their quasi-divine agency. Similarly, the English word *noise*, Old French *noise*, which designates a disagreeable sound, a disturbance, or disorder, an insurgency even, captures the association between sound and external harm, *nuisance* in French and *nuisance* in English. The kinship between noise and anything that might appear noxious or noisesome is here conveyed by the kinship between the words themselves. Yet we hear these external sounds when they ring, or din, inside our heads; it is here that they hurt, that their harm is done.

6 This paper will turn about these notions of music and noise, their relation to silence or the scream, and the role of the voice in this relationship. It will speculate that song, as potential vocal performance, has the capacity to mediate between the primal terms of silence and cry. On its way to this conclusion, it will also analyze how song may mediate between the more symbolically identifiable terms of music and noise. It will do so with reference to the songs composed by one of the better-known troubadours of medieval Occitania, Bertran de Born, a nobleman-poet of the second half of the twelfth century known for singing in a way that both celebrates and foments strife. Almost all his songs belong in the genre known as the sirventes, which takes politics or ethics as its theme rather than the erotic love more frequently associated with troubadour lyric. The texts

of two of Bertran's sirventes, which I take as exemplary and on which I ground my argument, are included in an appendix at the end of this paper.

Love, war and intimate revolt

7 One of Bertran's editors, the French scholar Gérard Gouiran, titles his edition *L'Amour et la guerre*, "Love and War".[4] The title is apt not because these are two distinct themes found side by side in the troubadour's songs, but because, on the contrary, they are so intimately connected as to be fused together. Compared with other troubadours, Bertran treats love with a swagger of aggression, using abrupt and even violent language in his songs about women; at the same time he eroticizes war as a true source of manly excitement. A particularly successful study, in my view, of this blurring together of the aggressive and the libidinal is an article by Luke Sunderland, "The Art of Revolt: Rebellion in the Works of Bertran de Born and Julia Kristeva". [5]Sutherland sees a parallel between the contents of Bertran's songs and what Kristeva calls "la révolte intime", or intimate revolt, which consists not in confrontation between two external entities but in the constant putting into question of one's own inner being through risk and change, and crucially, through constant openness to new objects. Pushing forward from the Oedipal bind of the home, intimate revolt enables the subject constantly to find new objects of violence (other than the father) and new objects of love (other than the mother), thereby gaining some measure of independent thought and action:

> Facing failure, holding one's head high once more, opening up new ways forward—ever renewed displacements, healthy metonymies—and all the while keeping one's family origins at a distance, repeating with innumerable new objects and unfamiliar signs this wager of loving and/as killing that makes us autonomous, guilty and capable of thought.[6]

8 Kristeva proposes to work with potential patients undertaking a psychoanalysis with her on deepening what Sunderland calls "a logic of protest" in which this freedom can be achieved.

9 The formula "love and war" could lead us to look at Bertran's poetry from the perspective of the external world, that of kings, knights, ladies, courts, castles, jongleurs and horses, a world that is indeed repeatedly evoked in his songs. Sunderland instead draws attention to the internal drama of his songs as a scene of intimate revolt. Love and war are not so much external events as they are caught up in the extimacy of what Kristeva calls "le pari d'aimer-tuer", the wager of loving and/as killing: an inner, symbolic dice board in which murderous and amorous desires are hurtled together to form our psychic objects. The energy of Bertran's poetry, Sunderland shows, can be read as expressing a Kristevan "logic of protest" in that it constantly pushes past setbacks to find new objects of love and violence as the means to a constantly rediscovered sense of self. He reads Bertran's embrace of personal risk, peril and change as a sign of this logic. That the logic is internal is what colors sexual desires with warlike action, and vice versa, that suffuses warlike action with sexual desires. That the logic is symbolic is what leads to Bertran composing poetry rather than committing acts of actual butchery, whether of warriors or women. That it is intimate explains the constant interplay, or interpenetration, between the troubadour's evocation of the external world and his expression of restless desire.

The soundtrack of intimate revolt

10 What is, however, absent from Sunderland's account, and from that of most critics of the themes of love and war in Bertran de Born, is their sonic dimension. Conversely, Sunderland's portrayal of intimate revolt unfolding through a logic of protest helps us see that voice, music and noise are treated by Bertran in their *symbolic* perspective. This means not only that Bertran adopts the form of performable song, but also that he listens, often in imagination, to his own and other songs, and to the sounds of conflict, which equally may often similarly be fictional representations rather than actual sounds.[7]

11 This essay focuses on two songs (see appendix) that illustrate how Bertran handles sound in song in order to steer a symbolic course through noise, music and performance. The first contains the most references to sound. Probably composed in 1183, it is one of two songs that violently criticize King Alphonso II of Aragon for his role in the siege of Bertran's castle, Hautefort.[8] This assault resulted in Bertran's being expelled from it for a period. (Count Richard—the later Richard Lionheart—who is also mentioned similarly took part in the besieging force, but Bertran is more conciliating to him and, indeed, eventually recovers his fief with Richard's concurrence.)[9] The second song, whose date of composition is much less certain, but which editors agree may date from 1190, probably involves Alphonso of Castille and Richard, who by then would just have assumed the throne after the death of Henry II Plantagenet in 1189.[10]

12 One way in which Bertran situates his compositions as sonorous performed song is by repeated and self-conscious reminiscences of the epic poems, better known as *chansons de geste* ("songs of action", "songs of lineage" or "songs of history") of medieval France. [11] Singers of these epic *chansons* invite their listeners not only to see, in imagination, the violent events which they narrate (*lors veïssiez*, they say to their audience, "then you would have seen") but also to hear them (*lors oïssiez*, "then you would have heard"); they insist, too, that their own singing should be listened to (*oyez chanson*, "hear the song"). Bertran copies these features of the *chansons de geste* to make his own songs be about listening, to the sound of battle, or to the songs themselves; he also retains from them the sense that these acts of listening involve imaginary or fictional sounds as much as actual or historical ones. In this way, Bertran both gives intimate revolt an aural dimension and anchors it in the voice, especially the singing voice.[12] Stanza 1 of the first of these songs in the appendix, and stanzas 2 and 3 of the second, are good examples of this "epic" dimension to his singing.

13 Also reminiscent of the *chansons de geste* is the hectic to and fro between the thrill of battle and various tense political dealings. Both these aspects of conflict are present in both of my two exemplary songs, which situate themselves in the context of dealings between Richard Lionheart and Iberian kings named Alphonso. The first opens with the soundscape of a military camp before or after a battle, and thereafter consists mainly of calumnious assertions against Alphonso, sarcastically positioned as an ostensible attempt to negotiate a truce with him. By means of these calumnies, which Bertran attributes to everyone around Alphonso, the poet lays symbolic siege to the Catalan king, in retaliation for the actual siege Alphonso had laid to him. In the second, "Mieisirventes", the political situation between the kings—and their identity—are more lightly sketched, although, as I have said, both recent editors agree in dating this song

ca. 1190. There are also indications of a broader, diplomatic backdrop, which may have involved quarrels over marriage and inheritance.[13]

“Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar”

14 It would be helpful to begin by quickly identifying the sounds evoked in the the earlier of the two *sirventes*, “Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar”. Stanza I enumerates a range of musical and non-musical sounds associated with a military camp, including horses neighing and trumpets blowing. In stanza II, we get the discreet murmurings of negotiations with Alphonso of Aragon followed by those, less discreet, of reproaches; stanzas III, IV, V and VI concern the various slanders circulating all around the king; stanza VII has us imagine him yawning when people speak to him of battle; in the last full stanza, VIII, the song implies Richard issuing commands.

15 The war-like setting of the opening stanza may be meant to evoke Bertran’s victory and his jubilation at winning back his castle, but they also describe any camp at any time: the scenario evoked is the experience of being encamped during a campaign, an experience that is indefinitely repeatable. The potentially innumerable vituperations add savor to Bertran’s successful reinstatement by vilifying the man who contributed to his expulsion (Alphonso), while praises elevate the man who, although a party to the siege, will eventually approve his recovering it (Richard). Alphonso’s violent siege and destitution of Bertran are countered, as I have said, by the troubadour in turn surrounding the king with a shockwave of calumnies that isolate him and strip him of his status. Failure and success, and their accompaniments of praise and censure, combine in an intimate revolt that resounds along the *sirventes*’s varied diegetic soundtrack.

16 The *sirventes* in turn designates itself as something to be listened to, in stanza I when it is destined to be sung before count Richard; and again, at the end, when it is imagined as being sung in the presence of Alphonso, heard by him and then (improbably, given its slanderous content) broadcast by him to his neighbors throughout the region. Repeated references to jongleurs’ songs and narratives seal the mediation between events and song, and between song and its performance. The vehemence of Bertran’s attack on Alphonso recalls that of the Catalan troubadour Guillem de Berguedà, presumed to be the unnamed vassal alluded to in stanza III. Guillem de Berguedà is known for the violence and obscenity of his satirical songs. Although Bertran does not come close to emulating the virulence of his fellow poet, it nevertheless provides a horizon of offensiveness for his own attacks on Alphonso.

17 Through these references to the song itself, to jongleur performances and to a fellow troubadour, Bertran draws attention to the transformation into song of the sounds that accompany war and of the rumblings of negotiation and scandal. More accurately, Bertran uses the sounds of his song to represent some sounds that we might not think of as musical (horses neighing, rumors circulating); but the very fact that he does so draws these non-musical sounds back into the domain of music, both as represented within the song and as realized by its performance. At the same time, the song works to generate further potential noise in the renewable military encampments of stanza 1 and the provocation to further conflict with Alphonso thereafter. Almost all these sounds are in some sense vocal, whether they are the voices of horses, trumpets, jongleurs, other poets or slanderers. The troubadour’s singing voice, I propose, is what

enables the *sirventes* to move back and forth between different kinds of (musical or non-musical) sound, mediating the passage between them. The *sirventes* represents vocal performance across a variety of registers, some of which, along with the *sirventes* itself, may be thought of as at once "musical" and "noisesome".

"Miei-sirventes vueilh far"

18 This two-way mediation of song—in which the singing voice references non-musical sound, turns it into musical performance, and then uses the song to project further noise and strife, confounding the distinction between them—is also found in the later so-called "half *sirventes*", where song once more expresses violent noise in the double form of battle and vituperation. From an opening stanza recording animosity between the kings, the second stanza imagines the fighting that will result from it, conjuring it as future spectacle. In stanza III, the scene of struggle can be heard as well as seen; Bertran goes on from there to predict the general state of uncertainty and risk that will engulf all travelers who are not themselves knights, and welcomes, in the concluding *tornadas*, the mortal danger that this poses to himself. The whole scenario, conditional on the actions of the kings, is hypothetical and thus, for now, fictive, that is to say a symbolic construction. Sunderland cites this song as a good example of "the logic of protest".[14] This is perhaps especially true of the second *tornada*: "E si sui vius, er mi grans benanansa,/ E se ieu mueir, er mi grans deliuriers" (And if I am alive it will be, for me, great happiness, / and if I die it will be great deliverance). These lines clinch Bertran's thought, both in this song and as manifested elsewhere. The alternatives of extreme happiness and extreme freedom lie on either side of the extreme violence of a life-or-death struggle that is understood as grounding them both—and this struggle has a sonorous dimension that combines both "music" and "noise".

"This wager of loving and/as killing"

19 There are different routes to happiness, of course, and the restless quest for new objects of (symbolically elaborated and often imagined) aggression is more obvious in both the songs I have chosen as examples than the restless quest for love objects. Nevertheless, critics agree that Bertran's songs of war are also all in some ways love songs.[15] Not only do they eroticize violence, but they are themselves poetic reworkings, or even distortions, of love songs, and some are subsequently recast as love songs by other poets.

20 This coexistence of songs of war with erotic songs was often inscribed in how they sounded. *Sirventes* are said to be so called because they are modeled on a pre-existing song, most commonly a courtly *canso*. "Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar" is not transmitted with music, but it may once have had a model with a melody that we do not know. In fact, its form is tantalizingly close to that of two songs by women troubadours.[16] (The only example where Bertran explicitly identifies one of his songs as contrafacted is, intriguingly, also modeled on a song involving a woman troubadour, a gender reversal that chimes with other reversals and distortions considered below.[17])

21 Even if "Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar" is not an exact formal imitation of existing songs, the song places the love of war in a spring opening that all too obviously recalls

love songs. It is reminiscent, for example, of Peire d'Alvernhe's *Bela m'es la flors d'aguilen* (323.5), 1-6 or Arnaut Daniel's *Ar vei vermeills, vertz, blaus, blancs, grocs* (29.4), 1-7.[18] More interestingly in some ways, its opening stanza insinuates an amorous model that does not exist except as the pre-text to its own deformation into the text we now have. Its existence, however, is sufficiently implied for us to go in search of it and, with only a few, simple tweaks, to bring it back into view. Here is the text as we have it:

Cant vei pels vergiers *desplegar*
Los *cendatz* grocs, indis e blaus,
M'adousa la votz dels *cavaus*
E·l sonet que fan li joglar
Que viulon *de trap en tenda*,
Trombas e corn e graile clar.
Adoncs voill *un sirventes* far
Tal que·l *coms Richartz* l'entenda.

> When I see *banners* yellow, violet and blue *unfurled* among the orchards, the voice of *horses* soothes me, and the melodies the minstrels make as they go fiddling *from tent to tent, and the trumpets and horns and clarions* clear; then I want to compose *a sirventes for Count Richard* to hear.

22 We can easily read this as conjuring up a more conventional amorous exordium:

Cant vei pels vergiers *botonar*
Los *glaios* grocs, indis e blaus,
M'adousa la votz dels *oisiaus*
E·l sonet que fan li joglar
Que viulan *per bell' entenda*
e chantan vers hautet et clar.
Adoncs voill *una chanson* far
Tal que *ma dompna* l'entenda.

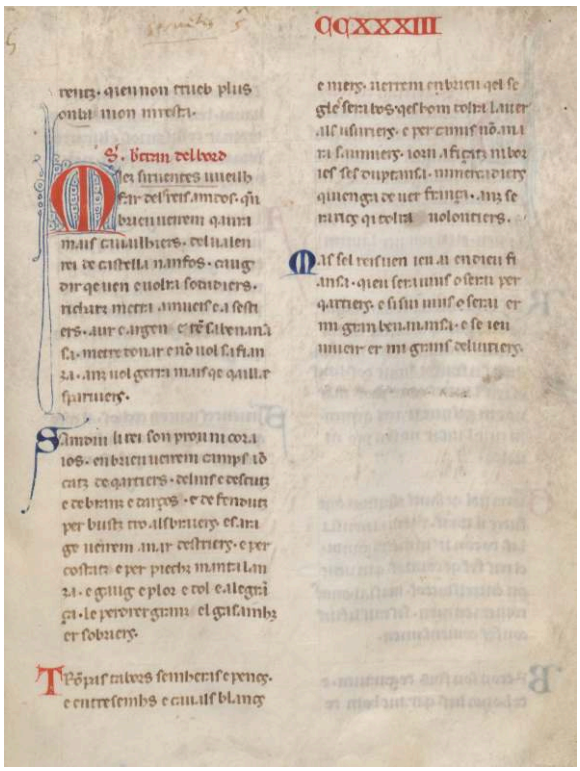
> When I see *lilies* yellow, violet and blue coming into *bud* throughout the orchards, the voice of the *birds* soothes me, and the melodies the minstrels sing as they go *agreeably playing their fiddles and singing their verses high and clear*; then I want to compose a *song for my lady* to hear.

23 With a few relatively easy substitutions a military scene can be transformed into one of courtship, a song of war can be turned into a love song. That this can be done is possible, I think, because Bertran had already imagined the converse operation, creating his song of war *from* a love song. The fusion of the themes of love and war is complete: knighthood *is* sexy, courtship *is* violent, and the sounds of the one merge seamlessly into those of the other.

24 The "half *sirventes*" may similarly disclose an erotic lining, beginning with the question: where is the other half? It is striking that in the only major *chansonnier* manuscript to transmit this text, known to scholars as *chansonnier M*, it is copied on a page which otherwise contains only just over a line of the preceding song, and most of which is left blank, as if to frame the absent, other half (see Fig. 1). Perhaps we should regard the song as the *sirventes* half of a *sirventes-canso*, a widely practiced hybrid genre combining

moral-political with amorous themes, from which Bertran simply suppressed the erotic half. Is it possible the compilers of *chansonnier M* left a space specifically to enable its restoration? As regards actually existing love songs, "Miei-sirventes" does not have the same form—and therefore cannot be thought to have the same melody—as any known instance, although as with "Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar" its meter presents clear parallels with other songs, and thus with other tunes.[19] Its form resembles that of Bertran's own "Can la novella flors par el vergan" (80.34) which, it has been suggested, imitates a love song by Guillem de Sant Leidier.[20]

Figure 1. Paris, BnF f. fr. 12474, fol. 233r., Bertran de Born, "Miei-sirventes vueilh far dels reis amdos" (80.25).[21]



25 Drawing together this part of my argument, then, I would say that in the case of both the examples discussed in this article, the text of Bertran's song insinuates a spectral double whose theme was erotic. This phantom other can most obviously be thought of as arising from the extant song. From another point of view, however, it could be understood as that song's original form. Each of the two versions, martial or courtly, is derivable from the other and morphs disquietingly back into it; and each version is silenced when the other is voiced.

Intimate revolt, voice and silence

26 Its resonance with the amorous *canso* makes the intimacy of revolt in Bertran's *sirventes* all the more audible. The songs, we have seen, evoke the simultaneity of love and mayhem, of desire and death, and distort one into the other. Sometimes their insistently male voice plays off, through formal imitation, against a female-voiced model, adding another layer of distortion. His songs are formally intricate, in meter and presumably also in melody, and thus symbolically contained. Yet because they are

conceived for the voice, there may be ways in which they nonetheless fray the edges of this symbolic containment. In their content, they share common ground with Kristeva's wager of loving and/as killing ("pari d'aimer-tuer") and evoke the fragility of the separation of life from death. When sung in a solo voice, they might further echo, beyond this symbolically contained logic, the inaugural life-or-death invasion by the air at the start of life, and the primal scream on the threshold of deathly silence.

27 We are accustomed to decorous performances of troubadour song. Imagine, however, a rock performance of Bertran's *sirventes*. The rough, angry pulse would suit their shift from love songs into songs of war or enmity, from female to male, while at the same time it would continue to press the erotic alongside violence and conflict. It would emphasize the oscillation of music and noise performed in his texts. It would still be codified and territorialized, but it might come closer to repeating a more visceral cry and its counterpart, the invasive silence of mortality, of the body in its life or death first breath.

28 Bertran de Born's songs are almost all transmitted without their melodies, the only one copied with notation being "Rassa, tan creis" (80.37, Gouiran, ed. cit., song 1). Several more can plausibly be attributed music thanks to the survival of contrafacta, or potential contrafacta, that are notated. The sound of their vocal performance is thus very difficult to reconstruct, even before we can speculate about its relation to the scream. But paradoxically, it is even harder to sense the counterpart of that cry, the deathly silence of the body, across the centuries that separate us from Bertran. Perhaps, rather than looking for it in imagined performances of the songs, we should focus instead on what we have to hand: the manuscript copies of Bertran's songs.

29 "Miei-sirventes" as copied in *M* can serve as an example (Fig. 1). Despite the absence of musical notation, the text appears on this page as both lively—jaunty even, with its bright rubrics and initials—and as patently contoured by the voice. Each stanza is demarcated from its fellows, and every line separated at the rhyme by a *punctus* or full stop. In these indications of the overall limits of the melody and the units of breathing that enable it to be sung, we can make out the potential sound of the singing voice, highlighted for us on the page. At the same time, fully half of the page is blank. Beyond and underneath the handwritten text and the grid of rulings that demarcate the page into zones, the parchment extends to the edges of the margins, through the intercolumn, and for much of the second column. Its surface is marked not only by the voiced song, but also, here and there, by the slender veins and the slight bruising that trace their way through the skin of the animal from which the parchment was made. Once part of a creature with a voice of its own, it is now dead and mute, passively ranged in its new environment of the book. This skin of the page acts, I would say, as the silent condition of the song's voicing in much the same way as silence provides the mute condition for the initial voice, the scream. If the Lacan passage quoted above is recast with the word "song" in the place of "scream" and "page" instead of "silence", we get the following:

> And yet what is palpable is that the *page* is no mere background to the *song*: rather the *song* is what seems literally to provoke the *page*. As its sound dissolves in that *page*, we feel that the *song* is its cause. It makes the *page* rise up, enables it to hold its pitch. It is the *song* that sustains the *page*, and not the other way around.[22]

Reformulation and wider implications

30 As the argument of this paper is somewhat dense and theoretical, I shall now briefly reformulate it as a single arc before looking at its wider implications.

1. Voice, which is the earliest psychic object, is "extimate" because it results from a traumatic invasion by an alien element, air, as the newborn struggles on the threshold of life.
2. Silence and the scream define this primitive object "voice" against which subsequent sounds will define themselves; they too are extimate, if to a less striking degree.
3. Hypothesis: *qua* vocal performance, song has the potential to mediate between this primitive, visceral voice (with its counterweight of deathly silence) and the more socially codified notions of music and noise.
4. In working the themes of love and war as a "wager of loving and/as killing", Bertran de Born can be seen to be pursuing an "intimate revolt", whose "logic of protest" is symbolic.
5. This intimate revolt in Bertran's songs has an important sonic dimension.
6. His songs resemble medieval *chansons de geste* where the audience has to imagine hearing both the sounds of strife (whether of battle or political wrangling) and the music of the song.
7. His songs also represent a variety of musical and nonmusical noises; they assimilate noise to music but also imagine, foment or celebrate conflict and thereby translate from music back to noise.
8. This noise/music coincides, in the songs, with the evocation of life-or-death situations.
9. Bertran's songs disguise, deform or supplant love songs.
10. We can imagine violently parodic or distorting performances of them that lead from music toward noise and, if not to the scream, at least towards it.
11. (cf. 3) The centrality of the voice to song has the potential to connect the song's sound to the primal traumatic voice of the scream.
12. The transmission of medieval songs in parchment codices may offer a way to figure silence as the condition and counterpart of this scream.

31 I hope that reformulating the outline of my argument in this way shows that its import is not limited to the case of Bertran de Born. In general, songs of war offer an opportunity to reflect on the relationship between musical sounds and those other sounds that might be thought of as noise, and to hear them interact and even merge. This is in large part because these songs, however musically and metrically codified they may be, are nonetheless framed by life-and-death struggles which, in the case of Bertran de Born, fuse together erotic love and lethal violence. Eros and aggression, music and noise, are alike mediated by a solo, first-person voice. Thanks to the voice, these sounds which meet in song can exceed these symbolic categories of music and noise to evoke the scream and its counterpart of silence. I happen to work on the troubadours, but songs of war from any period could lend themselves to being analyzed in similar terms.

Appendix

32 **Bertran de Born, "Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar" (PC 80.35), ed. Gouiran, song 24**[23]

I		Cant vei pels vergiers desplegar
		Los cendatz grocs, indis e blaus,
		M'adousa la votz dels cavaus
		E·l sonet que fan li joglar
	5	Que viulon de trap en tenda,
		Trombas e corn e graile clar.
		Adoncs voill un sirventes far
		Tal que·l coms Richartz l'entenda.
II		Ab lo rei mi voill acordar
	10	D'Aragon, e tornar en paus.
		Mas trop fon descausitz e braus
		can venc sai sus per osteiar;
		Per q'es dregs qu'eu lo.l reprenda.
		Eu o dic per lui castiar
	15	E peza·m si·l vei folleiar,
		E voill qe de mi aprenda.
III		A mi·l volon tuich encusar,
		C'us me comdet de sos vassaus
		Qe de Castellot ac mal laus
	20	Qan ne fes n'Espangnol gitar.
		E no·m par que ai defenda
		Ves el, si el n'auza proar;
		E quant intret per covidar,
		Conquerri lai pauc de renda.
IV	25	Oi mais no li puosc ren celar,
		Anz li serai amics coraus:
		Gastons, cui es Bearns e Paus,
		Mi trames sai novas comdar,
		Que de sos pres pres esmenda
	30	Del rei, qe·ls i degra liurar,
		E volc en mais l'aver portar
		Que hom totz sos pres li renda.
V		Que so m'an dich de lui joglar,
		Q'en perdon an fags totz lur laus ;
	35	S'anc lur det vestirs vertz ni blaus
		Ni lor fetz nuill denier donar,
		Lag l'es c'om l'en sobreprenda
		Que d'un sol s'en saup ben pagar,
		D'Artuzet, don fai a blasmar,
	40	Q'en mes als Juzieus en venda.
VI		Peire Joglar saup mal pagar
		Qe·l prestet deniers e cavaus,
		Que la vella, que Fons-Ebraus
		Atent lo fetz tot pesseiar;
	45	c'anc l'entreseings fags ab benda
		De la jupa del rei d'armar
		Que·l baillet, no li puoc guizar
		C'om ab coutels tot no·l fenda.
VII		Peire Rois saup divinar
	50	Al prim que·l vi joves reiaus,
		Que no seria arditz ni maus;
		E conoc o al badaillar:
		Reis que badaill ni s'estenda

33 **Translation**

I. When I see banners yellow, violet and blue unfurled among the orchards, the voice of horses soothes me, and the melodies the minstrels make as they go fiddling from tent to tent, and the trumpets and horns and clarions clear; then I want to compose a *sirventes* for Count Richard to hear.

II. I would like to make a truce with the King of Aragon, and return to peace, but he was too coarse and rude when he came up here to make war, and so it is fair that I should scold him. I say so to admonish him, for I do not like to see him making a fool of himself, and I hope he will learn from me.

III. Everyone is accusing him to me, for one of his vassals told me that he used bad judgment about Chastellot, when he had Sir Spaniard tossed out. It seems to me that he cannot defend himself if Sir Spaniard dares to challenge him for it, and when he entered there by invitation he did not get much.

IV. From now on I'll be a loyal friend to him; I can hide nothing: Gaston of Béarn and Pau sent to tell me the news that he got money from the king to ransom his men who had been taken prisoner; yet he preferred to make off with the loot rather than get them all back.

V. And the minstrels told me they composed all his praises in vain; if ever he gave them clothes, green and blue, or had them awarded a single penny, he hated to get caught at it. He managed to get paid back well by one minstrel alone, namely Artuset, and he deserves to be blamed for it, for he put him up for sale to the Jews.

VI. He knew how to shortchange Peire the minstrel, who lent him money and horses, since the old woman who runs Fontevrault had him cut all to pieces – even the badge that the king of arms gave him, made with a band from his jerkin, couldn't keep him from getting hacked up with knives.

VII. When Pedro Ruiz was a young prince, he could guess, as soon as he saw Alphonso, that he would not be courageous or bold – and he knew it by his yawn; a king who yawns and stretches when he hears talk of battle probably does so either from cowardice or because he is not interested in arms.

VIII. I forgive him if he caused the Catalans and the men of Lara to do me wrong. Since the lord of Poitou forced hum, he did not dare to do otherwise, and a king who expects par from a lord must earn it the hard way. He came here for the sake of gain, and for no other purpose.

IX. I want the king to know and learn my *sirventes* at his pleasure, and have it sung to the king of Navarre, and spread throughout Castile.

34 **"Miei-sirventes" (PC 80.25), ed. Gouiran, song 32**[24]

I		Miei-sirventes vueilh far dels reis amdos,
		Q'en brieu veirem q'aura mais cavailhiers
		Del valen rei de Castella, n'Anfos,
		C'aug dir qe ven e volra sodadiers ;
	5	Richarz metra a mueis e a sestiers
		Aur e argen, e ten s'a benanansa
		Metr' e donar, e non vol s'afiansa,
		Anz vol gerra mais qe qailla esparviers.
II		S'amdui li rei son prou ni corajos,
	10	En brieu veirem camps joncatz de qartiers
		D'elms e d'escutz e de branz e d'arços
		E de fendutz per bustz tro als braiers;
		Es arage veirem anar destriers,
		E per costatz e per peichz manta lanza,
	15	E gaug e plor e dol e alegrança.
		Le perdr'er granz e·l gasainhz er sobriers.
III		Trompas, tabors, seinheras e penos
		E entreseinhs e cavals blancs e niers
		Veirem en brieu, qe·l segles sera bos,
	20	Qes hom tolra l'aver als usuriers,
		E per camis non anara saumiers
		Jorn afiçatz ni borjes ses duptansa,
		Ni mercadiers qi venga deves França;
		Anz sera rics qi tolra volontiers.
IV	25	Mas se·l reis ven, ieu ai en Dieu fiansa
		Q'ieu serai vius o serai per qartiers.
V		E si sui vius, er mi grans benanansa,
		E se ieu mueir, er mi grans deliuriers.

35 **Translation**

I. I think I'll make just a half sirventes about the two kings – for soon we shall see that there will be more knights of the valiant king of Castile, Sir Alphonso, who is coming, I hear, and will want mercenaries; Richard will spend gold and silver by hogsheads and bushels, thinking it happiness to spend and give, and he doesn't Alphonso's treaty. He wants war more than a hawk wants quail.

II. If both kings are noble and courageous, we shall soon see fields strewn with pieces of helmet and shield and swords and saddlebows and men split through their trunks down to their breech; we shall see horses running wild, and many a lance through sides and chests, and joy and tears and grief and rejoicing.

III. Trumpets, drums, standards, and pennons and ensigns and horses white and black we soon shall see, and the world will be good. We'll take the usurers' money, and never a mule-driver will travel the roads in safety, nor a burgher without fear, nor a merchant coming from France, he who gladly takes will be rich.

IV. But if the king comes, I trust in God I'll be alive or else in pieces;

V. And if I am alive it will be, for me, great happiness, and if I die it will be great deliverance.

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NOTES

1. ATTALI Jacques, *Bruits, Essai sur l’économie politique de la musique*, 2nd ed., Paris, Fayard/Puf, 2001, is the foundational study here. I have been especially helped by WILSON Scott, “Amusia, noise and the drive. Towards a theory of the audio unconscious”, GODDARD Michael, HALLIGAN Benjamin, and HEGARTY Paul (eds.), *Reverberations. The Philosophy, Aesthetics and Politics of Noise*, London, Continuum, 2012, pp. 26-39. This chapter is reprinted with minor changes in WILSON Scott, *Stop Making Sense: Music from the Perspective of the Rea*l, London, CRC Press, 2015.

2. LACAN Jacques, *Le Séminaire livre X, L'Angoisse [1962-1963]*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, Paris, Seuil, 2004, p. 378: « Arrêtez-vous alors à considérer cette chose incroyable – l'étrangeté de ce saut par quoi des êtres vivants sont sortis de leur milieu primitif, et sont passés à l'air... C'est ce qu'on a appelé le trauma ... le trauma de la naissance, qui n'est pas séparation d'avec la mère, mais aspiration en soi d'un milieu foncièrement Autre » (my translation).

3. LACAN Jacques, *Le Séminaire livre* XII [1964-1965], *Problèmes cruciaux pour la psychanalyse*, séance of 7 March, unedited; consulted in transcript online at http://gaogoa.free.fr/SeminaireS.htm: « Qu'est-ce que c'est que ce cri ? Qui l'entendrait, ce cri que nous n'entendons pas, sinon justement qu'il impose ce règne du silence ... Il semble là que ce silence soit en quelque sorte le corrélatif qui distingue dans sa présence ce cri de tout autre modulation imaginable, et pourtant, ce qui est sensible, c'est que le silence n'est pas le fond du cri ... littéralement le cri semble provoquer le silence et, s'y abolissant, il est sensible qu'il le cause. Il le fait surgir, il lui permet de tenir la note. C'est le cri qui le soutient et non le silence le cri » (my translation).

4. GOUIRAN Gérard, *L'Amour et la guere. L'Œuvre poétique de Bertrand de Born*, Aix and Marseille, Université de Provence and Lafitte, 1985. I have also consulted PADEN William D., SANKOVITCH, Tilde, and STÄBLEIN, Patricia, *The poems of the troubadour Bertran de Born*, Berkeley CA, University of California Press, 1986.

5. SUNDERLAND Luke, "The Art of Revolt: Rebellion in the Works of Bertran de Born and Julia Kristeva", *Comparative Literature*, 2010, vol. 62, no. 1, pp. 22-40.

6. KRISTEVA Julia, *Sens et non-sens de la révolte*, Paris, Fayard, 1996, p. 78: « Assumer l'échec, relever la tête, ouvrir de nouvelles voies—éternel déplacement, salubre métonymie : et toujours en s'écartant du foyer natal, indéfiniment refaire avec de nouveaux objets et des signes insolites ce pari d'aimer-tuer qui nous rend autonomes, coupables et pensants » (my translation, which differs in some respects from the one provided by SUNDERLAND, art. cit., p. 26).

7. The sonorousness of Bertran's songs has to my knowledge only been explored (in French) in a few pages of FRITZ Jean-Marie, *La Cloche et la lyre. Pour une poétique médiévale du paysage sonore*, Geneva, Droz, 2011, pp. 125-130, and (in Spanish) in a long and densely argued essay by RUIZ-DOMÈNEC José Enrique, "El sonido de la batalla en Bertran de Born", *Medievalia*, vol. 2, 1981, pp. 77-109.

8. GOUIRAN, ed. cit., I, pp. 447-449; PADEN *et al.*, ed. cit., pp. 266-267.

9. See PADEN William D., "De l'identité historique de Bertran de Born", *Romania,* 101, 1980, pp. 192-224.

10. GOUIRAN, ed. cit., II, 650; PADEN *et al.,* 396. ASPERTI Stefano, "Miei-sirventes vueilh far dels reis amdos (BdT 80,25)", *Cultura neolatina*, vol. 58, 1998, pp. 165-323, thinks that this song is not Bertran de Born's but dates from a whole century later. Its date and authorship are not crucial to my argument here. The "Miei-sirventes" is important to the arguments of the articles cited by SUNDERLAND, pp. 32-33 and RUIZ-DOMÈNEC, pp. 89-92).

11. Bertran himself refers to the *geste* in one of his songs, "Non puosc mudar mon chantar non esparga" (80.29): "E·nz encontrem a millers e a cen / si c'apres nos en chant hom puois la gesta" (Now let us assemble by the hundreds and the thousands, so that afterwards people will sing of our deeds/sing a *chanson de geste* about us; GOUIRAN, ed. cit., song 28, lines 7-8). Bertran also compares the situations he encounters with those featuring various well-known heroes of these *chansons de geste*, including Aigar, Guerri le Sor, Ogier le Danois and Roland. For details, see the list of proper names in GOUIRAN, ed. cit., II, pp. 857-871 and PADEN *et al.*, ed. cit., pp. 37-42.

12. The poetic self-consciousness that results from these reminiscences of other genres is another means by which this logic is located in the symbolic. In the same vein, RUIZ-DOMÈNEC, art. cit., evokes the troubadour's capacity to sacralize and ritualize the violence of battle in his songs.

13. PADEN *et al.* in their edition write, "Conflict between Richard and Alfonso takes a downward turn in 1190 when Richard gives Gascony—which Henry II had given his daughter Eleanor when

she married Alfonso—to his intended bride Berengaria of Navarre, thereby also outraging the French since Richard was supposedly betrothed to Alice of France", p. 396.

14. SUNDERLAND, art. cit., pp. 32-33.

15. In addition to the works already cited in this article, see ASPERTI Stefano, "L'eredità lirica di Bertran de Born", *Cultura neolatina*, vol. 64, 2004, pp. 475-525.

16. Bertran's song has the form 8a 8b 8b 8a 7'c 8a 8a 7'c (classified by FRANK István, *Répertoire métrique de la poésie des troubadours*, Paris, Champion, 1957, as schema 539.2). Frank cites no immediate equivalents, but this rhyme scheme is closely related to his schema 624, abbacddc, which found with the same line lengths in both in La Comtessa de Dia, "Estat ai en greu consirier" (46.4), and in another, anonymous song whose incipit is lost (461.252), on which see RIEGER Angelica, *Trobairitz: Der Beitrag der Frau in der altokzitanischen höfischen Lyrik. Edition des Gesamtkorpus*, *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 233, Tübingen, M. Niemeyer, 1991, pp. 94-98. The same versifications is also found in Pons de Capduel, "Ma domna.m ditz qu'eu fatz orgoil" (375.15).

17. "D'un sirventes no·m cal far loignor ganda" (GOUIRAN, ed. cit., song 11) is said to be set to the tune of the debate between Giraut de Borneil and Lady Alamanda, "S'ie·us quier conseill, bel' amig' Alamanda" (242.69).

18. My thanks to one of the anonymous readers of this article for suggesting these references.

19. In FRANK, op. cit., the *miei-sirventes* is classed as schema 325.01. This schema is closely related to Frank 382.5 – 382.53 (all of which have the same line length as the *miei-sirventes*, but with the rhyme scheme ababccdd and the feminine rhymes differently distributed); or to Frank 407.1 – 407.8 (also in decasyllables, but with rhymes ababcdcd, and again the feminine rhymes placed differently). Among the songs that share Frank's schema's 382 and 407 are several others by Bertran de Born, who clearly favored 8-line decasyllabic stanzas: see GOUIRAN, ed. cit., I, cxliv-clxv, for an exhaustive overview of the troubadour's versification.

20. GOUIRAN, ed. cit., song 21 (80.34), Frank 382.7; cf. Guillem de Sant Leidier, "Aissi com es bela cil de cui chan" (234.3), Frank 382.11; see GOUIRAN, ed. cit., I, cvl, for details. Note that both these two songs are catalogued by Frank under 382, mentioned in the previous footnote.

21. See https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b6000427q/f489.image.

22. Compare the passage from *Le Séminaire livre* XII quoted on note 3.

23. GOUIRAN, ed. cit., I, 475ff.; translation mine but drawing extensively on the one provided by PADEN *et al.*, 274ff.

24. GOUIRAN, ed. cit., II, p. 652. Translation mine, but drawing extensively on the one provided by PADEN *et al*, ed. cit., 398f.

ABSTRACTS

The *sirventes* or political songs composed by the troubadour Bertran de Born in the second half of the twelfth century in order to foment strife among the political leaders of his day provide the springboard for an enquiry into the relationship between "music" and "noise" undertaken in the light of psychoanalytic theory. Jacque Lacan's concept of "voice" situates both "noise" and "music" in relation to the traumatic scream and silence of a newborn baby. Bertran's explicit themes of love and war may seem more responsive to the notion of "intimate revolt" put forward by Julia Kristeva, which would locate them at some distance from this originary trauma, and yet

the sonic dimension of the troubadour's songs mediates between noise and music in such a way as to threaten the opposition with collapse, while the superimposition of love and war and the threat of death make it possible to envisage performances of these songs in which the singing voice might also evoke the primary, traumatic experiences of silence and the scream

Les *sirventes* ou chansons politiques composés par le troubadour Bertran de Born dans la seconde moitié du 12e siècle pour fomenter la guerre entre les grands de son époque, servent ici de tremplin à une enquête sur le rapport entre « musique » et « bruit » menée à la lumière de théories psychanalytiques. Le concept de la voix formulé par Jacques Lacan situe « bruit » et « musique » en rapport avec le cri et le silence traumatiques de l'enfant naissant. Si les motifs de l'amour et la guerre chez Bertran répondent plutôt à la notion de « révolte intime » proposée par Julia Kristeva, ce qui les situerait dans un contexte symbolique bien loin de ce trauma originel, il n'en reste pas moins que la dimension sonore des chansons de ce troubadour révèle une médiation entre bruit et musique capable de confondre les deux termes, alors que la superposition de l'amour et de la mort, et la menace d'anéantissement, permettent d'en envisager des réalisations où la voix chantante évoquerait aussi le cri et le silence traumatiques primaires.

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Mots-clés: voix, cris, silence, Lacan, troubadours, guerre, performance
Keywords: voice, scream, silence, Lacan, troubadours, war, performance

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Making Home, Making Sense: Aural Experiences of Warsaw and East Galician Jews in Subterranean Shelters during the Holocaust

Créer un chez-soi, créer du sens : expériences d'écoute de Juifs de Varsovie et de Galicie orientale dans des abris souterrains pendant l'Holocauste

Nikita Hock

Introduction and state of research

Introduction

Following the dissolution of most ghettos in 1942, many Jews of Central and Eastern Europe—those who had managed to evade deportation and death—went into hiding. Carving out temporary and long-term spaces in the existing topography of towns, villages and their surroundings, they created precarious life-worlds beyond German control. In these last-ditch attempts to survive by eluding surveillance regimes of both Germans and locals, some Jews literally went underground. From wooden boxes buried in a Ukrainian farmer's barn to bunkers connected to tunnel systems under the rubble of the destroyed Warsaw ghetto, these parallel spaces became settings for a reconfigured daily life. Experiencing the often harsh conditions underground for weeks, months and even years gave the inhabitants time to document and reflect on their situation. This essay examines diaries written at the time in those underground hideouts. In doing so, it contrasts the depictions and interpretation of sounds in diaries written in rural and urban environments, mainly focusing on journals kept underground in and around Warsaw and in the rural region of East Galicia, which nowadays spans the Southeast of Poland and Western Ukraine.

Aural history of the Holocaust

This study is an examination of the historical realities of this experience of Jews by means of sound. It is thus situated within the broader realm of what has been variously termed aural history, or sound history.[1] Engaging a wide range of textual, graphical, architectural and other sources, this relatively recent area of inquiry approaches the varieties of sound, sound production and listening in the past. Whether taking as their starting point village bells in rural France or the noise of early-20th-century New York, studies of this genre are informed by the notion that examining sound can yield fundamental insights into wider structures of sensation, emotion, knowledge and social attitudes.[2]

The aural history of the Holocaust, as a field, is at its very beginnings. The use of public sound in the Third Reich and its ideological context are the subject of Carolyn Birdsall's *Nazi Soundscapes.*[3] Presenting case studies for German cities, she examines how radio, loudspeakers and rally cries functioned to engage the German populace and shaped the experience of public urban spaces in the Third Reich. Several recent studies touch on the transformation of the aural environment in selected European cities during and in the immediate aftermath of German occupation.[4] However, with the notable exception of studies on music,[5] such examinations have yet to tackle in-depth the experience, production and making-sense of sound by Jews facing persecution during World War II. [6] As a first foray, Christian Gerlach has recently provided an examination of sound recollections in early postwar statements by Holocaust survivors.[7]

History of Jewish hiding practices

In choosing Jewish hiding places as the setting to which to apply this approach, this essay contributes to what Gunnar S. Paulsson in 2001 diagnosed as the "unexplored continent of Holocaust historiography".[8] Invoking what influential Holocaust scholar Raul Hilberg has proposed as categories of responses by victims—resistance, alleviation, evasion, paralysis and compliance—Paulsson pointed to the lack of scholarship on the phenomenon of evasion, namely Jewish escape and survival in hiding. While several subsequent publications, including in part Paulsson's own work,[9] have begun to fill this gap, for the area of what before the war was Polish territory, this diagnosis can be said to still largely hold true.

Of the hiding places of Jews in the General Government, those in Warsaw have been addressed the most. Already during the war, Jewish historian Emanuel Ringelblum in his writings touched on hiding places that provided shelter from murderous violence and deportations, both in the ghetto and those on the so-called "Aryan side" beyond the ghetto wall.[10] Subsequent historical scholarship concentrated on the building of 'bunkers', at times elaborate hiding places in which groups of people would hide during the Warsaw ghetto uprising and after its failure.[11] The hiding practices of Jews outside the Warsaw ghetto are partly addressed in studies on their survival in the city.[12] Daily life in hiding in the countryside, small towns and rural areas of the German zone of occupation remains less analysed.[13] A growing amount of literature on the Holocaust in rural Poland deals with Jewish survival and hiding as a phenomenon of social history, mostly from the vantage point of Jewish-Polish relations, on which it relied and which it affected.[14]

Sources and approach

Sources

This essay brings these two strands together, introducing the subject of Jewish hiding practices to the field of sound history. As its source base, it takes nineteen published and archival diaries written by Jews in underground bunkers, earthen dugouts and cellars under urban centres and rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe during World War II. A majority of the archival documents have not yet been accessed in Holocaust scholarship. Six of these diaries were written by Jews in various subterranean hiding places in Warsaw, both within and outside the ghetto walls. The other diaries come to us from rural and small-town areas: two from towns near Warsaw and Kraków, and eleven from a cluster of underground hiding places in towns of the predominantly rural region of Eastern Galicia, nowadays western Ukraine. Due to markedly more complex conditions, this short examination excludes diaries from well-constructed, semi-submerged shelters (*ziemianki*), often by partisans, in forests.[15] Written in notebooks and on loose scraps of paper, these manuscripts range in length from several to four hundred pages. The gender distribution of the authors skews towards female, with twelve of the diaries written by women. Most were adults at the beginning of their diaries, and through their use of references and self-descriptions can be said to have come from an educated background. The diaries are composed in Polish, Yiddish and German. Quotes from archival material in Polish and German are provided in our own translation, with the original sound representation in the text provided where necessary.[16]

Approach

Examining these accounts with an ear to sound is a rich area of research. This is not least due to the fact that the aural dimension, by necessity, crucially influences important facets of life in hiding: the need to control one's own sound production so as not to be discovered, as well as the almost constant emotional and mental engagement with the sounds outside. As a preliminary examination, this essay takes up two aspects of this still under-researched area of study.

Firstly, it highlights how the varying ability of sound to travel between the inside and the outside of the shelters impacted the daily life of Jews hiding underground. If, in the converted basements of a besieged Warsaw or a town in East Galicia, the relatively open architecture forced silence and immobility, the conditions in more insulated bunkers and rural dugouts permitted activities such as singing, talking, cooking and tending to basic hygiene. Most underground shelters fell somewhere in between these two extremes, with different areas of the shelter exposed in various ways. Here, the concepts of "aural architecture" from cultural acoustics and "perforation" from musicology are employed to describe how the built environment of underground hideouts affected the sounds that entered or exited them, limiting or allowing certain day-to-day practices.

Secondly, this essay argues that the specifics of aural experiences in underground shelters contributed to how those in hiding related to the events unfolding outside, and

how they framed their own state of being hidden. For the authors, aural experiences served as triggers and clues for imaginatory constructions of the war-time daily life outside of the shelter. Relating their own hiding to this inferred everyday, they use imagery that stresses the protective function or the socially excluding effects of the underground shelter. The experiences of sound that engendered such framings were shaped by the specific acoustic conditions in the architecturally varying subterranean hideouts. Attention to these conditions helps explain the diarists' highlighting the protective function or the socially excluding effects of their surroundings. The affordances of sound that play a role here are a topic into which human geographers and sound-studies scholars have provided some insight. The essay draws on their work describing the interrelationships between place, sound and notions of presence.

If this survey is a first examination of Jewish hiding practices by way of sound, the approach taken in doing so contributes to filling a gap in the aural history of war and violence. Reflecting on recent studies in this field, Jim Sykes has called for examining sonic life-worlds beyond immediately violent situations and combatant actors.[17] The aural conditions in Jewish underground shelters here serve as an entry point to the wartime practices of a broad range of non-combatants, including women and children. Examining how they experienced and interpreted their aural conditions additionally shifts the focus beyond reactions to acute violence, to attitudes and meanings regarding daily life—both experienced in hiding on the inside and constructed, by way of sonic experience, about the war- and even peace-time outside. The approach taken in this essay thus permits a more complete understanding of the "experience of enduring the entire war".[18]

Inhabiting perforated space

In Warsaw, the mass construction of hideouts began after the German *Grossaktion* or "great action", the partial liquidation of the ghetto that began in July 1942. In several deportation waves over a period of two months, 250,000–300,000, or approximately half of the ghetto's Jews, were sent to the extermination camp in Treblinka.[19] The architecture of Warsaw tenements had made this task easy for the Germans: they were able to block the exits from the house, check the floors and remove resisting people from the apartments.[20] Following this experience, ghetto inhabitants turned to the construction of longer-term hiding places. In the main ghetto area, underground constructions made use of the debris of buildings destroyed in the 1939 fighting.[21] In the so-called "small ghetto", hideouts were also built under apartments occupied by non-Jewish Poles after the deportations, masked as renovations.[22] These hideouts ended up providing shelter during the time of the second large deportation action and the armed fighting in the ghetto that followed in January 1943.[23]

Those going into hiding underground modified already existing infrastructure. Hiding places below ground—the largest built for several hundred people—were created by adapting the cellars, basements and sewers of the densely-built brick tenement buildings, and camouflaging the entries. By April 1943, the ghetto already had an entire system of several hundred underground hideouts, located beneath about 450 buildings.[24] They were most prominently used by fighting groups during the Jewish uprising in the Warsaw ghetto in April–May 1943.[25] The construction of civilian hideouts continued

after the ghetto uprising, and underground hiding places made from rubble or converted basements with additional walls provided shelter for surviving Jews.[26]

While underground hiding relied on already existing structures in the Warsaw tenement cityscape, it did so to varying degrees. Little-modified architectural features created significant acoustic exposure for the diarists. This is especially notable in a rare surviving diary written in hiding during the first days of the Warsaw ghetto uprising.[27] In it, an anonymous woman, writing in a barricaded cellar on Miła street under the burning ghetto, describes the existential importance of silence and control over movement in such a hideout. In a refrain that repeats three times over the ten surviving pages, she notes that when the enemy is outside their shelter, "Our defence is the greatest possible stillness".[28] To leverage this defence, the bunker inhabitants adopt an upside-down routine common for exposed underground hiding: they sleep by day and are active by night, so that the noise does not reveal the existence of the bunker to the German search parties.[29] This is a pattern found among several of the more exposed hideouts.[30]

In the towns and villages of Eastern Galicia, the widespread building or finding of hideouts emerged after a major wave of gathering, deportation and murder in the fall of 1942. Only a small number of Jews, predominantly young and without family ties, had managed to spontaneously escape the German military advance to the Soviet Union.[31] Similarly, only a minority of Jews in the region were able to survive by posing as "Aryans" in cities.[32]

The majority of Jews in these rural areas survived in hiding places.[33] Several factors determined the choice of going into hiding. In the generally little-urbanized Poland of the time, cities stood out in a landscape dominated by fields and forests.[34] While such a proximity to dense woods encouraged organised Jewish fighting groups to prioritize moving there,[35] this was not the case for individual Jews or families. For many, the forests—unfamiliar, exposed in the cold seasons to harsh weather conditions, and with precarious supply possibilities—were a last resort.[36] Some of those who managed to evade or escape deportation even opted to go back to the urban environment, as was the case with several Jews who returned to the Warsaw ghetto.[37] To do otherwise required extreme caution: having escaped during a deportation to the death camp in Treblinka, diarist Herschel Wulkier headed on foot to his former family town of Łosice to the East of Warsaw, and joined a group of Jews, writing in his diary, "We avoided the villages and crossed fields and forests all through that night. [...] I feel secure when it is dark".[38]

In such conditions, being able to secure the goodwill of helpers, or possessing enough money to pay for food and assistance, became paramount.[39] Thus, for example, Galician diarist Marceli Najder attributes his delayed escape to a hiding place to the great risks of being betrayed or caught and delivered to German authorities, as well as a lack of resources: "I did not know anyone I could trust, with whom I could hide... I [also] did not have any money to count on being able to pay for a hiding place, food, or being smuggled into Romania."[40] Jews who decided to go into hiding tried approaching their Polish and Ukrainian acquaintances for shelters in attics, barns and cellars. At times, what began as an improvised disappearance for the duration of the German *Aktionen* turned into long-term shelter for weeks and even months. "I entered my [acquainted] peasant's house, my heart pounding. He greeted me most pleasantly and told me that he wasn't sure about 'forever', but for the meantime I could remain with him," notes

Wulkier. He would end up staying for four weeks.[41] Several of the examined rural or small-town diaries document stays lasting close to a year, while twelve-year-old Molly Applebaum endured staying in and out of several improvised wooden boxes under a barn for almost two years.[42]

Exposed spaces

For those Jews who did not have the skills, opportunity, money or available goodwill of helpers to build elaborate constructions, underground refuges were limited to basements and cellars as they found them. Such was the case for diarist Dina Rathauserowa, who hid in a cellar in the Eastern Galician village of Peczeniżyn. In the very first entry, her diary is interrupted mid-thought. It resumes with an entry dated the next day: "I stopped writing yesterday, because soldiers were marching on the road".[43] Similarly, as Christmas approaches and villagers begin their holiday preparations, the countryside bustles with activity and traffic, well audible from the cellar.[44] After fifteen-year-old Leo Silberman loses his family in one of the bunkers in Przemyśl, he hides in a cellar behind a heap of tin trash and a kitchen stove. From here, he can clearly hear the conversations of the local inhabitants—and finds out that they can hear him: "Stasiu, give me a flashlight, someone is snoring under the stairs."[45] What saves Leo is the lack of a working battery.

Such depictions illustrate the vulnerability and exposure of Jews resorting to pre-existing structures in improvised subterranean spaces. The acoustic transparency of non-fortified basements put the diarists in direct contact with the outside world, thereby necessitating certain bodily practices to avoid detection by Germans or neighbours. Rathauserowa can only speak to her 14-year-old cohabitant in a hushed voice, a difficult prospect in their emotionally tolling conditions: "Igo is so scared that he barely knows to talk in a whisper".[46] The open architecture of the cellar forces her and Igo to stay on their straw mattresses for most of the day.[47] Similarly, in his basement in Przemyśl, where local people come to shelter from air raids, Leo has to walk "barefoot so that nobody can hear me".[48]

At the perforations

Diaries that were kept in such little-adapted bunkers and cellars, and which have survived to today, are comparatively rare. Less camouflaged and soundproof hideouts were not as suited for long-term hiding, and did not provide uninterrupted time favourable for keeping a diary.[49] Most surviving diaries come from more insulated constructions. In Warsaw, these are the fortified underground "bunkers" that could house entire families and fighting groups. Building such solid shelters even included the systematic construction of communication lines, piercing walls between cellars, and sometimes creating underground routes utilising canalisation.[50] In rural Galicia, we find dugouts in the ground, located in or behind barns, or behind side walls of cellars. These dugouts were engineered to varying degrees, and could range from primitive earthen dugouts to entire subterranean rooms supported with pit props and equipped with kitchens and latrines.

For the needs of daily life and survival inside them, even these hiding places could not be entirely insulated and impermeable. In the bunkers inhabited by Jews for the ghetto uprising and during and after the Warsaw Uprising, which at times housed and

sustained dozens of people, we find partitions leading to nearby bunkers. On the "Aryan side", Stella Fidelseid informs us of a hiding place made of two chambers connected by a narrow corridor.[51] Writing in a converted basement under the ghetto, female diarist Maryłka is terrified when a directly adjacent basement hideout falls silent and does not respond to knocks.[52] Leading to the outside, there could be several camouflaged entries, as well as slits for light.[53] In the case of the well-fortified bunker that housed a diarist under Miła street, the diary includes a sketch marking a dedicated spying hole called *judasz*.[54] Well-equipped bunkers with kitchens also had to manage smoke, and diaries mention constructed chimneys.[55]

The hiding conditions in rural Galicia presented a different set of problems. While inhabitants of bunkers in the Warsaw ghetto or the "Aryan side" could utilise the chaos and destruction of the ghetto and Warsaw uprisings to venture out for provisions,[56] people hiding in less dense, rural areas would be more easily detected if they left their hideout. They were therefore almost entirely dependent on the help of outside caretakers for food, hygienic needs and information, and the hideouts relied on doorways and entries connecting them to the barns and houses of their hosts.[57] Thus, diarist Marceli Najder's Galician hideout connected to a cellar contiguous to the house of their helpers, the Śliwiaks. Clara Kramer, hiding with her family north of Lwów, was able to exit through the floorboards directly to a room in the house of the ethnic German Beck family hiding her. Molly Applebaum's and Grete Holländer's underground hideouts exited to barns located apart from the houses of their helpers. Additionally, the more insulated the subterranean hiding places, the more of a problem air circulation became. When the soil around Grete Holländer's cramped hiding place under a barn near Czortków is wet, the air around the three inhabitants becomes so deprived of oxygen that the candle has trouble burning.[58] Diaries feature complaints about the air underground becoming so stuffy that severe headaches and nausea ensue and sleep is impossible.[59] Those in hiding therefore had to arrange air ventilation shafts, either to a nearby cellar or to the surface.

Such apertures played an important role in the acoustic ecology of the dugouts. In his earthen bunker, even a small ventilation opening "the size of a chicken egg" from an adjacent tunnel leads M. Landsberg to note that this improved the audibility of the outside.[60] The shaft in Grete Holländer's dugout lets her hear the animals in the barn above.[61] The acoustic properties that doors and spy-holes bring with them at times play a role in more dramatic experiences. When, during an *Aktion* in the Eastern Galician town of Mikulińce, Miriam Guensberg's overcrowded hiding place runs out of air, the decision is made to open a partition to a second part of the dugout:

> All of us, especially the children, began to choke, so that we risked opening the small doors [*drzwiczki*] to the first shelter. Everyone greedily gasped for that bit of fresh air, but not for long, because the voices of the Germans from above reached us and we had to close the doors again. And this repeated hundreds of times, throughout whole day.[62]

All these camouflaged slits, doors, entries and air shafts create apertures in the insulating material of the subterranean space. They form what Benjamin Piekut and Jason Stanyek, in a noted essay linking musicology and sound studies, call *perforation*:

> Blockages can interrupt flows [of sound], or flows can traverse obstacles through certain well-defined openings, which we call *perforations*. A perforation controls and focuses flows between two spaces, but maintains separation between them.[63]

Perforations allow underground hiding places to remain semi-insulated from, but also semi-connected to, the outside environment. Whether consciously designed for that purpose or not, they regulate and channel the flow of sound between the inside and the outside. As openings in the insulating bunker space, they structure the acoustic ecology of the underground hideouts by distributing where sounds of the outside can be perceived.

Such perforations also shape the sounds in the bunker in a less direct manner, by opening the space to animals. While Holländer's three air openings let in only frogs,[64] others in hiding have to deal with rodents. Landsberg's egg-sized opening to the cellar is large enough to let in mice.[65] Leo Silberman's sleep is accompanied by the sound of cellar rats.[66] The sound of rats plagues Dawid Fogelman in his underground hiding space, writing that they "will not let me sleep at night".[67] In rural Galicia, while less intrusive, Holländer mentions the sounds of a goat, and Marceli Najder hears pigs.[68]

These openings convey outside sounds into the bunkers and dugouts, and their inhabitants, in turn, structure their activities in relation to these perforations. In the Warsaw bunker on Miła street, a daytime "watch" lays beside the camouflaged spy-hole, surveilling the outside not with the eyes but with the ears.[69] In several bunkers under embattled Warsaw, taking turns at these listening posts becomes a daily routine. [70] In the stuffy and often hot underground dugouts in East Galicia, people gather at the air shafts. They keep the listening post company, "air the lungs", write in silence, or escape the snoring cohabitants.[71] Especially in populated bunkers, these areas become places of community. People lie and talk with each other in hushed tones, leading some to question the efficiency of a guard "because in the changing [of guard], it is easy to knock against something, shuffle feet, or start talking to one's companion".[72] The "well-defined openings" in the walls and ceilings thus themselves become spots of communal activity, of low talking and silent co-presence.

Apart from perforations

In dugouts and larger bunkers with several areas, being apart from such perforations afforded the inhabitants a relative freedom of movement. When, in Galica, Marceli Najder and his companions consider moving from their earthen bunker to the attic of their peasant's house, they begin planning it by considering how to organize straw mattresses, because "in the attic we will only be able to lie motionless", something they do not need to do in the main room of their bunker.[73]

In elaborate underground hideouts, those in hiding are even able to wash laundry. Doing this with ease is characteristic for underground hideouts insulated by earth: Jews in rural attics mention not being able to wash, or taking hours to finish, as every sound is perfectly audible through the open, we can now say profoundly *perforated*, architecture.[74] Where present, basic hygiene procedures such as these are described as major events that are long-awaited and break up the endless tedium of being underground.[75]

Not being close to perforations also allowed those in hiding to improvise rudimentary entertainment. Having retreated deeper into Warsaw's underground bunker system, Irena Grocher's hiding companions are able to sing.[76] Twelve-year-old Molly Applebaum, hidden with an older cousin under a barn in DĄbrowa Tarnowska, writes that "the most bearable time[s] of day are the evenings, when we lie under the warm

eiderdown and Kitten tells me various stories, which often make me burst out laughing".[77] Further east, in an earthen dugout in the Eastern Galician town of Krzemeniec, M. Landsberg and his companion Rudy read German and Ukrainian newspapers for six hours every day; saving their candles, they spend the rest of their time on what the author terms "discussions after dark".[78] Throughout the diaries, such singing and talking provide psychological relief, help kill time, and offer a certain degree of imaginatory escape.[79]

Reading the daily entries with an ear for sound depictions, then, reveals the underground hiding places as a very specific form of *aural architecture*: in significant measure, they were experienced aurally, and through their structure imposed a form on what can be heard.[80] This form ranged from exposed bunkers in which every movement was audible, to hideouts that permitted sound vibrations to pass more easily through certain perforations, and insulated underground hiding places almost entirely cut off by concrete and earth.

The structure of this aural architecture shaped what could be heard at which places in the bunkers. This influenced the daily life and activities of the inhabitants. Highly exposed hideouts, in which every place was acoustically transparent, forced certain behaviours on those in hiding: being immobile, talking in whispers or walking barefoot, etc. In more insulated bunkers, acoustic perforations that connected the inside to the outside became an important organizing factor for daily life. People lay at perforations to listen, or to write in silence. They become social spaces, for example when people gather at slits and air shafts, or when those on the outside plead to come in. In more insulated hideouts, the lack of perforations in turn allowed for various bodily and social practices such as freely moving about, doing laundry, and passing the time by talking and singing. Further sound-generating practices afforded by the most isolating hideouts include preparing food using fire and stoves, listening to front news over the radio, modifying the hideout itself, and even pursuing handicrafts to pass time or economically sustain oneself in hiding.

Imagining the underground

Apart from influencing daily life in the shelters, the presence and location of such perforations also affected how those in hiding were able to relate to the events unfolding outside, and informed how they framed their own situation. Hearing the world outside was a major factor in their self-understanding, and the particular way they heard it in their instances of aural architecture helped direct the imagination of the diarists writing in these conditions.

In a broader study of hiding in Poland during the Holocaust, Marta Cobel-Tokarska collected multiple examples of Jews describing their hiding places in stark imagery: as a "grave", a "ship", a "besieged fortress", an "island", or a "prison".[81] For those in hiding, metaphors serve as a means of making sense of their current life circumstances. They variously emphasize perceived aspects of life in hiding such as feeling confined, being solitary, or point to the constant awareness of Jews of being besieged by hostile forces.[82]

The diaries written underground also feature such metonymic conceptualization, thus interpreting their hiding under the surface. Among the metaphors prevalent in underground diaries, two will be examined more closely: the images of the underground hideout as a "ship" and a "grave". Both express a common feeling of

being surrounded by boundaries that cannot or should not be crossed, and thus speak to a central feature of the hiding experience in general. However, what will become clear is that, in using either metaphor (ship or grave), the diarists imbue these boundaries with particular meanings: the conceptualization of the underground as a ship hints that the boundaries of the hiding place are understood as providing protection from a hostile outside world; its characterization as a grave points to the role the hideout boundary plays in existential displacement and social exclusion.

Equipped with the analysis in the first part of this study, it is possible to account for the particular meanings engaged by diarists by examining the aural architecture of their locations. A closer examination of this will show that what inspires and sustains the diarists' understanding of being protected, or of being excluded, are the affordances of sound that vary with the presence and position of semi-insulating and semi-connecting perforations.

Ship, protection, perforation

In several diaries written underground, diarists use the metaphor of being surrounded by a stormy sea. For Sewek Okonowski, writing in an underground bunker on the "Aryan side" of Warsaw after the liquidation of the ghetto, "The unlit rectangular shelter, in which you cannot stand up straight, is becoming a precious, unique anchor for us, a calm sail, so to speak, in a stormy ocean among death-carrying waves. The artillery shells, fired relentlessly, will not reach us".[83] The underground hideout becomes associated with a vessel providing often tenuous sanctuary from waves of surrounding and ongoing atrocities. The anonymous diarist writing in her basement in the midst of the Warsaw ghetto uprising likens it to a boat:

> In my fantasy, for a moment our shelter seems to me like a sinking boat. [...] The faintest noise [*szum*] or the distant explosions of grenades elicits reactions from the people, because everyone is on edge due to our internal relations. To put it briefly, a very small boat, with many people [aboard], with little food supplies, swims on a raging sea, and there is no rescue [in sight]. Not a happy outlook. I feel as if the water is searching for a weak spot in the boat, to bring about a quick end. Woe is us, SOS?[84]

If here, the outside danger is described as a raging sea in search of a "weak spot" to enter, Marceli Najder, inhabiting an underground shelter with an upper "chamber" and an earthen dugout beneath, conveys more security through a related image:

> Entering the shaft resembles entering a submarine tower—the hatches are sealed (after all, the enemy is on the horizon) and we are left with the air that is inside. These "bunks" of ours, the lack of a "view", and observing the chamber through a crack—as in a "periscope", the listening [*nasłuchiwanie*] and full "combat readiness" [...] Many times we have compared our room to a submarine and each time we find new similarities.[85]

In such descriptions, we find a first hint of a motivating role of aural conditions in the co-occurrence of the image and descriptions of sound. It is present in Okonowski's text, in which he connects the "death-carrying waves" among which he finds himself and the "relentless firing" of the artillery shells. The female Warsaw diarist's description features such a slippage of register most explicitly, when her description "The faintest noise of the distant thunder..." is directly followed by "to put it briefly, a very small boat". Marceli Najder's conceptualization is more layered. It speaks to protection and clandestinity, and implies a more goal-oriented military framing than that of a boat

awaiting rescue—but it, too, connects the image of the "submarine" to the practice of "listening out".

The role of sound in these constructions also suggests itself once the specific aural architecture of these underground hiding places is taken into account. This is most obviously the case for the urban bunker of the anonymous Warsaw diarist. Her "small boat, with many people aboard", was constructed from a tenement cellar employing timber and bricks at different places, and features a camouflaged trap door, an outlet for smoke from the kitchen, and, at the time of writing, holes from German grenades.[86] The disorientation and fear brought about through this type of aural exposure leads her to note that "the enemy looks for us everywhere. He listens, knocks, moves everywhere".[87] From Sewek Okonowski's manuscript we learn that the "unlit rectangular shelter" located "among death-carrying waves" is similarly constructed within a basement. Marceli Najder here presents a hybrid image: a vessel that can be "sealed", but featuring a periscope and inhabited by listening out, corresponding to an overground chamber and a more insulated dugout beneath. Among the examined diaries, the metaphor of a "ship" is found mostly in urban bunkers, and here, exclusively in those that can be characterized as highly perforated. Diarists in such hideouts are, firstly, exposed to sounds of danger, leading them to conceive of the outside world predominantly as relentlessly hostile; and secondly, exposed to these sounds from many perforations, making the images of being surrounded apt.

This is an indication that the aural environment of the underground hideouts is involved in leading the diarists to conceive of their current life conditions in specific terms. This suspicion is borne out by the closer examination of a second image employed by the diarists.

Grave

Remembering how she visited a bunker while it was still under construction, a Jewish diarist in Warsaw vividly remembers her apprehension. "I remember inhabiting it in my imagination, and felt shivers at the very thought that it one day would become our dwelling [*pomieszkanie*]. At that time I still constantly counted on other possibilities to survive; but the hideout, this escape to the grave during my lifetime, I left as a last resort".[88] Trapped under the surface, one of the most frequent images that the diarists use to characterize their situation is the domain of dead bodies. In one of his diary entries, Dawid Fogelman measures "five weeks of being in this grave".[89] Molly Applebaum, spending most of her waking hours in a box buried under a barn near Krakow, calls it a "grave that [we] are nonetheless thankful for".[90] Throughout the texts of those writing underground, we find similar references metonymically describing their hideouts as graves and coffins.

The question can be posed as to which sensory conditions make the analogy to a "grave" appear more apt to the authors than the "ship" metaphor discussed previously. The idea that specific sensory environments inspire the use of particular metonymies for authors writing during the Holocaust has been hinted at in the literature. In a study of Jewish ego-documents from Warsaw, Jacek Leociak examines comparisons by the authors of the sealed Jewish district to a "cemetery".[91] As a figure speaking to the fate of Jews, this image conveys the authors' sense of existential proximity to death. Going further in his examination, however, Leociak provides a more immediate motivation

for the prevalent choice of this specific conceptualization of the ghetto—an almost inescapable experience of the authors while moving through it:

> The bodies of the dead lying up against the walls of houses and on the pavements, amidst the feverish foot traffic, the carts of Pinkert's funeral parlour, loaded with corpses, the mass graves of the Jewish cemetery on Okopowa Street sprinkled with lime—all these and similar pictures noted by eyewitnesses had already become [in 1942] symbolic images of the ghetto.[92]

The authors are daily eyewitnesses of corpses and other attributes connected with dead bodies. They find themselves in specific surroundings that provide visual cues and reminders of death. The choice to metonymically describe the ghetto as a cemetery thus occurs in a sensory environment that makes such a choice highly plausible. While not a determining factor, direct sensory experience provides a motivation for using this over other images, such as a prison, for example.[93]

If choosing to emphasize proximity to death and therefore opting for describing the ghetto as a "cemetery" is suggested, at least partly, by the prevalent daily visual experience of corpses, which specific sensory conditions inspire imagining the underground hiding place as a "grave"? To answer this question, it will be necessary to examine additional meanings that are connected with the use of the grave image in the examined diaries.

Grave as belowness; insulation and directionality of sound

Faced with the increasing cold of winter in the open attic of a peasant in Łosice, Herschel Wulkier convinces his host to dig a hole in the ground under the house. "I did most of the digging", he recalls in his notes, "and finally made a hole big enough, or should I say a grave big enough for a living person".[94] Going under the surface is described accordingly: "The first time I went into the hole, I had the feeling that I would be buried there while I was still alive".[95] On the second day in her earthen bunker, still under the impression of this relocation, Grete Holländer remarks that "it is terrible to sit inside the earth [...] one almost believes oneself to be buried alive".[96] What connects these characterizations is their conscious conveyance of moving *under*, or of being *below,* the surface of the earth. Where the diarists access the cultural resources of "grave", they frequently do so to express a state or experience of being submerged in the ground.

The cultural resources that are activated in these imaginations bring with them the necessary meanings to express the state of being under the surface. In both Polish and Jewish burial customs at the beginning of the 20th century, the dead are placed under the earth. In the Jewish tradition, the connection of burial and "placing below" finds additional conceptual expression in one of two terms for the netherworld, *eresh*. In its most literal meaning, *eresh* is simply the material of the earth extending from the surface to an incalculable below. It also stands for the particular "land" or "country" of the dead, characterized by darkness and great depth.[97]

The sensory conditions motivating the choice of the grave image, then, for such uses of the grave metaphor, should sustain a sense of being "below". On first consideration, this would not point to aural experience. An oft-stated assertion in literature touching on the phenomenology of sound states that its experience is characterized by multi-directionality. Building on the psychology of perception and previous work done on sound in human geography, Paul Rodaway puts this observation in absolute terms:

> In sensuous experience, the auditory world not only surrounds us but we seem to be within it and participants. [...] Auditory phenomena penetrate us from all directions at all times. The auditory perspective is not linear but multidirectional—even when we are deaf in one ear.[98]

As is clear by now, however, the particular character of sonic presence in the bunkers cannot be described without taking into account its concrete, material conditions which shape and channel sound. In particular, it is again the "aural architecture" of the underground hideouts, with its interplay of insulation and openings, that allows and limits how multidirectional the experience of sound can be.

Hiding in a bunker consisting of two connected underground chambers during the ghetto uprising, Warsaw diarist Stella Fidelseid is able to gauge daylight from night through a slit. This perforation allows her to hear the sound of firearms entering the hideout, and gauge their closeness in the horizontal plane. "The whole day we could hear unusually loud detonations and constant shots. It seems they were not at our place, because there was no rumbling reaching us from the backyard".[99] In a basement on the Aryan side of an embattled Warsaw, Pinkus Blumenfeld is able to trace what he takes to be a change of guard: "At 1 o'clock we heard conversations next to us... After a while, they subsided, and we heard footsteps above us. Perhaps a change of guard has come?"[100] Listening both across ("next to us") and upward ("above us"), Blumenfeld is able to trace a movement, concluding that the same people had changed location, which he imagines as a change of guard.

In these underground diaries, the relative multi-directionality of sound is provided by the "well-defined openings" of slits, shafts, windows and doors made out of more conductive material. These perforations break the acoustic insulation of dirt and cement walls. Sound, entering through sideways windows and slits, allows for a certain degree of multidirectional spatial orientation. This becomes pronounced in contrast with more insulated underground hideouts, where the awareness of being surrounded by an expanse of sound (water) yields to the awareness of being surrounded by layers of packed earth and clay. The majority of sound descriptions in such diaries are related to sounds happening on the surface: "Already we hear the steps of the Germans above us".[101] The more insulated the hideout, the more the diarists' listening to the world is forced into a strict directionality. When the world makes sound, it does so from above. To listen to it, the diarists listen upward.

By pointing to the directionality of sound, we can account for the difference between framing the hideout as a ship surrounded by waves on the one hand, and as a grave located under the surface on the other. As the diarists in insulated bunkers turn to imagine their situation, they do so with a vivid and sustained awareness of being under the surface. They are thus likely to access the semiotic resources provided by the images of grave and burial.

Both metaphors, the vessel and the grave, then, function as imaginatory mappings. As with the "life-saving" ship, however, the spatial logic of the image of burial is valenced and expresses personal attitudes to the "outside". When Landsberg's caretakers, after a visit from above, leave the dugout again, they camouflage the entry. The sounds, for the author, take on a sinister dimension. "One can hear the hollow impact of potatoes with which our board [i.e. the entry hatch] gets covered up. It seems to us that this is the thud [*łoskot*] of earth falling on the lid of our coffin".[102] Here, the morbid sense of being "buried" is connected to hearing oneself as located under the entry hatch—but also to hearing the departure of the hosts, and thus the end of friendly contact. A

further examination of the burial conceptualization will show that its more-than-spatial deployments are, too, closely tied to the specific aural environment of the day-to-day in the hideout.

Grave as exclusion; perforation and parallel experience of sound

In examining how those writing underground depict their own situation, another theme emerges. Pervading nearly all of the diaries is an acute, disempowering sense of being removed from the centre of action. Once again taking this theme as being sustained by direct sensory experience, a closer examination suggests that—as with the themes of "being surrounded" and "being below"—it is tied to a specific sound environment. The sense of being removed from activity is supported and sustained by aural experiences. These are both explicitly written about in the diaries, and implicitly inform the authors' metaphorical descriptions of their situation through burial imagery.

Thus, writing in November 1944 under the Aryan side of Warsaw, Helena Midler notes that "on occasion (rarely, far too rarely), the silence is torn by a distant roar of artillery fire, an exploding shell, or the rhythmic knocking of a machine gun: another signal from the outside world." The existence of these sounds, to her, is a signal, namely the long-awaited "proof that the Bolsheviks are close and the fighting is going on".[103] Conversely, silence for these embattled diarists suggests a lack of movement and activity. Thus, the sounds of the Red Army's advance sustains hope, and in many diaries, unexplained absence of sound is unsettling.[104]

Though many of the examined diarists expected to inhabit their underground hiding places for a relatively short period, their stay in most cases extended to months, and in a few cases to years, almost always assisted by locals who go by their daily business. Thus, Jews in rural hiding places often hear not just the immediate sounds of combat or acute threats. Clara Kramer, who with her family went into hiding in a bunker constructed under the house of an ethnic German family, repeatedly becomes ear-witness to their day-to-day in the conditions of occupation: "Today, the Becks sleep overhead us, because they gave their room to some soldiers. It seems there are three of them. We don't know for sure, but we can assume it from what we hear".[105] When Marceli Najder lays on watch in the upper part of his two-storied hide-out, he can hear the sounds of leisure of both nearby German soldiers and his Polish helpers: "On Sunday, one can hear some commotion [*gwar*], the soldiers entertain themselves. The Śliwiaks most probably also have a party, as can be concluded from the noise [*odgłosy*] from the direction of their windows".[106] For prolonged periods of time, these authors are exposed to the signatures of small-town and rural war-time life unfolding beyond the boundaries of the hideout.

The diarists at times explicitly connect the activity they are able to hear outside with a more abstract notion of "life". Whenever Landsberg's caretaker comes by to talk and share news, "These visits [...] bring breath from the world of the living."[107] The inside, with its oppressively monotonous existence, often appears in contrast. After Landsberg and Rudy are able to spend time on the surface and have to return, "We sleep almost all the time, to sleep off the feeling of 'being above'";[108] Landsberg even longs to "sleep for a year and wake up in a free Poland".[109] Accordingly, the absence of perceived sound is often framed as "death". It is present in frequent idiomatic connections such as "mute

as a grave [*schwieg wie ein Grab*]",[110] or "tomb-like silence [*grobowa cisza*]".[111] It is also found in more general descriptions. When Stella emerges after hiding in bunkers among the Warsaw rubble, she notes in one conjunction that "the ghetto had died out [*wymarłe*], calm and silence [*spokój i cisza*] reigned".[112]

We thus find in the diaries the outside, sound-filled environment as one in which activity and "life" is happening, and its corollary of a silent environment as stillness and a sign of "death". This particular connection of two registers, of perceived sound/silence and imagined life/death, of the experiential and the meaningful, is not accidental. It is rooted in both the properties of sound, and in the cultural connotations of the employed images around death.

On a material level, a minimal definition of sound is the "mechanical disturbance from a state of equilibrium that propagates through an elastic material medium".[113] This physical definition hinges on activity, and it has been pointed out that sound as a phenomenon of perception points to activity as well. In the words of Brandon LaBelle, sound, "by stemming from an object or body, signals that movement is occurring".[114] This nexus has wider implications. Following his observation, LaBelle somewhat ambiguously adds that sound signals "that life is happening".[115] One sense in which this is the case is that human lives are not possible without generating sonic traces. Sound studies scholar Holger Schulze reminds us that "human beings live and act—and as they do so, they actualize sound".[116] In a more general sense of "life", the presence of sounds points to the temporal unfolding of activity in the world. In the words of cultural geographer Douglas Pocock, since "something is happening for sound to exist", sound is "temporal, continually and perhaps unpredictably coming and going, but it is also powerful, for it signifies existence, generates a sense of life".[117] A perceived sound, whether a sign of inanimate or animate movement, can be said to evidence activity.

It is thus not surprising that the authors, listening to the sounds reaching them from the outside of their underground shelters, frame them as the outside presence of activity and life, and conversely associate their absence with death. The idioms and images they employ provide the necessary connotations. In the Polish linguistic corpus, death is lexically linked to and conceptually framed as a loss, end and rest or sleep.[118] The Polish word cemetery, *cmentarz*, etymologically derives from the Latin word *coemeterium* and the ancient Greek *koimeterion,* literally meaning "sleeping place" or "dormitory".[119] In Jewish tradition, we find the netherworld of *sheol*, a famously undetermined "holding space" in which the dead are suspended until their bodily resurrection.[120] As with the state of "being below", the cultural semantics around death and burial are suited to express the state of being "apart from activity".

Summing up this look at how diarists in different conditions conceived of their situation, the following can be noted: In most diaries, sound reaching the hideout from outside is a reminder that movement happens "not here". When the authors turn to imagine and describe their situation, they do so with a vivid and sustained awareness of being placed outside of unfolding events.

For several Warsaw diarists, these events are not just predominantly and relentlessly threatening, but their sonic presence in very perforated hideouts can additionally be said to phenomenologically "surround" or envelop those in hiding. This helps account for the fact that these diarists highlight the protection implicit in their apartness, for example through metaphors of a ship providing tenuous shelter from waves.

In rural hiding places, however, the social sounds of daily life enter. The sustained awareness of being removed from the outside day-to-day takes on another sense—not of being protected, but of being outside of life. The less perforated acoustic conditions remind the hiding diarists of their separation from the relative normalcy of the wartime everyday. Understanding these sounds as indices of life passing by above, the diarists here are more likely to access the semiotic resources provided by images of grave and burial.

Having observed the interconnection of the specifics of the aural architecture and the conceptualization of one's own position, we thus arrive at and are able to account for important differences in the attitudes of Jews in hiding to the aurally present "outside". Being attuned to the sounds that trigger such depictions helps unearth their connotations of protection, morbidity, exclusion or torturous ambiguity. This adds complexity and nuance to previous observations regarding the straightforward association between external sounds and feelings of risk and endurance in, for example, air raid shelters.[121]

Conclusion

This study outlined several points of connection between hideout acoustics, inhabitation practices of Jews, and their imaginatory framing of the hideout-outside relationship.

For this, it described the cellars, bunkers and dugouts with attention to the sound conditions they created. In doing so, it understood them as instances of aural architecture ranging from exposed cellars to increasingly insulated bunkers. Within this gradation, an important role is played by perforations that channelled the flow of sound from the outside to different degrees at different places. This model brought to the fore and contextualized important aspects of how Jews in Warsaw and East Galicia inhabited their shelters. It drew attention to various sound-related bodily techniques, as well as more complex practices such as surveilling the outside and homemaking routines. It thus directed the aural war historian's ear beyond its common focus on violent moments to the wartime everyday.

The essay further highlighted the interrelationship of the acoustic conditions in the hideouts and the imaginative description of the hiding place employed by the diarists. Examining how much of which type of sound the diarists could hear announcing the outside world, and how they heard it in their shelters, helped account for marked differences in how they made sense of their current life conditions. In relating (and relating *to*) both the nature of the sounds that could be heard in various degrees of insulation, as well as their penetration and spatial localization underground, the diarists interpreted the confines of their hideouts by using metaphors variously underlining protection or social exclusion. Attention to the functioning of sound thus not just helped describe and understand practicalities of everyday Jewish life in conditions of underground hiding. What these practicalities can eclipse is a world of often ambivalent attitudes and meaning-making—one that became accessible through the consideration of aural experience.

While this survey thus emphasizes the influence of sound on historical actors, it also indicates its wider evidentiary potential for historians of the "unexplored continent of Holocaust historiography". It is not just true that acoustic conditions are an important

factor for how people inhabited shelters, and that their analysis provides necessary context for understanding homemaking practices and the daily life of those hiding from persecution. Meanings inspired by, shaped through and expressed around the experience of sounds also reveal how Jews related to the events unfolding outside the confines of their hiding places, from searches and battles to social gatherings and daily routines. Taking sound seriously thus has significant potential for the history of emotions and the social history of the Holocaust.

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1. Landmark studies include Alain Corbin’s work on the role of bells in 19th-century France (CORBIN Alain, *Village Bells: Sound and Meaning in the Nineteenth-century French Countryside*, London, Papermac, 1999); Bruce R. Smith’s reconstruction of the sound-worlds and their meanings for Shakespeare’s contemporaries in England (SMITH Bruce R., *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor*, Chicago, London, University of Chicago Press, 1994); and Mark M. Smith’s study on politicized sound environments in antebellum America (SMITH Mark M., *Listening to Nineteenth-century America*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2001); as well as the important works by Jonathan Sterne (STERNE Jonathan, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*, Durham; London, Duke University Press, 2003) and Emily Thompson (THOMPSON Emily Ann, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*, Cambridge, Mass, MIT Press, 2004) on the impact of sound technology in the 20th century. For synopsis see SMITH Mark M., *Sensory History*, Oxford, New York, Berg, 2007, pp. 41–58; MILLS Steve, *Auditory Archaeology: Understanding Sound and Hearing in the Past*, London; New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 48–51.

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32. POHL, *Nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung,* p. 363; see ALEKSIUN, "Daily Survival", p. 306 f.

33. POHL, *Ibid.*

34. COBEL-TOKARSKA, *Desert Island, Burrow, Grave,* p. 86. A concise description is given by Jacek Leociak, who writes of the countryside east of Warsaw : "The topography of the village lacks the elements of the urban scenery. Cobblestones, pavements, tenement houses locking in the

perspective of the street, all this changes into the open space of fields and forests, crossed by bands of roads." LEOCIAK Jacek, "Wizerunek Polaków w zapisach Żydów z dystryktu warszawskiego [The image of Poles in the writings of Jews from the Warsaw district]", Prowincja noc: życie i zagłada Żydów w dystrykcie warszawskim [Province Night: Life and extermination of the Polish Jews in the Warsaw district], Warszawa, IFiS PAN, 2007, pp. 321-372, here 395.

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38. YVA O.33/9399 [Wulkier, Łosice], p. 14 (dated May 1, 1943).

39. BAUER Yehuda, *The Death of the Shtetl*, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2010, pp. 79; 155.

40. NAJDER Marceli, *Rewanż* [Revenge], Warszawa, Ośrodek Karta, 2013 (no exact date).

41. YVA O.33/9399 [Wulkier, Łosice], p. 14 (dated May 1, 1943).

42. APPLEBAUM Molly, *Buried Words: The Diary of Molly Applebaum,* Azrieli Foundation, 2017.

43. YVA O.33/633 [Rathauserowa, Peczeniżynie], p. 16 (undated, approx. early November 1942).

44. YVA O.33/633 [Rathauserowa, Peczeniżynie], p. 16 (undated, approx. early November 1942), p. 18 (dated December 10, 1942).

45. Silberman, undated. Manuscript courtesy of Alexandra Zapruder.

46. YVA O.33/633 [Rathauserowa, Peczeniżynie], p. 16 (undated, approx. early November 1942).

47. *Ibid.*

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55. Thus, Warsaw diarist Dawid Fogelman adapts a canalization pipe: ŻIH 302/25 [Fogelman, Warsaw], pp. 44-45 (undated); see ŻIH 302/228 [NN, Warsaw], p. 4 (dated May [real date poss. April] 18, 1943); GFH 6045 [NN, Warsaw], p. 5 (dated May 2, 1943).

56. ŻIH 302/25 [Fogelman, Warsaw], pp: 45; 46 (undated); ŻIH 302/161 [Midler, Warsaw], p. 5 (dated December 2, 1944). The shelters in the Warsaw ghetto also possessed something akin to a mutual welfare system for food, see DREIFUSS (BEN-SASSON), "Hell Has Risen", p. 28 fn. 62.

57. For a typology of assisted hiding places as "under the same roof" and "at a distance", see COBEL-TOKARSKA, *Desert Island, Burrow, Grave,* pp. 75-84.

58. YVA O.33/774 [Holländer, Czortków], p. 18 (dated August 5, 1943).

59. NAJDER, *Rewanż* (dated April 21, 1943); YVA O.33/774 [Holländer, Czortków], p. 18 (dated August 5, 1943). Depending on the number of people, air availability also became a problem in Warsaw, see ŻIH 302/39 [Maryłka, Warsaw], p. 23 (dated April 20, 1943).

60. First name unknown. YVA O.33/1099 [Landsberg, Krzemieniec], p. 72 (amb. dating, 1942).

61. YVA O.33/774 [Holländer, Czortków], pp. 84-85 (dated July 14, 1943).

62. YVA O.33/2535 [Guensberg, Mikulińce], p. 15 (dated June 3, 1943).

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66. Silberman, undated.
67. ŻIH 302/25 [Fogelman, Warsaw], undated.
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69. GFH 6045 [NN, Warsaw], p. 7 (dated May 10, 1943).
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71. NAJDER, *Rewanż* (dated April 20-21, 1943); YVA O.33/1099 [Landsberg, Krzemieniec], p. 73 (amb. dating, 1942).
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85. NAJDER, *Rewanż* (dated August 12, 1943).
86. GFH 6045 [NN, Warsaw], pp. 5-6 (dated May 2, 1943).
87. GFH 6045 [NN, Warsaw], p. 4 (dated April 30, 1943).
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99. ŻIH 302/180 [Stella, Warsaw], p. 11 (undated); see p. 13 (undated): "We hear the steps of the thugs walking right here above our heads. [...] Suddenly, from the direction of the backyard...".
100. GFH 21899 [Blumenfeld, Warsaw], p. 5 (dated August 10, 1944).
101. e.g. YVA O.33/2535 [Guensberg, Mikulińce], pp. 15; 17 (dated June 3, 1943).
102. YVA O.33/1099 [Landsberg, Krzemieniec], p. 104 (undated).
103. ŻIH 302/161 [Midler, Warsaw], p. 1 (dated November 16, 1944).
104. YVA O.33/1099 [Landsberg, Krzemieniec], p. 92 (undated); ŻIH 302/25 [Fogelman, Warsaw], p. 52 (amb. dating, before December 15,1944); see nervous waiting for it, YVA O.33/2535 [Guensberg, Mikulińce], p. 41 (dated November 15, 1943).
105. KRAMER Clara, *Tyleśmy już przeszli: dziennik pisany w bunkrze* (Żółkiew 1942-1944) [We have gone through so much: A diary written in the bunker (Żółkiew 1942-1944)], Warszawa, Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów, 2017, p. 99 (dated March 27, 1944).
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ABSTRACTS

This essay examines the depictions and interpretation of auditory experiences in a sample of Jewish diaries that were written in underground bunkers, earthen dugouts and cellars beneath urban centres in and around Warsaw and in the rural region of East Galicia in World War II. Concepts from musicology and sound studies are applied to model the subterranean dugouts as instances of "aural architecture" set through with perforations channelling the flow of sound from the outside. This highlights and contextualizes important aspects of how Jews in East Galicia inhabited their shelters. In particular, it draws attention to various sound-related bodily techniques and to more complex practices, such as surveilling "the outside" and the adapted routines of homemaking that shaped daily life in these hiding places. The essay further posits an interrelationship between the acoustic conditions in the hideouts and the imaginative descriptions employed by the authors to describe their hideouts. Examining what the diarists could hear of the outside world, and how it sounded to them in their shelters, helps account for marked differences in how they made sense of their current life conditions. Depending on both the nature of the sounds that could be heard, and their penetration and spatial localization underground, the diarists interpret the confines of their hideouts by using metaphors variously underlining protection and social exclusion.

Cet article s'intéresse aux expériences auditives décrites et interprétées dans des journaux intimes tenus lors de la Seconde Guerre mondiale par des Juifs réfugiés dans des bunkers souterrains, abris et caves situées sous les centres urbains de Varsovie et de ses alentours, ainsi que dans la région rurale de la Galice orientale. Des concepts de la musicologie et des *sound studies* permettent de caractériser ces abris comme des instances d'« architecture sonore », les flux sonores de l'extérieur étant canalisés par des conduits perforés. Cette étude met donc en lumière, et contextualise, des aspects importants de la façon dont les Juifs de Galicie orientale ont habité leurs abris. Une attention particulière est conférée à la variété de techniques corporelles relatives au son ainsi qu'à des pratiques plus complexes – surveiller « l'extérieur », adapter les routines quant aux façons d'habiter – façonnant la vie quotidienne dans ces lieux de dissimulation. L'article traite ensuite de l'interaction entre les conditions acoustiques dans les cachettes et les descriptions imaginatives qui sont faites de ces cachettes. En examinant ce que les auteurs des carnets pouvaient entendre du monde extérieur et la façon dont cela sonnait à leurs oreilles, il est alors possible de rendre compte de différences prononcés s'agissant du sens donné aux conditions de vie. Tributaires non seulement de la nature des sons qui pouvaient être entendus, mais aussi de leur pénétration et localisation dans le souterrain, ces auteurs donnent aux confins de leurs cachettes une interprétation usant de métaphores qui mettent variablement en lumière la protection et l'exclusion sociale.

INDEX

Keywords: Jews in hiding, sound history, aural architecture, resilience, survival, imagination
Mots-clés: Juifs cachés, histoire sonore, architecture sonore, résilience, survie, imagination

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Nikita Hock studied Jewish and Religious Studies at the Freie Universität Berlin, as well as Cultural Theory and History at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He has measured religious sonic spaces in Namibia and curated a sound exhibit at the Märkisches Museum in Berlin. As Research Assistant, he taught seminars on Auditory Culture Studies at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin and served as chief editor of the Berlin-based Kulturwelle radio show. He is currently pursuing his PhD at the Historical Institute in Bern, examining the sonic dimension in Jewish wartime diaries.

Interview and Commentaries

Entretien et commentaires

De la musique à la lutte armée, de 1968 à Action directe : entretien avec Jean-Marc Rouillan

From Music to Armed Struggle, from 1968 to Action Directe*: An Interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan*

Luis Velasco-Pufleau

NOTE DE L'AUTEUR

Les propos qui suivent sont issus d'un entretien à la Maison des métallos à Paris, réalisé le 10 avril 2019. Cette rencontre fait partie des recherches que je mène depuis plusieurs années sur le rôle du son et de la musique dans des dynamiques de violence et de lutte armée. Dans ce cadre, le témoignage de Jean-Marc Rouillan m'a paru important. Le texte conserve dans la mesure du possible le ton général de la rencontre, notamment le tutoiement entre les deux parties. Je voudrais remercier Rémi Philton, Stéphanie Gernet et Thierry Discepolo pour leurs contributions à la réalisation ou à l'édition de cet entretien.

Introduction

1 Jean-Marc Rouillan est né à Auch (France) en 1952. Il participe à la lutte antifranquiste et au mouvement autonome en Espagne et en France à la fin des années 1960 et au début des années 1970. Puis, il s'engage dans la lutte armée au sein d'Action directe (1977-1987). Qualifié de groupe terroriste d'extrême gauche par l'État français et les médias, les membres d'Action directe se considèrent comme un groupe révolutionnaire européen – au même titre que la Fraction armée rouge (*Rote Armee Fraktion*, RAF) en Allemagne et les Brigades Rouges (*Brigate Rosse*, BR) en Italie. Pour Action directe, la lutte pour l'émancipation et l'autonomie était indissociable « d'une remise en cause du

monopole de la violence détenu par l'État »[1]. De ce fait, la lutte armée est constitutive de leur existence : braquages de banques, mitraillages et attentats à la bombe contre des bâtiments de l'État ou d'organisations militaires internationales (Otan, Interpol), puis des assassinats ciblés de dirigeants industriels et de responsables militaires.

2 En février 1987 Jean-Marc Rouillan est arrêté avec les autres membres du noyau historique d'Action directe et condamné à la réclusion à perpétuité. Il passe 28 ans en prison, dont une dizaine à l'isolement. Il est soumis à plusieurs régimes de liberté conditionnelle entre 2007 et 2018. Libéré depuis le 18 mai 2018, il peut dorénavant s'exprimer publiquement sur les faits pour lesquels il a été condamné. Dans cet entretien, Jean-Marc Rouillan parle des liens entre sa pratique musicale et l'expérience sensible de son engagement politique depuis 1968, du rôle de la musique et du son dans la lutte armée d'Action directe, ainsi que de la place qu'il attribue à la musique dans la mémoire des luttes politiques.

Musique et politique : de 1968 à Action directe

LUIS VELASCO-PUFLEAU : Dans ton livre *Je regrette*, tu racontes qu'à une époque tu jouais de la guitare et de la basse électrique[2]. Quel rôle a eu la musique dans ton engagement politique et dans le choix de la violence armée ?

Jean-Marc Rouillan : Il faudrait revenir tout à fait au début de mon engagement, parce que mon engagement politique en 1968 est précédé par un engagement musical. La musique, la littérature, la poésie et la culture underground des années 1960 ont été centrales dans mon engagement. Jouer de la musique c'était faire de l'underground en prévision de quelque chose, en prévision d'un affrontement. Mais cela ne pouvait pas satisfaire l'engagement qu'allait prendre ma vie. Finalement, 1968 est arrivé et je suis passé de la musique à l'engagement politique – c'est complexe et ne peut être délié. Ensuite, l'engagement armé a pris sa source dans la même culture que le mouvement punk et le mouvement autonome. Pour moi comme pour les autres membres d'Action directe, la musique, la littérature, la poésie et la peinture ont eu une importance cruciale dans notre action armée.

LVP : De quelle façon ton écoute de la musique a-t-elle donné sens à l'affrontement à venir ?

JMR : Quand j'étais gamin, l'écoute d'une chanson a été un choc. J'écoutais devant le jukebox la chanson « Gloria » de Them, un groupe irlandais des années 1960. Après le solo de cette chanson, il y a une reprise où tu sens vraiment qu'il va se passer quelque chose, qu'il faut qu'il se passe quelque chose. Quand j'écoutais cette musique, je me suis dit : « Dans nos vies, il va se passer quelque chose ». La vague musicale anglaise a précédé 1968, elle l'a formé culturellement mais elle l'a précédé dans l'expression : « On est la génération du babyboom et on ne va pas se satisfaire d'être commandés pas les vieux, d'être toujours en gris ». Cette idée, c'est la musique qui l'a exprimée. En parlant d'une histoire d'amour, les Them ont dit : « On va faire bouger le monde ».

LVP : Puis 1968 a matérialisé les changements que tu attendais.

JMR : La musique a fait partie de cette attente de la généralisation du conflit, dans lequel j'allais prendre ma part. Avant la première manifestation que j'ai faite en 1968, on attendait dans un bar en écoutant le jukebox pour aller répéter. Il y a un copain qui est rentré dans le bar et qui nous a dit : « Comment, vous allez répéter alors qu'il y a la manif ? On va aller se bastonner avec les flics ». Et on a dit : « Ok, on va se

bastonner ». Après mai-juin 1968, l'engagement militant a fait que je ne pouvais plus jouer de la musique. C'était un choix.

LVP : Tu as donc « remisé ta guitare Fender » et abandonné tes « projets d'installation dans un squat de musicos près de Piccadilly Circus »[3]. As-tu complètement arrêté de jouer de la musique après 1968 ?

JMR : Je n'ai pratiquement plus joué, sauf dans les planques en Espagne au début des années 1970, quand je participais à la lutte armée contre la dictature franquiste. La plupart des camarades espagnols catalans avaient eu une vie musicale avant d'avoir une vie dans la clandestinité. Il y avait toujours des guitares et les gens en jouaient lors des soirées. Parfois, dans la journée, on jouait ensemble quelques accords, on chantait. J'avais une culture de la chanson contestataire antifranquiste à travers Paco Ibáñez et aussi latino-américaine avec Quilapayún. À cette époque, on écoutait beaucoup de musique.

LVP : Quelle était la musique que tu écoutais à l'époque d'Action directe ?

JMR : La musique qu'on écoutait au début d'Action directe, dans nos meetings ou dans les autoradios de nos voitures en 1977-1978, était principalement du punk et un peu de rockabilly. On écoutait aussi des chanteurs, par exemple Léo Ferré, dont les paroles étaient proches de notre engagement militant. Mais surtout on écoutait du punk : The Clash, beaucoup plus que les Sex Pistols. On y retrouvait une politisation qui nous correspondait, la culture punk du « Do it yourself – DIY [Fais le toi-même] » a été décisive pour nous.

LVP : Alliez-vous souvent écouter des concerts ensemble ?

JMR : Oui, à cette époque on faisait des actions armées mais on n'était pas vraiment recherchés, donc on pouvait aller voir des concerts. Une de ces aventures musicales du noyau historique d'Action directe est quand on a été à Londres en juillet 1977 pour assister à un grand festival de rockabilly. On a vu Crazy Cavan et d'autres vieux groupes de rockabilly. Puis le soir on est allés au Marquee Club, où on a vu un concert des Pirates, l'ancien groupe de Johnny Kidd. L'année suivante, on a vu The Clash en concert à Paris[4].

LVP : Quelle importance a eu ce concert pour vous ?

JMR : Il a été important parce que c'était à l'époque du mouvement autonome. En 1978, on avait gardé l'esprit de *free music*, cette revendication issue de la fin des années 1960 de ne pas payer les concerts quand c'étaient des concerts montés par des grosses sociétés qui faisaient du fric avec la musique. Quand on est allés voir les Clash, on était environ trois cents autonomes et on avait dit qu'on allait rentrer en force. C'est à ce moment que Joe Strummer est sorti et a demandé ce qu'il se passait[5]. On lui a expliqué la situation, qu'on n'allait pas payer pour entrer les voir. Il nous a dit : « D'accord, dès qu'on commence la première chanson, ils vont ouvrir les portes et vous pourrez entrer ». C'est la première fois que j'ai rencontré Joe Strummer. La deuxième fois c'était en 1981 (au début des années Mitterrand, quand Action directe était légal), il était venu à Paris faire un concert au théâtre Mogador et on s'est vus pour boire un café.

Résister à la marchandisation de la musique

LVP : Cet épisode entre en résonance avec un autre épisode de ton livre *Je regrette*, quand tu racontes ta volonté de « libérer la musique des marchands », en marge du festival de l'île de Wight en 1970[6].

JMR : Notre génération de militants était habituée à la naissance des groupes dans les *pubs* ou les petites salles de concert. On prenait une bière et on écoutait de la musique, il y avait toute une ambiance. Puis est arrivée cette mode des grands concerts, au départ gratuits mais on s'est bientôt retrouvés derrière de gros investisseurs qui faisaient du fric avec ça. Il y a eu les premières éditions du festival de l'île de Wight, mais je n'y suis pas allé, vu le prix des places et l'ambiance concentrationnaire de la musique : on faisait ça à la campagne et ils préparaient un château fort en tôle pour protéger leur business. En 1970, il y a eu un appel de militants pour aller à l'île de Wight et obliger les organisateurs à rendre le festival gratuit. On s'est présentés et pendant quinze jours on a fait tous les soirs des bagarres avec les flics, avec les Hells Angels et avec les polices privées qui gardaient le truc. Jusqu'à faire que le festival soit gratuit. La musique libre était une lutte politique, on la concevait comme telle.

LVP : Vous disiez non à la marchandisation de la musique tout en soutenant les musiciens.

JMR : Les musiciens doivent pouvoir vivre de leur musique, c'est pourquoi on payait comme tout le monde quand il s'agissait de petits concerts, quand on savait que l'argent allait aux musiciens. Mais à Wight ou à Woodstock, c'étaient des grosses boîtes qui se montaient pour faire des festivals soi-disant libres, de paix et d'amour. Mais c'était pour faire du fric. Ça n'a pas été facile de lutter contre la marchandisation, le monopole de ces grandes sociétés qui ont compris qu'elles pouvaient faire énormément de fric avec le rock. Alors que c'était notre musique, la musique des *pubs*, la musique des petits concerts, la musique de nos meetings. Cette lutte s'est prolongée durant les années 1970 jusqu'à l'époque punk. Là, il y a eu une divergence. D'un côté il y avait la musique qui s'écoutait dans des grandes salles, comme à la Villette. Une musique emprisonnée, protégée par la police. D'un autre côté il y avait le punk, avec l'esprit *Do it yourself*. Les gens se disaient : « Moi aussi je peux jouer du punk. Donc on va refaire notre musique. Parce que celle-là ne nous appartient plus. Elle a été récupérée ». L'esprit de la *free music*, c'était de retrouver un espace commun avec les musiciens, comme dans les *pubs* britanniques au début des années 1960.

LVP : Faire de la musique soi-même était un acte d'émancipation ?

JMR : Oui, d'émancipation des personnes, et aussi de la musique. Parce que parfois les groupes ont déplacé les limites de la musique. Avec leurs cris, par exemple, c'était plus l'expression d'une rage que d'une musique issue de la soul ou du blues comme on avait l'habitude d'entendre.

LVP : Quelle était la musique que vous n'écoutiez pas, celle que vous ne supportiez pas ?

JMR : On avait un terme pour la définir : la « soupe ». On ne supportait pas cette musique, qui n'est plus qu'une marchandise. Par exemple, j'écoutais les Rolling Stones jusqu'à 1972-1973. Après, ce n'est que de la soupe. Ils ont fait de la disco et d'autres choses pour faire du fric. Du moment où la musique ne sert qu'à faire du fric, il n'y a plus aucun message politique. Et pas que dans les paroles, aussi dans le son.

LVP : Y avait-il d'autres groupes britanniques que tu ne supportais pas ?

JMR : Des groupes comme Cream, où jouait Eric Clapton. Clapton est quelqu'un que je n'ai jamais supporté, même quand il était avec les Yardbirds. Clapton faisait partie des gens qui puaient le « Je veux faire du fric, je joue de la guitare pour faire du fric ». Ce n'était pas quelqu'un qui accompagnait des luttes – d'ailleurs, plus tard, il a été un sympathisant des idées du National front et toutes ces conneries fascistes. Un peu comme David Bowie, il faisait des super chansons, mais ça puait trop le fric. Ça ne correspondait pas à l'engagement militant de notre génération.

LVP : En rapport avec votre idéologie anti-impérialiste, associez-vous certains groupes à l'impérialisme étatsunien ?

JMR : Je pense que du moment où des groupes ont vendu leur musique aux grands managers, leur musique a d'une certaine façon « impérialisé » notre culture. Même des groupes comme le Velvet Underground, ça puait trop le faux underground. Les groupes que j'ai suivis sont des groupes que j'ai vus dans des *pubs* ou dans des petits concerts.

Musique et lutte armée

LVP : À l'époque d'Action directe, écoutiez-vous de la musique avant vos actions armées ?

JMR : Non, on n'écoutait pas de musique. Il y avait une concentration extrêmement forte, il y avait aussi la peur. La musique venait après, quand il y avait eu un coup de chaud, pour se décontracter ou pour faire descendre l'adrénaline. C'étaient les débuts du walkman. Il y avait donc des militants qui, après les actions armées, mettaient de la musique dans leur walkman. Mais ce n'était pas forcement la musique qu'on écoutait le reste de la journée. À ce moment-là, on écoutait par exemple du Pink Floyd ou d'autres choses plutôt « zen ». Parfois on écoutait aussi de la musique classique, du Mozart ou du Fauré, par exemple.

LVP : Cette écoute était plutôt une écoute solitaire.

JMR : Oui, quand quelqu'un avait besoin de la musique pour décompresser, il prenait un verre et le walkman, assis sur un fauteuil.

LVP : Chantiez-vous après vos actions armées ?

JMR : Pas vraiment, mais cela pouvait arriver. Récemment je suis allé à Rome et une camarade italienne m'a dit : « Tu te souviens quand, après une action, on chantait une chanson pop italienne ridicule, "Sarà Perché Ti Amo"... ». En effet, je me suis souvenu qu'on la chantait à tue-tête dans la voiture, pour rigoler.

LVP : Et le soir, y avait-il aussi des moments d'écoute collective ?

JMR : Oui, bien sûr, mais elle n'avait pas la même fonction. Comme les appartements étaient souvent collectifs et que la consigne pour les clandestins était de ne pas sortir après 21 heures, le soir chacun mettait son 33 tours à tour de rôle. Le répertoire était plus varié, des vieux disques des années 1960, du punk ou du rock. Comme on ne regardait pas la télévision, c'était donc la musique ou l'écriture. La musique était quotidienne.

LVP : Une autre caractéristique de votre lutte armée est sa dimension internationaliste, qui a pris la forme d'échanges et d'actions communes avec d'autres groupes armés européens (RAF, Brigades Rouges) ou du Moyen Orient (OLP, kurdes). Partagiez-vous de la musique

entre militants lorsque vous étiez dans un autre pays ou qu'il y avait des militants étrangers qui passaient chez vous ?

JMR : Généralement, on écoutait la musique qu'écoutaient les militants de l'endroit où on était. Mais même si les échanges musicaux n'étaient pas quelque chose de central dans nos activités, ils ont eu une influence sur nos sphères musicales. Au début des années 1970 en Espagne, j'ai fait découvrir aux camarades catalans de la musique anglaise, pas celle qu'ils écoutaient dans leurs radios mais de la musique plutôt *garage*, les premiers T. Rex, par exemple. À l'époque de la fin d'Action directe, les militants allemands de la RAF écoutaient beaucoup de musique *indus* (*industrial music*), bien plus que le punk. Grâce à eux, j'ai découvert cette musique que j'ai commencé à écouter. On essayait de partager ce qu'on aimait.

LVP : Quelles émotions associes-tu à la musique partagée à cette époque avec tes camarades ?

JMR : Ces premières années de la lutte armée, au début des années 1970, ont été très dures, beaucoup de camarades sont morts dans cette période-là. Mais en même temps, elles se caractérisent par une immense joie, une immense camaraderie entre les gens. Mes souvenirs avec la musique me rappellent qu'il y avait beaucoup de joie finalement dans toutes les périodes, avec les Italiens, avec les Allemands, avec tous ces gens qui étaient venus se battre à Paris.

Son et tactique révolutionnaire

LVP : Dans ton dernier livre *Dix ans d'Action directe*, tu consacres plusieurs pages aux écoutes que vous réalisiez de la radio de la police et au repérage des fréquences des unités spéciales. Tu affirmes que vos « méthodes de contrevérification et le boulot d'écoute » vous ont donné souvent « une courte avance sur la répression »[7]. Pourrais-tu en dire un peu plus sur le rôle qu'a eu l'écoute dans votre lutte armée ?

JMR : L'information a toujours un rôle crucial dans la lutte. Surveiller l'adversaire était une nécessité pour gagner cette bataille. Ils nous surveillaient et nous les surveillions. La guérilla a donc été forcée de créer une fonction de contre-surveillance des actions de la police. Grâce à des scanners radio (souvent fabriqués aux États-Unis mais que nous achetions en Suisse), nous avons réussi à intercepter toutes les communications de l'appareil de répression, même les plus locales. Jusqu'à ce qu'ils trouvent nos cahiers de surveillance, au bout de longues années, ils ne se doutaient pas de nos compétences. De nombreuses arrestations ont ainsi été déjouées, qu'ils croyaient dues à des taupes dans leurs propres services ou à des complicités dans l'appareil d'État.

LVP : Finalement vous avez détourné un des moyens de surveillance les plus utilisés par l'État : l'interception des communications.

JMR : Totalement. Nous interceptions jusqu'aux communications du contre-espionnage, la DST [Direction de surveillance du territoire] et les brigades spéciales qui étaient chargées d'intercepter nos communications.

LVP : Comment le son de la radio (de la police ou des radios libres) façonnait-il votre quotidien ?

JMR : La majeure partie du temps, les appareils d'écoute étaient en fonctionnement dans les appartements et dans les voitures des commandos. Les sons de ces communications faisaient partie de notre quotidien, ou alors l'une ou l'un d'entre

nous portait un casque. Les appareils scannaient les ondes principales de communication de la police. Avant les opérations, nous vérifiions qu'il n'y avait pas de membres des brigades spéciales dans la zone.

Du côté des radios pirates aussi, il s'agissait d'obtenir de l'information. On suivait les émissions de débat du mouvement. Les gens savaient que nous les écoutions et souvent ils s'adressaient à nous directement, pour critiquer et proposer. Tout ceci constituait un son en direct et permanent qui rythmait nos vies militantes, comme le son de Paris, de la ville frénétique – notre sierra à nous…

Musique et mémoire des luttes politiques

LVP : Pour toi, la musique peut-elle constituer une mémoire politique, une façon de ne pas oublier les luttes du passé ?

JMR : La mémoire est un combat aussi bien pour la musique que pour les actes politiques eux-mêmes. Si on laisse la mémoire de notre combat politique aux mains de ceux qui ont gagné la bataille, il n'y a plus de mémoire, il n'y a que leur version des faits. Concernant la musique, si on ne va pas chercher jusqu'au fond de la musique de ces années-là, ça se résumera toujours à de la « soupe ». Je pense que notre génération a intégré la musique qu'elle a écoutée et produite, comme un acte politique. Ce qui n'est pratiquement plus le cas aujourd'hui. Je pense qu'il faut s'accrocher : c'est important d'expliquer ça aux nouvelles générations. Il faut combattre pour retrouver la mémoire de notre musique.

LVP : De quelle façon la mémoire est-elle une condition des luttes politiques ?

JMR : La mémoire fait partie de toute lutte révolutionnaire. Il n'y a pas une lutte révolutionnaire qui soit née spontanément (comme on le pensait de certaines maladies du XIX^{e} siècle). La mémoire est un terreau qui t'amène à lutter : si tu connais bien la mémoire du mouvement révolutionnaire, tu y trouves de la force, tu y trouves de l'expérience et énormément d'autres choses. Il n'y a pas de lutte sans mémoire : si on perd la mémoire, on perd le sens de notre lutte.

LVP : De quelle façon la musique fait-elle partie de cette mémoire ?

JMR : La musique a une histoire politique. Il y a des jeunes qui écoutent de la musique sans savoir d'où elle vient. Ils pensent qu'elle est née au sein de mouvements récents. Mais si tu connais la musique depuis les années 1960, tu comprends que certaines musiques découlent d'autres mouvements ou qu'elles ont des filiations avec des luttes politiques plus anciennes. Par exemple, il y a une histoire politique derrière le ska. Il est né dans des boites, à Londres, où on acceptait seulement des Antillais et des Irlandais, à qui on refusait l'accès dans des boites réservées aux Anglais. Donc, ils ont fait leur musique. C'est pourquoi The Clash avait aussi un penchant pour d'autres musiques, par exemple le reggae : Joe Strummer allait souvent dans ces boites de relégués, où se trouvaient les premiers skins [mouvement skinhead]. Tout cela n'est pas nouveau et demande une articulation et une compréhension politiques. La musique, c'est un combat permanent sous l'influence des luttes politiques.

LVP : Tu penses que la dépolitisation de la musique va de pair avec la dépolitisation de la mémoire de ces luttes ?

JMR : La « soupe » qu'on produit, elle ne fait que reproduire des produits commerciaux. Il n'y a plus rien, seulement de l'émotionnel. C'est comme un peintre

qui fait seulement de la décoration pour ton salon, qui n'exprime pas quelque chose de fondamental. Il y a des groupes qui font toujours de la musique très proprette, pour ascenseur, de la musique décolorée : de la musique vide. Quand tu écoutes de la musique, il faut que tes sentiments aient une qualité de réflexion sur le monde.

LVP : Cette réflexion sur le monde est provoquée par les paroles ou par la façon de jouer et d'interpréter la musique ?

JMR : Les deux, même si parfois ça peut paraître contradictoire. Par exemple, la musique anglaise des groupes qu'on pouvait voir dans les *pubs* au cours des années 1960, comme les Them, les Small Faces, même The Who, parlent d'histoires d'amourettes et de petits trucs. Mais dans la musique, on sent l'affrontement, on sent la rage, on sent qu'on refuse le monde tel qu'il est. On criera au milieu du solo… L'expression de ce refus est très rageuse alors qu'on dit que ma petite amie doit arriver au rendez-vous deux heures après. C'est la musique qui parle, pas les paroles. En se réappropriant la soul, les Animals ou les Small Faces y ont rajouté une étincelle de rage. Ils y ont rajouté aussi un contenu de classe et l'espérance qu'il va se passer quelque chose.

Repousser les limites du possible

LVP : Pour toi, cette musique a donc repoussé les limites de ce qui était possible.

JMR : Oui, absolument. On sent au cours des années 1960 qu'il y a encore un barrage. Mais il est de plus en plus petit. Enfin, ça part en live avec Jimi Hendrix. Là, on fait ce qu'on veut. Musicalement, on fait ce qu'on veut parce qu'on en est capable. De la même façon, nous, en tant que mouvement politique, on se dit que les partis et les syndicats, ça nous fait chier. On se dit : on va faire d'autres choses.

LVP : Comment cela s'est-il traduit dans votre expérience ?

JMR : Dès qu'on s'est mis dans une lutte radicale face à un système mortifère, on a eu un air frais de liberté qui était incroyable. Il nous a suffi de rentrer radicalement en conflit, pour qu'on devienne presque plus grands, même physiquement, qu'on se redresse. On se dit : « tout cela est passé, ce monde est fini. Je ne veux plus y participer en rien, parce que toute participation à ce monde est mortifère ».

LVP : Pour toi, Jimi Hendrix incarne cette rupture ?

JMR : Il y a des prédécesseurs à Jimi Hendrix. Mais avec lui, dès le début, en 1966, on a senti que la porte était ouverte. Ce qui n'était pas possible quatre ans avant. Jimi Hendrix a dit : « C'est possible. On a décidé que c'est possible ». C'était une décision. Et Jimi Hendrix disait « Je suis libre » dans un solo de sept ou huit minutes. Puis des gens sont tout de suite arrivés pour vendre cette liberté. Des majors et des organisateurs des concerts. Ils ont joué avec ce sentiment de liberté pour le vendre à toute notre génération. Ils en ont fait des produits commerciaux. On a passé deux ou trois ans à acheter ça. Et après on s'est dit : « Non, là on s'est fait baiser ».

LVP : Jusqu'au moment où d'autres refusent à nouveau de se soumettre au marché.

JMR : Les punks incarnent ce renouveau, la nouvelle étincelle dans la musique autour de 1976-1977. Ils se sont dit : « On va pas tomber dans cette musique de "soupe". On va faire la musique nous-mêmes, à la maison ». Ils ont voulu nous dire que tout le monde est capable d'être un membre des Sex Pistols. Partout allaient naître des gens,

des groupes, qui avaient envie de gratter sans être des grands musiciens. C'était une nouvelle liberté. Même si, après, cette liberté a aussi été récupérée.

LVP : Le combat pour éviter la récupération est permanent…

JMR : C'est vrai, autant pour la musique que pour ce qu'a été Action directe. Tant que certains d'entre nous peuvent parler, on est irrécupérables. On a refusé de se vendre. Et tant qu'on peut contrarier une récupération politique, il est impossible de combler le fossé qu'on a creusé entre eux et nous. Il est toujours possible de nous présenter comme des fous (ou pire), de résumer tout ce qu'on a fait à très peu de choses, de tourner en dérision notre action. Mais tant qu'on est vivants et qu'on peut fournir notre propre récit, la récupération est très difficile.

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NOTES

1. ROUILLAN Jann Marc, *Dix ans d'Action directe : Un témoignage, 1977-1987*, Marseille, Agone, 2018, p. 36.
2. ROUILLAN Jann Marc, *Je regrette*, Marseille, Agone, 2016, chap. 33 et 173.
3. *Ibid.*, chap. 33.
4. [ndlr] Le concert des Clash a eu lieu le 16 octobre 1978 au Stadium, 66 avenue d'Ivry à Paris.
5. [ndlr] Joe Strummer (1952-2002) est le chanteur et guitariste des Clash.
6. ROUILLAN, *Je regrette*, chap. 175-176.
7. ROUILLAN, *Dix ans d'Action directe*, p. 220-221.

RÉSUMÉS

Jean-Marc Rouillan est l'un des membres fondateurs d'Action directe (1977-1987). Dans cet entretien, il parle des liens entre sa pratique musicale et l'expérience sensible de son engagement politique depuis 1968, du rôle de la musique et du son dans la lutte armée d'Action directe, ainsi que de la place qu'il attribue à la musique dans la mémoire des luttes politiques.

Jean-Marc Rouillan is one of the founding members of *Action directe* (1977–1987). In this interview, he talks about the connection between his musical practices and his political activism since the May 1968 events in France, the role of music and sound in the armed struggle of *Action directe*, and the place he attributes to music in the history of political struggles.

INDEX

Mots-clés : Action directe, lutte armée, terrorisme, musique, politique, DIY, Rote Armee Fraktion, Clash, Hendrix (Jimi), punk rock
Keywords : Action directe, armed struggle, terrorism, music, politics, DIY, Rote Armee Fraktion, Clash, Hendrix (Jimi), punk rock

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From Music to Armed Struggle, from 1968 to *Action Directe*: An Interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan

De la musique à la lutte armée, de 1968 à Action directe : entretien avec Jean-Marc Rouillan

Luis Velasco-Pufleau

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The following is from an interview at the Maison des métallos in Paris on 10 April 2019. This meeting was part of the research I have been conducting for several years on the role of sound and music in dynamics of violence and armed struggles. In this context, the testimony of Jean-Marc Rouillan seemed to me to be of undeniable importance. The text retains, as far as possible, the general tone of the meeting. I would like to thank Rémi Philton and Stéphanie Gernet for making this interview possible, and Thierry Discepolo for his contributions to the editing of this text.

Introduction

1 Jean-Marc Rouillan was born in Auch (France) in 1952. He participated in the anti-Franco struggle and the autonomist movements in Spain and France in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He then continued in armed struggle with *Action directe* (1977–1987). Described as an extreme left-wing terrorist group by the French State and the media, the members of *Action directe* considered themselves to be a European revolutionary group—like the Red Army Fraction (*Rote Armee Fraktion*, RAF) in Germany and the Red Brigades (*Brigate Rosse,* BR) in Italy. For *Action directe*, the struggle for emancipation and autonomy was indissociable from "challenging the monopoly of violence held by the State".[1] Consequently, armed struggle was part of their existence, including bank

robberies, machine-gun fire and bomb attacks against state buildings or international military organisations (NATO, Interpol), followed by targeted assassinations of industrial and military leaders.

2 In February 1987, Jean-Marc Rouillan was arrested with the other members of the historic nucleus of *Action directe,* and sentenced to life imprisonment. He spent 28 years in prison, including roughly ten years in solitary confinement. He was granted various parole arrangements between 2007 and 2018. Since his final release on 18 May 2018, he can now express himself publicly about the actions for which he was convicted. In this interview, Jean-Marc Rouillan talks about the connection between his musical practice and his political commitment since the May 1968 events in France, the role of music and sound in the armed struggle of *Action directe*, and the place he attributes to music in the history of political struggles.

Music and politics: from 1968 to *Action directe*

LUIS VELASCO-PUFLEAU: In your book *Je regrette*, you say that at one time you played guitar and electric bass.[2] What role did music play in your political activism and in your choice to use armed violence?

Jean-Marc Rouillan: We should go back to the beginning of my activism, because my political commitment in 1968 was preceded by musical commitment. The music, literature, poetry and underground culture of the 1960s were central to my commitment. Playing music was like going underground in anticipation of something, in anticipation of a confrontation. But that could not satisfy the commitment that my life was going to make. Finally, the May 1968 events in France arrived and I moved from music to political activism – it is complex and cannot be untied. Then, the armed activism drew its inspiration from the same culture as the punk and autonomist movements. For me and the other members of *Action directe*, music, literature, poetry—the arts—were crucial to our armed action.

LVP: How did your listening to music give meaning to the upcoming confrontation?

JMR: When I was a kid, listening to a particular song was a shock. I was listening to the song "Gloria" by Them, an Irish band from the 1960s, on the jukebox. After the guitar solo of this song, there is a reprise where you really feel that something is going to happen, that something has to happen. When I was listening to this music, I said to myself, "Something will happen in our lives". The English musical wave preceded 1968; it shaped it culturally but preceded it in expression: "We are the baby boom generation and we won't accept to be ordered about by the old and always wear grey". This idea was expressed by the music. Speaking of a love story, Them would say, "We're going to shake up the world".

LVP: Then 1968 brought about the changes you were waiting for.

JMR: Music was part of this expectation of the spread of the conflict, in which I was going to play my part. Before the first demonstration I went to in May 1968, we were waiting to go to rehearsal in a bar, listening to the jukebox. A friend came into the bar and said, "What? You're going to rehearse when there's a demonstration? We're going to go fight the cops." And we said, "Okay, let's go fight." After May 1968, militant activism meant that I could no longer play music. It was a choice.

LVP: So you "put away your Fender guitar" and abandoned your "plan to move to a music squat near Piccadilly Circus".[3] Did you completely stop playing music after 1968?

JMR: I hardly played any more, except in the hideouts in Spain in the early 1970s, when I was involved in the armed struggle against the Franco dictatorship. Most of the Catalan Spanish comrades had had a musical life before their life in hiding. There were always guitars, and people played them at night. Sometimes, during the day, we would play a few chords together; we would sing. I had a culture of protest songs: anti-Franco through Paco Ibañez and Latin American with Quilapayun. At that time, we listened to a lot of music.

LVP: What was the music you were listening to at the time of *Action directe*?

JMR: The music we were listening to at the beginning of *Action directe*, at our meetings or on our car radios in 1977–1978, was mainly punk and a little rockabilly. We also listened to singers, like Léo Ferré, whose lyrics were close to our militant commitment. But above all we listened to punk: The Clash, much more than the Sex Pistols. There was a politicization that spoke to us, the punk culture of "Do it yourself —DIY" was decisive for us.

LVP: Did you often go to concerts together?

JMR: Yes, at that time we were doing armed actions but were not really "wanted" yet, so we could go to shows. One such musical adventure of the historic nucleus of *Action directe* is when we went to London in July 1977 for a major rockabilly festival. We saw Crazy Cavan and other old rockabilly bands. Then in the evening we went to the Marquee Club, where we saw a concert of the Pirates, Johnny Kidd's former band. The following year, we saw The Clash in concert in Paris.[4]

LVP: How important was this show for you?

JMR: It was important because it was at the time of the autonomous movement. In 1978, we kept the spirit of freemusic, this late-1960s principle of not paying for concerts when they were organised by big companies that made money with music. When we went to see The Clash, there were about three hundred of us autonomous activists, and we said we were going to force our way in. That's when Joe Strummer came out and asked what was going on.[5] We explained the situation to him, that we were not going to pay to come in and see them. He said, "Okay, as soon as we start the first song, they'll open the doors and you can come in". It was the first time I met Joe Strummer. The second time was in 1981 (at the beginning of the Mitterrand years, when *Action directe* was legal); he was in Paris doing a concert at the Mogador theatre and we met for a coffee.

Resisting the commodification of music

LVP: This incident resonates with another episode in your book *Je regrette*, in which you talk about wanting to "free the music from the merchants", at the Isle of Wight Festival in 1970.[6]

JMR: Our generation of activists was used to groups being born in pubs or small concert halls. We would have a beer and listen to music; there was a whole atmosphere. Then came this trend of big concerts, initially free, but we soon found ourselves behind big investors who made money with that. There were the first editions of the Isle of Wight Festival, but I didn't go, given the price of the tickets and the concentration camp atmosphere of the music: they held the festival in the

countryside but were putting up high walls to protect their business. In 1970, there was a call from activists to go to the Isle of Wight and force the organizers to make the festival free. We went over and for two weeks fought every night with the cops, with Hells Angels and with the private security agents trying to protect the thing. We kept fighting until the festival was free. Free music was a political struggle; we understood it as such.

LVP: You refused the commodification of music while supporting musicians themselves.

JMR: Musicians have to be able to make a living from their music, which is why we paid like everyone else when it came to small concerts, when we knew the money went to the musicians. But at Wight or Woodstock, they were big companies that were set up to make so-called free, peace and love festivals. But it was to make money. It wasn't easy to fight against commodification, the monopoly of these big companies who understood that they could make a lot of money with rock—when it was our music, the music of the pubs, the music of the small concerts, the music of our meetings. This struggle lasted from the 1970s to the punk era. There was a divergence there. On one hand there was the music listened to in big venues, like at La Villette. Music imprisoned, protected by the police. On the other hand there was punk, with the Do It Yourself spirit. People were saying, "I can play punk, too. So we are going to make our own music again, because this is no longer ours. It has been taken over". The spirit of free music was to find a common space with musicians, like in British pubs in the early 1960s.

LVP: Making music yourself was an act of emancipation?

JMR: Yes, emancipation of people, and also of music. Because sometimes bands have pushed the boundaries of music itself. With their shouting, for example, it was more an expression of rage than the music from soul or blues that we were used to hearing.

LVP: What was the music you didn't listen to, the music you couldn't stand?

JMR: We had a word for it: "soup". We couldn't stand this music, which is no more than a commodity. For example, I listened to the Rolling Stones until 1972–1973. After that, it was just "soup". They did disco and other things to make money. When music becomes only about making money, there is no longer any political message. Not only in the lyrics, but also in the sound.

LVP: Were there any other British bands you couldn't stand?

JMR: Bands like Cream, in which Eric Clapton played. Clapton is someone I've never liked, even when he was with the Yardbirds. Clapton was one of the people who stank of "I want to make money; I play guitar to make money". He was not someone who played a role in struggles; moreover, later on, he was a sympathizer of the ideas of the National Front and all that fascist bullshit. Kind of like David Bowie: he made great songs, but it smelled too much like money. It did not fit with the militant commitment of our generation.

LVP: In terms of your anti-imperialist ideology, did you associate certain groups with US imperialism?

JMR: I think that from the moment bands sold their music to big managers, their music somehow "imperialised" our culture. Even bands like The Velvet Underground; it smelled too much like fake underground. The bands I followed were bands I saw in pubs or small gigs.

Music and armed struggle

LVP: At the time of *Action directe*, did you listen to music before your armed actions?

JMR: No, didn't listen to music. We were extremely focused on the action; there was also fear. Music came after, when a highly stressful moment had passed, to relax or lower our adrenaline. It was the beginning of the Walkman. So there were activists who, after armed actions, put music in their Walkmans. But it wasn't necessarily the music we listened to the rest of the day. At that time, we listened to Pink Floyd or other things that were more "zen". Sometimes we also listened to classical music, Mozart or Fauré, for example.

LVP: This listening was more solitary listening.

JMR: Yes, when someone needed music to wind down, they would take a drink and their Walkman, sitting in an armchair.

LVP: Did you sing after your armed actions?

JMR: Not really, but it could happen. Recently I went to Rome and an Italian comrade told me, "Remember when, after an action, we sang a ridiculous Italian pop song, 'Sarà Perché Ti Amo'...". Yes, I remembered that we sung it at the top of our lungs in the car, just for fun.

LVP: In the evenings, were there also moments of collective listening?

JMR: Yes, of course, but it didn't have the same function. As the flats were often shared and the instruction for underground members was not to go out after 9 p.m., in the evening we all took turns playing our 33 vinyls. The repertoire was more varied: old records from the 1960s, punk or rock. Since we didn't watch television, we used our time for music or writing. Music was a daily presence.

LVP: Another characteristic of your armed struggle is its internationalist dimension, which took the form of exchanges and joint actions with other armed groups in Europe (RAF [*Rote Armee Fraktion*], Red Brigades [*Brigate Rosse*]) or the Middle East (PLO, Kurds). Did you share music among activists when you were in another country or when there were foreign activists passing through your home?

JMR: Generally, we listened to the music that the activists listened to wherever we were. But even if musical exchanges were not central to our activities, they had an influence on our musical spheres. In the early 1970s in Spain, I introduced Catalan comrades to English music, not what they heard on their radios, but garage music, the first albums of T. Rex, for example. Towards the end of *Action directe*, German RAF activists were listening to a lot of industrial music, much more than punk. Thanks to them, I discovered new music that I started listening to regularly. We were trying to share what we loved.

LVP: What emotions do you associate with the music shared at that time with your comrades?

JMR: Those early years of the armed struggle, in the early 1970s, were very hard. Many comrades died during that period. But at the same time, those years are characterized by immense joy, immense camaraderie between people. My memories of music remind me that there was a lot of joy during those times, with the Italians, with the Germans, with all those people who had come to fight in Paris.

Sound and revolutionary tactics

LVP: In your latest book *Dix ans d'Action directe*, you devote several pages to your surveillance listening to police radio and tracking the frequencies of special units. You say that your "methods of cross-checking and the work of surveillance listening" have often given you "a slight step ahead repression."[7] Could you say a little more about the role that surveillance listening played in your armed struggle?

JMR: Information has always had a crucial role to play in the struggle. Monitoring the adversary was a necessity to win the battle. They were watching us and we were watching them. *Action directe*, as a guerrilla war, was therefore forced to create a function of countersurveillance of police actions. Thanks to radio scanners (often made in the United States but purchased in Switzerland), we were able to intercept all communications—even the most local—from the repressive state apparatus. Until they found our surveillance notebooks, after many years, they had no idea of our capabilities. Many arrests were thwarted, which they thought was because of moles in their own departments or complicity in the state security services.

LVP: In the end, you hijacked one of the most common means used by states for surveillance purposes: the interception of communications.

JMR: Totally. We even intercepted the communications of counterintelligence services, the DST[8] and the special units that were responsible for intercepting our communications.

LVP: How did the sound of radio (police or pirate radio) shape your daily life?

JMR: Most of the time, surveillance devices were in use in the apartments and commando cars. The sounds of these communications were part of our daily lives, or sometimes one of us used headphones. The devices were scanning the police's main communication radio waves. Before operations, we checked that there were no special unit members in the area.

For pirate radio stations, too, it was a question of obtaining information. We followed the movement's debate shows. People knew we were listening and often they would speak to us directly, to criticize and make suggestions. All of this was a live and constant sound that punctuated our militant lives, like the sound of Paris, the frenetic city—our own sierra…

Music and the collective memory of political struggles

LVP: For you, can music be a political collective memory, a way of not forgetting the political struggles of the past?

JMR: Collective memory is a struggle for both music and political acts themselves. If we leave the collective memory of our political struggle in the hands of those who won the battle, there is no longer any collective memory, only their version of the facts. When it comes to music, if we don't go deep into the music of those years, it will always boil down to "soup". I think our generation integrated the music it has listened to and produced, as a political act. This is rarely the case today. I think we have to keep at it: it's important to explain this to the new generations. We have to fight to reclaim the collective memory of our music.

LVP: In what way is collective memory a condition for political struggles?

JMR: Collective memory is part of any revolutionary struggle. There is not one revolutionary struggle that was born spontaneously (as was thought of some 19th-century diseases). Collective memory is a breeding ground for struggles: if you know the past of the revolutionary movement, you find strength, experience and a lot of other things. There is no struggle without knowledge of the past: if we lose our collective memory, we lose the meaning of our struggle.

LVP: In what way is music part of this collective memory?

JMR: Music has a political history. There are young people who listen to music without knowing where it comes from. They think it comes from recent political movements. But if you know music history from the 1960s to the present, you understand that some music comes from other movements or has links to older political struggles. For example, there is a political history behind ska. It emerged in clubs in London, where only West Indians and Irish people were accepted, and they were denied access to clubs reserved for English people. So they created their own music. That's why The Clash also had a penchant for other kinds of music, like reggae: Joe Strummer often went to these relegated clubs, where the first skins [skinhead movement] were located. All of this is nothing new and requires political articulation and understanding. Music is a constant fight under the influence of political struggles.

LVP: Do you think that the depoliticisation of music goes hand in hand with the depoliticisation of the collective memory of these struggles?

JMR: "Soup" that is produced reproduces commercial products. There's nothing left, only emotion. It's like a painter who just decorates your living room, who doesn't express anything fundamental. There are bands that always make bland, colourless music, for elevators: empty music. When you listen to music, your feelings have to have a quality of reflection on the world.

LVP: Is this reflection on the world driven by the lyrics or by the way music is played and interpreted?

JMR: Both, even if sometimes it may seem contradictory. For example, the lyrics of the British bands you could see in pubs in the 1960s, like Them, Small Faces, even The Who, talk about love stories and small stuff. But in their music, we feel the confrontation, we feel the rage, we feel that they refuse the world as it is. They will shout in the middle of the solo... The expression of this refusal is angry even if they're singing "I've got a date with my girlfriend in two hours". It's the music that speaks, not the lyrics. In creating their own take on soul music, The Animals or Small Faces added a spark of rage. They also added class content and the hope for something to change.

Pushing the limits of what is possible

LVP: For you, this music pushed the limits of what was possible.

JMR: Yes, absolutely. In the 1960s, we felt that there was still a barrier; but it was getting smaller and smaller. It finally exploded with Jimi Hendrix. From that point, we could do whatever we wanted. Musically, he did what he wanted because he was capable of doing it. In the same way, as a political movement, we were fed up with

political parties and unions. So we said to ourselves, "We're going to do things differently".

LVP: How did this translate in your experience?

JMR: As soon as we got into a radical struggle against a deadly system, we tasted the fresh air of freedom and it was incredible. All we had to do was to enter into a radical conflict to be bigger, physically taller even, to straighten up. We said to ourselves, "All this is over; this world is over. I no longer want any part in it, because any participation in this world is fatal".

LVP: For you, Jimi Hendrix embodied this breakaway?

JMR: There are forerunners to Jimi Hendrix. But with him, from the beginning in 1966, we felt that the door was open. What was not possible four years before, Jimi Hendrix said, "It's possible now. We have decided that it's possible". It was a decision. And Jimi Hendrix would say "I'm free" in a seven- or eight-minute solo. Then, right away, people showed up to sell this freedom—major labels and concert managers. They played with this feeling of freedom, in order to sell it to our entire generation. They turned it into commercial products. We spent two or three years buying it, and then we thought, "No, we're getting fucked".

LVP: Until other musicians also refused to submit to the market.

JMR: Punks represented this renewal, the new spark in music around 1976–1977. They said, "We're not going to fall into this 'soup' music trap. We're going to make music ourselves, at home". They wanted to tell us that anyone could be a member of the Sex Pistols. Everywhere, people and groups emerged, who wanted to make music without being great musicians. It was a new kind of freedom—even though, later, the market usurped this freedom too.

LVP: It's a constant battle to avoid being turned into something else...

JMR: That's true, as much for music as for *Action directe*. As long as some of us can talk, we can't be controlled. We refused to sell out. And as long as we can thwart a political distortion, it is impossible to cross the divide that we dug between them and us. They can always present us as fools (or worse), try to make what we did sound like very little, mock our action. But as long as we are alive and able to provide our own account, being turned into something else will be very difficult.

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NOTES

1. ROUILLAN Jann Marc, *Dix ans d'Action directe: Un témoignage, 1977-1987*, Marseille, Agone, 2018, p. 36.

2. ROUILLAN Jann Marc, *Je regrette*, Marseille, Agone, 2016, chaps. 33 and 173.

3. Ibid., chap. 33.

4. [Editor's note] The Clash gig took place on 16 October 1978 at the Stadium, 66 avenue d'Ivry in Paris.

5. [Editor's note] Joe Strummer (1952–2002) was the singer and guitarist of The Clash.

6. ROUILLAN, *Je regrette*, chaps. 175–176.

7. ROUILLAN, *Dix ans d'Action directe*, pp. 220–221.

8. The Direction de surveillance du territoire (DST) was responsible for counterespionage and counterterrorism—the French equivalent of the FBI in the United States and the British MI5. Created in 1944, it was merged in 2008 with the Direction centrale des renseignements généraux (often called Renseignements Généraux, RG) into the new Direction générale de la Sécurité intérieure (DGSI).

ABSTRACTS

Jean-Marc Rouillan is one of the founding members of *Action directe* (1977–1987). In this interview, he talks about the connection between his musical practices and his political activism since the May 1968 events in France, the role of music and sound in the armed struggle of *Action directe*, and the place he attributes to music in the history of political struggles.

Jean-Marc Rouillan est l'un des membres fondateurs d'Action directe (1977-1987). Dans cet entretien, il parle des liens entre sa pratique musicale et l'expérience sensible de son engagement politique depuis 1968, du rôle de la musique et du son dans la lutte armée d'Action directe, ainsi que de la place qu'il attribue à la musique dans la mémoire des luttes politiques.

INDEX

Keywords: Action directe, armed struggle, terrorism, music, politics, DIY, Rote Armee Fraktion, Clash, Hendrix (Jimi), punk rock
Mots-clés: Action directe, lutte armée, terrorisme, musique, politique, DIY, Rote Armee Fraktion, Clash, Hendrix (Jimi), punk rock

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Guitars Give Way to Guns: A Commentary on an Interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan

Les guitares laissent place aux fusils : commentaire d'un entretien avec Jean-Marc Rouillan

Matthew Worley

EDITOR'S NOTE

The following is a commentary on: VELASCO-PUFLEAU Luis, "From Music to Armed Struggle, from 1968 to *Action Directe*: An Interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan", *Transposition*, no. Hors-série 2, 2020, https://journals.openedition.org/transposition/3780. DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.3780

1 The life of Jean-Marc Rouillan brings into sharp relief the connections and overlaps between pop music, youth culture and politics that helped define the late twentieth century. As the interview reveals, music – and rock music especially – served as a segue from teenage agitation to political provocation. Guitars gave way to guns. Shaking some action transformed into *Action directe*. Romanticism became rebellion; a revolution of the senses fed into a revolution on the streets until clang clang went the jail guitar doors.

2 In recounting his life's trajectory to Luis Velasco-Pufleau's probing questions, Rouillan taps into much that resonated at the time and continues to resonate for scholars and politicos today. Certainly, in the late twentieth century, a correlation between music, violence and politics became clear, as rock'n'roll's tearing of the cultural fabric allowed for flesh, frustrations and freedoms to fall free. From the 1950s, creativity begat personal liberation, confronting and overturning tired expectations and social restraints. Political commitment was preceded by musical commitment, Rouillan notes, as if the spaces occupied by youth cultural innovation required more than a temporal

response. In the hands of Rouillan, rock's rebel pose became real. In May 1968, rock provided a soundtrack to a protest that further generated allusions to street fighting men and set about upturning the horrors of the twentieth century. Rouillan felt it and believed it; he did not just perform it.

3 Interestingly, the shift from music to militancy ensured Rouillan 'could no longer play music'. For others, of course, 1968 served as inspiration to revitalise popular music. With punk, the spirit of rebellion connected the subversive thrill of rock'n'roll to the seditious thrill of 1968's almost-revolution – or it did so for some anyway. As an aside, it may be worth pondering if the assault of Peter Brotzmann's *Machine Gun* or Anthony Braxton's *This Time* better captured the moment *in the moment*. Punk, after all, took time to gestate. Whatever, Rouillan recognised the feeling bound up in songs such as Them's 'Gloria': primal, raw, pushing to the edge of *something*. A soundtrack to chaos. The thrill of the fight ... or the fuck.

4 Yet, even as Rouillan lay down his guitar, he continued to find a soundtrack to the revolution in pop music. The Clash, and the DIY ethos associated with punk, are mentioned. This is interesting for several reasons. First, The Clash's signing to CBS was a contentious moment, a decision to engage on the *inside* rather than without. The band's experience – including the release of 'Remote Control' (1977) as a single without the group's consent – revealed the expected tension between art, protest and commerce, with the more cynical reader perhaps left wondering how far CBS consciously sought to cash-in via marketing The Clash's rebel-image ('turning rebellion into money'). Second, the experience of The Clash on CBS reaffirmed – for bands such as Crass and others of a less overtly anarchistic bent – the need to circumnavigate the music industry to better embody punk's oppositionism. Punk died, Mark Perry once said, on the day The Clash signed to CBS, an exaggerated remark that nevertheless allowed the innovator of *Sniffin' Glue* and ATV to seek more creative avenues under – rather than over – ground. Third, and linked to this, punk's DIY was in some ways a response to The Clash (and the Sex Pistols') perceived co-option by the music industry. If the 'first wave' had been codified and commodified, then it was up to those who followed to forge a better and alternative path. Fourth, The Clash's relationship to politics was likewise contentious. In particular, the band's performance at the Anti-Nazi League carnival of 1978, whereat Joe Strummer wore a (mis-spelt) *Brigade Rosse* T-shirt brokered yet more debate. Already criticised for their trip to Belfast and the photos taken in front of the barricades, The Clash's evoking the armed struggle of Italian militants led to further condemnation, be it for fetishizing violence or dabbling in politics little understood. And yet, beyond the pose and the pretence, Rouillan's meeting with Strummer reaffirms the more general sense of The Clash as a band that mattered and meant well. They opened doors, literally, and the connection made between The Clash's smuggling fans into gigs and the 1970 Isle of Wight Festival confrontations is telling. The notion of punk being a 'year zero', a wholesale rejection of the hippie counterculture and a break from the past was always dubious, and Rouillan is surely right to recognise continuums. We may note, too, the double meaning of 'free music'; that is both costless and open to experimentation. Either way, boundaries are this way broken and crossed.

5 Indeed, the question of commodification looms large in Rouillan's interview and loomed large in punk's broader critique of both the music industry and society more generally. Be it Jamie Reid's artwork for the Sex Pistols or X-Ray Spex's dissection of

consumerism, Gang of Four's agit-pop musical essays on the commodification of desire or Buzzcocks' breakdown of fiction romance, Rough Trade's co-op shop and label or Crass' anarchist communiqués, the 'fight against commodification' (as Rouillan puts it) was fought on many fronts. The Sex Pistols may be seen as a kamikaze mission into the heart of pop's spectacle. Following their impact, amidst the shrapnel and the media-generated horror, spaces opened up for previously untapped voices, sounds, labels, language and attitudes to find expression. Rouillan mentions British pubs, but there followed the arts centres, squats and collectives that likewise enabled bands to push the parameters of music. And as the 'expression of rage' transformed from anger to alienation, so the post-punk period from late 1977 fused with punk's DIY ethos to enable one of the most diverse and creative periods of music ever. The money was not the motive. Expression, originality, creativity, communication, agency, autonomy: these became the watchwords. Rouillan reveals a penchant for bands in small pubs or playing small gigs. There's a search for purity here: the moment before corruption.

6 Or … the moment before the action. Once engaged in the armed struggle, so the music followed rather than preceded the moment of confrontation. Pink Floyd and classical music helped lower Rouillan's adrenalin. A soundtrack of urgency gave way to sounds of fluidity and contemplation. Maybe even silence. The industrial noise that Rouillan says the German Red Army Faction plotted to in the early 1980s might seem more attuned to the violence of the struggle: maybe the volume it was played at could affect the response of the listener? The harsh tones of Throbbing Gristle become soothing when played at minimal volume, more sound-bath than aural assault.

7 Industrial, obsessed about the media: about control processes and systems. Of all punk's associated cultures, industrial came closest to fetishizing political aesthetics and formulating music/sound as a weapon. When Rouillan talks of surveillance, it recalls the proto-sampling of Cabaret Voltaire and the fascination with fascism that informed the paranoid instincts of Throbbing Gristle's 'total war'. Here, of course, Rouillan was surveying those doing the surveillance. Punk, more generally, may be read as a dialogue with the media, a critique of distortions and double-standards, an alternative TV. Think of all those collages of newspaper headlines set against bland adverts and cropped photos from glossy magazines. Think of all those lyrics setting television as the new religion, or the impetus to *do it* rather than consume/absorb/observe it. But when Rouillan talks of intercepting communications, it reminds more of industrial's jamming of media signals and construction of alternative narratives. Herein, now the 1970s and 1980s are very much *history*, lay trace of collective memories that tell different stories and different possibilities. Resources of hope, Raymond Williams might say.

8 Certainly, amidst the scrambled (fake) news casts of the twenty-first century, such resources are important. As the interview notes, musics have a history and those histories are often bound to political struggles. The playing and the production, the language and the location, the music and the movement of the bodies. And it is those histories that help make music more than the 'soup' Rouillan compares much commercially-produced pop to. Context is all. Know your history. Never disentangle or atomize. In rock'n'roll he heard anger, frustration and the desire for change: love songs sung through gritted teeth. Where rock suggested a reconstitution of music, so the politics it served to soundtrack and conceive also sought to reinvent: to do different; to demand the impossible; to kiss the sky. In many ways, Rouillan's life sought to make tangible the world rock promised; to ensure the freedoms encapsulated in sound and

feedback might shake off the chains of commerce and soiled tradition. The struggle – against capital, reification, commodification and control – continues. There remains a world to win.

ABSTRACTS

This short commentary reflects on Luis Velasco-Pufleau's interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan. Picking up on the connections made between musical practice and political struggle, it locates Rouillan's life and thoughts in relation to punk and the subversive charge more general to rock'n'roll. By so doing, questions of freedom, action and commodification are considered, relating how cultural revolution may feed into political insurrection.

Ce court commentaire revient sur l'entretien que Luis Velasco-Pufleau a mené auprès de Jean-Marc Rouillan. En reprenant les liens effectués entre pratique musicale et lutte politique, il contextualise la vie et la pensée de Rouillan en relation avec le punk et la charge subjective plus généralement propre au rock'n'roll. Pour ce faire, les questions de liberté, d'action et de marchandisation sont interrogées en perspective de la manière dont la révolution culturelle pourrait contribuer à l'insurrection politique.

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Mots-clés: révolution, rock'n'roll, punk, Action directe, musique, marchandisation
Keywords: revolution, rock'n'roll, punk, Action directe, music, commodification

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Going Underground: The Politics of Free Music around 1968

Going underground *: politiques de la musique libre autour de 1968*

Timothy Scott Brown

EDITOR'S NOTE

The following is a commentary on: VELASCO-PUFLEAU Luis, “From Music to Armed Struggle, from 1968 to *Action Directe*: An Interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan”, *Transposition*, no. Hors-série 2, 2020, https://journals.openedition.org/transposition/3780. DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.3780

1 When Jean-Marc Rouillan observes that his “political commitment in 1968 was preceded by musical commitment”, he touches on an oft-emphasized point in the recent scholarship on the “global 1960s”. It was not just that culture and politics were intimately bound together around 1968, but that innovations in the former often precipitated developments in the latter. The point is particularly relevant where popular music is concerned. In no other area of cultural production was the social impact so explosive nor the politics of consumption so fraught. And as the scholarship of the last dozen or so years has shown and Rouillan’s recollections again confirm, popular music—above all rock‘n’roll—was the sound of revolt *par excellence*. Rouillan touches on this fact directly when he remarks that “[p]laying music was like going underground…in anticipation of a confrontation”. That this statement could be uttered with reference to the moment of 1968 was in part a function of rock‘n’roll’s newness, and the ease with which that newness allowed it to articulate with other cultural and political innovations emerging around the same time. In this respect, rock‘n’roll gained its cultural-political import through a process of synergy in which it came to stand in for a broader rebellion.

2 Rouillan’s comment simultaneously suggests a spatial relationship—one in which the socially-valuable in music, as in politics, can take root only in the subterranean spaces

where society's demands for conformity fail fully to penetrate. Here, the "underground" as a term/concept has a double valence—as the space simultaneously in which the left-wing political desperadoes of the post-'68 moment marshaled their forces for all out war with the forces of the state, and the place where cultural militants sought to create authentic artistic expression free from the deforming pressures of mass commerce. The most culturally militant sounds, like the most politically militant agitation, were to be found not at the surface level of society, again, but underneath it, in the realm of subculture. To "go underground" was the act not just of the political militant who rejected all accommodation with bourgeois-parliamentary forms, but of the cultural militant who, similarly, rejected the forms dictated by the market.

3 The liberatory qualities of music, in Rouillan's account especially the music of Jimi Hendrix, foreshadowed other possibilities. With Hendrix, remembers Rouillan, "we felt that the door was open. What was not possible four years before, Jimi Hendrix said, 'It's possible now. We have decided that it's possible.'" This voluntaristic act was, as Rouillan puts it, a "decision", one that could lead to others. "From that point [the appearance on the scene of Hendrix] we could do whatever we wanted. Musically, he did what he wanted because he was capable of doing it. In the same way, as a political movement, we were fed up with political parties and unions. So we said to ourselves, 'We're going to do things differently.'"

4 Almost as soon as it was enunciated, however, that emancipatory decision faced the danger of being rendered meaningless. "Jimi Hendrix would say 'I'm free' in a seven- or eight-minute solo;" says Rouillan; "Then, right away, people showed up to sell this freedom—major labels and concert managers. They played with this feeling of freedom, in order to sell it to our entire generation. They turned it into commercial products. We spent two or three years buying it, and then we thought, 'No, we're getting fucked.'" The demand for free music was a response to this realization. A key threat perceived by radicals in the long 1960s was posed by what the Situationists dubbed *recuperation*, a term meant to invoke capitalism's ability to heal itself from challenges to its hegemony. Across the whole range of cultural production, from mainstream publishing programs calculated to cash in on the demand for the writings of Che and Mao to the commerce-safe recapitulation of countercultural values represented by the musical *Hair*, capitalism proved adept at placing the revolution up for sale almost as quickly as it could be created. Radicals worried about recuperation because capitalism's ability to assimilate the cultural gave it the ability to disable the political. The "underground" in which subcultures flourished was never a pure sphere of rebellion, but constantly under threat of having its content siphoned away. Capitalism was all too adept, in the words of a band that figures centrally in Rouillan's account—the Clash—of "turning rebellion into money".

5 The effort to "free the music from the merchants" was a transnational one. It is no surprise, for example, that Action Directe's West German counterparts, the Movement 2nd June, were first politicized in precisely such a refusal of the logic of the "big concert". This was in the infamous 1965 riot at the Rolling Stones concert in West Berlin, which saw militants-to-be crash the show and participate in a riot that destroyed the venue. The same group of militants later carried out a smoke bomb attack on the West Berlin debut of *Hair*, denouncing it as an attempt to "gratify capitalist demands" at the expense of the "real subculture". The attack against *Hair* took place against the backdrop of ongoing police pressure against the Zodiak Arts Lab,

a key site of subcultural experimentation in West Berlin. Such attempts to mobilize against the twin threat of police pressure and capitalist recuperation could be multiplied across a range of European and North American cases. Meanwhile the conceptual basis of these attempts—the assumption of a unity between political and cultural forms of struggle—was symbolized in an ubiquitous image of 1968 on both sides of the Atlantic: the juxtaposition of the machine gun and the electric guitar.

6 The pervasiveness of the association between political and cultural militancy and the linked struggle against recuperation offers more evidence of the importance of the transnational around 1968. It was not just a matter of ideas moving across national borders, however; rather, activists everywhere were responding to the issues imbedded in industrial society in general and capitalism in particular. That militants expected a political message from their music or ascribed political significance to music whether it was openly political or not was symptomatic of the long-1960s moment. But it also suggests for us a key link between the activism of the moment around 1968 and that of the decade that followed. It is no accident that Rouillan references both Hendrix and the Clash, the former a musical avatar of the 1960s rebellion, the latter the most-explicitly political of the bands associated with the punk explosion of the late-1970s. In both cases, music held a political valence; more importantly, punk—along with the proto-punk exemplified by bands such as West Germany's Ton Steine Scherben—directly embodied an approach to cultural production in which the act of making and distributing the music became as important as the messages embedded in the music itself.

7 This DIY ("Do it yourself") approach is a key feature linking the rebellion of 1968 and the rebellion of punk, calling into question too-easy assumptions about the extent to which punk actually broke with the cultural politics of a hippie rebellion that, on the surface, it violently rejected. More important is that DIY, as both mode of cultural production and political ethos, exists at the very heart of the particular understanding of music put forward by Jean-Marc Rouillan. The demand that music be free was simultaneously an anti-capitalist act and an act of cultural rebellion that sought to protect the integrity of the musical-political gesture. "Free music was a political struggle", as Rouillan puts it; "we understood it as such".

ABSTRACTS

Going Underground situates the demand for "free music" as part of a broader contestation of the terms of cultural consumption in the radical milieu of the long 1960s. At stake in the mobilizations recounted in the reflections of Action Directe-member Jean-Marc Rouillan was not just access to popular music, but the validity of the subversive meanings ascribed to cultural production under capitalism. Struggling with the system's ability to co-opt challenges to its hegemony by putting them up for sale, activists insisted that it was they, and not promoters or other financially-interested middle men, who had the right to determine the conditions under which liberatory cultural expression such as rock'n'roll would be consumed. The insistence that

music be “free” embodied a characteristic demand of the radical moment around 1968: that culture actually matter.

Going underground resitue la revendication d’une “musique libre” (*free music*) au sein d’une contestation plus large, dans le milieu radical des années 1960, des termes de la consommation culturelle. Dans les mobilisations dont Jean-Marc Rouillan, membre d’Action directe, rend compte dans ses réflexions, ce qui est en jeu n’est pas simplement l’accès à la musique populaire, mais aussi la validité de la charge subversive accordée à la production culturelle en régime capitaliste. Luttant contre la capacité qu’a le système à intégrer – en le commercialisant – ce qui défie son hégémonie, les activistes insistent : c’est bien eux, et non des promoteurs et autres intermédiaires intéressés par l’argent, qui ont le droit de déterminer les conditions de consommation d’expressions culturelles libératoires telles que le rock‘n’roll. L’insistance sur le fait que la musique doit être “libre” (*free*) rejoint une revendication caractéristique du moment radical entourant 1968 : que la culture compte bel et bien.

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Mots-clés: DIY, récupération, rock, subculture, underground
Keywords: DIY, recuperation, rock, subculture, underground

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Reflections on a Revolutionary and Music

Réflexions sur un révolutionnaire et la musique

Jeremy Varon

EDITOR'S NOTE

The following is a commentary on: VELASCO-PUFLEAU Luis, "From Music to Armed Struggle, from 1968 to *Action Directe*: An Interview with Jean-Marc Rouillan", *Transposition*, no. Hors-série 2, 2020, https://journals.openedition.org/transposition/3780. DOI : https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.3780

The age of miracles.
The age of sound.
Well there's a Golden Age.
Comin' round, comin' round, comin' round!
- Phish, "Golden Age"

1 At the height of the radical Sixties, the White Panther's John Sinclair called for the creation of a "guitar army".[1] "Rock'n'roll", he extolled, was "a weapon of cultural revolution" — indeed, the "*model* of a revolutionary future".[2] Combined with acid, activism, and guns, it had the power to birth beautiful, free, high-energy people in a new, beautiful world.

2 Sinclair's vision spoke to rock'n'roll's insurgent roots. From its start, rock music has been the bearer of rebellion, borne of adolescent rage, illicit sexuality, and great dollops of Black cool so coveted within white Western culture. Building on the musical legacy of the Civil Rights Movement, folk and then rock musicians brought the protest song to thriving social movements. Some artists embraced the revolutionary "freak" culture reaching its zenith at the Woodstock festival of August 1969.

3 The music-saturated event served, in turn, as a master-metaphor for a comprehensive liberation. On the witness stand for his involvement in the Chicago 1968 protests at the

Democratic National Convention, Yippee leader Abbie Hoffman declared himself a resident not of the United States but of a Woodstock Nation. That nation, currently "held captive" by a "decaying system", valued "cooperation" over "competition" and profit.[3]

4 A decade later — and with hope of revolution now in decay — Hoffman changed his tune. (He had spent much of the 1970s underground fleeing cocaine charges, while remaining active in small environmental campaigns.) "The idea that rock was revolutionary", he told an interviewer in 1979, "was probably the greatest put-on of the Sixties".[4] Only Phil Ochs, the MC5, and the Fugs had dared play at the Yippie's Festival of Life during the Chicago convention, teeming with riot police. Most musicians, Hoffman lamented, "just wanted to make a lot of money and smoke a lot of dope".

5 Here Hoffman speaks to that other side of rock music, squarely planted in the culture industry. From its start, rock'n'roll was a mass commercial enterprise, growing more lucrative as youth culture exploded. Its leading artists appeared to relish growing fabulously wealthy — even as they maintained the persona of the incorrigible bad-ass, or earnest rocker, or pop spiritualist, or patron of noble causes. Reckless profligacy in the form of gluttonous addictions and smashed instruments, hotel rooms, and sports cars became part of the renegade profile.

6 All the while, little golden ages of pushback to commercialism — such as once captivated Sinclair and Hoffman — bubbled up and quickly vanished. The fledgling "guitar army" of the Sixties gave way to arena rock, disco, and the inward-looking singer-songwriter. Thereafter, the whole genre periodically re-energized itself in purported return to a plebian, break-even authenticity, like the early days of punk or grunge. This cycle of decline and rebirth continues on, with DIY-diehards ever posing as rock's conscience.

7 But eventually, most everyone wants to get paid. When they don't, they file lawsuits. Bitter disputes over royalty payments and estates have themselves become the unseemly stuff of rock legend, consuming the likes of George Clinton, John Fogerty, Johnny Rotten/Lydon, the Dead Kennedys, Prince, and the Clash's Paul Simonon. Involvement in good causes still exists, but mostly as philanthropy and celebrity advocacy safely within the progressive mainstream.

8 And still the singers howl, in whatever the latest rebel fashion, "Long live rock, be it dead or alive!"

9 The enduring genius of rock'n'roll has been to mask its social position with its subjective spirit: to signify rebellion in a deep, visceral way, while remaining tethered to common aspirations for fame and fortune, or at least a decent living. How else to explain the reflections on music and revolution of the French urban guerrilla Jean-Marc Rouillan than in terms of this cunning?

10 Rouillan repeatedly describes rock music — the *real* rock music of the 1960s and later of the punk era — as the people's music. He praises the bands of his own little golden age tearing up British clubs in the early and mid-1960s. He credits music for helping to push him into the streets of Paris in May 68 and a life of radical activism. And he

readily separates the damned from the saved: those who betrayed and those who stayed faithful to rock's rebel roots, defined for him by the rejection of profit.

11 Rouillan holds the "big companies" promoting rock concerts in special contempt, claiming the right to crash any show too wedded to money. Posing as a "peace and love" festival, Woodstock itself was a giant rip-off. Few artists escape his purist wrath, which verges on self-parody. Rouillan brands Eric Clapton a sell-out from the start; his remarkable achievements on the guitar were evidently driven by his single-minded goal "to make money". David Bowie, no matter what he meant to queer and other misfit kids, suffers the similar taint of greed. Even the ultra-hip Velvet Underground "smelled too much like the fake underground". Rouillan found redemption in the European punk/DIY scene of the 1970s and early 80s, aligned with the autonomist movement and, in his mind, the militancy of *Action directe*. The Clash, a favorite among his comrades, became for him the gods of a resurrected rock.

12 By parts idealistic, censorious, and naïve, Rouillan somehow escaped Hoffman's disillusionment. Above all, he seems guilty of taking rock's insurgent spirit for its essence, imposing expectations on it not widely shared by rockers themselves. The extraordinary times he lived in make this error, at the very least, understandable. His generation was propelled into a higher consciousness and mission of social change under the influence of music. Countless youths appealed to rock — the lyrics but also just the energy — as inspiration, oracle and omen.

13 Rouillan recalls being seized with the sense that "something will happen in our lives" after hearing a rousing section in the garage band classic "Gloria". That something became for him a new life as a radical trying to create a new world. Rock could capture also the heaviness of the times. Jonathan Lerner, an American radical, recalls of 1967:

> my soundtrack mostly came from folk rockers, like Jesse Colin Young. His iconic "Get Together"[5], with its admonition to "love one another right now", came out that year. So did his "Dreamer's Dream"[6]. Its chorus goes, "Now the dream has ended, the world that I intended crashing down into bitter reality". It was actually a song of broken romance. I misheard it as political commentary, because crashing into bitter reality felt like what was happening.[7]

14 Two years later, Lerner helped found the urban guerrilla group Weatherman. Suggesting inexorable change, its name was famously drawn from the Bob Dylan line "you don't need a Weatherman to know which way the wind blows". At the time and in reflection, rock was used both to make sense of and to reshape one's individual and social world.

15 Insofar as the subjecting feelings associated with rock music inspired activism and other change energy, music became an objective, social force. In this limited sense, Roullian is not wrong to equate rock music with social transformation and even political radicalism, no matter his dubious claim of rock's elemental purity.

16 More troublesome, however, is Rouillan's conceit that art somehow owes the revolution — even when revolution is just a pipe dream of a handful of ultra-radicals at the far margins of their national politics. The Grateful Dead's early manager, Rock Scully, took as his creed that "there's no such thing as a free show", even when the audience paid nothing.[8] (Scully had helped set-up numerous free Dead concerts in San Francisco's Panhandle and other locales).[9] *Someone* is always doing the hard work, whether compensated or not. Setting aside the issue of money, Grateful Dead guitarist Jerry

Garcia addressed the late-Sixties demand of "free music for free people" from a musician's perspective:

> the musician's first responsibility is to play music as well as he can. . . . [A]ny responsibility to anyone else is just journalistic fiction. . . or political fiction. Because that bullshit about the people's music, man . . . what's that supposed to mean? It wasn't any people that sat with me while I learned to play guitar. . . . [And] when somebody says *the people* . . . that has to mean everybody. It means the cops, the guys who drive the limousines, the fucker who runs the elevators, everybody".[10]

17 Insisting that artists conform to "the militant commitment" of radicals like Rouillan — self-appointed as the arbiters of worthy art — is to ask the wrong thing from the wrong people. Of the many reasons that *Action directe* and similar Western armed struggle groups failed to instigate mass insurrections, that kind of arrogance may be one.

18 In closing, Roullian asserts that, "we have to fight to reclaim the collective memory of our music", much as we must reclaim the memory of radical political struggles. Part of both histories is the passion of true belief and the optimism, joy, and dedication it brings. In his idealism, unbroken by years in prison, Rouillan is himself worthy of appreciation and study as part of this memory project. But it is also vital to learn from — and not merely reclaim — illusions, no matter how seductive. Otherwise, the next great reign of freedom risks being just another golden age.

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ABSTRACTS

After spending years in prison for armed actions with the French urban guerrilla group *Action directe*, Jean-Marc Rouillan shared in an interview his reflections on the role of music in his political development and on the broader politics of rock'n'roll. This essay responds to Rouillan's reflections. Noting rock'n'roll's dual identity as rebel music and a mass commercial enterprise, the essay sees hopefulness, naiveté, and arrogance in Rouillan's insistence that to stay true to its roots rock music must shun profit. The essay argues the value of recovering radical moments in popular culture while cautioning against idealizing cultural forms.

Après des années d'emprisonnement suite à son action armée au sein de l'organisation française de guérilla urbaine Action directe, Jean-Marc Rouillan a donné un entretien au gré duquel il partage ses réflexions sur le rôle de la musique dans son propre engagement politique, et plus largement sur les politiques du rock'n'roll. Cet essai répond aux réflexions de Rouillan. Relevant l'identité duale du rock'n'roll – à la fois musique rebelle et entreprise commerciale de masse –, nous notons l'optimisme, la naïveté et l'arrogance avec lesquelles Rouillan insiste sur la nécessité qu'a le rock à fuir le profit afin de rester fidèle à ses racines. Soulignant l'intérêt d'un tel retour sur des moments radicaux de la culture populaire, cet essai met en garde contre l'idéalisation de formes culturelles.

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Mots-clés: Action directe, Bowie (David), Clapton (Eric), Clash, Garcia (Jerry), Grateful Dead, Hofmann (Abbie), Lerner (Jonathan), Rouillan (Jean-Marc), rock'n'roll, Sinclair (John), White Panthers, Yippies.
Keywords: Action directe, Bowie (David), Clapton (Eric), Clash, Garcia (Jerry), Grateful Dead, Hofmann (Abbie), Lerner (Jonathan), Rouillan (Jean-Marc), rock'n'roll, Sinclair (John), White Panthers, Yippies.

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Essays

Essais

On Music and War

À propos de la musique et la guerre

Morag Josephine Grant

1 The musicology of war and other forms of collective violence is a relatively new field of enquiry. Its emergence can be viewed, on the one hand, as a logical development of the turn towards explicitly political concerns in music research over the past twenty to thirty years.[1] On the other, it can be regarded as a musicological *pendant* to how the study of war and violence more generally has developed over roughly the same time period, marked by a move away from the celebratory and hagiographic tendencies of old-school military history towards critical military studies and a focus on the impacts of violence on individuals, be they those inflicting the violence, or those who have violence inflicted upon them (most combatants, of course, are both).

2 My own approach to these topics starts from the same perspective I take generally as a musicologist working in what I can broadly call Kaden-school music sociology. For Christian Kaden (1946-2015), music sociology "is an inquiry into the aesthetic *and* the social potentials that are entwined in the act of making and perceiving music. It is both a historical and a systematic discipline, concerned as much with how music is socially embedded in longer-term historical processes as with the clarification of its function in different cultural systems".[2] Subsequent spokespeople of the working group on sociology and social history of music which Kaden founded within the German *Gesellschaft für Musikforschung* extrapolated further in a manner very much in keeping with Kaden's own, interdisciplinary approach:

> Music sociology investigates material and conceptual value systems, mediality and structures of social behaviour, the attribution of and expectations associated with particular roles, and in particular the functions of music in everyday life, and does so both synchronically and diachronically. In doing so, interdisciplinary impetuses––for example from the fields of sociological theory, empirical social research, but also a wider spectrum ranging from religious studies to communication theory––play an important role, without ever losing sight of those aspects of the subject "music" which are specific to it and cannot be reduced to other things.[3]

3 What, then, are these irreducible elements of music, and what makes them relevant in the context of war and collective violence? And how can music sociology, thus defined, help us explore these issues?

4 To begin answering these questions—or rather, to indicate in what direction these answers might lie—we need first remind ourselves what the context of these investigations is. I have talked here of the musicology of "war and collective violence", whereby collective violence is actually the superordinate category and war, in its various forms, a special case thereof––a very special case indeed, given its enormous social, political and cultural significance. War is not simply violence, although violence––the act of killing specifically––is its very heart: war is a cultural system which, since Neolithic times, has come increasingly to define the world in fundamental ways. Almost all societies in today's world are martial cultures: that is, cultures predicated to a greater or lesser extent on the possibility of war and on the collective memory of war. In some martial cultures, war becomes so fundamental to the political and social structures of the society in question that war is inevitably produced by these societies. Thus, systems developed originally––we can hypothesise–– to enable societies to defend themselves just as most animals defend their territory and their young, become so entrenched in these societies politically, economically, and morally, that they bring about the very thing they claim to be defending against.[4]

5 Recognising the cultural rather than "natural" foundations of war is of fundamental importance for understanding the roles of music in war. Equally important is emphasising, again, the collective nature of violence in war. Collective violence––which we could also term intergroup violence––has specific structural and organisational features and dynamics which set it off from forms of violence not committed in the context or in the name of a group. Definitive for collective violence is not that acts of violence are necessarily carried out by a group, but that matters of group identity, and ingroup/outgroup dynamics specifically, define why the violence is carried out. Thus, what is sometimes erroneously termed "lone-wolf" terrorism is generally also a form of collective violence, since both the motivation and the socio-psychological mechanisms at play situate it within a script of attacking one group in defence of the other. Joe Stroud's discussion of how the Norwegian terrorist Anders Breivik used music in preparation for the mass murder of 77 people and the injuring of several hundreds more is particularly pertinent here: Breivik's own manifesto showed him anticipating the use of music to allay his fears during the attack itself, but also contained references to specific artists and genres that consolidated his identity as a white supremacist.[5] Collective violence is rooted in collective practices, practices which do not necessarily lead to violence but which can provide the emotional bedrock for turning ideology into action.[6]

6 Musical practices are very often collective practices, and thus specific forms of collective experience: in the act of singing, playing or listening to and moving with music in the company of others, but also, at a distance, through the sense of sung or felt rather than purely imagined communities that particular pieces of music engender where they have become symbolically connected to, and expressive of, particular collective identities. In both these cases, but particularly in the former, to collectively experience music is to enact collectivity itself, and simultaneously to have collectivity enacted upon one, thanks to the processes known as entrainment which are arguably one of the most significant and fundamental aspects of music and musicality per se.[7]

Whether actively keeping together in time, or simply being together in time through the uniting force of a common music––such as an anthem, or other type of group song––the potential of musicality and musical communication for collective identity cannot be overstated, though it is often overlooked.

7 Sociological studies of collective action and collective violence by Randall Collins, Charles Tilly and others provide ample theoretical underpinnings as regards the importance of group structure, group dynamics, and group rituals in the enabling of group violence.[8] Here, for example, is Collins' description of what he terms solidarity rituals, which he regards as fundamental for understanding the dynamism of social movements:

> The ingredients are: first, assembling people bodily in the same place, so that they are in full multi-modal intercommunication; second, focusing their attention on the same thing and becoming mutually aware of each other's focus, thereby generating a sense of intersubjectivity; and third, feeling and expressing the same emotion. Interaction rituals can succeed or fail, can be intense or mediocre; if the ingredients pass a threshold, mutual focus and shared emotion feed back into each other, driving them upwards to high levels of rhythmic entrainment that Durkheim called collective effervescence. At these high levels, what the group focuses upon becomes symbolic, representing membership in the group as well as depicting its boundaries and enemies. Individuals are filled with emotional energy, the feelings of confidence and enthusiasm that motivate them to acts of heroism and sacrifice. They are filled with a sense of morality, the palpable experience of good and its fight against evil.[9]

8 It is easy to see how music fits into this muster, though it is not something that Collins appears to have considered—and in this, he is far from alone. Nevertheless, along with the anthropology of war and armed conflict, studies like these are highlighting the multifaceted performativity of war, and the communicative nature of violence itself.[10] Such research is also a plea for a greater understanding of the cultural contingency of acts of violence: this includes how certain acts come to be defined as violence while others do not, and how some forms of violence, in some situations, become morally or legally acceptable while others remain outside accepted codes of behaviour.[11] In this normative sense, too, violence and the collective come to be linked.

9 War is a case in point of how cultures sanction and enable acts that in other contexts would be deemed illegal, while simultaneously struggling to contain them within these contexts. Many researchers—including Collins—have argued that the act of inflicting serious violence on another human being is in most cases profoundly unnatural;[12] and while there are significant exceptions to this rule, the very existence of so many and such complex cultural systems and practices for organising, justifying and mythologising war—and very often, this includes drawing attention as far as possible away from the act of killing at war's heart—is just one indication of how high the stakes are. The fact that war is brutal, and at the same time highly ritualised, is not a contradiction: rituals enable the brutality (both in the sense of inflicting it, but also subjecting oneself to it), and ritual is also needed to contain the brutality and give it meaning. Hence the large number of rituals of war which historically have marked off the combat zone as a separate, even liminal space, and mark combatants themselves off from civilians. Hence, too, the importance of collective honouring of those who have fought, and in particular, those who have acted bravely or killed most effectively within the agreed limits, and those who themselves were killed. Notably, rituals of war in the modern world have not yet caught up with the fact that since the twentieth

century, more civilians than combatants have died in war; in fact, as I have argued elsewhere, the demise in many of these rituals and the dramatic changes in attitudes to civilians in war that lead to these statistics may be linked.[13]

10 From the perspective of music sociology, music can function as a catalyst, a channel and a frame for collective experience and meaning-making. And these capacities of musical activities and practices are what make them such important strategic tools before, during, and after war. Without giving special significance to the act of killing in war, and without consecrating death in war as the supreme sacrifice—even the term reeks of ritual—wars could hardly be justified. On a more directly strategic level, rituals which mark off and give meaning to combat are essential psychological responses to the trauma combat almost inevitably entails; and, where music is used on the battlefield itself—as was once common—it can serve as a focus and as an ordering mechanism which keeps troops together in the very moment when they are most likely to succumb to panic.[14] Long after ceasefire, music continues to play an oftentimes fundamental role in celebrating or commemorating wars and warriors, thus functioning as a fundamental toolkit for collective memory which itself, all too often, becomes mobilised in the service of wars yet to come.

11 To focus on music as a framing and ordering device, and on its roles in meaning-making; to situate music's effects squarely within the context of collective identity and collective action; in other words, to understand the connection between music and war *socially*: this flies in the face of a tendency still found in some discussions of music and war to emphasise the brute force qualities of musical sound itself. Neoplatonic, magic bullet-style causal explanations which attribute to music the ability to trigger or unleash certain emotions (such as aggression) which are regarded as essential for committing acts of violence (they are not) can be understood as an attempt to distance ourselves, and music, from the fact that war is an integral part of our civilisation, and that more often than not it abides by civilisation's codes (codes that, after all, allow for war and often actively promote it). There are societies without war, but most of what passes in the past and present for "great" civilisations have been profoundly martial in nature. Western musical aesthetics have conspired to create the idea of a divide between a cultured, rational taste for music, and the way in which "lower" classes and races react to music: instinctively, emotionally. In the prevailing ideology of western civilisation, such a division between this civilised "us" and a barbarian "other" is often propagated in times of war, but also filters through into how we think about music and its relationship to action more generally.

12 An approach to the musicology of war which, in Kaden's sense, is both historical and systematic, is well placed to contribute to the wider project of understanding how we came to be so dependent on war for our ideas of who we are; for our economic systems; and for our activities in the fields of art and culture. A historical and comparative perspective on this issue seems to me particularly pertinent, and the historical record certainly makes it abundantly clear that, as far back as we can see, where there is war there is also music. And why should this surprise us, since both are such integral aspects of human society?

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NOTES

1. I say "explicitly political" because musicology and its disciplinary forebears have always been underpinned by political beliefs and agendas, no more so than when they deny any link at all between music and the political.
2. Christian Kaden, quoted in KALISCH Volker, HERR Corinna, "Positionspapier der Fachgruppe Soziologie und Sozialgeschichte der Musik", https://www.musikforschung.de/index.php/en/field-units/soziologie-und-sozialgeschichte-der-musik/183-positionspapier-der-fachgruppe-soziologie-und-sozialgeschichte-der-musik, accessed 30 August 2019; my translation.
3. KALISCH and HERR, "Positionspapier", my translation.
4. A pertinent example is the speed with which the doctrine of Christianity was adapted to make it amenable to the warrior cultures of Europe, cultures in which performance in war was integral to the honour system of the nobility.
5. STROUD Joe, "The Importance of Music to Anders Behring Breivik", *Journal of Terrorism Research*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2013, pp. 5-18.

6. For a fuller discussion of this issue as it pertains to racist violence, see GRANT M. J., "Musical Communication, 'Hate Speech', and Human Rights Law", GEPHART Werner, LEKO Jure (eds.), *Law and the Arts: Elective Affinities and Relationships of Tension*, Frankfurt am Main, Vittorio Klostermann, 2017, pp. 217-250.
7. Entrainment here refers to the ways in which processes come into time with one another. Humans appear to be almost unique in the animal kingdom in the way they frequently and proactively act in time with others, especially in the behaviours we call music (and closely related activities, especially dance). Entrainment however more properly refers to how at subconscious levels as well, our bodily systems come into synch with one another and how we unconsciously and not just consciously come "into time" with others in our presence. Processes of keeping in time with others have proved fundamentally important in the context of martial and military organisations, as the prevalence of war dances and their modern western equivalents, marching and drill, testify.
8. COLLINS Randall, *Violence: A Sociological Theory*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2008; "Time-bubbles of Nationalism: Dynamics of Solidarity Ritual in Lived Time", *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 18, no. (3), 2012, pp. 383-397; TILLY Charles, *The Politics of Collective Violence*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
9. COLLINS, "Time-bubbles of nationalism", p. 387.
10. See here especially SCHRÖDER Ingo W., SCHMIDT Bettina E., "Introduction: Violent Imaginaries and Violent Practices", SCHMIDT Bettina E., SCHRÖDER Ingo W. (eds.), *Anthropology of Violence and Conflict*, London, Routledge, 2001, pp. 1-24.
11. JACKMAN Mary, "Violence in Social Life", *Annual Review of Sociology*, vol. 28, 2002, pp. 387-415.
12. An exception is that inflicting violence on one perceived as weaker appears to be much easier than inflicting it on one of equal strength or standing. Collins recognises this, but does not, in my opinion, sufficiently consider the broader significance of this in light of what we know to be high levels of relationship violence and violence against children. This is too complex a topic to enter into here, except to say that a mix of innate and cultural factors may be at play here: to attack the weak makes sense in terms of personal survival, but who is encoded as "weak" or subordinate/inferior is culturally conditioned.
13. GRANT M. J., "Chaos and Order: Issues in the Historiography of Martial Music", STROHM Reinhard (ed.), *Transcultural Music History: Global Participation and Regional Diversity in the Modern Age,* Berlin, Berliner Wissenschaftsverlag (forthcoming).
14. GRANT M. J., "Bagpipes at the Front: Pipers and Piping During Combat in the Great War", SCHRAMM Michael (ed.), *Militärmusik und Erster Weltkrieg*, Bonn, Militärmusikzentrum der Bundeswehr, 2015, pp. 35-67; GRANT M. J., "Chaos and Order".

ABSTRACTS

The musicology of war and collective violence is a relatively young field, and appropriate theoretical frameworks for this research are still emerging. Here, an approach is outlined which, in keeping with the programme for music sociology outlined by Christian Kaden, is both systematic and historical in its approach. Perspectives from the sociology of violence (Randalls Collins, Charles Tilly) can help us understand the dynamics of collective violence, and thus the role of music within it. War is a cultural rather than natural phenomenon, and music plays significant roles in the rituals which enable wars to happen.

La musicologie de la guerre et de la violence collective est un champ d'étude relativement jeune, et les cadres théoriques ajustés à ces recherches sont encore en cours d'élaboration. Ici, une approche à la fois systématique et historique est esquissée, conformément au programme de sociologie de la musique proposé par Christian Kaden. Les perspectives de la sociologie de la violence (Randall Collins, Charles Tilly) peuvent nous aider à comprendre la dynamique de la violence collective et, par-là, le rôle qu'y joue la musique. La guerre est un phénomène culturel plutôt que naturel et la musique remplit des fonctions importantes dans les rituels qui permettent aux guerres de se produire.

INDEX

Mots-clés: guerre, violence collective, sociologie de la musique, sociologie de la violence, anthropologie de la guerre, rituels de guerre
Keywords: war, collective violence, music sociology, sociology of violence, anthropology of war, rituals of war

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Culprit or Accomplice: Observations on the Role and Perception of Music in Violent Contexts in the Sierra Leone War

Coupable ou complice : observations sur le rôle et la perception de la musique dans des contextes violents durant la guerre en Sierra Leone

Cornelia Nuxoll

1 In the 1990s, combatants of the Sierra Leonean Revolutionary United Front (RUF) often used music in the context of war to justify, prepare for, and accompany violent attacks. Diving deeper into this matter leads to further questions: Which were the songs that became part of the "rebel soundtrack" and what was their appeal to the RUF? Was music an accessory to or the driving force behind their violent actions? And how do the musicians who released the songs, as well as the civilians who fell victim to violent strategies involving these songs, view the rebels' appropriation of music for war?

Innocuous or Dangerous: Agency of Music

2 When I began to study the role and impact of music in conflict situations and the way music may be used to incite, accompany and legitimise violence, my research focus was time and again met with some resistance. The idea that music could be used for ulterior motives stands in stark contrast to the widely held notion that music is intrinsically good, an all-time positive force and a unifying, universal language. On the other hand, it has been suggested that listening to certain types of music with "violent lyrics" ultimately causes aggressive behaviour in the listener. Based on my field research in post-war Sierra Leone, music used in war does not necessarily have to be perceived as either good or bad. Rather, former combatants, civilians and musicians positioned music in a neutral way, looking beyond its appropriation in the context of violence in order to preserve their relationship with it.

3 As Tia DeNora and others have pointed out, people turn to music as a framing device and mood regulator. It is often used as an enhancer (or diffuser), playing into and amplifying (or dispelling) the listener's emotional disposition. Music provides resources to connect and reconnect with oneself and one's emotions. However, it is not music alone or any intrinsic property it contains that acts as a causal stimulus that creates or changes emotions in a person. Instead, music's effect is attributable: its power cannot be abstracted from the context in which it is used and experienced. Music is a resource that people utilise to gain access to emotional experiences and responses as they look for and deal with dormant issues not yet fully grasped or negotiated.[1] Music is considered an agentive force because engaging with it facilitates a state of "entrainment" in which the listener ascribes perceived meanings and purpose to the musical material.[2] The structuring properties of music allow it to form a significant constitutive means of human action and provide a resource through which personal and social lives can be configured. Music can be used to foster critical consciousness. It may also serve as a referent for action and an ordering device that organises its listeners and performers in real time.[3]

4 Over the past fifteen years or so, musicological research increasingly addressed the question of music's effective use in post-conflict settings as a tool for peace and reconciliation as well as in processes of nation-building and commemoration. At the same time, there is an increasing amount of studies recognising the use of music as a means of mobilisation and propaganda, and inciting or accompanying violence. Both research approaches assume that music can be instrumentalised to activate as well as intensify the feelings, intentions, and actions of those who hear it or make it. In other words, music is a tool that can be used for belligerent and peaceful means alike.[4]

5 The following discusses some observations on the role of music made through my fieldwork among the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of the Sierra Leonean civil war that took place from 1991 to 2002.

Reminiscing about Music after the War: Fieldwork Observations

6 After decades of increasing state decline due to bad governance, political corruption and economic failure, the newly-formed rebel group RUF attempted to topple the then ruling government. Mostly comprised of disenfranchised young men striving to improve their own and the country's socio-economic conditions, the RUF movement gained some initial sympathy and support from civilians. For various reasons, however, the RUF very soon no longer pursued its political agenda and resorted to indiscriminate violence, brutal robberies, and forced recruitment to sustain itself, which resulted in the complete loss of civilian support. Numerous power changes and various collusive alliances later, the Sierra Leone conflict – by now widely labelled a "senseless war"[5] infamous for its atrocities, blood diamonds and widespread use of underage combatants – was officially declared over in 2002.[6]

7 Producing only losers, civilians bore the brunt of this conflict, with tens of thousands dead, many more displaced, no significant change in politics and a destroyed infrastructure. Until today, many of the root causes of the war remain disturbingly unresolved and most former RUF members never returned home to their families.

Instead, they chose to live in anonymity in the bigger cities to avoid any stigmatisation for their active involvement in the war. Although rank and file combatants were granted amnesty after the war, many feared indictments, self-incrimination, retribution and other negative exposure because of their affiliation with the rebel group. When I began my field research in Sierra Leone, there was a concern that former RUF members would be unwilling to engage in dialogue for fear of reprisals.

8 Early on, however, I realised that the music focus of my research served as a sort of door opener. The emphasis on the role of music and not on the atrocities during the war seemed to present my research in an innocent, benign, perhaps even trivially insignificant context to my interlocutors. My interactions did not necessarily require detailed descriptions of war crimes and human rights violations to obtain information on the role of music among RUF members.

9 During my interviews, I further stressed my focus on music to my interlocutors to make them feel more at ease, in the hope that this approach would obtain sincere answers rather than prompting defensive or face-saving behaviour. Equally important, however, I wanted to avoid that my research would cause participants to relive potentially distressing and traumatic experiences as perpetrators or victims.

10 At the outset, my request to speak about music was met with some initial astonishment. At the same time, it was evident how – given the topic – former RUF members visibly relaxed and even enjoyed speaking about this topic precisely because they felt that our conversation was going to be "just about music." It was also apparent that most former rebel fighters had not given music much thought whenever they had looked back on the war before. Once they shifted their focus towards it, however, music swiftly resonated with them as an integral part of the war experience. In conversations with former RUF members, it was striking to see how reminiscing about relevant songs triggered vivid memories of their time as combatants. Discussing the songs that were popular with the RUF notably energised and enthused my interlocutors, the joint singing of commando songs made them smile, generated feelings of past camaraderie, prompting them to be more engaged in group interviews. Their emotional response to remembering and performing some songs ultimately provided me with a better understanding of music's impact during the war years.

11 During interviews, former RUF fighters mentioned specific music genres and songs they listened to that inspired or educated them. They also spoke of commando songs they performed during military training. Over time, my interlocutors brought up more sensitive topics, widening the scope of the role and function of music during the war. As I will discuss in the following section, they gave music examples linked to strong-arm tactics and combat action, songs the rebels appropriated as a weapon, or used as an accompaniment to execute violent attacks.

12 The music-focused research proved beneficial in at least two ways: the seemingly "innocuous" nature of the project allowed me easier access to former RUF combatants and helped improve their willingness to share their war experiences with me. At the same time, music served as an excellent means to trigger memories, not only of songs that were meaningful to them at the time, but also of the situations they were in and the emotions they felt when they played and heard these songs again.

Music and Violence through the Eyes of Perpetrators, Victims and Musicians

13 In the following, I would like to explore another aspect of the use of music during the conflict, viewed through the eyes of the perpetrator, victim and musician. To give more context, I will briefly introduce some of the musical genres that were most relevant to RUF forces, and why.[7] I will then discuss how rebels, civilians and the respective artists alike perceive this music linked to violence.

14 Roots reggae was by far the most preferred music genre among early RUF members. Songs like Bob Marley's *War* and *The Real Situation*, *It's Not a Crime* by Burning Spear or *House of Exile* by Lucky Dube were described as educational and highly motivating. When former combatants listened to the socially critical lyrics of the songs, they saw many parallels to injustices in their own country and interpreted them as justification to take up arms. For RUF combatants who joined the movement at the beginning, reggae offered a vital source for fostering identities as revolutionary freedom fighters. Many felt that engaging with countercultural music that was also associated with the struggle against Apartheid, was already a political act. They felt that many of the songs had instructive and educational components that raised their awareness for socio-economic grievances and oppressive political systems. They discussed and interpreted the lyrics amongst each other and aligned them with the political situation in Sierra Leone, with the result that the use of violence in the name of revolutionary resistance was considered necessary and legitimate.

15 In the context of combat action and executing attacks, the RUF made use of some of the songs of popular local musicians Ahmed Janka Nabay and Steady Bongo. Steady Bongo is what Sierra Leoneans commonly refer to as a "cultural musician" who composes songs that often convey traditional values and moral lessons. During the war, he released several albums and was an instrumental figure in the transitional demobilisation and reconciliation process throughout the post-war period. Touring the hinterland with peace concerts, Bongo performed songs that promoted peace and unity, and his live shows helped to ease tensions between opposing factions. RUF forces enjoyed listening to Steady Bongo even though many of songs condemned the war in general, and rebel conduct in particular. *Eeh en* was a popular song on love, love-making and the dangers of womanising. However, during the war, the song *Eeh En* was part of rebel attacks. Due to its "rousing cultural beat", former RUF fighters recounted how some of the boldest combatants played it as a personal soundtrack over headphones on portable cassette players while moving into battle, keeping in time with the song's rhythm, pumping themselves up and getting ready to fight. It is interesting to note how combatants turned to music as an external source of energy to transform them into what the situation required of them.

16 Similarly, and while advancing on targets, RUF forces would play the fast and rhythmically complex Bubu songs by the late singer Ahmed Janka Nabay. Done to confuse, and tempt them out of their houses in order to surround and capture them more easily, local inhabitants were subjected to the loud sound blasting of Nabay's music during village attacks. On other occasions, the rebels sang new lyrics on top of Nabay's songs playing over portable boomboxes. They changed some of the original Bubu lyrics, stripping them of their intended message to suit their agenda, now claiming that the RUF was winning the war and that villagers should join the rebel

force. The appropriation of these songs was not only a deceptive manoeuvre to expose civilians to psychological stress and lure them out, but it was also a ploy to utilize the same music against the very people Nabay's songs were intended to lend moral support to and promote perseverance in difficult times.

17 These three music examples represent only a small sample of songs that were used by RUF forces to legitimise, prepare for and accompany violence. Reggae music served as a means to reinforce their political ideology and vindicate their violent response to failed politics. Steady Bongo's rhythmic song helped combatants to generate a certain state of mind to forge ahead and get ready for close combat, harden them as fighters and contain emotions of fear. Janka Nabay's Bubu music was instrumentalised as a tactical and psychological weapon to deceive and terrorise civilians during raids, robbing them of the very songs that were supposed to help them withstand the brutality of the war.

18 All parties involved in or affected by these strategies – namely RUF forces, civilians and the artists themselves – acknowledge that music was weaponised in the context of violence. Interestingly though, all agents ascribe neutrality, if not a certain sense of "purity" to the different musics in question. During interviews with former RUF combatants, we would discuss whether reggae music incited violence in any way. Former RUF members responded by saying:

> Violent? Violent? No, no, no. Reggae is part of life and of course, like I said earlier, it inspires zeal and that is revealing maybe your right to you [...], how things should go. Things should go this way, and maybe if you relate that kind of situation to the prevailing situation in your country, you see where the truth lies. Something like that (Interview with M., Kailahun, November 13, 2010).
>
> Actually, it [reggae] doesn't call for violence, it has a message, something like advocates [sic], it is not about calling for violence, but it calls your mind to reflect [...] it was not about calling you to engage yourself in violence actually, it was only unfortunate because of the war, so that people who decided to reflect, find their own ways and means of bringing agency to the system, but it is not about engaging you or making you to engage yourself into violence; it is about telling you to know your right [...] it's about advocacy. It is not about 'the music was right there and used to inspire people to go into rampage and all whatsoever'..., no, it is about knowing your right and exactly know what to do (Interview with S.J., Kailahun, November 10, 2010).

19 The comments show that reggae was not a direct call to inflict violence, but an important framing device to revaluate their actions. Reggae's capacity of raising awareness with regards to socio-political injustices facilitated violence as a legitimate means to rectify these inequities. Put more simply: Is roots reggae considered violent music? No. Can it be used to justify violent means? Yes.

20 In an interview with Steady Bongo, the musician shared his own ideas on why the rebels co-opted his music when they were advancing on the battlefield:

> So before we left [referring to a trip he made to a rebel stronghold], we went down to Super Sound [a music production studio in Freetown] and then we bought so many of my cassettes, CDs, you know, yeah, we put them in the Jeep that we were using. Because they [RUF] love my music so much, you know. Most of the time when they want to attack a village or a town, they always enter with a loud music and that is my music, you know. I did a track during the war, titled *Eeh En*, you know, *Eeh En* is about love making, you know, but the beat I gave, the music was a typical culture beat and danceable, you know, so it was easy for them to use this music. And this music was so popular, you know, so when they are moving, they move with that. They have the tape on their head [carrying portable cassette players and

> headphones or boomboxes], all over, dancing..., they attack people, you know (Interview with Lansana Sheriff, aka Steady Bongo, Freetown, October 28, 2010).

21 Steady Bongo neither seems upset, nor does he seem to condemn the rebels' use of his music during attacks. Instead, to him, it is the appeal of the music's "typical culture beat" that lends itself to the appropriation by rebels, which above all, tells him how popular he was and how good and relatable his music is. The context in which his music is played, what it is used for and by whom seems less relevant to Bongo than its overall popularity.[8]

22 One of my research assistants, a former soldier in the Sierra Leone army now living in Makeni, remembered the effect weaponised Bubu music had on a civilian who fell victim to one of the rebels' ploys:

> I have [know] an old woman. She can never forget this song because when they [the RUF] wanted to attack Kambia, they were playing this music on top of their head [carrying boomboxes]. They [the rebels] enter the people's churches, just people happy, it was Christmas time. Festive time. So the people, all of them joined [the rebels' party] and they thought it's good, not knowing that after ten, fifteen minutes... [he whispers and makes a gesture of something spreading out] [the rebels were] everywhere (Interview with A., Makeni, December 29, 2011).

23 Another civilian who experienced a similar attack pointed out that she could no longer listen to the Bubu songs for fear of being retraumatised. Nonetheless, she still has fond memories of the songs and stressed that she considers the late Janka Nabay an exceptional artist.

24 Music seems to trigger memories and conjure images more readily than most other stimuli. For former RUF combatants, remembering the war through music was a mostly positive affair. Even when used in the context of violence, reminiscing the songs that they sung or listened to typically brought back memories of the pleasure of the music itself and less of how it was used. Moreover, the collective singing of some songs recreated moments of camaraderie and a sense of belonging, prompting feelings of pride for having been revolutionaries fighting the good fight. In essence, reminding them of a time when they were driven and felt strong and fearless.

25 Until today, former RUF combatants still listen to reggae music and hold its profound messages in reverence. Janka Nabay's and Steady Bongo's songs are still considered classic hits. They may not actively listen to the cultural songs anymore. However, they also do not have any bad associations with any of these particular songs, even though, in hindsight, they are critical of their conduct in war and may regret the misappropriation of music for violent means. For those that suffered under the RUF's "musical manoeuvres," Janka Nabay's songs may be forever linked to the trauma they had to endure. Nonetheless, victims are perfectly capable of separating the music from the attack. Similarly, Sierra Leonean musicians Bongo and Nabay who learned about the appropriation of their songs, chose to take the instrumentalisation of their music as a sign of their popularity and disregarded its use for ulterior motives.

26 It is interesting to note that when former rebels, civilians, and musicians recall the war and music's role in it, they all are protective of the music. In order to maintain their own relationship and personal connection with music, they intuitively preserve music's neutrality by decontextualising it from its use. They do not hold the songs accountable for the abuse they either executed or suffered. Instead, rebels, civilians and musicians acknowledge music's presence in the context of violence, they recognise it has played its part and its use as a tool and weapon, but they dissociate music from the actual

assault, and in doing so, the music itself remains unscathed. Both victims and perpetrators realise that even though music functioned as an amplification device, it is not music that is to blame. However, there seems to be more at play, given that – independently of each other – all parties concerned push to preserve music as untarnished, no matter the circumstances. More research is needed to fully understand why, perhaps, for Sierra Leoneans and humans more generally, music is too important to discredit it or see it tainted in any way.

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1. See SLOBODA John, *Exploring the Musical Mind: Cognition, Emotion, Ability, Function*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004; SLOBODA John, "Music Structure and Emotional Response: Some Empirical Findings", *Psychology of Music*, vol. 19, no. 2, 1991, pp. 110-120; DENORA Tia, *Music in Everyday Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; FRITH Simon, "Music and Identity", HALL Stuart and DU GAY Paul (eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity,* London, Sage Publications, 1996, pp. 108-127; FRITH Simon, *Performing Rites: Evaluating Popular Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996.
2. DENORA, *Music in Everyday Life*, p. 94 ff.
3. See DENORA, *Ibid.*; DENORA Tia, *Music-In-Action: Selected Essays in Sonic Ecology*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2011; DENORA Tia, *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003.
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5. See for example IBRAHIM Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror: The Sierra Leone Civil War*, Dakar, Codesria, 2004; KING Nathaniel, *Conflict as Integration: Youth Aspiration to Personhood in the Teleology of Sierra Leone's 'Senseless War'*, Uppsala, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2007.

6. For a detailed analysis of the Sierra Leone war and its root causes, see for example RICHARDS Paul, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford, International African Institute, 1996; HOFFMAN Danny, *The War Machines: Young Men and Violence in Sierra Leone and Liberia,* Durham (NC), Duke University Press, 2011; PETERS Krijn, *War and Crisis of Youth in Sierra Leone*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011; KEEN David, *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*, Oxford, James Currey, 2005; GBERIE Lansana, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The R.U.F. and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2005; DENOV Myriam, *Child Soldiers: Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010; IBRAHIM, *Between Democracy and Terror: The Sierra Leone Civil War*; TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION, *Witness to Truth: Report of the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission*, vol. 3A, 2004.

7. I have discussed the role of roots reggae, Bubu music and commando songs among RUF combatants in more detail elsewhere: NUXOLL Cornelia, "'We listened to it because of the message.' Juvenile RUF Combatants and the Role of Music in the Sierra Leone Civil War", *Music & Politics*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2015. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0009.104; NUXOLL Cornelia "Borrowed Tunes. Commando and Morale Booster Songs in the Sierra Leone War", *Transposition*, no. 4, 2014. DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.4000/transposition.598.

8. Ahmed Janka Nabay had a similar reaction to the appropriation of his music by RUF forces.

ABSTRACTS

The article focuses on the role of music among RUF combatants fighting in the Sierra Leone civil war. It touches on some widely held notions of music and a general reluctance towards the idea that music can be instrumentalised for violent means. Furthermore, it will address in what way

the research focus on music was conducive to qualitative interview sessions and direct interactions with former RUF members. Special focus lies on the songs that inspired rebel fighters and how these songs were used to prepare for and accompany violent attacks. The article concludes by exploring and comparing how perpetrators, victims and musicians assess the appropriation of music in the context of violence and how they feel about the songs today.

L'article examine le rôle de la musique pour les combattants du RUF qui se battent dans la guerre civile en Sierra Leone. Il interroge certaines notions générales sur la musique ainsi que la réticence à l'idée que la musique puisse être instrumentalisée à des fins violentes. En outre, il explique de quelle manière le biais de la recherche sur la musique a été propice à des séances d'entretiens qualitatifs et à des interactions directes avec d'anciens membres du RUF. Il prête une attention particulière aux chansons qui ont inspiré les combattants rebelles et sur la façon dont ces chansons ont été utilisées pour préparer et accompagner des attaques violentes. L'article conclut en analysant et en comparant la façon dont les auteurs de violences, les victimes et les musiciens évaluent l'appropriation de la musique dans un contexte violent et ce qu'ils ressentent aujourd'hui à propos de ces chansons.

INDEX

Keywords: Sierra Leone war, RUF, music, violence, music as a weapon, agency, fieldwork experiences, anthropology and music research
Mots-clés: guerre civile de la Sierra Leone, RUF, musique, violence, guerre, musique comme arme, agentivité, expériences de terrain, sociologie de la musique, anthropologie et recherche musicale

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Cornelia Nuxoll is a social anthropologist with a focus on ethnomusicology in sub-Saharan Africa. Currently an independent scholar, she previously was a member of the interdisciplinary research group *Music, Conflict and the State* at the Georg August University of Göttingen in Germany, which focused on the role of music in promoting, facilitating and perpetuating violent responses to conflict settings and in connection with war crimes and crimes against humanity. Within the framework of her PhD thesis, she conducted fieldwork in Sierra Leone on the role and impact of music among juvenile RUF combatants fighting in the Sierra Leone civil war.

Sound, Music, War and Violence: Listening from the Archive

Son, musique, guerre et violence : à l'écoute des archives

Annegret Fauser

1 Movies, video games, and television programs can take their audiences sonically and visually into the midst of battle and violence, offering vicarious experience through audiovisual mediation. Whether in *Saving Private Ryan* (1998) or the latest *Terminator* installment (*Dark Fate*, 2019), in the darkness of the movie theater—or in the comfort of home—soundscapes of violence have grown to be a meticulously curated experience.[1] Similarly, attempts to invoke the experience of battle can be found also in costumed re-enactments—for instance of the American Civil War or of the 1811 Louisiana slave rebellion—where just the right powder and weapons produce the sonic signature of a musket fired in battle, even if the balls are blanks.[2] These simulacra of sonic violence contrast with the silence of past trauma—the fragmented character of its material remnants, including its sonic traces, left scattered in archives. To confront the aurality of historical violence poses challenges for musicology not only because of the absence of recorded sound but also given the way audiovisual media have contributed to overwriting archival traces with their invented soundscapes.[3] Listening from and through the archives, however, opens up ways to engage with the sound, music, and even silence of war and violence.

2 This space of historic aurality, however, is one curated through scholarly intercession that poses theoretical, ethical, and methodological challenges. A historiography of past violence depends simultaneously on scholars' skills and their empathy, a willingness to face a past reality of death and trauma painstakingly pieced together from archives either absent—destroyed by perpetrators as a strategy of silencing their victims—or generated in retrospect, even if materials are already accumulated during a war, for instance by bureaucrats on either side of the conflict.[4] But if the material traces in archives of violence provide significant challenges, the sonic side of war and its experience defy simple transposition and mediation. Rather, the silence of the archives opens a space for engagement that acknowledges from the outset the historical and

experiential difference between the positionality of the scholar as mediator and the sonic experiences of violence by the dead bodies of those with whom scholars might consort in their research.[5]

3 Where, then, does the sonic reside in records of violence, and how may archives become sites of listening? Moreover, what media can form part of such a resource, especially prior to, or absent of, sound recordings? And finally, how do noise and music intersect in this context? These questions form the core of sound-centered approaches to violence in the past, unique in their scope compared to traditional historiographies of war and conflict.[6] To what extent sound and violence are often inextricably intertwined both in experience and in memory has been the topic of research by scholars in music history, ethnomusicology, and music therapy. In what follows I will focus on traces of the sonic in war-related archives and discuss music as activity and experience, as well as sound and silence in the framework of war theaters—the very word as it is deployed in the English language already an emblem of the located specificity of battles and their soundscapes for all that their impact usually extended far beyond such boundaries.

4 Much archival material that might enable listening to war—even through a mediated imaginary—consists of paper (whether or not now in digital form), and some of it is in the form of compositions and evidence of their performance.[7] All these traces share their ontological condition as mediated and mediating discourse networks (*Aufschreibesysteme*) interceding between past and present.[8] The performance-studies scholar Diana Taylor set up a dialectic relationship between the archive as mediating discourse network and embodied experience by pointing out that "insofar as it constitutes materials that seem to endure, the archive exceeds the live," while—at the same time—"embodied memory, because it is live, exceeds the archive's ability to capture it."[9] This dialectic tension might be resolved, in Ana María Ochoa Gautier's words, through "an acoustically tuned exploration of the written archive," an approach that reveals the entangled history of aural and archival practices.[10] Translating this theoretical position into the musicological practice of listening from the archive would lead to privileging the experiential aspect of the sonic past as it is reflected in the material remnants gathered in such collections. It demands of the scholar not only to take seriously the individual and their experience, but also to understand the constructedness of the archive and its powers of mediation. By shifting the focus on the traces of audibility in the archivally curated material debris of war, these remnants are functioning as "legible representations of aural experience" not only in writing but also in musical notation and recording.[11]

5 As archives are constructed entities, they privilege certain experiences over others. Whose voice and which musics are recorded in the archives reflects the value systems not only of past societies but also of current ones given the way access to collections is curated, for instance through finding aids. As I worked on the music of World War I and World War II, two aspects were particularly noticeable. First, despite the immense volume of archival materials, such institutions as the Library of Congress, the National Archives, the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, and the Bibliothèque nationale de France were privileging the experiences of their own respective nations. And second, what was considered worthwhile to collect in these institutions were generally materials relating to the war-time experiences of white men, often neglecting those of women and of people of color. Unless recognized as such, this archival bias might find

an insidious reproduction in scholarly work. As I pointed out in the introduction to *Sounds of War*, it takes deliberate effort to trace a multitude of voices in these archives.[12]

6 Among the most fundamental responsibilities of scholarship on music and war is to respect and take seriously the experiential gap between a scholar's own musical practice and that of the voices inscribed within the archives. Rather than offering too quickly an assessment from the perspective of contemporary scholarship, it matters to listen to what someone reported on their experience of war. If a young man deployed during World War II in the Pacific wrote about the almost painful beauty of listening to a symphonic broadcast on the deck of his navy ship, it meant something different from hearing such music today in the safety of the concert hall or the home: "Above to hear Toscanini with the NBC Symph. It's very, very seldom that I get the chance to hear music + it sounded wonderful. Very satisfying + restful but at the same time causing pangs of frustration."[13] It would be so easy and glib to speak of Eurocentrism and to address canonicity, whiteness, and hegemony; instead, listening from the archives means to value the writer's experience in its own right and to pay attention to the echoes of his embodied listening experience within the words written to his father—the emotions alluded to, his joy at that restful moment provided by the broadcast, and the unspecified experience of frustration. This short glimpse into hearing symphonic music in a war theater—the serendipity and rarity of the experience—speaks to how music might displace, at least for the time that it lasts, the everyday encounters of warfare and combat into a "restful" albeit exceptional sonic experience.

7 That music can offer a shift, through organized sound, into a calmer mental and emotional space has long been part of musical discourse networks.[14] In the context of war and violence, this aspect of musicking plays a crucial role, whether in the experience of individual soldiers or that of groups subjected to precarious conditions of combat or other forms of violence. Yet this cognitive shift through music has also been instrumentalized in retrospective forms of engagement with violence, through commemoration and re-enactments. Even "battle" pieces composed close to the conflict itself—Claude Janequin's "La Guerre" ("La Bataille de Marignan"), Ludwig van Beethoven's *Wellington's Victory*, or Marc Blitzstein's *Airborne Symphony*—transpose the actual experience of sound and violence into a memory regime that can overwrite past or present experience through sonic reconfiguration.[15] Appropriating previous musical works into acts of commemoration also diverts their purpose, whether in the case of "wartime pieces"—as with Edward Elgar's *The Spirit of England* (1917), used in the service of remembrance on Armistice Day through an annual broadcast on BBC radio—or those with no such prior connotation (Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings*), relying on pathos to overlay any sonic traces that might remain from actual acts of violence.[16] Yet Elgar's work fulfills an important role in configuring wartime trauma as heroic suffering, thus smothering through its very musical language any contradictory experiences by contributing to the fashioning of a normative and hegemonic narrative of national unity and Britishness. In this respect, *The Spirit of England* itself becomes part of the sonic archives—a strand of musical engagement with violence that has its place in listening from the archive—while also displacing the more terrifying, or mundane, sounds of war itself.

8 Still thornier questions are raised when music itself becomes complicit within acts of violence or the representation thereof. Music used directly for the purposes of propaganda on either side of any conflict might seem straightforward enough, but

appropriating it to instill fear in the enemy has a long history going back to Classical and Biblical times, treating organized sound itself as a weapon. The extension of that use of music into an instrument of torture, as documented by Suzanne Cusick and others, also poses profound ethical questions encompassing to the role of the scholars themselves (psychologists, sociologists, and even musicologists) in actively or passively supporting such practices for a purported greater good.[17] It might also be worth asking how to listen to, and reflect on, the cultural work of musical soundtracks commonly added to representations of war and violence, whether in films—as with Beethoven and Gioachino Rossini in *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), Richard Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" in *Apocalypse Now* (1979), or Elgar's "Nimrod" in *Dunkirk* (2017)—or in video games.

9 These examples can serve only as signposts towards the presence of music, sound, and silence in the archives. There are other documents, for instance those that speak to shell shock, trauma, and the beginnings of music as therapy, developed by women—often nurses—who realized that their musicking might reach soldiers profoundly affected by the relentless noise of battle. There are official documents by governments regulating soldiers' musical practice. There are letters about, and photographs of, music-making in war theaters. There are musicians who write music that hold the noise of battle at bay, and poets who use musical metaphors to describe battle noise they suffered as concerts from hell. The archives are rich with documents that inscribe the sonic experience in war, but they pose significant challenges and dilemmas to musicological interpretation, none more than that of listening across the experiential divide and privileging the voices of the dead over the agendas of the living.

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NOTES

1. In the DVD's bonus material, members of the production team describe in striking detail how they worked on turning the sonic representation of battle into an "authentic" experience in the movie theater in order to "transport" audiences in the manner of time travel in the middle of the battle field. *Saving Private Ryan* (1998), directed by Steven Spielberg, DVD released by Dreamworks Video, 2004.

2. The reenactment of the 1811 Louisiana slave rebellion on 10 November 2019, included chants and songs, echoing and recreating a "sonic vernacular" as part of the event. See LAUGHLAND Oliver, "'It Makes it Real': Hundreds March to Re-enact 1811 Louisiana Slave Rebellion", *The Guardian*, 11 November 2019, https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2019/nov/11/louisiana-slave-rebellion-reenactment-artist-dread-scott. The term "sonic vernacular" is borrowed from TAUSIG Benjamin, "Sound and Movement: Vernaculars of Sonic Dissent", *Social Text*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2018, pp. 25-45. He defines (p. 26) "sonic vernaculars" as being "composed of locally trenchant sonic and aural practices and the symbolic meanings that they transduce and mediate."

3. I addressed some of this cleavage in FAUSER Annegret, "Cultural Musicology: New Perspectives on World War II", *Zeithistorische Forschungen/Studies in Contemporary History*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2011, pp. 282-286. See also on-line edition on http://www.zeithistorische-forschungen.de/16126041-Fauser-2-2011.

4. Chérie Rivers Ndaliko addresses the absence and reconstitution of archives in "The Accidental Archivist: Memory, Resonance, and Decay in Kivu", FAUSER Annegret and FIGUEROA Michael A. (eds.), Ann Arbor, *Performing Commemoration: Musical Reenactment and the Politics of Trauma*, University of Michigan Press, 2020 (in press).

5. I am drawing here on scholarship discussing phenomenological gap inherent in danced reenactment. See, for example, FOSTER Susan Leigh, "Manifesto for Dead and Moving Bodies", formulated in her introduction to FOSTER Susan Leigh (ed.), *Choreographing History*, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 3-21, especially p. 6.

6. Although historians have begun to claim an acoustic turn of their discipline, the lack of interdisciplinary engagement with such fields as musicology make for limited and often naïve evocations of the sonic. See, for example, MEYER Petra (ed.), *Acoustic Turn*, Munich, Fink, 2008.

7. On the concept of "paper" and the function of documents, see GITELMAN Lisa, *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents*, Durham (N.C.), Duke University Press, 2014.

8. Friedrich Kittler's notion of "Aufschreibesystem" still offers a valuable hermeneutic concept to address the material conditions of mediation. Unfortunately the English term "discourse network" misses some of its specificity. See KITTLER Friedrich A, *Aufschreibesysteme 1800/1900*, Munich, Fink, 1985 (English translation: *Discourse Networks 1800 / 1900*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1990).

9. TAYLOR Diana, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Durham (N.C.), Duke University Press, 2003, pp. 19-20.

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ABSTRACTS

When the sonic remnants of violence and war survive in archives as being inscribed in such media as paper, it can be a challenge to engage with their aurality, all the more because subsequent audiovisual representations might overlay such embodied past experiences with different musical signifiers. Drawing on examples from the two world wars of the twentieth century, this contribution discusses which positionalities an author might embrace when listening to war and violence through the presence of music, sound, and silence in the archives.

Lorsque les vestiges sonores de la violence et de la guerre survivent en étant archivés sur un support comme le papier, il peut être difficile d'accéder à leur dimension aurale. D'autant plus que des représentations audiovisuelles ultérieures peuvent venir recouvrir ces expériences autrefois incarnées en y superposant des signifiants musicaux différents. En s'appuyant sur des exemples issus des deux guerres mondiales du XX^{e} siècle, cet article examine les perspectives que peut adopter un auteur pour se mettre à l'écoute de la guerre et de la violence en prêtant attention à la présence, au sein des archives, de la musique, du son et du silence.

INDEX

Keywords: archives, aurality, listening, music, war, violence, musical historiography
Mots-clés: archives, auralité, écoute, musique, guerre, violence, historiographie musicale

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Nature's Sonic Order on the Western Front

L'ordre sonore de la nature sur le front de l'Ouest

Michael Guida

1 The sound of human conflict can only be made sense of in relation to the surrounding reference sounds of the natural world. It is in the extreme conditions of wartime that the context of the natural world takes on renewed sensory power. Here I suggest we pay attention to nature's sounds and their reception to better understand the ways in which men experienced and endured the fighting on the Western Front in the First World War. To survive in that place it was necessary to listen to the surrounding environment for sounds of danger, safety and relief. There was much more to hear than battle noise in the trenches and I argue that under conditions that were barely tolerable the sounds of the natural world needed to be heard and, when they were, they were assigned special meaning. The soldier's writing during and after the war that I examine makes clear that the disorder of trench experience could in part be managed or even reversed when the sounds of nature were brought to auditory attention.

2 There is no doubt that technological battle noise was overwhelming to combatants on both sides of the line.[1] However, over time the idea of the monstrous noise of the guns has saturated post-war narratives with its symbolism of a new scale of technological violence and combined with the psychological phenomenon of "shell shock" has become a prism through which much of the cultural history of the 1914-18 has been viewed.[2] Ford Madox Ford, who served in the Welch Regiment and lost his memory for three weeks when he was concussed by a shell explosion, wrote that the noise "said things of an intolerable intimacy".[3] The noise got inside the body and into mind. Young German recruits exposed to the crash of artillery were left "green and throwing up", Erich Maria Remarque reported a decade after his combat experience in *All Quiet on the Western Front*.[4] Memory was deeply impressed by the sound of shelling, Robert Graves telling five decades on of a noise that "never stopped for one moment – ever".[5] Nevertheless, scholars must work beyond these kinds of accounts if trench experience and the techniques of emotional survival are to be better understood.

3 Like so much war, the Western Front conflict was played out within nature – the field of battle was a trench network cut into hundreds of miles of landscape, recognised by British soldiers at least initially as pastoral and pleasantly evocative of home. Even the decimation of the French and Belgian countryside over the course of the war did not prevent it retaining certain rural potencies in the minds of those who were submerged there. Civilian soldiers from the suburbs or the city found themselves hard pressed to the rawness of the natural world. Combat experience had to be measured to some extent against this immediate natural environment. The deathly expanses of mud and tree stumps familiar from trench photography (which in fact supported a new ecosystem of owls, rats and corpses) were a reality for many in the front line, but soldiers cycled through the tiers of the trench system, resting in reserve trenches or behind the lines. In all of these places men encountered and wrote about the natural world, which seemed to carry on and even thrive.[6] Men may have lived underground, in the "troglodyte world" of the trenches as Paul Fussell called it,[7] with feet sucked by a terrible compost, trapped in "one huge grave",[8] but there was hope above this mess.

4 Soldiers' letters, diaries, memoirs and poems reveal that amid the chaos of war, and perhaps because of it, nature was heard to sound out. The songs of birds, the murmur of trees and the stillness of the cosmos were rich in meaning to men in peril. To perceive – or to imagine – such sounds within the tyranny of bombardment or the haunted silences that followed was not unusual. Paying attention to the sonic environment was a way to understand the status and safety of ones' surroundings, which could rarely be reliably gauged through vision. In the trench system "hearing became much more important than vision as an index of what was real and threatening", Eric Leed has argued.[9] The "sonic-mindedness" of German troops that Yaron Jean has described came from auditory training to distinguish between different kinds of overhead ordnance.[10] Airborne projectiles were named by British troops for their sonic character (Coal Boxes, Jack Johnsons, Whizz-Bangs), as the identification of alien sounds was the first part of avoiding danger.[11] This kind of acute listening was a technique of survival that gave renewed significance to all sounds. Ford Madox Ford noticed that the texture of the landscape altered the sound of artillery fire and he wrote to his friend Joseph Conrad about it: "In woody country heavy artillery makes the *most* noise, because of the echoes... On dry down land the sound is much *sharper*; it hits *you* & shakes *you*".[12] This was not only literary sensitivity at work; sound-ranging techniques requiring this kind of knowledge were being developed by engineers to locate enemy artillery positions.

5 Finding ways to listen through and beyond the noise was necessary. There were other sounds to be heard, birdsong in particular. Some accounts give the impression that birdsong was pulled from the air despite the noise. Ford told a friend in a letter that amid the noise "the ear picks out the singing of innumerable larks".[13] Such small but urgent sounds needed to be heard. The sound of the most ordinary birds like sparrows and starlings offset the "grime of battle".[14] Of course there were lulls in the firing and into these spaces sounds of significance would find a place. Theodore Wilson wrote to his aunt in April 1916: "I'm writing in a trench not very far from the Germans and I've just heard the first cuckoo!"[15] This incongruous report came from the tradition in England of being the first to identify the herald of spring. Wilson had managed to find a sense of homeliness and continuity in the trenches.

6 The silence after a bombardment or at night-time presented an antithesis to the noise that could rarely be savoured. Agitated alertness persisted, ears straining for meaning. In a listening-post poking out into no-man's-land Frederick Harvey found himself afraid to move or whisper "waiting in wonder whether 'twas the breeze moved in the grass, shaking the frozen flowers just then".[16] In the darkness, the screams of wounded men in no-man's-land might be accompanied by the liquid notes of a nightingale. Reflecting on this dreadful juxtaposition, one soldier felt that the nightingale's song was "the only real thing which would remain when all the rest was long past and forgotten".[17] More than any other, the nightingale's song was loaded with meaning and symbolism, but so were many encounters with nature's sounds that were known from home. Remarque's protagonist in *All Quiet on the Western Front* escaped his night-watch duty for a moment in a reverie in which he was back with his boyhood friends beneath a row of poplar trees where the wind sang.[18] These memories felt "quiet" to him even if they were not when first experienced. Remarque called them "soundless apparitions" and they were accompanied by longing and melancholy more than hope. The trees that Edmund Blunden met in the darkness could be sinister broken figures or proud sentinels standing tall. Some provided companionship even if they were not very talkative. He wrote that one "sad guard of trees dripping with the dankness of autumn had nothing to say but sempiternal syllables".[19] Difficult silences could be punctuated by private communication with nature, when speaking out loud was not possible.

7 These responses to an encounter with nature's sounds often suggest a search for order and rhythm in trench life. The sonic extremes of noise and silence were intolerable and demanded alternatives. Birdsong structured the unpredictability of trench-time, when sleep and circadian rhythms were dislocated, most notably my research has shown with the lark heard at day-break and the nightingale at night-time. To engage with these sounds was to find pattern and sense within the incoherence of trench existence. When the artillery officer and poet, Edward Thomas, recorded in his diary the sounds of birds together with his unit's shelling, it was as if the two gave shape and balance to a morning ritual that could continue indefinitely. "Up at 4.30. Blackbirds sing at battery at 5.45 – shooting at 6.30".[20] Without the birds, just the shooting would remain and the counter-weight to the pounding of guns would be gone.

8 There is a question about how much could actually be heard amid the cacophonies of shelling (although both the song and the roar may well have been accentuated in soldiers' accounts). If some of the sounds of nature recorded in primary sources were works of fantasy or the imagination, they were clearly needed and meaningful and therefore warrant attention. Though remembered and 'fictional' accounts are accused of perpetuating myths, I have found they are not very different to unpublished diaries kept by combatants during the war.[21] Like others, I have drawn upon the writing of all ranks but the men who wrote were often of a middle-class literary mind. Were these men particularly sensitive to nature's sounds and its poetry? Perhaps so, but I tend to think that what they felt was common to many who did not have the chance to express themselves in writing. There is also a question of soldiers' writing giving expression to pastoral motifs, beloved of much writing of the period, rather than reality. Paul Fussell's literary analysis *The Great War and Modern Memory* saw "recourse to the pastoral" as an English mode of both "fully gauging the calamities of the Great War and imaginatively protecting oneself against them".[22] However, I have worked with material that gives precedence to immediate lived experience rather than imaginative

impressions. Indeed, I see soldiers' engagement with nature sounding out as evidence of living urgently in present tense, rather than reaching back for the comfort of tradition. To hear a bird meant you, and it, were alive and might continue to be. The responses to nature in soldiers' writing show a determined effort to make meaning and sense out of a sound world that seemed to deny such a possibility.

9 Soldiers drew towards them sounds that were explicitly *not* about the war because they offered refreshing meanings. Most written about was the vitality and energy of singing birds whose sound was known from home and signified to many patriotic defiance and resilience. The occupation of the air above the trenches by birdsong signified that sonic order and perhaps universal order had been reinstated. Birdsong rose free from the stasis and filth of the trenches and into the sky where it could purify the corrupted atmosphere. The punch of detonations, the cries of the wounded, the hiss of corpses could be cleansed with the notes of bird song, if only momentarily. Birdsong could disrupt the violence of explosion with familiar, chiming musicality. It could counter the excruciating weight of shelling with a lightness and freedom. The lark's overhead cascade turned eyes upwards towards the stillness of the cosmos. This connection to the peace and permanence of the heavens, to nature in its most perfect grandeur, was noticed by the troops on the ground. Robert Sterling in a letter to a friend admitted that he had been "longing for some link with the normal universe detached from the storm". He found in the "sightless song" of a lark "the very essence of the Normal and Unchangeable Universe carrying on unhindered...".[23]

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ABSTRACTS

Sound scholars and historians have made much of the noise of warfare. In the trenches of the Western Front, however, there was more to hear than the unprecedented noise of shelling, and the cultivation of listening for danger and for safety brought other sounds to the ear that could offer relief from the intensity of the conflict. Often these were the sounds of nature: birdsong, trees and the stillness of the heavens above the battlefields. Soldiers' writing (letters, diaries, memoirs and poems) reveals a deep engagement with these sounds as part of an effort to make sense of the fearsome environment in which men were contained. Birdsong in particular gave harmony and rhythm to a fractured and unpredictable sound-world. It made coherent, if only for a moment, the possibility of continuity and survival. High above the trenches, it was the cascading song of the lark that cleansed the air and drew eyes further upwards to an imaginative cosmic escape.

Les spécialistes du son et les historien.nes ont beaucoup exploré le bruit de la guerre. Néanmoins, dans les tranchées du front de l'Ouest, il y avait plus à entendre que le bruit inédit des bombardements. Une culture de l'écoute orientée vers le danger et la sécurité n'excluait pas d'autres sons qui pouvaient offrir un soulagement face à l'intensité du conflit. Ces sons

provenaient souvent de la nature : le chant des oiseaux, les arbres et le calme du ciel au-dessus des champs de bataille. Les écrits des soldats (lettres, journaux intimes, mémoires et poèmes) révèlent un intérêt profond pour ces sons en tant qu'ils participaient d'un effort pour donner un sens à l'environnement redoutable au sein duquel les hommes étaient confinés. Le chant des oiseaux, en particulier, donnait de l'harmonie et du rythme à un monde sonore fracturé et imprévisible. Il donnait une cohérence, ne serait-ce que pour un instant, à la possibilité d'une continuité et d'une survie. Au-dessus des tranchées, c'étaient les jaillissements du chant de l'alouette qui purifiaient l'air et élevaient le regard vers une évasion cosmique imaginée.

INDEX

Mots-clés: Première Guerre mondiale, front de l'Ouest, tranchées, nature, son, écoute, rythme, chant d'oiseaux, bruit, silence
Keywords: First World War, Western Front, trenches, nature, sound, listening, rhythm, birdsong, noise, silence

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Sound Bites: Music as Violence

Morsures sonores : la musique comme violence

John Morgan O'Connell

War as Peace

1 "C'est la musique qui parle, pas les paroles".[1] So observes Jean-Marc Rouillan with reference to the Irish band called the Them (among others). For him, music can simultaneously speak about trivial sentiments while at the same time express visceral emotions. Where a text talks about love a melody might simultaneously scream rage. Here, the voice operates as an instrument of confrontation. Rouillan seems to confirm the paradoxical character of music in violent contexts, music at once being employed to incite war and at the same time being used to promote peace.[2] Interestingly, Rouillan reminiscences about the musical preferences of his activist colleagues he notes in particular the importance of punk bands such as The Clash and the Sex Pistols for articulating collectively a dissonant register. For him, music-making reinforced a social bond among comrades and music listening quenched the terrifying heat after an affray. In contrast to other commentators,[3] Rouillan confirms that he never listened to music before or during armed confrontations. Rather, music afforded peace after war.

2 For Rouillan, music operated as a resource to enable de-escalation. It is interesting to note the repertoire chosen by Rouillan after action. He includes "classical" composers such as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Gabriel Fauré in his selection. This is a very different playlist from the ones chosen by militants in other conflicts. As Lisa Gilman among others note, metal was widely listened to by American soldiers in Iraq before engaging the enemy.[4] For Rouillan and Gilman different styles of music afforded distinctive pathways in their reaction to and their preparation for violent episodes.[5] For Rouillan and Gilman respectively a Walkman and an iPod were the auditory weapons of choice. Like other scholars observe with reference to different conflicts,[6] Rouillan was attracted first to a musical subculture before adopting a radical ideology. Interestingly, Rouillan equates music with politics just as Jonathan Pieslak equates metal with war. Of course, music is not politics and metal is not war. Music is a

metaphor for both. That is, music provides a distinctive conduit for either fulfilling or transcending acts of violence.

3 With these issues in mind, I interrogate in this essay the ideas that concern music and violence which are presented by scholars in this *Transposition* special issue. Although each article is very different, common themes emerge. I interpolate these with reference to my own research into the sounds of music in the Gallipoli Campaign (1915-1916).[7] Following Nikita Hock,[8] I examine the notion of metaphor as it relates to underground hideouts in a war zone. Here, a grave is employed in song and poetry to signify a living tomb. Following Victor A. Stoichita,[9] I look at the sounds that perforate a "sound bubble" on the front line. In this context, I document the informal manifestation of sound and the formal organization of music that appear in the diaries and memoires of combatants. Following Sarah Kay,[10] I examine the ways in which contrafactum helps clarify the ambivalent positionality of Irish recruits in the Gallipoli Campaign. Not ignoring the visualization of violence, I find Kay's exploration of "extimacy" especially useful when interpreting expressionist representations of a naval assault in the Dardanelles.[11]

4 In my monograph entitled *Commemorating Gallipol through Music*,[12] I examine the relationship between music and memory as it relates to a military expedition. In it, I explore the multiple ways in which music is employed to remember or forget, to celebrate and commemorate a victory (on the part of the Central Powers) and a defeat (on the part of the Allied forces) in the Dardanelles during the First World War (1914-1918). In particular, I interrogate the ambivalent position of sound in a warzone, music at once being used to unify allies (by way of motivation) or to scatter foes (by means of terrorization). Further, I show how song can serve to articulate a nationalist defiance and an imperialist consensus among ethnic minorities. Through musical analysis, I demonstrate how the colonized could become the colonizer (in the case of the Irish) and a how minority might conform to a majority (in the case of the Armenians). In short, I argue that commemoration is itself an act of war clothed in the mantle of peace.

Beyond the Grave

5 In his contribution, Nikita Hock looks at the acoustic ecology of Jewish survivors who were hiding underground to escape their Nazi persecutors in Poland and East Galicia during the Second World War (1939-1945). Based on the testimony to be found in diaries and notebooks, Hock reconstructs the sound world of relevant bunkers and hideouts both in urban and rural contexts. Here, he focuses on the sound strategies employed by Jews to survive, such as the strategic enforcement of silence or the selective engagement with sound. Of particular interest, Hock shows how Jews employed sound to make sense of their entombment, from the sound of the human world above ground to the silence of the inhuman world below. It is noteworthy that Jews used metaphoric language to write about their precarious condition. In particular, they often employed the grave as a metaphor to represent their seclusion from death and their exclusion from life. As such, Jews frequently expressed that they were suspended between life and death in an apparent grave where they were buried alive.

6 The grave is a common topos in the Turkish songs of the Gallipoli Campaign. For example, in the iconic number entitled "Çanakkale Türküsü" (en. "Song of the

Dardanelles"), the text speaks of "rows of willows" (tr. "sıra [sıra] söğütler") and "a long [row] of cypress [trees]" (tr. "uzun bir selvi") both of which represent extended graveyards "under which brave lions lie" (tr. "altında yatıyor aslan yiğitler"). Especially poignant at the opening of the song is as follows: the main protagonist laments being buried alive thusly: "In Gallipoli they shot me / They interred me in a grave while still alive" (tr. "Çanakkale içinde vurdular beni / Ölmeden mezara koydular beni"). In another line, he mourns the passing of his boyhood using the formulaic language of a lament (tr. *ağıt*): "Alas, such was my youth!" (tr. "Of gençliğim eyvah!"). Throughout the song the familiar is set against the unfamiliar. For example, the principal hero goes away from his mother (tr. *ana*) to the enemy (tr. *duşman'a*). Inevitably, "her hope is smashed" (tr."ümidi kesti") when he is killed.

7 The grave is also a familiar theme in the English poems of the Gallipoli Campaign. For example, the poem entitled "The Diggers" (1915) concerns soldiers who are digging a grave for a comrade. Composed by the Australian poet Leon Gellert (1892-1977), the piece tells the story of a man who unknowingly is witnessing his own burial. The diggers sing and swing, sigh and cry while completing the task. The poem concludes: "The brown earth clatters and covers my head / Then I laugh and I laugh, for they think I'm dead". The poem is a wonderful example of music in words. There is an exquisite counterpoint between the active states of digging and swinging and the dormant states of lead and dead. Indeed, depth and death are conveyed through the essential elongation of some words to maintain prosodic symmetry. For example, deep must be read as de-ep and asleep must be recited as asle-ep. Gellert employs other techniques. For example, he uses consonantal alliteration and rhyme pattern respectively to emphasize the connection between digging and de-ep, between bed and dead.

8 Referring back to Hock, the song and the poem represented here show soldiers suspended between life and death in a living grave. In the song, the grave signifies the futility of war where friends are needlessly slaughtered and families are unnecessarily destroyed. Futility is juxtaposed against inevitability, the soldier being resigned to his fate on the war front. In the poem, the grave represents a dance with death. As a principal actor in this own "arcadia of sacrifice", the poet employs parody and irony to make sense of the hero's demise. Using risible juxtapositions, he laughs at death while the diggers cry.[13] As Hock reminds us, the issue of directionality is also important. In the song, the soldier goes away from home to fight against the enemy. Like his comrades, he is buried underground in a cemetery framed by willows and cypresses. In the poem, the soldier looks up from his bed while the diggers look down on his grave. The soldier hears prayers intoned from below and feels earth falling from above.

Over the Parapet

9 Victor A. Stoichita, like Hock, conceives of sound in terms of metaphor: Stoichita viewing music as war and Hock seeing sound as architecture. However, both authors explore the acoustic ecology of violent situations differently, Stoichita with reference to an imaginary landscape but Hock with reference to a claustrophobic underworld. Where Hock represents affordance as a limitation (sound being dependent upon location), Stoichita conceives of affordance as a resource (music being available for action). Here, I think that Hock's notion of perforation is especially valuable for

understanding the meaning of sound in trench warfare. But, I think Stoichita's conception of affordance is extremely useful for understanding music-making in a warzone. In the Gallipoli Campaign, soldiers in the front trenches interpreted sound in what Gilman calls "a sound bubble",[14] by selectively listening to the enemy "over the parapet". In the Gallipoli Campaign combatants afforded music with different agencies either by endowing music with an aggressive intent during active confrontation or by granting music a reflective ambience during passive disengagement.

10 The sounds of battle on the front line ranged from noise to music. From the petrifying screams of the dying to the thunderous cacophony of artillery, the soundscape of a frontal assault was as terrifying as it was confusing. However, some sounds were predictable: from the sacred chant of the Turks: "God is great!" (tr. "Allahuekber!") to the war cry of the French: "Long live France!" (fr. "Vive la France!"). In certain instances Allied recruits sang popular numbers while charging into battle. There are accounts of Irish soldiers singing "It's a long way to Tipperary" when going "over the top". Of course, bugles and whistles were the preferred instruments of assault on both sides, although the musical formations of bugles and drums were considered by then to be anachronistic.[15] In Scottish regiments, pipers led the attack in notable battles. During Turkish attacks, a brass band played patriotic marches in the forward trenches. A common observation was as follows: "The Turks blew bugles, sounded martial music, shouted 'Allah Allah' and died".[16]

11 The music-making in a war zone ranged from the informal to the formal. Soldiers on both sides entertained each other by singing and playing. In such instances, the harmonica was frequently mentioned in English and Turkish sources. On both sides, gramophones played an important part in the soundscape, the sounds of the latest hits wafting across no-man's land. Notably, gramophones were also used as booby traps. Concert parties were organized informally in the front line trenches. These could be surprisingly cosmopolitan affairs featuring Arab and Turkish repertoire on the part of the Central Powers and Māori and "Senegalese" repertoire on the part of the Allied forces. Written recollections of such events were not always complimentary. At a formal level, religious services were convened to boost morale. However, hymn singing in Christian worship sometimes attracted the unwelcome attention of enemy fire. Musical performances were also arranged behind the lines by both sides to foster motivation. One Australian cornet player, Ted McMahon (b.1895), is especially celebrated in the memoires of friend and foe alike.[17]

12 As Hock might contend, music perforated the "sound bubble" of the trenches, be it in the form of the music created by enemy socialization or the music emanating from enemy media. However, sound could smash the acoustic ecology of such spaces during bombardments. As Stoichita might assert, music afforded distinctive pathways, one being to activate towards, the other being to disengage from aggression. There are a number of anecdotes to this effect. When the Allied commander of the Gallipoli Campaign, Sir Ian Hamilton (1853-1947), attempted to understand the self-sacrifice of Ottoman soldiers during frontal assaults, he noted the "influence of a military band concealed in a forward position [playing] martial music throughout the action".[18] In Hamilton's view, music afforded soldiers with a pathway to engage in a charge with suicidal courage. When McMahon serenaded at dusk on the front line with his rendition of "Silent Night", he was universally applauded by both sides, gunfire

apparently falling silent during such performances. From McMahon's perspective, music afforded soldiers with a pathway to disengage from the inhumanity of war.[19]

Love and War

13 "All is fair in love and war" so goes the saying. That is, the rules of war are applicable to the rules of love. Such is the case in Kay's study of love and war in the songs of Bertran de Born. For Kay, war is erotic and love is violent. For her, knighthood is sexy and courtship is combat. Like Stoichita, Kay is interested in simultaneity, for the former scholar affordance is ambiguously suspended between the objective and the subjective, for the latter scholar song evokes yet distorts the interrelationship between desire and death. There are other examples of similitude such as Hock's concern for the living dead and my interest in war as peace (see above). Kay also examines the significance of contrafactum for reconfiguring meanings and subverting identities. Importantly, she argues that the sounds in song are important for understanding the soundscape of a military camp and the sonic thrill of a military exchange. She relates all of this to the life and death moment of the scream, an "extimacy" of the voice which is at once intimate and external.

14 In the Gallipoli Campaign, there is one song that employs contrafactum and reveals extimacy. It is entitled: "Old Gallipoli's a Wonderful Place". It is one of the few songs from the Gallipoli Campaign that survived in the oral tradition among Irish veterans. Composed anonymously in two stanzas, the song considers, first, the strategic aims of the Gallipoli Campaign (that is, the capture of Constantinople or Istanbul) and, second, the deplorable conditions on the Gallipoli peninsula (especially with respect to food and drink). There is a cynical edge to the piece: soldiers are ordered to capture the elevated outpost called "Achi Baba" (tr. "Alçı Tepe") in expectation of an Ottoman defeat. However, that is what is anticipated and not what is achieved. The song indicates the ground-level recognition of a military stalemate among the Irish recruits "that lasts till Doomsday I think". Resigned to their fate, the soldiers "never grumble, they smile through it all", while thinking with empty stomachs about "where the old Gallipoli sweeps down to the sea".

15 "Old Gallipoli" (c. 1915) is an excellent example of contrafactum. It is sung to the tune of the vaudeville number called "The Mountains of Mourne" (1896). Written by the Anglo-Irish songster, Percy French (1854-1920), "The Mountains of Mourne" concerns a satirical commentary upon English society by an Irish emigrant. Two lines of the two songs are almost identical however the two contexts are very different. "Old Gallipoli" is set during wartime in Turkey while "The Mountains of Mourne" is set during peacetime in England. "The Mountains of Mourne" is composed using a melody taken from a nationalist ballad called "Carrigdhoun" (1845). "Carrigdhoun" tells the story of Irish soldiers forced to flee Ireland for France following the Treaty of Limerick (1691). There is an eschatological register to the piece. The ballad foresees a spring when Ireland is freed from the winter of English oppression. Finally, all three pieces are set to the melody of an orientalist verse called "Bendemeer's Stream" (1817). Written by Thomas Moore (1779-1852), the sonnet is part of an allegorical romance entitled "Lalla Rookh".

16 "Old Gallipoli" reveals multiple registers of Irish identity through contrafactum. By using the same melodic frame, "Old Gallipoli" references the social subversion of an

Irish emigrant (in “The Mountains of Mourne”) and the political sedition of an Irish rebel (in “Carrigdhoun”). It talks about the realities of war (in “Old Gallipoli”) and the fantasies of love (in “Bendemeer’s Stream”). It speaks about Irish soldiers who are forced to flee home (in “Carrigdhoun”) and about Irish volunteers who are required to invade abroad (in “Old Gallipoli”). In many respects, “Old Gallipoli” is a fitting song for Irish soldiers to sing on a Turkish campaign as it juxtaposes the local with the global and it melds the “occident” with the “orient”. It shows through parody how the Irish could simultaneously be colonized (in Ireland) and colonizers (in Turkey). As an example of extimacy, “Old Gallipoli” renders the unfamiliar familiar in that it compares favorably through intertextuality a hostile landscape in Turkey with a beloved vista in Ireland, “where the Mountains of Mourne sweep down to the sea”.

Sound the Silence

17 “Old Gallipoli” represents another level of extimacy. My father sang the song. He must have learned it from his father, a veteran of the Gallipoli Campaign. Wounded and gassed in the conflict, my grandfather never spoke of his wartime experiences. Like many of his contemporaries, he remained silent throughout his life about the terrors of war. Only “Old Gallipoli” testifies to the sound of his silence, an intimate moment made external across the generations through the voice of my father. Here, singing renders the past real in the present. And, my grandfather’s version of “Old Gallipoli” was distinctive in underlying the authenticity of its transmission. Interestingly, song was often employed as a metaphor for the sound of battle in the Gallipoli Campaign. As I show elsewhere, song was often used to describe salvos and barrages.[20] Song was employed euphemistically in poems and memoires alike to make sense of the terrifying sounds of trench warfare. That is, song allowed for the intimate control of an exterior sound world that could not be contained.

18 “Old Gallipoli” speaks to an archive of family memory. As Rouillan might assert, it is the tune rather than the text that speaks in this regard. “Old Gallipoli” embodies within itself multiple levels of family identity that range from militarism abroad (during the eighteenth century) to constitutionalism at home (during the nineteenth century). It speaks to a family engagement with the Ottoman Empire (as officials in peacetime) to a family detachment from the Ottoman Empire (as soldiers in wartime). That my grandfather, as an Irish catholic and a British officer, was involved in the Gallipoli Campaign is especially ironic since he believed he was fighting for peace at home (in the form of Irish independence) while participating in a war away from home (in the service of British imperialism). For some, he was a hero and for others he was a traitor. “Old Gallipoli” provides an insight into this conundrum as it revels through music the complex positionality of an Irishman who was both conquered and conquerer. In this way, “Old Gallipoli” helps remember a past that is almost forgotten.

19 That being said, “Old Gallipoli” does not convey the life and death extimacy of “The Scream” (1897) by Edvard Munch (1863-1944). As Kay argues, song can re-sound the silence of art. There is one such image of the Gallipoli Campaign, called “Battle in front of the Dardanelles” (gr. “Kampf vor den Dardanellen”) (1915). It was penned by the expressionist artist, Ulrich Hüber (1872-1932), in Berlin for the wartime magazine *Kriegzeit*. It portrays the appalling mayhem of a maritime engagement in the Dardanelles when the Allied navy was repulsed by Turkish gunfire. The lithograph is

framed by a short verse. It is a German version of *Don Juan* "Canto VIII" (1823) by George Lord Byron (1788-1824). Only verse seven is represented here. The poem alludes to the inferno portrayed. It speaks of: "Air, earth and water are allayed by a fiery rain" (gr. "Luft, Erde, Wasser bannt ein Glutenregen") and of a: "Shore that spits ore, piece by piece, like Vesuvius" (gr. "Das Ufer speit, vesuvgleich Stück auf Stück Erz") in a Dantesque apparition of the apocalypse.

20 The poem matches the anxious emotionalism of the expressionist movement. It brings to life the oral and the aural experience of violence. Although not (exactly) music, the "Canto" affords the reader with a distinctive pathway towards aggression (after Stoichita). It presents a volcano as a metaphor for naval belligerence (after Hock). It envisions art as a sound vision of life and death, an extimacy worthy of "The Scream" (after Kay). In this respect, it sounds the silence of the artist's canvas. Although, the "Canto" cannot be considered properly to be contrafactum, it does represent a double reworking of the Byronic original, first by way of translation and second by way of adaptation, the verse now contributing to the propaganda machine of the German Reich . What is missing here is the Byronic flair for parody and satire, that most English quality which loves to laugh at death as the poem "The Diggers" and the song "Old Gallipoli" attest. However, the "Canto" reminds us of the simultaneity of sound and sense: the light flippancy of the word but the intense sincerity of the music (after Rouillan).

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2. See O'CONNELL John M. and CASTELO-BRANCO Salwa (eds.), *Music and Conflict*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2010.

3. See, for example, PIESLAK Jonathan, *Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2009.

4. See GILMAN Lisa, *My Music, My War: The Listening Habits of U.S. Troops in Iraq and Afghanistan*, Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 2016.

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6. PIESLAK Jonathan, *Radicalism and Music: An Introduction to the Music Cultures of al-Qa'ida, Racist Skinheads, Christian-Affiliated Radicals, and Eco-Animal Rights Militants*, Middletown, Wesleyan University Press, 2015; TEITELBAUM Benjamin R., *Lions of the North: Sounds of the New Nordic Radical Nationalism*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2017.

7. The Gallipoli Campaign is known by a number of names in different sources. In French it is equally referred to as "la bataille des Dardanelles" and "la bataille de Gallipoli". In German it is usually known as "die Schlacht von Gallipoli". In Turkish it is commonly called either "Çanakkale Savaşı" or "Çanakkale Muharebeleri". For the sake of simplicity, I will refer to the Allied landings

(1915) on the Gallipoli peninsula as the "Gallipoli Campaign" although I am aware that other names were used in English.

8. HOCK Nikita, "Making Home, Making Sense: Aural Experiences of Warsaw and East Galician Jews in Subterranean Shelters during the Holocaust", *Transposition*, no. Hors-série 2, 2020, https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.4205.

9. STOICHITA Victor A., "Affordance to Kill: Sound Agency and Auditory Experiences of a Norwegian Terrorist and American Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan".

10. KAY Sarah, "Songs of War: The Voice of Bertran de Born", *Transposition*, no. Hors-série 2, 2020, https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.3785.

11. The examples referenced in this essay are taken from my recent monograph (see O'CONNELL, 2017). However, they are reworked to suit the issues in question and the authors' contributions to this special issue. In addition to my edited collection on music and conflict (see O'CONNELL and CASTELO-BRANCO, eds., 2010), the essay also draws upon my work on music and war (see O'Connell, 2011) and music and radicalism (see O'CONNELL, forthcoming). Because of copyright limitations, I am unable to reproduce relevant plates and examples which are featured in my book entitled *Commemorating Gallipoli*.

12. O'CONNELL John M., *Commemorating Gallipoli through Music: Remembering and Forgetting*, Lanham, Lexington Books, 2017.

13. See FUSSELL Paul, *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013 [1975].

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15. CARLYON Les A, *Gallipoli*, London, Bantam Books, 2001, p. 311.

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19. LATHAM Chris., "Re-Sounding Gallipoli: Music for the Campaign", Concert Brochure, High Court of Australia, Canberra (12 April 2015), unpublished.

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ABSTRACTS

In this essay, I interrogate the ideas that concern music and violence which are presented by scholars in this *Transposition* special issue. Although each article is very different, common themes emerge. I interpolate these with reference to my own research into the sounds of music in the Gallipoli Campaign (1915-1916). Following Nikita Hock, I examine the notion of metaphor as it relates to underground hideouts in a war zone. Following Victor A. Stoichita, I look at how music affords distinctive pathways in the fulfilment of or disengagement from acts of violence. Following Sarah Kay, I examine the ways in which contrafactum helps clarify the ambivalent positionality of Allied recruits in a foreign campaign. I also refer to Kay's notion of "extimacy" when interpreting expressionist representations of warfare in the Dardanelles.

Dans cet essai, je discute les idées concernant la musique et la violence présentées par les contribut·eurs·rices de ce numéro hors-série de *Transposition*. Bien que les articles soient très différents les uns des autres, des thèmes communs émergent. Je les croise avec ma propre recherche sur les sons musicaux de la campagne de Gallipoli (1915-1916). En suivant Nikita Hock, j'examine la notion de métaphore en ce qui concerne les cachettes souterraines en zone de guerre. En suivant Victor A. Stoichita, je regarde comment la musique offre différents chemins dans l'accomplissement ou le désengagement d'actes de violence. En suivant Sarah Kay, j'examine les façons dont le contrafactum aide à clarifier la positionnalité ambivalente des recrues alliées dans le cadre d'une campagne étrangère. Je me réfère également à la notion d'« extimité » proposée par Sarah Kay au moment d'interpréter les représentations expressionnistes de la guerre dans les Dardanelles.

INDEX

Mots-clés: affordance, extimité, contrafactum, métaphore, perforation, simultanéité, Bataille de Gallipoli
Keywords: affordance, extimacy, contrafactum, metaphor, perforation, simultaneity, Gallipoli Campaign

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On Music, Torture and Detention: Reflections on Issues of Research and Discipline

Musique, torture et détention : réflexions sur des enjeux de recherche et de discipline

Anna Papaeti

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I am grateful to the guest editor of this issue Luis Velasco-Pufleau and to Martin Daughtry for their valuable commentary, as well as to Athena Athanasiou for many thought-provoking discussions over the last two years. This essay is based on research conducted in the context of a Marie Skłodowska Curie Individual Fellowship (acronym MUSDEWAR 706016) held at the Department of Social Anthropology at Panteion University of Political and Social Sciences, Athens (2017–2019).

1 Musicology and ethnomusicology have been historically and ideologically founded on the notion of music as an inherently positive, benign and ennobling artform. As such, these fields took long to engage with music's long-standing association with violence, war and power, dating back to the Middle Ages if not earlier;[1] the study of Nazi concentration and extermination camps is a notable exception, although it was also examined relatively belatedly.[2] Left unexplored by historians, social anthropologists, human rights scholars, and legal experts working in the field of violence, detention and justice, this gap began to be critically addressed in music research only in the last decades. In this essay, I explore (ethno)musicology's latent reaction to music's relationship with violence and technologies of terror as a disciplinary trauma, critically discussing a wide range of effects stemming from this silencing. Also investigated are the cultural biases that have turned music into an elusive means of torture, the practice of music torture, its impact and the legal context that has made it possible.

Addressing the intersections of music and terror, I underline the need for more nuanced soundscapes of detention that explore the entanglement of negative and positive uses of music imposed from above and reclaimed from below.

Music, Violence and Torture: A Disciplinary Blind Spot

2 Although movements in the USA and the UK such as new musicology and critical musicology stretched the boundaries of the discipline during the last decades of the twentieth century, enriching it with new areas of study and theoretical approaches, research on music's association with violence remained at the fringes of both musicology and the more progressive discipline of ethnomusicology. Commenting on this latent response, Timothy Rice has noted how ethnomusicology, up until the late twentieth century, focused on the positive role of music for the individual, communities and local societies, contrary to anthropological research which, quite early on, examined issues of violence, methods and mechanisms of repression by authoritarian regimes.[3] Musicology followed suit with some delay.

3 Catalyst to this turn were testimonies of detainees from the US naval base at Guantanamo, Cuba and the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, bringing to the fore the institutionalized use of music and sound in torture in the so-called War on Terror. Opening Pandora's box, these accounts initiated changes institutionally, as well as in music research in the USA and Europe. Gradually challenging rigid understandings of the discipline of musicology itself, these changes called for a re-examination of its boundaries, methodologies and ideologies.[4] Signs of this turn initially took the form of resolutions passed by music societies in the USA, condemning the use of music torture by the USA: resolutions were issued in 2007 by the Society of Ethnomusicology (SEM)[5] and the Society for American Music (SAM),[6] and in 2008 by the American Musicological Society (AMS).[7] On the other side of the Atlantic, there was notable silence from respective music associations in the UK, even though this was a country also involved in the "War on Terror", implicated in extraordinary renditions, torture and inhuman treatment of detainees. Prompted on separate occasions by researcher Katia Chornik in 2017 to consider the possibility of making public statements about political incidents, both the Royal Music Association (RMA) and the British Forum for Ethnomusicology (BFE) declined to follow in the footsteps of their US counterparts; the RMA noted that it would take a public role if and when political actions would impact its members or music research.[8]

4 The pioneering work of Suzanne Cusick on music torture in the so-called War on Terror was crucial for the above-mentioned institutional opening. Published at the very moment when debates on torture had re-emerged in civil society, Cusick's articles gave important and much needed theoretical and musicological insights into the use and institutionalization of music in technologies of terror.[9] A leading and respected musicologist in the USA and internationally, her work also legitimized musicological research on this topic. The issue of legitimation is not one to be taken lightly. Up until recently, research on music, torture and violence was met by musicologists with scepticism, if not hostility, at least in Europe. In the past I personally encountered more than once the comment "this is great research but not musicology" at the end of conference presentations of my research on music torture by the military dictatorship in Greece (1967–1974), the first documented example of a European country to sample

coercive interrogation techniques later used by South American dictatorships[10] and more recently in the detention centres of the "War on Terror". Yet even in the USA, Cusick's research was not embraced by all. It was occasionally met with awkwardness expressed in a favouring of her work on musical culture in early modern Italy. That she was elected president of the AMS (2018–2020) is telling of the changes taking place in musicology in the USA in the last decades.

5 Music's integral role in torture, thus, emerges as a kind of personal and collective trauma that needed to be supressed.[11] The complicity of music, jewel of enlightened civilization, in the breaking of bodies, spirits and subjects turned, for some, into an open wound, a rupture in the "harmonious universe" upon which we, musicologists and ethnomusicologists, had structured our lives and subjectivities. Just like Amfortas's wound in Wagner's *Parsifal*, this open wound that will not heal has been inflicted by a newly acquired knowledge: music's institutionalization in technologies of terror. For some, this knowledge became a point of no return. Cusick explains how her research on music torture initiated a wound concerning her relationship with music; cultivated all her life, this relationship had been central to her subjectivity.[12] The realization that music has always been the medium of violence does not only affect us personally, she notes, but it is also "disciplinarily devastating". It falls to us, musicologists and ethnomusicologists involved in the study, performance, and reception of music, to document, fully grasp and theorize this phenomenon and its genealogy. Such research and historical recovery are not only of essence in terms of the discipline, but also a matter of urgency given political and legal issues related to current practices of terror.

6 Nowadays scepticism for these topics mostly belongs to the past, reflecting the broadening of the fields of musicology and ethnomusicology, as well as the important contribution of sound studies[13] in music research. Notable is a comparison between two international conferences I co-organized in 2013 (Germany) and 2019 (Greece), for which there was an international call for papers.[14] The first, *Music in Detention*, took place in 2013 at the University of Goettingen. It attracted 40 submissions, one third of which dealt with Nazi concentration and extermination camps during WWII. Titled *Soundscapes of Trauma: Music, Violence, Therapy*, the second conference took place in 2019 in Athens. There were 80 submissions, double the number, and a notable wide range of new topics; only three papers dealt with Nazi WWII camps. Fourteen years since Cusick's first article on music torture, we are no longer faced with comments questioning the place of these topics in musicology. There is a move away from the notion of music as a singularly benign artform, which had previously shaped the trajectory of music research, towards a flourishing new emerging field. Its theoretical and thematic branching out, sophistication and critical approaches are reflected in the contributions within this volume.

Music Torture and the Politics of Opacity

7 The late(nt) engagement of music research with the intersections of music and violence, and its perpetuation of biases about music's ennobling character make it politically complicit in supporting a critical blindness about music's instrumentalization as an ideal weapon of terror. Music's elusive nature has also been reinforced by the fact that it leaves no visible marks on the body. Its opacity makes it hard to prosecute in courts of law, but also to be fully grasped by the general public or

even human rights lawyers, a point I will return to in the next section. Consequently, these practices have mostly remained undocumented and under-researched, as has music's long-standing association with power, punishment and violence. Grounded epistemologically on ancient Greek philosophy and the Enlightenment, and music's alignment with the transcendental, these perceptions conditioned public understanding about its inherently benign nature.[15] They are strongly evident in the difficulty of registering music as torture in the public sphere as well as popular culture. Comments to the online article *The Torture Playlist* by the website Mother Jones about music torture in the "War on Terror" are indicative.[16] What is striking to notice is the humorous tone of the unfolding discussion below the article. The discussion makes clear the sheer difficulty in grasping the transformation of music per se into a weapon of torture. Music's torturous quality is attributed to the genre, singer or composer rather than the practice itself, implicitly suggesting that listening to good music would create an altogether different experience.

8 Such positions are not limited to the uninformed online reader but are often encountered in popular culture. Woody Allen's *Bananas* (1971) is only one example in a string of many, humorously approaching music torture through this angle. The film's interrogation scene shows a guerrilla caught by the dictatorial regime of San Marcos. Chained on a chair, his torture solely consists of being forced to listen to the operetta *Naughty Marietta*. An ironic comment on opera lovers' aversion to operetta, the scene brings laughter even to the most informed audience. A similar scene in Billy Wilder's comedy *One, Two, Three* (1961) set in West Berlin before the building of the Berlin wall, features the song *Itsy, bitsy, teeny, weeny, yellow polka dot bikini* as the sole form of torture, ultimately driving the victim to a false confession. Both works humorously portray the use of music in coercive interrogation techniques. This kind of representations would be rare—if at all possible—in cinematic portrayals of physical torture like foot whipping, denailing, electroshocks or hair-pulling. What is also interesting to observe is that both comedies were released in the early 1960s and '70s, at precisely the time when these practices were emerging, indicating that these methods were not as oblique as one would expect.

9 Biases about music's inherently benign nature have made it difficult not only for the general public but also for survivors and perpetrators to recognize music's complicity in torture. This is notable in testimonies I collected from political prisoners of the military dictatorship in Greece (1967–1974), who were tortured with music. Even though they testified to its terrorizing effect, they initially did not view music as an integral part to the torture ritual;[17] the latter consisted of a combination of interrogation techniques such as isolation, continuous standing, stress positions, sleep, food and drink deprivation and exposure to continuous music. Instead, the first assumption was that music was played from the radio in order to drown out the cries of torture. However, the Special Interrogation Unit of Greek Military Police (EAT/ESA), where they were held, did not have any civilian buildings directly adjacent to it, but was surrounded by a park, military offices and naval and military hospitals. Additionally, the cries of torture were purposefully used as a means of torture for other detainees, a method also acknowledged by Amnesty International at the time.[18] Gradually over the course of the interview process, they came to realize that the same songs were played in a loop. This realization was prompted by my questions about radio programming, sequence of songs, news programmes and radio broadcasters. On

the one hand, their difficulty speaks volumes about the elusive nature of music's role in torture. On the other, it also testifies to the fact that they did not want to "cede" music to their torturers, music being central to their discourse of resistance. Nor did they wish to credit them with the most cutting-edge torture practices of the period; there is a post-dictatorship tendency to look down on the dictators as ridiculous and kitschy individuals, a portrayal that overshadows the absolute terror in which they ruled.

10 The difficulty in acknowledging music's weaponization in torture is also underlined in the testimony of former Guantanamo guard Chris Arendt for the documentary *Songs of War: Music as Torture*.[19] As Arendt explains, he initially understood torture as inflicting acute physical pain—for instance, pulling out nails and administering electroshocks. He only later began to recognize as torture the use of blasting music in combination with stress positions, isolation, and changes between hot and cold, darkness and light. Similar cultural perceptions of what constitutes torture were echoed by a soldier of the Greek Military Police, who acted as a guard at the Special Interrogation Unit (EAT/ESA; 1972–73). He characteristically told me that they did not use scientific torture and electric wires there, but mainly their fists and legs, isolation, and forced standing, among others.[20] Contrary to Arendt, he continues to remain oblivious to the fact that these were the most cutting-edge torture methods circulating internationally at the time.

Coercive Interrogation and Definitions of Torture

11 The qualitative transformation of music into a sonic weapon of torture and interrogation must be understood in the context of the human rights treaties responding to the unprecedented atrocities of World War II, the rise of international human rights law, as well as the intensification of psychological warfare during the unfolding Cold War. The preoccupation with "Soviet brainwashing" in the West, reinforced by debriefings of US soldiers returning from the Korean War, prompted the CIA's infamous mind control programme (MK Ultra) in the 1950s which included psychological research in universities in Canada, USA and the UK.[21] This research constituted the basis of new interrogation techniques, aiming to effectively manipulate and collapse subjectivities of opponents in ways that could not be traced or prosecuted. The elusiveness of these techniques, and of music in particular, is therefore intentional and deeply rooted in their design and conception. Heavily relying on culturally shaped perceptions of what constitutes severe pain and suffering, and therefore torture, these methods are essentially based on manipulating captive environments. Important to note here is that they work in an accumulative manner and in combination rather than each one individually.

12 A close look at the CIA *Kubark Counter Intelligence Interrogation Manual*, the first manual to build on this research, shows how this new approach essentially relies on exposure to isolation, silence, continuous sound, stress positions, disorientation through sound, time deprivation and humiliations, causing a state of anxiety, fear, vulnerability and panic.[22] As Kubark makes clear, continuous exposure to them can be more effective than the actual sensation of pain: "Control of an interogatee can rarely be established without control of his environment. [...] The threat to inflict pain triggers fears more damaging than the immediate sensation of pain".[23] Kubark's claims have since been corroborated by research on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a mental health

condition related to the experience or witnessing of acute trauma that can leave long-lasting side-effects. Highlighting how the continued experience of fear and loss of control create a sense of "learned helplessness", it has showed that such conditions can be more detrimental than the experience of physical pain.[24] These techniques aim at creating a cloud, an enclosed space that separates the detainee from his/her surroundings both physically and mentally. The only person left to relate to or depend on for support is the interrogator. Music and sound, in this context, constitute a holistic attack on the bodies and minds of detainees. Creating a sonic enclosure and obliterating any sense of external or inner space, they totalize the sense of isolation and disconnection. Detainees are unable to think, meditate or pray, but experience acute vulnerability and utter loss of control. In his testimony, Ruhal Ahmed, a former Guantanamo detainee, notes that the introduction of music to the torture ritual made the situation even worse,[25] raising the stakes much higher. Music threatened his sanity, a position echoed by several others.[26]

13 Even though coercive interrogation techniques are usually legally deemed as cruel, inhuman and degrading (CID) treatment, they have more long-term effects than so-called physical torture with regard to PTSD.[27] In this sense, it is not only the public, survivors and perpetrators who find it hard to fully grasp the impact of this kind of torture, but human rights lawyers as well. And it is precisely at this legal juncture that one has to understand the qualitative change in technologies of terror, including the transformation of music into a sonic weapon of torture. Their success in evading international law is evident in the emphasis placed on severity of pain in legal judgements concerning such interrogation techniques, debates that have recently re-emerged in the context of the Guantanamo tribunal for Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, accused of planning the 9/11 attacks. According to news reports, James Mitchell, one of the psychologists to devise so-called enhanced interrogation techniques used on Mohammed, acknowledged that such methods induced "learned helplessness", arguing however that this later goes away.[28] In a book detailing these techniques, he and his colleague Bill Harlow argue that even though these methods (including waterboarding) cause fear and panic, they do not constitute torture because they do not inflict severe pain.[29]

14 PTSD research contests such arguments, underlining how these techniques are linked to survivors' long-term psychological and physical conditions. Also important in proving long-term and irreparable damage caused by exposure to loud noise is the 2018 case of the viola player Christopher Goldscheider against the Royal Opera House in the UK High Court; the trial examined the ways in which exposure to acute noise during rehearsals of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* caused irreparable damage to his hearing. This was the first time acoustic shock (with symptoms including tinnitus, hyperacusis and dizziness) was legally recognized as a condition which would require compensation.[30] That Goldscheider has been unable to be around noise since then, experiencing pain, nausea and dizziness, underlines the long-term side effects of acoustic shock. It provides an important precedent that can be used in cases of music torture. It is precisely in these legal debates that (ethno)musicologists and sound experts can contribute through scientific studies that make this complex phenomenon and its damaging potential better understood. Collecting and analysing oral histories can address the dynamic of these methods, as well as short- and long-term effects for survivors. Additionally, theoretical insights into the use and impact of music and sound in such contexts can make clear the damaging potential they harbour. That human

rights lawyers defending detainees have turned to musicologists' testimony in substantiating allegations of music torture underlines the need for and importance of research on this topic, both legally and politically.

15 The official argument defending the use of coercive interrogation techniques (misleadingly called "enhanced interrogation" techniques) in the "War on Terror" was based on the 1978 judgement of the European Court of Human Rights for the case of Ireland versus the UK.[31] The trial examined charges including teaching the Royal Ulster Constabulary and authorizing five interrogation techniques against 14 IRA prisoners: hooding, wall standing, exposure to noise, reduced diet and sleep deprivation. Contrary to the report of the now defunct European Commission of Human Rights, which unanimously deemed these techniques to be torture, the court adopted a restricted meaning. It ruled that these methods amounted "only" to inhuman and degrading treatment. The judgement was not a unanimous one. Judge Dimitrios Evrigenis criticized a definition of torture based on grading the suffering inflicted, stressing the need to account for new forms of technologically sophisticated torture like this one. His remarks sadly continue to have a strong resonance today:

> Torture can be practised—and indeed is practised—by using subtle techniques developed in multidisciplinary laboratories, which claim to be scientific. By means of new forms of suffering that have little in common with the physical pain caused by conventional torture it aims to bring about, even if only temporarily, the disintegration of an individual's personality, the shattering of his mental and psychological equilibrium and the crushing of his will. I should very much regret it if the definition of torture which emerges from the judgment could not cover these various forms of technologically sophisticated torture. Such an interpretation would overlook the current situation and the historical prospects in which the European Convention on Human Rights should be implemented.[32]

16 Since 1978, this grading of pain and suffering has prevailed even though both torture and CID treatment are equally banned by article 3 of the European Charter of Human Rights. Such differentiation has since been starkly challenged by research on coercive interrogation techniques and PTSD. And yet the European Court of Human Rights recently missed a historic opportunity to revise the 1978 judgment by rejecting a request submitted by Ireland in 2014. This was based on a folder of declassified files withheld by the UK government during the trial. The files included medical reports, outlining that detainees suffered from a number of psychiatric and psychosomatic symptoms related to the five-point technique; these ranged from severe to medium and mild depending on the age, medical predisposition and experience, among others. They also highlighted that the five-point interrogation techniques were used under ministerial order. What transpires from these files is that the UK had prior knowledge of the severe and long-term effects of these methods, portrayed in court at the time as minor and short-term.[33] The Court's rejection mostly on technical grounds was a missed opportunity to set straight the legal shortfalls concerning a scientific method that by design aimed to cause maximum harm while evading international law. It also failed to recognize its responsibility in providing a judgement that in later years legitimated the extensive use of these methods in the "War on Terror". As Judge Siofra O'Leary noted in her dissenting opinion in 2018, an intra-state application "is not an exercise of a right of action to enforce the applicant state's rights, but an action against an alleged violation of the public order of Europe", calling for issues of public interest also to be taken into account along with legal certainty.[34]

Mechanism of Music Terror

17 The debate around music torture eventually centres around the question of whether its damaging potential is due to the genre or quality of performance mentioned above, or to the materiality of sound. On the one hand, there are those who suggest that a good performance of a favourite piece would not have the same effect as a genre despised by the listener or poorly performed. On the other, there are those who support that the incessant repetition of music turns it, at some point, into sound, which is true. However, music's dynamic also resides in the cultural meanings it carries with regard to class, nationality, ethnicity, religion and gender, among others. These layers of meaning also contribute to the humiliation, stress, fear and sense of vulnerability of the one forced to listen. Cusick has critically discussed the link between music torture, gender coercion and futility in the "War on Terror".[35] Former detainees but also CIA operatives have spoken about the effect that certain songs—lyrics, genre, gender of singer—had on detainees, particularly those who were not raised or had not lived in Western countries.[36] Furthermore, Katia Chornik has shown that in Pinochet's detention centres in Chile officers played classical music, contrary to guards and agents of the National Intelligence Directorate (DINA) who opted for popular music.[37] This choice, which denotes class, was immortalized in Ariel Dorfmann's book *Death and the Maiden* (1990) and its cinematic rendition by Roman Polanski (1994). In my work, torture survivors of the military dictatorship in Greece repeatedly spoke about the deeply ironic and offensive nature of the songs played to them. They did not consider their choice accidental. All of them would avoid listening to these songs fifty years later. One said that he would turn off the radio, noting however that such songs are not played any more. Another survivor explained that listening to them now would make him melancholic; he was quick to add that he is generally melancholic.

18 Can listening to a favourite song in the context of detention, interrogation and torture lead to a different experience than sheer terror, fear and helplessness? My interviewee Maria, a former political prisoner of the military dictatorship in Greece, was clear in refuting this. Arrested in 1967, she was held for one year at the prison camps at the barren island of Giaros. There, she was not tortured but lived in inhuman conditions and was forced to listen to nationalist speeches and music, mostly folk songs and marches; this was the last remnant of the "re-education" or "rehabilitation" practices for communists and leftists practiced during the civil-war period in Greece (1946–49).[38] In essence, they aimed to create a sonic enclosure that complemented their imprisonment on a barren, uninhabitable island in the midst of the Aegean Sea. Reinforced by the sound of incessant winds, this sonic enclosure was inescapable. A regular song played to them was *Famous Macedonia Country of Alexander*, a folk song she loved. Coming from the geographical region of Macedonia in Northern Greece, she considered it her own and used to dance it. But when this song was identified with the dictators and her oppressors, she could no longer stand listening to it. Each time it was played, she would place her fingers in her ears in an attempt to block the sound, and would feel physically sick.

19 Maria's nausea brings to mind Stanley Kubrick's *Clockwork Orange* based on the book by Anthony Burgess. Just like Maria, the main character Alex wants to vomit each time he listens to music by his favourite composer Ludwig van Beethoven—the result of an experimental "rehabilitation" programme aiming to pacify his violent nature. Chained

on a chair with his eyes pinned-open by government scientists, in a scene that brings to mind images of torture, Alex is forced to watch scenes of sex and violence to the accompaniment of Beethoven's music. It is worth noting here that Burgess's book was published in 1962, a year before the Kubark manual, with which it bears similarities at parts. Indeed, the book portrays the dystopian quality of psychological experiments of the mind-control programme, showing how the ideas behind and the mechanisms of so-called brainwashing were circulating in popular culture and in the public sphere at the time.[39]

Witnessing Music in Detention: Future Research Perspectives

20 The long-term disciplinary overshadowing of music's dark side also shaped the emerging fields that took it on board. In doing so, the latter overcompensated to some extent by focusing on the negative role of music/sound in order to thoroughly document it and make a strong case, given the initial scepticism as well as the difficulty in acknowledging music's integral role in torture. This focus is also due to the long process of systematic and persistent "digging" in terms of archival and qualitative research, brushing against the grain, in order to uncover such uses, particularly for historical cases. This was, at least, my experience in investigating the previously unknown use of music in coercive interrogation techniques by the military dictatorship in Greece. Starting off this research with one survivor testimony from the proceedings of the first Torturers' Trial (1975) and a few fragments from others, I conducted archival research and numerous interviews with former political prisoners. Many of the stories I am currently working on, I owe to my interviewees and not to my own questions which mostly focused on music and sound imposed from above. Given the above-mentioned biases about music's ennobling character but also the central role it held in the discourse of resistance in Greece, testimonies kept returning to these stories; several of my interviewees talked extensively about how they used music to counter the sense of fear and terror in the very setting in which music was weaponized.

21 Returning to these interviews in recent years, I was able to fully appreciate the important message of entanglement they carried, calling for more nuanced listening and understanding of the ways in which music can be reclaimed or be given different meanings in the midst of abuse and unfreedom. The following examples clarify the point I wish to make. Maria, whose exposure to music from loudspeakers at Giaros prison camp was previously mentioned, was eventually able to shift the meaning of music imposed from above. By associating some of the songs with the man she was in love with at the time, she managed to withstand this inescapable listening. Or, as I have shown elsewhere, during the same period, detainees in solitary confinement faced with imposed silence reclaimed agency through humming, whistling or even coded knocking on the wall. Turning their fellow detainees into a kind of audience, into witnesses of their clandestine experience, they challenged the objectification of brutal torture to which they were exposed and which also included sound.[40] Through the faint sounds of singing and knocks on the wall, they were able to transgress imposed silence and terror. Music and sound in these settings set into motion a constitutive component of the structure of subjectivity: the ability to address an other (address-ability) and the potential of a response (response-ability). As Lacanian philosopher Mladen Dolar

writes, we are social beings *with* and *through* the voice: voice is at the core of our social bonds and subjectivity itself, as it structurally presupposes an Other.[41] Even the pure cry (*cri pur*) is for psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan a cry *for* someone (*cri pour*), writes Dolar; listening to it presupposes the call and the interpolation of an other, calling for a response.[42] Acousmatic sound too, such as faint knocks on the wall, can be turned into voice, attaining meaning.

22 This kind of witnessing, a subject that has not been given its due attention, has been beautifully portrayed in the film A Twelve Year Night (*La noche de 12 años*, 2018) by Álvaro Brechner. The film tells the story of three imprisoned members of the Tupamaros movement in Uruguay, Mauricio Rosencof, Eleuterio Fernándex Huidobro and José Murica (who later became president of Uruguay). Detained in solitary confinement for twelve years, they were essentially treated as hostages. The story unfolds through the ears and eyes of the detainees. Silence pervades. Throughout the film Rosencof and Huidobro devise a language through knocks on the wall in order to communicate, translated to us in the subtitles. Shared by so many political prisoners across the world around that period, this practice reminds us how strategies of survival are also international, just as the methods of torture used to break them. On their 2391st day of detention, the prisoners are transported, hooded and handcuffed, to another secret location. Once they enter their cells Rosencof, who is a poet, starts knocking to see if Huidobro is in the next cell. Relieved and emotional, he "recites" to him a poem through knocks on the wall:

Y si este fuera mi último poema *insumiso y triste* *raído pero entero* *tan solo una palabra escribiría:* *compañero*	And if this were my last poem rebellious and sad worn out but whole I would only write one word: *compañero*

23 A touching moment, it speaks volumes in its elliptic language and its sounds of silence about comradery, community building, solidarity and communication in the midst of isolation, terror and abuse. Stories like these abound. Music usually features as their driving force. The prison camps on the barren island of Makronissos in Greece during the civil war, infamous for its brutal torture and indoctrination, provide my last and equally striking example. Relentlessly exposed to music and speeches from loudspeakers that made them dizzy, women political prisoners used their song to block the sound imposed from above.[43] Joining their voices together, their song became an acoustic shield, countering the damaging effect of the loudspeaker, which had been turned into a sonic panopticon of power. Their song was also intended for the so-called hard-core detainees deemed impossible to "rehabilitate". Forced to stay out in the open, in natural trenches instead of tents, they were exposed to incessant winds, bitter cold or scorching sun. Recognizing and responding to their ordeal, the women's song also became a powerful tool for expressing solidarity and resistance, reinforcing community in the midst of terror.

24 Stories like these are not always possible. The blasting of music in the detention centres of the "War on Terror", often through earphones, obliterated the space for such attempts. However, what I have tried to underline through this brief discussion on witnessing trauma testimony is the need to ask questions that allow for other kinds of

stories or even failed attempts to surface. Researchers need to account, wherever possible, for the sounds and music of resistance as well as of terror, otherwise we run the risk of reproducing the soundscapes of power and oppression, missing out the dynamic of music and sound in these contexts. The process of witnessing thus emerges as an ethical moment that calls us to make sense and respond to these stories, their multiple versions and voices, in ways that open up the debate about the violence and abuse of the past and the present. It allows for a kind of history-telling that emerges from below, registering all these voices and noises in the historical account, opening up unanticipated paths for our understanding of the role and impact of music in detention.

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ABSTRACTS

This essay explores the late engagement of music research with the long-standing yet overlooked association between music, violence and terror. In mapping this new field, it seeks to understand this latency as a disciplinary trauma. It examines music's integral role in new technologies of terror emerging during the Cold War, the cultural biases that have turned it into an elusive means of torture, and the effects stemming from the overshadowing of its damaging potential. Focusing on the notion of witnessing, it highlights the need for more nuanced soundscapes of detention that explore the entanglement of negative and positive uses of music as they are imposed from above and reclaimed from below.

Cet article interroge le caractère tardif de l'intérêt de la recherche musicologique pour l'association durable et néanmoins négligée entre musique, violence et terreur. En cartographiant ce nouveau champ de recherche, il s'agit de comprendre une telle période de latence en tant que traumatisme disciplinaire. Il s'agit aussi d'examiner le rôle constitutif de la musique dans les nouvelles technologies de la terreur issues de la guerre froide, les préjugés culturels qui l'ont transformée en un moyen de torture difficile à saisir ainsi que les effets qui

découlent de l'ignorance de son potentiel de nuisance. Mettant l'accent sur la notion de témoignage, l'article souligne la nécessité de concevoir des paysages sonores plus nuancés pour les espaces de détention, en explorant les usages négatifs et positifs de la musique tels qu'ils sont imposés d'en haut ou réappropriés d'en bas.

INDEX

Keywords: music, detention, violence, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, subjectivity, witnessing, musicology, ethnomusicology
Mots-clés: musique, détention, violence, torture, traitements inhumains et dégradants, subjectivité, témoignage, musicologie, ethnomusicologie

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On Sensationalism, Violence and Academic Knowledge

Du sensationnalisme, de la violence et de la connaissance scientifique
Sobre sensacionalismo, violencia y conocimiento académico

Hettie Malcomson

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Acknowledgements
This project was funded by a Leverhulme Research Fellowship grant. I am extremely grateful to the research participants for generously giving me their time and insights. I also wish to thank friends and colleagues who provided really helpful comments and suggestions (you know who you are). All shortcomings are my own.

1 In his reflection on death in the Mexican/US border city of Ciudad Juárez, journalist Charles Bowden wrote about a hypothetical performance by ghosts where voices would be quiet and other sounds, including post-death silence, subdued; a performance where:

> We will not allow anyone with answers to be present. Explanations will be killed on sight. Theories strangled by my own hands. No one can speak of cartels if he [*sic*] is not a member of a cartel [...] Academic commentators must show video of themselves at the killings or having beers with the killers before they will be allowed to say a single word.[1]

2 Bowden's somewhat macho stance may seem extreme, but I contend that it is a position that must be engaged with seriously. It raises methodological, analytical and representational issues that continue to challenge scholars addressing bellicose violence: Is it ethical to write about terror, pain and despair from afar; to provide answers and explanations; to use theoretical material in such discussions? Can sensationalism ever be justified in analyses of bellicose violence? Are we tuned in enough to notice the distinction between sensational and non-sensational representations? What kind of silences might we allow for? In this essay, I address

these questions in relation to necropolitical Mexico, drawing from my empirical research with musicians commissioned to write *narco rap*, producers and consumers of *rap del barrio* (which is sometimes linked to gangs); and hip hop artists protesting the disappearances, homicides, systematic violence and impunity enjoyed by criminal organisations and state institutions alike.

Lunching with someone who has killed another human

3 Whilst researching Mexican popular music, I have lunched with two men who told me that they have killed others. The first was someone I know well, a former security guard I spent many hours dancing with while researching the popular music-dance form, danzón: my curiosity got the better of me when we were eating one day, and I asked him if he had killed anyone. He responded in unemotional, factual terms, describing an event where a man drew a firearm in a dance hall, and he reacted by grabbing the gun and killing the man. This seemed to him like a sensible solution. I was shocked, but the account did not stick to me for long.

4 The second time I knowingly lunched with someone who had killed people was more difficult. This man was just tagging along with some rappers I was interviewing. While we were eating, it was revealed that he was not only a rap fan, but had been "one of Them" (an ex-narco), and I was encouraged to interview him.[2] He was delighted to consent, and I was keen to get his perspective on who commissioned narco rap, how, the veracity of the information They gave musicians, and how this genre was consumed.[3] I set out my interests and let him speak. He told me how he had killed seven people at first hand (not counting those involved in shoot outs); how he was distressed by the sounds that their bodies made as he did so; how hearing the screams of his friends being tortured over the walkie-talkie disturbed him; and how he had made stew out of body parts while tanked up on cocaine. I stopped him, aware that I was not coping with hearing first-hand about the visceral details of such gruesome violence. It continues to unsettle me.[4] Trust, empathy and power were entangled in our relationship in ways I had not experienced before. Part confessional, part a plea for acceptance as a humane being, but also part assertion of power should I transgress.

5 Bowden's proposal that "academic commentators must show video of themselves at the killings or having beers with the killers" presumably refers to the second, more traumatic kind of encounter I describe here.[5] However, sharing experiences (beers, lunch) with someone who has killed another human is surely less the point, than the relationship of the scholar to that person, to that violence. I do not believe that presence or trauma (be it primary or vicarious) are prerequisites for a researcher to speak about violence, but I do think that some sense of the visceral can be helpful in not falling into gratuitous sensationalism.

Sensationalism

6 Narco-culture has increasingly become a focus of academic study, and I have often felt outraged at the way in which victims and/or perpetrators of Mexico's bellicose violence are sensationalised, objectified and de-individualised by academics at conferences, with salacious accounts of dismembered women as "territories" in

analyses of femicides, of spectacular deaths as "exchange commodities" in a system of narco accumulation. My argument is as much with analysts of literature and popular culture, as with music scholars. Violence in Mexico is notoriously spectacular, but there is no justification for its sensationalism to be furthered in academic accounts. Where is the humanity? I decry. The suffering, the agony of torture, rape, pre-death horror. The silenced bodies unearthed in *fosas* (mass graves), their skeletal mouths still screaming.

7 Sensationalism is distinguished from individual sensory knowledge by its relationality, specifically the relationship between a phenomenon and the sensed responses to it (be they emotional, intellectual, physical or otherwise), responses which are magnified in relation to measured rationality and so-called tastefulness. Back in 1992, in her analysis of mid-nineteenth century British sensation novels, Ann Cvetkovich argued that sensationalism:

> produces the *embodiment*, in both the literal and figurative senses, of social structures. It not only renders them concrete, by embodying them in a single and powerful representation, but the responses it produces are bodily or physical experiences that seem immediate and natural.[6]

8 Moreover, Cvetkovich proposed, sensationalism can perform political work by making phenomena visible, often via spectacle. She evoked the ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) movement of the 1980s (which emerged in the USA), where sensationalism was "endorsed as a useful tactic for goading people into an awareness of social problems".[7] Cvetkovich poses the question: "what political possibilities are overlooked when sensationalism is condemned?"[8] In the case of ACT UP, the stigma attached to the bodies of those subjected to state violence was politicised. Yet in necropolitical contexts such as twenty-first century Mexico, contesting state and criminal violence can be suicidal, and insensitivity to sadistic, spectacular violence is widespread, as Berlanga Gayón has explored, making it difficult to harness sensationalism as a tool for political ends, particularly since it is an important element of narco-propaganda.[9] Thus, in response to the question of whether sensationalism can be justified in analyses of bellicose violence, I would argue that in necropolitical contexts, the answer is no.

Answers, explanations and theories

9 So if the use of sensationalism is inappropriate in necropolitical contexts, might there still be a place for answers and explanations, for the use theoretical material in analyses of brutal violence? It is not uncommon for researchers from the global north writing about necropolitical Mexico to justify their research with broad claims and even solutions to the drug-related, capitalism-fuelled violence in the country. I have been culprit to this, pointing to how the criminalisation of drugs sustains brutal violence and inequalities, and contesting the corruption and impunity which feeds this system. Yet I am a sociologist of music, an ethnomusicologist, without in-depth knowledge of broad socio-political issues. My primary hope is that my research on hip hop can do specific work: to reveal the mechanisms through which music and popular culture reproduce narco violence — by romanticising it, as well as critiquing it.[10] While I disagree with Bowden's position that answers and explanations should be "killed", I also recognise that providing answers and explanations can do more work to make a scholar feel "good" about themselves and their discipline, than having an impact in the

social world.[11] It is not uncommon for scholars to claim the uniqueness of their subject area in providing broad insights into human experience, for example that music provides understandings of violence that are particularly ground-breaking. I think we need to look ourselves hard in the mirror and reflect on whether we ask too much of our disciplines. Not enough people read academic texts to warrant a claim that research on hip hop is likely to stop violence in Mexico, but I do hope, maybe naively, that it could shift certain people's understanding.

10 In considering the appropriateness of using theoretical material in analyses of horrific violence, it is helpful to turn to work on film and photography where the glamorisation of horror has long been discussed. In her classic text *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag points to the tension between photographs as documentary and photographs as transforming their subjects into aesthetic objects. This tension is acute in war photography where critics consider suffering to be incompatible with beauty, and captions that moralise to be inappropriate. "In this view" Sontag argues,

> a beautiful photograph drains attention from the sobering subject and turns it toward the medium itself, thereby compromising the picture's status as a document. The photograph gives mixed signals. Stop this, it urges. But it also exclaims, What a spectacle![12]

11 War photography is a useful analogue for thinking about research material and theory in war-like contexts: like photography, scholarly analysis transforms and may be critiqued if overly theoretical about suffering subjects. Documentation may be considered more appropriate in depicting suffering, rather than a theoretical contribution to disciplinary and broader understandings. Likewise, analyses should not be moralising. Scholarly analysis of war zones, like war photography, (and it is apposite to quote Sontag again): "gives mixed signals. Stop this, it urges. But it also exclaims, What a spectacle!"[13] Where the spectacularisation of bellicose violence is combined with the fetishization of (usually French) theory, which is common in hegemonic, global northern musicology, humanities and social science, I contend that the ethics of global northern scholars using (colonial) theory in analyses of bellicose violence in the global south becomes ever more dubious.[14]

Silence and humanity

12 To conclude, let me clarify that I believe that silencing is counterproductive: there must always be space for a multiplicity of perspectives, for discussion and critique, in order to move ideas forward to enable collective action.[15] What is key in scholarship on bellicose violence is that people's humanity is maintained. Too often, victims and perpetrators are objectified. The ex-narco I interviewed told me that he often wondered who those people were, the ones he killed. He knew that they may not have worked for the other side, that they might have been innocent, but there was no going back after a certain point – they knew too much, or so he thought. That wondering who they were is not remorse, but it does bestow humanity. It is harder to sensationalise, to objectify others, when we are talking about individuals we have engaged with, people with a name, a life, a story.

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NOTES

1. BOWDEN Charles, *Murder City: Ciudad Juárez and the Global Economy’s New Killing Fields*, New York, Nation Books, 2010, p. 209.

2. I use the term “narco” here as it is used widely in academia, but want to highlight that it is a stigmatising term which was rarely used by the rappers or ex-narco I interviewed: the terms “Them”, *malandros* (badmen) and mafia were instead employed. The term narco rap, however, is a vernacular term.

3. See MALCOMSON Hettie, “Negotiating Violence and Creative Agency in Commissioned Mexican Narco Rap”, *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2019b, pp. 347-362. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/blar.12977.

4. Analysis of, and advice regarding, traumatic fieldwork encounters and vicarious trauma is provided by DICKSON-SWIFT Virginia, JAMES Erica L., KIPPEN Sandra, LIAMPUTTONG Pranee, “Researching Sensitive Topics: Qualitative Research as Emotion Work”, *Qualitative Research,* vol. 9, no. 1, 2009, pp. 61-79, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794108098031; and DUBBERLEY Sam, GRANT Michele, “Journalism and Vicarious Trauma: A Guide for Journalists, Editors and News Organisations”, 2017. Available at: https://firstdraftnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/vicarioustrauma.pdf (consulted on 05 January 2020).

5. BOWDEN Charles, *Murder City*, p. 209.

6. CVETKOVICH Ann, *Mixed Feelings: Feminism, Mass Culture, and Victorian Sensationalism*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1992, p. 24.

7. *Ibid*., p. 24.

8. *Ibid*., p. 24.

9. Regarding indifference to violence in Mexico, see BERLANGA GAYÓN Mariana, “El Espectáculo de la Violencia en el México Actual: Del Feminicidio al Juvenicidio”, *Athenea Digital*, vol. 15, no. 4, 2015, pp. 105-128. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5565/rev/athenea.1556. Regarding narco-propaganda, see for example, CAMPBELL Howard, “Narco-Propaganda in the Mexican ‘Drug War’: An Anthropological Perspective”, *Latin American Perspectives*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2014, pp. 60-77. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/0094582X12443519.

10. In conversation with important interventions on narcomusic and violence, such as: BURGOS DÁVILA César Jesús, “‘¡Que Truene la Tambora y Que Suene el Acordeón!’: Composición, Difusión y Consumo Juvenil de Narcocorridos en Sinaloa”, *Trans*, vol. 20, 2016, pp. 1-24, https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/public/docs/01a-trans-2016.pdf; EDBERG Mark, *El Narcotraficante: Narcocorridos and the Construction of a Cultural Persona on the U.S. Mexico Border*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 2004; SIMONETT Helena, “Narcocorridos: An Emerging Micromusic of Nuevo L.A.”, *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2001, pp. 315-337. DOI: https://doi.org/10.2307/852677; SIMONETT Helena, “Los Gallos Valientes: Examining Violence in Mexican Popular Music”, *Trans*, vol. 10, 2006, https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/149/los-gallos-valientes-examining-violence-in-mexican-popular-music; VALENZUELA ARCE José Manuel, *Jefe de Jefes: Corridos y Narcocultura en México,* México, Hoja Casa Editorial, 2003.

11. The notion and commodification of "goodness" was criticised (in relation to NGOs) some two decades ago by, amongst others, FISHER William F.,"Doing Good? The Politics and Antipolitics of NGO Practices", *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1997, pp. 439-464. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.26.1.439; and BORNSTEIN Erica, "Child Sponsorship, Evangelism, and Belonging in the Work of World Vision Zimbabwe", *American Ethnologist*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2001, pp. 595-622. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.2001.28.3.595.

12. SONTAG Susan, *Regarding the Pain of Others*, New York, Picador, 2003, pp. 76-77.

13. Ibid., p. 77.

14. For an analysis of aficionado and hegemonic knowledge production in relation to danzón, see MALCOMSON Hettie, "Aficionados, Academics, and Danzón Expertise: Exploring Hierarchies in Popular Music Knowledge Production", *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 58, no. 2, 2014, pp. 222-253. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5406/ethnomusicology.58.2.0222.

15. I analyse distinct ways of critiquing bellicose violence in Mexico in MALCOMSON Hettie, "Contesting Resistance, Protesting Violence: Women, War and Hip Hop in Mexico", *Music and Arts in Action*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2019a, pp. 46-63, http://musicandartsinaction.net/index.php/maia/article/view/202/190, where I focus on two rappers who were asked to address the theme of "war" in a rap battle: while both attempt to shift people's understandings and promote change, their strategies are distinct and are articulated in ways that go beyond universalist (white, liberal, masculinist, global northern) notions of resistance, I argue.

ABSTRACTS

This essay interrogates methodological, analytical and representational issues that continue to challenge scholars addressing bellicose violence: Is it ethical to write about terror, pain and despair from afar? Can sensationalism ever be justified in analyses of bellicose violence? What kind of silences might we allow for? These questions are explored in relation to necropolitical Mexico, drawing from empirical research with musicians commissioned to write *narco rap*, producers and consumers of *rap del barrio*, and hip hop artists protesting the disappearances, homicides, systematic violence and impunity enjoyed by criminal organisations and state institutions alike.

Cet article examine les enjeux de méthode, d'analyse et de représentation qui continuent de poser problème aux chercheur.e.s travaillant sur la violence de la guerre : est-ce éthiquement admissible d'écrire sur la terreur, la douleur et le désespoir depuis le confort de la distance ? Peut-on jamais justifier le sensationnalisme dans l'analyse de la violence guerrière ? Quels types de silence acceptera-t-on ? Ces questions sont explorées à travers la nécropolitique mexicaine, en s'appuyant sur des recherches empiriques auprès de musicien.ne.s chargé.e.s d'écrire du *narco rap*, de producteurs ou de consommateurs de *rap del barrio*, et d'artistes hip hop mobilisé.e.s contre les disparitions, les homicides, la violence systémique et l'impunité des organisations criminelles comme des institutions étatiques.

Este ensayo interroga cuestiones metodológicas, analíticas y de representación que continúan desafiando a lxs académicxs que abordan la violencia belicosa: ¿Es ético escribir sobre el terror, el dolor y la desesperación desde lejos? ¿Se puede justificar el sensacionalismo en los análisis de la violencia belicosa? ¿Qué clase de silencios podríamos permitir? Estas preguntas se exploran en

relación con el México necropolítico a partir de una investigación empírica con músicos encargados de escribir narco rap, con productores y consumidores de rap del barrio, y con artistas de hip hop que protestan por las desapariciones, los homicidios, la violencia sistemática y la impunidad de la que gozan tanto las organizaciones criminales como las instituciones estatales.

INDEX

Mots-clés: sensationnalisme, violence, connaissance, trauma, éthique, hip hop, narco-culture, Mexique
Keywords: sensationalism, violence, knowledge, trauma, ethics, hip hop, narco-culture, Mexico
Palabras claves: sensacionalismo, violencia, conocimiento, trauma, ética, hip hop, narco-cultura, México

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Did Music Cause the End of the World?

La musique a-t-elle causé la fin du monde ?

J. Martin Daughtry

AUTHOR'S NOTE

A formidable group of people provided me with valuable thoughts and critiques of this essay. They include Mike Beckerman, Harris Berger, Zeynep Bulut, Samuel Chan, Beverley Diamond, Nina Eidsheim, Brian Fairley, Meghan Forsyth, Annie Garlid, Jairo Moreno, Daniel Oore, Anna Papaeti, Robin Preiss, Joel Rust, David Samuels, Joe Snape, Kati Szego, Hila Tamir, Tyler Volk, the Spring 2020 Applied Ethnomusicology seminar participants at Memorial University, and my family. Luis Velasco-Pufleau solicited and edited the essay; I am grateful to him, to the other contributors to this issue, and to the editorial team at *Transposition* for their support throughout the writing and publication process. Special acknowledgment goes to the musical voices that populate this essay: first and foremost, Yōsuke Yamashita, but also Kiyoshi Awazu, Cole Porter, Ella Fitzgerald, and the many music practitioners and communities mentioned within these pages. The footnotes and list of works cited form a partial acknowledgment of the many scholars I'm grateful to be in conversation with. Given the expansive scope of the essay's theme, it also seems appropriate to acknowledge my debts to the mind-bogglingly diverse collection of creatures, plants, habitats, machines, and other enigmatic entities that exist within the most anthropocentric and essentializing of all terms: "nonhuman."

"We need to understand the body, not as an organism or entity in itself, but as a system, or series of open-ended systems, functioning within other huge systems it cannot control through which it can access and acquire its abilities and

capacities."
—Elizabeth Grosz
"There is no document of civilization which is not
at the same time a document of barbarism."
—Walter Benjamin
"Every time we say goodbye / I die a little."
—Cole Porter

Transcorporeality

1 *The body called "piano" stood on top of the body called "beach," separated from the ragged fringe of the oceanic body by several meters.*[1] *The invisible body called "air" blanketed piano, beach and ocean, subtly pushing its way into each of them, blurring lines of separation. An array of bodies collectively called "audience" stood nearby, clapping hands together as a single body called "avant-garde jazz pianist Yōsuke Yamashita" pushed through air, atop beach, in a path toward piano. Yamashita was acting according to instructions that a body called "graphic designer Kiyoshi Awazu" had first composed for a performance in 1973. Thirty-five years later, as the Awazu body was nearing its final return to the body called "earth" through a process called "decomposition," Yamashita was repeating the old instructions. Much was the same, although the piano body from the original performance had long ago burned up, rejoining the embrace of earth and air.*

2 *The body called Yamashita—which, like "audience," "beach," "ocean," "air," and "piano," was really a swirling, gurgling concatenation of smaller bodies—was clad in a metallic fire-retardant coat and helmet. (The metal in these clothes-bodies had been extracted from a body called "mountain" and refined in a body called "smelting plant" some years before being painted on fibers formerly called "sheep.") Sitting down on a low-slung body called "bench," Yamashita began impacting piano, causing thin metal bodies called "strings" in its interior to vibrate and in so doing perturb air. These vibrations quickly reached the audience bodies, and altered chemical and electric flows within each of them, differently. They also reached a collection of feathered bodies called "birds," who flew away in response.*

3 *After a time, as the fingers continued to elicit the vibrations, a parallel process called "fire" was initiated through a hidden mechanism that created a spark in piano. Fire began transforming piano (which had formerly gone by the names "tree," "mountain," "sheep," and possibly "elephant") into a distributed, cloudlike body called "smoke" that moved in a rolling, roiling motion within the vast substance of air. Fire flickered and swooped and crackled and changed color and pulsated and grew, with smoke and an invisible body called "heat" fleeing from it. Fire transformed strings, causing them to stretch and soften and break, one by one. The fingers protruding from the metallic coat continued to pound away at piano, although the vibrations they elicited grew weaker and weaker, and were soon overtaken by the crackling vibrations fire made.*

4 *The body called smoke continued to billow off piano, growing far larger and reaching far further into air than the vibrations ever could. Smoke now roamed in air over beach and a growing piece of ocean. Air was active in several registers by this point; radiating and convecting heat, it sent vibrations to audience, oxygen to fire, and a barely viable mixture of oxygen, nitrogen, argon, carbon dioxide, and smoky piano body to the lungs of Yamashita and a downwind subsection of audience. Buffeted by smoke (formerly "piano," more formerly "mountain," "tree," "sheep," etc.) and heat and flames from the ever-encroaching fire, the fingers pounded and pounded against*

the shrinking, increasingly compromised piano, with less and less vibrational effect. After a while, piano could no longer be called "piano," as it had lost nearly all of its piano-like characteristics. Having briefly become "detuned," then "broken," then "toy" piano, it was now best called "fuel" for fire. This identity loss and reclassification, along with the toxic grey cloud of hot smoke into which the former piano was being transformed, evidently proved too much for Yamashita: carrying an indeterminate amount of aspirated former piano inside the sticky labyrinths of his lungs, the human performer retreated through air along beach, as ocean waves lapped and audience hands once again clapped. In his absence, fire, fuel, smoke, and air continued their monstrous, entropic dance.

5 *This 2008 performance, which was called "Burning Piano," seemed to have a clear initiation point (i.e., the moment of first contact between piano and Yamashita) but no clear ending: the tiny atomic bodies that made up smoke and ash continued to invade air and lung and earth indefinitely—indeed, they are still doing so now, floating along on invisible atmospheric currents, descending to earth or ocean, loosing their chemical bonds, forming new ones, cycling back up into air, and so on,* ad infinitum*. Such is the nature of atmosphere and the carbon cycle that a few atoms of the body called piano could literally be present in the room or outdoor space where you are reading this: piano,* that *piano, could be cycling through your lungs at this very moment. This fact can be stretched into an aphorism:* while all performances begin, no performances truly end*; rather, they all taper off, in an asymptotic decrescendo of sorts, as the various bodies that they manipulate and transform and unleash eternally continue to make pathways through—and exert effects within—the aggregate body called "environment" (a.k.a. "biosphere," a.k.a. "world").[2] This means that the palimpsest of ongoing earthly performances is gaining new layers at an ever-accelerating rate. "Burning Piano" intensifies and spectacularizes these more-than-human trajectories; my self-conscious attempt to track them without privileging the human or sonorous aspects of the performance is designed to highlight them further. Here, the burning instrument and hot smoky air reveal themselves as active entities—entities that simultaneously sustain, shape, threaten, and ultimately overwhelm the humans with which they are irreversibly involved. No clean line separates any of these human and nonhuman bodies from the others. They are trans-corporeal,[3] intra-active,[4] and co-vulnerable. However, these prefixes (trans-, intra-, co-), illuminating as they are, fail to convey the asymmetry and temporal dynamism of any body's environmental entanglements. To wit: the different bodies (piano, performer, audience, air, etc.) were agentive and vulnerable and accountable to one another in different ways, with different stakes, at different moments. Yamashita (or, more likely, his technical assistant) may have lit the fire, but after that, air-fire-piano took control, dictating the volume and timbre and length of his participation, not to mention the actuarial cost of his smoke inhalation on that fateful day. Smoke, a necessary byproduct of the performance, darkened the sky above the audience and contributed fractally to atmospheric processes whose consequences involve but vastly exceed the acoustical, aesthetic, social, and political realms we tend to associate with music. Music, however you choose to define or problematize this bedeviling term, is the product of dynamically and asymmetrically co-vulnerable bodies, only some of which are human.*

Registers

6 In what ways can music become entangled with violence? The essays in this special issue of *Transposition* provide a number of compelling answers to this question, extending considerably the work of music scholars over the past few decades.[5] In this

essay, I want to begin by suggesting that any attempt to understand the relationship between music and violence must necessarily approach this subject from within a certain frame of reference or *register*—a default orientation that carries a particular epistemology and set of spatiotemporal parameters along with it.[6] I need to assert at the outset that registers are not neutral things; like funhouse mirrors, they inevitably distort that which they reflect. Despite decades of critical scholarship on this topic, academic authors tend to ignore the distortive properties of the registers they activate, representing them as more-or-less transparent framing devices: faithful magnifying lenses rather than the slightly surreal soap-bubble projections they are.[7] We ignore the inconvenient fact that the application of a particular register to a problem creates its own ripple of symbolic violence: every act of framing requires a series of exclusions, reductions, and Procrustean cuts that leave some parties marginalized and others out of the conversation altogether. Reality is infinitely polyscalar—like a Russian nesting doll, you and I envelop and are enveloped by bodies and processes taking place at multiple orders of magnitude simultaneously.[8] Nonetheless, whether we acknowledge them or not, registers are unavoidable: there is no registerless position from which to observe the infinite complexity of the world, nor is there an all-inclusive framing device that embraces all entities equally while retaining the radical individuality of each of them. In this funhouse environment, the best one can do is maintain an awareness of the registers that one has activated, and develop a feel for both the distortions and the insights they produce. (I am belaboring this point here at the beginning because the register I will deploy later in this essay creates an almost comical level of distortion; my hope is that the strange vantage point it affords will make the essay worth the read.)

7 Scholars and music listeners often place music in a *phenomenological* register, examining it within the temporal and spatial conditions of its unfolding in performance. To think of music phenomenologically is to foreground its acoustical, echoic properties, as well as the embodied act of listening, the transmission of affect, and the micro-social intensities that musical performances tend to engender. A *music theoretical* register, by contrast, tends to place a particular musical work in a kind of contemplative, conditional freeze-frame: a non-space/non-time that allows it to be apprehended outside of its unfolding, as if it is in stasis, present all at once like a painting; this allows one to leisurely examine its different constituent parts, their behaviors and interactions, and the ways these parts articulate with other structures external to the piece. Music is also frequently placed within a *historical* register, which allows broader diachronic phenomena to be sensed; at this scale one can grasp the trajectory of a composer's oeuvre, or a genre's lifespan, or the pathways a song traces within globalized networks of consumption. A *cultural* or *ethnographic* register brings people into focus, along with the webs of significance that they inherit and continually shape.[9] It may not surprise you to learn that scholars tend to place violence—another human construct, with a historical depth and global reach that rival those of music—within a phenomenological register of embodied experience and traumatic memory, a theoretical register of quantitative or comparative analysis, a historical register that links major conflicts with their precursors and their aftermaths, and a cultural register that seeks to situate discrete acts within local systems of meaning. While registers such as these can be combined in fruitful and exciting ways, it stands to reason that when one seeks to understand how two distinct phenomena *interact*, it is desirable to

harmonize or synchronize the temporalities and spatialities at which they are apprehended.

Slowness

8 And herein lies a challenge, for what can one possibly say about *music* in the dyad "music and violence" if the *violence* one has in mind is not the "hot violence" of retribution or impassioned aggression, nor the "cold violence" of premeditated individual or state killing, nor even the "symbolic violence" that Pierre Bourdieu found within structures of social inequity,[10] but rather what environmental humanities scholar Rob Nixon has called the "slow violence" of large-scale practices of pollution and extraction that have destabilized the earth's biosphere?[11] "Slow violence," Nixon explains, is "a violence that occurs gradually and out of sight, a violence of delayed destruction that is dispersed across time and space, *an attritional violence* that is typically not viewed as violence at all."[12] While caused by human activities, slow violence is *inhuman* in the sense that it often operates at spatial, temporal, and conceptual scales too vast or foreign for humans to perceive, let alone control. The current state of escalating precarity throughout the biosphere is to a great extent the result of the slow violence of industrial processes (from carbon combustion to factory farming to nuclear testing) that had beginnings, but because of their durational effects and long half-lives, never properly end. What we see or hear or smell or feel today, in a forest fire, or a record breaking heatwave, or a sinking island, or a methane spike, or a toxic algae bloom, or a cancer outbreak, are the *effects* of slow violence rather than the processes themselves, which are ongoing and imperceptible.[13]

9 Nixon argues that these processes disproportionately affect "people lacking resources," and he tracks the colonial pathways that have allowed the world's wealthy classes to direct the brunt of slow violence toward the global poor. (Colonialism, in his analysis, is the slow-violence-generator *par excellence*.) At the same time he acknowledges that, while wealthy populations may be better insulated against environmental calamity than poor populations, the interconnectedness of our ecologies and economies means that there are (largely future) effects of slow violence that will be shared throughout the biosphere. The global scale of carbon emissions, along with the atmospheric warming, habitat destruction, and species extinctions that it has begun to trigger and/or exacerbate, threatens the entire planetary system; this kind of violence doesn't draw a clean line between human groups, or even between human and nonhuman bodies.

10 Some manifestations of slow violence were initiated relatively recently (e.g., through 20th-century nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands, or 21st-century exportation of e-waste to China); others have been gradually accelerating over the course of the industrial age (e.g., ocean acidification through the absorption of atmospheric carbon); or even since the dawn of agriculture 12,000 years ago (e.g., increased greenhouse gases from deforestation and early farming). What is clear is that some of the humans who preceded us set in motion slow, snowballing processes whose effects large populations of humans and nonhumans must now endure; it is equally clear that those of us whose lives are tied to carbon emissions and factory farms and microplastics and laptop heavy metals are participants in a multi-species slow violence whose victims stretch deep into the future.

11 With all this in mind, we can now state the question at hand more precisely: *in what ways have music and slow environmental violence become entangled?* There are two potential vectors of causation embedded in this question: one pointing to the ways that environmental violence has impacted music praxes over time, and another addressing the ways in which musicking might have caused or exacerbated environmental violence. The first vector is familiar: it is the subject of a wealth of music scholarship dealing with recent environmental crises from Fukushima to Katrina to climate migration in Europe.[14] (Indeed, it is becoming impossible to do anthropological work on music or any other topic without taking environmental issues such as these into account.) The second is more counterintuitive, particularly if one takes the slow pace and global scope of slow violence into account. If we were to phrase this counterintuitive question more precisely, it would sound like this: *what has been the net environmental effect of music over the course of the age of humans?* Another formulation, with a nod to Nixon, would be: *does music have an "attritional" effect on environment?* In what follows, I will take on these questions, teasing out some of the deep structures of music (or more properly *musicking,* the complex of activities that brings "music" into being) that may have smoothed the path, gradually and over millennia, toward our current age of mass extinction and environmental calamity.

12 Needless to say, this is not a familiar register for most music scholars. While the fields of music cognition and psychoacoustics support research on how humans evolved musical capacities, how music and language influenced one another over time, and related questions connected largely to the evolution of the nervous and auditory systems, they tend to be confined, like most music research, to the activities of human brains, human ears, human collectives. The burgeoning field of ecomusicology provides the most logical escape route from the human-sized registers, although I am unaware of studies that attempt to answer the particular question posed above. This is no surprise, as the question itself verges on the nonsensical: how could music—not just one type of music, but the totality of music throughout history—be in any way complicit with environmental violence—not just one instantiation of it, but the totality of anthropogenic pollution and climate change?

Apocalypse

13 Indeed, it would be easy to argue that music and the environmental register are fundamentally incompatible. A frame this expansive cannot capture discrete phenomena like individual musical experiences, individual musicians' lives, individual genres' lifespans, or even the social histories of music over a span of centuries. The scintillating diversity of the world's musical praxes—the profound textual and contextual distinctions that separate a German symphony from a Brazilian work song from a Norwegian heavy metal album from a Balinese gamelan performance—are impossible to discern at this all-inclusive scale. Compositional genius, performative virtuosity, cultural idiosyncrasy, alternative epistemologies and aesthetics—so many of the attributes that give music praxes their distinctive grain are sanded down into the sublime smoothness of the environmental register's stretched-out timeline and planetary embrace. This spatiotemporal vastness only increases the distortion that is present in all registers; the fact that you and I, as humans, cannot directly perceive environmental space or time, but rather can only imagine or speculate about it,

multiplies these distortions further. Under these circumstances, one might be tempted to withdraw the question altogether, eschew the speculative register it relied upon, and allow the sciences to tell the story of pollution and climate change in graphs and figures. But a retreat to data and empiricism hardly corrects the problem of interpretive distortions, and utterly fails to get at the urgent ethical, political, and aesthetic questions that are tied up in music's relation to environment. In the end, speculation may be the only way to even begin to address them.

14 So what *does* this speculative environmental register capture? Let me preview a bit of my conclusion here, and suggest that it captures a metaphysics. The metaphysics I have in mind is not the only one that music praxes have underwritten over the course of human history—far from it—but it is the one that has come to dominate global life, the one that has had the greatest environmental effects, and the one that thus far has proven impossible to dispel, even in the face of ongoing and intensifying ecological catastrophe. It provides the ground for a widespread understanding of the concepts "human" and "nature" as separate and unequal, agent and background.

15 Much of the public discourse on environmental violence is oriented toward the "the end of the world as we know it," a cataclysmic event horizon that looms sometime in the indeterminate future, a number of decades or at most centuries from now. It is common to cite the rising level of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and to project that, if levels aren't reduced or zeroed out within X amount of time, positive feedback loops will be established that will make global warming irreversible—and, some time later, human life as we know it impossible. If we are to avoid this fate, the argument goes, a number of globally coordinated actions and technological solutions will need to be undertaken within a particular temporal window. A growing number of authors have begun to counter this "apocalyptic" discourse with a "post-apocalyptic" one, arguing that "the end of the world has already occurred." This is not as unreasonable a statement as it might sound: "Clearly, planet Earth has not exploded," writes ecological theorist Timothy Morton, "[b]ut the concept *world*"—i.e., an all-encompassing, stable, generative environment for biological and cultural life—"is no longer operational."[15] Philosopher Claire Colebrook adds an important element of social critique to this argument when she says that the future "end of the world" that haunts climate change discourse actually involves "the sorts of conditions that most humans have been living in, and are still living in"[16] To say that the world has already ended is in this sense not an apocalyptic anachronism, but an acknowledgment of the ongoing fragility of our fellow humans and other creatures, and thus of the artificiality and exclusivity of the concept "world" itself. And so, nonsensical as it sounds at first hearing, a final formulation of the question at hand is this: *did musicking play a role in bringing about the end of the world?*

Humanity

16 I'll return to this question presently, but first I want to introduce some broad observations about the nature of music that a number of my colleagues have made in recent years. Collectively, they help us to see the contours of what one might call the "civilizational register," one that measures time in millennia but keeps the focus tightly on human modes of being. Elizabeth Tolbert, one of the rare ethnomusicologists who has explored musicking within an evolutionary frame, has suggested that humans

value music in part for the sensation of co-presence and authentic connection with other humans that it affords: "[W]e understand music in the most general sense as a *vehicle for cultural truth,*" she writes, "because we hear music as the *socially meaningful presence of another person.*" She continues:

> We understand *music as an embodied voice*, produced directly from a human throat or by instrumental proxy, yet retaining its identity as a *"humanly organized sound"* (Blacking, 1973: 26). Even though we may perceive musical form, when hearing a musical voice we cannot help but hear *more than pure structure*. We grasp *a social essence, one that is emotionally and corporeally informed*. On some level, we glimpse *the body behind the voice*, a body whose voice refers to the imagined socio-emotional essence of its figurative producer (Barthes, 1977). This voice is *not merely an object, but a voice of an intentional being such as oneself*, and one that therefore references states of arousal, attention, and emotion. Thus, an encounter with the voice is, above all, *an intercorporeal encounter with a social presence,* and we bring to it our social, corporeal, and enacting selves.[17]

17 For Tolbert, musicking facilitates an experience of connection with other humans. Music is saturated by the energy of the human body, even when the performing body is absent. Tolbert isn't arguing that music provides listeners and performers with actual, unmediated access to one another's inner lives. What it can do is project a *sensation* of unmediated copresence: the "intercorporeal encounter" that music facilitates is in this sense a virtual one—but it is no less powerful for that.

18 In a complementary vein, musicologist Morag Grant (in this very issue of *Transposition*) emphasizes the communitarian power that musicking holds. She writes:

> Musical practices are very often collective practices, and thus *specific forms of collective experience*: in the act of singing, playing or listening to and moving with music in the company of others, but also, at a distance, through the sense of sung or felt rather than purely imagined communities that particular pieces of music engender where they have become symbolically connected to, and expressive of, particular collective identities. In both these cases, but particularly in the former, *to collectively experience music is to enact collectivity itself, and simultaneously to have collectivity enacted upon one*, thanks to the processes known as entrainment which are arguably one of the most significant and fundamental aspects of music and musicality per se. Whether actively keeping together in time, or simply being together in time through the uniting force of a common music––such as an anthem, or other type of group song––*the potential of musicality and musical communication for collective identity cannot be overstated*, though it is often overlooked.[18]

19 Grant's observations about music's efficacy are framed within a sociocultural register: the scale of "real" (i.e., face-to-face) and "imagined" (e.g., national) collectives that share a particular musical experience or genre. These thoughts can be extended into the civilizational register without too much distortion, however, given that the most fundamental of the "particular collective identities" that music is "symbolically connected to, and expressive of" is, arguably, that of the human species. This is not to deny the existence of a multitude of musical traditions that have portrayed human-nonhuman relations in terms of continuity rather than disjuncture—nor is it to claim that discrete acts of musicking necessarily and consciously connect participants to some kind of universal plane of general humanity. Here, as in Tolbert's essay, the identity-crafting capacity of music is subtle; it consists of an unconscious or quasi-conscious recognition, flowing slowly beneath the more powerful currents of communication and entrainment and pleasure, that *these sounds were made by and for creatures like me*.

20 Musicologist Gary Tomlinson's *A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity* tracks the slow evolution of the human attributes that allowed musicking to come into being. One of his central claims is that "[t]he set of capacities that enables musicking is a *principal marker of modern humanity*." Casting his gaze back to the dawn of practices that we might credibly call human musicking 200,000 years ago, he claims that "[m]usicking was always *social*."

> If the cognitive capacities basic to it emerged from a constant, intimate interplay with available materials, their affordances, and their manipulation, all these took place, through the whole of the history here described, in the context of copresent interactions between individuals and within groups. The technological and the social were always bound together, and this *technosociality* formed the matrix in which musicking took shape.[19]

21 Elsewhere in the monograph, Tomlinson explains how musicking became entwined with the distinctly human skill of "thinking-at-a-distance." Musicking "developed alongside a 'release from proximity' whereby humans gradually gained the capacity *to imagine things not present to the senses*." These and other related developments led to music's emergence as "a transcendent cultural force":

> In a cognition increasingly able to think at a distance, musicking *pushed toward hierarchic levels beyond sensual stimuli.* The bond of music and metaphysics reaches back to the first inklings themselves of other worlds. . . . The final coalescing of musicking was not an independent development but a coformation involving language and the metaphysical imaginary. All three are characteristic, even definitive gestures of human modernity, and none of them could have taken their modern forms without the simultaneous formation of the others.[20]

22 Musicking, in other words, is not the singular "silver bullet" that separated us from the rest of the animal kingdom—but it is, in Tomlinson's treatment, deeply imbricated with an array of evolved capacities (e.g., thinking-at-a-distance, cultural accumulation, an incipient theory of mind) that combined to make human behavior and its collective power distinctive in the history of the biosphere.

23 Together, Tolbert, Grant, and Tomlinson advance complementary arguments about music's transcultural and transhistorical efficacy. Music praxes connect human participants with their "social essence[s]" and "collective identities," "push[ing]" them "toward hierarchic levels beyond sensual stimuli." Musicking brings people together in a synchronous activity that renders rich webs of human relationships—with present co-performers and imagined communities alike—audible, palpable, durable. The intense and lasting social force of musicking helps explain its ubiquity throughout the age of humans. What remains to be discussed, however, are the ways the social energies released by music may have helped shape some human attitudes toward environment, and the actions those attitudes enabled over time.

Humilibris

24 It bears repeating: there is, ultimately, no monolithic "human subject" or uniform global "we," no singular capacity or urge or belief system that unites all people, no inclusive habitat or politics or set of resources or rights to which all have equal access, no global industrial enterprise for which all are equally responsible.[21] At the same time, it is incontestable that some human belief systems have been more widespread and influential than others. The magnitude of this spread and influence can only be

understood in the context of the human population explosion that began in earnest after the Industrial Revolution. Consider the dynamics of this accelerating growth curve: it took roughly 11,800 years (from 10,000 BCE to 1804 CE) for the global population to grow from four million to one billion; by contrast, over a scant two centuries (from 1804 to 1999), humankind grew from one billion to six billion. A seventh billion was added to the world population just eleven years later. More than half of the 7.8 billion people currently on the planet are living in urban environments, and an absolute majority of all people have some exposure to the vast global archive of recorded music—an archive that presents music as yet another inexhaustible resource. An environmental register must thus encompass the long timeline of human development, the extraordinary explosion of human growth over the past two hundred years, the emergence of recording as a producer of radical musical plenitude—*and* the ever-increasing number of toxic emissions, habitat destructions, and species extinctions that have accompanied this planetary crescendo of all things human.

25 Over this span of growth and industrialization, no belief system has been more influential or widespread than the one that places humans outside and above all that they are not, that conceives of humans as special, and "nature" as separate from them. This metaphysics has been variously labeled *anthropocentrism* or *human exceptionalism* or *human/nature dualism*. Val Plumwood, the pioneering feminist philosopher and environmentalist, considered it to be the quintessential problem of our time:

> I see human/nature dualism as a failing of my culture, time and history. Human/nature dualism is a Western-based cultural formation going back thousands of years that sees the essentially *human as part of a radically separate order* of reason, mind, or consciousness, set apart from the lower order that comprises the body, the animal and the pre-human. Inferior orders of humanity, such as women, slaves and ethnic Others (so-called 'barbarians'), partake of this lower sphere to a greater degree, through their supposedly lesser participation in reason and greater participation in lower 'animal' elements such as embodiment and emotionality. Human/nature dualism conceives the *human as not only superior to but as different in kind from the non-human*, which as a lower sphere exists as a mere resource for the higher human one. This ideology has been functional for Western culture in enabling it to exploit nature with less constraint, but it also creates dangerous illusions by denying embeddedness in and dependency on nature."[22]

26 Human/nature dualism has undergirded virtually every form of mass thought and governmentality that has entertained global aspirations (e.g., Christianity, Islam, empire, settler colonialism, enlightenment modernity, capitalism, the industrial revolution, Leninism, Maoism, etc.). Our current era of neoliberalism or late capitalism could not have emerged without it. Its transparent logic has dominated over that of its competitors (e.g., various locally-inflected forms of perspectivism, panpsychism, hylozoism), and has provided justification for the large-scale practices of resource extraction, greenhouse gas emission, monocultural food production, environmental toxification, and human and nonhuman immiseration that accompany modern life. The logic rests on two paradoxical claims, each with its own paradoxical corollary:

> -Claim #1: humankind, as the superior species, is master of the earth and all life on it. The world is a resource for humans to utilize, exploit, and develop.
> Corollary: *some classes of people are more fully human than others.*
> -Claim #2: we humans are so small and insignificant, and the earth is so inexhaustibly big, that nothing we could possibly do would ever impact it in a lasting way. The world is superior to us, and impervious to our actions.
> Corollary: *if I make an effect invisible to myself, it ceases to exist.*

27 The first claim, a straightforward manifestation of hubris, is clearly ill-founded; the second, a somewhat disingenuous form of humility, is demonstrably false. Fused together, they form a single compound affect, an embodied orientation to the world that removes all obstacles to slow violence. According to this orientation, while I may have ethical obligations to other humans (or at least to the ones I define as fully human), it is my absolute right to treat the non- or less-than-human world as I please, as my thriving is more important than its thriving. In any event, any action I take will be inconsequential to the environment in the long run, because my thriving is unrelated to its thriving.

28 This is the durable metaphysical foundation that stands behind every gallon of gas I put in my car and every sack of garbage I send off to the landfill. It undergirds the industrial revolution, nuclear testing, leisure travel, and contemporary climate change denial. Its existence in the 21st century, in the face of overwhelming evidence of its falsity, is testament to its tenacity. As such, it deserves its own term. I propose that we assign this caustic fusion of hubris and humility the straightforward portmanteau *humilibris*, and that we recognize it as one of the primary drivers of our current era of environmental pollution and climate instability. Refining my original question further, I want to ask whether music has played any role in the perpetuation of human/nature dualism, the *humilibristic* energies it produces, and the snowballing performances of slow violence—performances with beginnings but no ends—that are its legacy.

Entanglement

29 Before taking on this question directly, allow me to introduce one last perspective. Ethnomusicologist Ana María Ochoa Gautier has written that much of the recent scholarship on music and environment, particularly that which takes place under the rubric of ecomusicology, ends up strangely reifying human/nature dualism.[23] Having established "humankind" and "nature" as separate entities, this work then installs music as the bridge between the two, presenting "music, sound, and listening . . . as that which politically resolves the separation between nature and the human or the conflictive relations between humans, understood as part of the ecological crisis. This corresponds to a conceptualization of *music as that which produces community* and of *listening as the much-needed suture for the torn relations both between humans and between humans and the environment*."[24] As a result, Ochoa Gautier argues, "the political properties attributed to music, sound, and listening in its engagement with ecology are all, by default, taken for granted as *a self-evident positivity*."[25] She concludes by echoing anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro's call for a "multinaturalism" (itself inspired by Amerindian cosmologies) that acknowledges a multiplicity of imbricated human and nonhuman modes of being. Ochoa Gautier's proposed "acoustic multinaturalism" brings sound into the discussion of the entanglement and occasional incompatibility of humans and nonhumans, and the politics of what feminist theorist Karen Barad would call their "intra-actions."

30 Those of us who write on music and violence have long ago left behind all notions of music as "a self-evident positivity." If the question of music's efficacy is posed from within the scale of human collectives, it is clear that music harbors many potentialities, and can be weaponized as easily as it can be used for reconciliation. If posed from the more-than-human environmental register, however, the picture changes. In what

follows, I will argue that the *cumulative* effect of musicking on environment has been to subtly perpetuate an anthropocentric, humilibristic orientation to the world. In this sense and from this vantage point, one might even advance the provocative claim that music has been a *self-evident negativity*, a force that helped to create the conditions within which acts of slow violence could thrive and multiply.

31 At first glance, it might seem that, if music is involved in the perpetuation of anthropocentric attitudes, then all human cultural products must be equally so. Don't a bridge, and a computer, and a sculpture, and a novel, and a church, and an ICBM all provide equal fodder for the argument that humans are cognitively superior to, and ontologically separate from, other species, and from our environment more generally? Perhaps. But in what follows I will argue that several of music's affordances have rendered it particularly powerful as a technology for obscuring environmental entanglements and fueling humilibristic impulses.

32 This argument requires the following caveats:

33 *Caveat 1:* In what follows, I'm going to largely bracket out the rich spectrum of musical traditions whose metaphysics explicitly contradict the logics of human/nature dualism. This decision would appear to be an affront to the core sensibilities of contemporary ethnomusicology, ecomusicology, and related humanities disciplines, whose missions centrally involve creating space and respect for historically marginalized voices. Here it is necessary, however, as those traditions, while producing profound effects within local sociocultural and spiritual registers, have thus far been unable to dethrone the global hegemony of the anthropocentric worldview. (This, again, is the primary distortion of the massive register that I'm calling environmental: it fails to recognize minoritarian traditions, or human diversity more broadly.) At the end of the day, anthropocentrism is the phenomenon I'm interested in, and I want to know if the net effect of musicking, tout court, might have been to help it attain and maintain its dominant status. Thus, unless noted otherwise, the "we" to which I occasionally refer below is not an inclusive "we" of all humanity but one that points to everyone who was or is caught up in the dualistic trap: those of us who understand ourselves as an exceptional species of autonomous individuals who stand out against the backdrop of the natural world. As Plumwood has asserted, the anthropocentric attitude has a history in the West that goes back thousands of years; it has certainly become the default metaphysics of the global modernity with which "we" (radically inclusive) must all contend.

34 This is not to imply that the musical potentialities I describe below are wholly absent in indigenous or non-Western music traditions. To fail to acknowledge the possibility of anthropocentric agencies outside the industrial West would be to succumb to a crude form of essentialism, and to deny the existence of "alternative modernities" around the world.[26] My suspicion is that many if not most people draw upon more than one worldview to make sense of their lives, and that the ability to resolve seemingly contradictory ontologies within one's experience is a core part of being human. In any case, if you're reading this essay, the chances are that you are at least partially embedded in the same humilibristic, global metaphysics that I am. You and I live, at least partially, in what sociologist Max Weber famously called the "disenchanted" world of empirical knowledge and secular institutions. (NB: the journal you are reading at this moment is one of these institutions.) This would mean, minimally, that the "music" that I reference below is "our" music: yours and mine.

35 *Caveat 2:* Within the vast musical terrain that remains, I'm also going to almost entirely ignore the dimension of words in the form of sung lyrics. The observations I will be making pertain to aspects of musicking that operate beneath and independent of the explicit theme or linguistic content any particular instantiation of musicking might have. Of course, one could argue that the presence of words in songs necessarily causes them to bend in an anthropocentric direction, no matter what those words denote.[27] For isn't singing doubly indexical of humanity—the voice pointing toward the human body that produces it; the words pointing toward the minds and social histories from which they emerged? In this sense, to rely upon the presence of singing in music would be to make my task too easy. I want to try to show how a number of music's attributes may have subtly naturalized the human/nature divide, and suggest that they have the potential to do this whether or not words are present.

36 My observations track to a certain extent with those of Tolbert, Grant, and Tomlinson, with one important difference. Within the civilizational register these authors occupy, the anthropocentric dimensions of musicking are implicitly understood to be life-affirming, or at the very least neutral: musicking is one of the suite of capacities that makes humans who they are. It is only within the counterintuitive territory of the environmental register that these same attributes can be understood as potentially sinister and destabilizing. And so, which of music's many attributes may have rendered it a particularly powerful agent of human/nature dualism and humilibristic thinking? Consider the following four proposals as soap-bubble distortions of musicking's *longue durée* history, glimpsed from the inhuman register in which slow violence takes place. While easy to puncture, they nonetheless serve as occasions to think anew about the vulnerable world they invert and reflect.

Exclusivity

37 Music can be broadly understood to consist of human-made sounds, unfolding in human-scaled time, tracing human-sized dramatic arcs, transmitting recognizably human affects and argumentations. From the intimate whisper of a lullaby to the rafter-rattling thrum of a metal band, music affords listeners and performers deep access to the dynamics of human bodies, human psyches, human technologies, and human collectives. What musical representations of the nonhuman exist—mimetic passages, bucolic genres, pastorales—are necessarily stylized, and hence disciplined into human aesthetic and cognitive regimes. As a result, the biosphere, if it is ever thematically present in musical sound, is necessarily shrunk down to a human scale with humans at its operative center. Regardless of its explicit themes or implicit inspirations, music is made and consumed by people, and it reflects the conditions of that making and consumption.

38 In all but the rarest instances, musical works are scaled to the temporalities of the humans producing and receiving them.[28] Music is, in this sense, an ode to human-sizedness. The world is not populated with musical works that are .00632 seconds in length: this is the duration that a 3-minute pop tune would be if it were keyed not to the 72-year lifespan of a typical human but the 24-hour lifespan of an adult mayfly. Similarly, with the arguable exception of Cage and a small number of durational pieces by experimental artists, global music history is not awash in compositions of a length approaching 19 years, which is what a one-hour performance would be if it was keyed

to the ongoing life of the 500,000-year-old colony of actinobacteria recently discovered in Siberia.[29] Moreover, the mayfly and the bacterium are, like many other nonhuman entities, ill-equipped even to perceive the vibrations that constitute musical sound. The list of earless creatures who live in muted or wholly soundless worlds is long. Music is manifestly not for them.[30]

39 Even for creatures who have ears, music's interspecies appeal is questionable. With very few exceptions, the undomesticated nonhuman realm appears to be profoundly unmoved by human-made musical sounds.[31] Ants and coyotes and pigeons do not congregate around musical instruments when they are played; bears in the wild perceive music as one more index of a dangerous species that should be avoided if at all possible. The only animals who appear to have a real tolerance for music are those that live among humans—dogs, cats, cockatoos and other "companion species."[32] Your housecat's attraction to your piano playing thus has less to do with music's broad interspecies appeal, and more to do with music's participation in regimes of domestication and discipline that pull pets and agricultural animals in the direction of their human caregivers. (Of course, if music does help to tame or "humanize" a domesticated animal, this only lends more credence to the solipsistic belief that we are distinct, autonomous agents capable of operating powerfully in, and on, the world.)

40 In most situations, music manifests as unwelcoming or inhospitable to nonhuman creatures. Unlike a sculpture upon which a bird can build its nest, unlike a painting or a book that can serve as a habitat for mold, music's vibratory materiality creates a sense of "home" that is designed exclusively for human habitation. Music disrupts animals' communicative channels. It is an exclusive gated playground whose structures were designed specifically for us. When placed within a broad environmental register that takes nonhuman life seriously, music reveals itself as a performance of exception.

Centripetality

41 Music reinforces human interiority, populating memory and imagination with an arresting archive of gestures, beats, textures, and feelings. Have you ever had an earworm stuck in your head, looping over and over independent of your will? Statistically, your answer will be yes.[33] Now, be honest: have you ever had a painting, or a building, or a mathematical formula, or the sound of rustling leaves, or the absent smell of gasoline stuck in your head with the same persistent force as an earworm? Musical structures colonize the imagination and memory with unique force; they insistently demonstrate the presence and vitality of an *inner* world, an auditory imagination accessible to you alone. Imagined or remembered music portrays that inner world as active and dynamic: a vibrant, intimate, human-sized space of emotional encounter. When music is present in the imagination, your surroundings lose a bit of their sensory intensity and edge. (If they didn't, the earworm would disappear, incinerated by your fascination with the external world.) In this way, the auditory imagination tends to exert a *centripetal* force on perception, which can intensify a listener's embodied sense of their fictive separation from all that is not them. Cultural historian Josh Kun gave this kind of centripetal, music-saturated interiority a name: audiotopia. The audiotopia he discovered through listening to records as a child emplaced him within "my own world, . . . an alternate set of cultural spaces that, through the private act of listening, could deliver me to different places and different

times and allow me to try out different versions of my self."[34] Though interior, audiotopias are by nature shared spaces, in which imagined communities of like-minded (human) listeners congregate. This audiotopic worlding capacity is what makes music such a powerful technology for creating and maintaining social identities.

42 Whether one is listening to music's public vibrations or silently experiencing music through imagination or memory, it is undeniable that a kind of embodied action is being performed. That action exists independently of the bodily movements that produce musical sounds (e.g., strumming a lute) or accompany them (e.g., dancing): the action is internal. Within a human-sized register, this internal action *means* something: it has spiritual, aesthetic, social, or other entailments. Musicking generates a sense of catharsis and fulfillment and feelingfulness. It triggers the release of endorphins that make us feel good inside. By generating these intoxicating sensations, music draws attention away from slow violence—a phenomenon that, because of its inhuman magnitude, is already impossible to fully grasp. The more riveting and beautiful music is, the greater its centripetality. Music's mesmerizing qualities cause expansive registers to collapse down to human size.[35]

Instrumentality

43 Consider the global music instrumentarium. Instrument makers throughout history have recruited a vast number of nonhuman bodies into the project of musicking, stripping them of their lives and ecological significance, and endowing them with a new "technosocial" role.[36] Musical instruments have made use of elephant tusks, sheep intestines, horse hairs, tortoise shells, and the skins of an array of mammals from cows to goats to whales. Many species of trees have been brought to the brink of extinction by the production of musical instruments. The mining and refining of ore for metal, a common material in many instruments, poisons water supplies, devastates habitats, and often shortens the lives of the armies of workers who are involved in this industry. As we insistently pound on these carcasses and pluck these fibers and tickle these tusks we engage, unapologetically, in an incantatory display that theatrically, sonorously, and microcosmically presents humans as masters of a nonhuman world that exists for them alone. People derive neither physical sustenance nor shelter from these instruments. They construct them for the emotional, social and spiritual benefits that musicking produces. A positive feedback loop is established: the instrumentalization of the nonhuman world and the sensation of humans as soulful and exceptional creatures reinforce one another.

44 Of course, some musical traditions do involve elaborate acknowledgment of the nonhuman sacrifices that went into the making of instruments, and the agencies instruments derive from their origins. Many indigenous communities treat instruments as "'beings', alive and sentient," for example[37]; and Yoruba traditions acknowledge the agencies trees have on the drums into which they are made.[38] Western practices, and most contemporary music scenes globally, resolutely ignore these sacrifices.[39] Tell the truth: when you listen to a recording of piano music do you *ever* find yourself thinking about the individual trees that were killed to make its body, much less the diverse ecology—the other trees, plants, birds, rodents, insects, humans, and potential spiritual entities—who were connected to and sustained by that tree? Do you think, when you hear the piano, of the oxygen that tree supplied and the atmospheric carbon it

absorbed over the course of a life that might be measured in hundreds of years? Are you aware of the sheep whose wool made the felt of the hammers, or the copper ore buried deep in a mountain for millions of years before being extracted and refined into its strings, poisoning a river and leveling a forest in the process? If the piano was made before 1970, do you think of the elephants that were killed for their tusks to cover the keys, or of the abject economic conditions that compelled people to enter into the tusk-harvesting trade? Do you think of the collection of human miners, lumberjacks, elephant poachers, sheep shearers, smelters, lacquer manufacturers, artisans, accountants, salespeople, et al., who participated in the making of a Steinway? Or of those laborers' many environmental entanglements and liabilities?[40] I realize that most of the objects in our lives are similarly compromised. A car or leather couch or milk dud are all deeply entangled in this way. I am not suggesting that we need to strive for environmental purity in our lives.[41] But I do want to suggest that, within a disenchanted, empirical register that does not assign spiritual significance to instrumental origins, the sound of a piano beautifully played is remarkably good at obliterating thoughts about these hidden victims and participants. The sacrifices born by instrumentalized bodies are, for the music lover, so amply justified that they need not even be acknowledged. Music renders that violence inaudible.

45 If the material entanglements of musical instruments connect them to the humilibristic logics of slow violence, the history of their development and use within human registers strengthens this connection considerably.[42] Music's involvement with organized killing is so profound that one could argue the two phenomena are co-constitutive. The bow loses its arrow and becomes the berimbau and a universal exciter of fiddle strings. The bone whistle enables communication among hunters and warriors alike. A type of magnetic tape developed for military use becomes a central technology for music recording. The drum and bagpipe are used to intimidate the enemy on the battlefield. Military service members construct "battle playlists" on their iPods to attain a hyperaggressive state before battle. The cacophony of modern warfare inspires Futurist musical experiments. Amplified music facilitates PSYOPS and "enhanced interrogation." Brass instruments decommissioned after the American Civil War facilitate the emergence of jazz. This well-documented history is often obscured within the phenomenological register of musical experience. Within the environmental register, by contrast, the connection between music, materiality, and violence in all of its multiplex forms is revealed as a throughline running from the beginning of the age of humans to the present.

Reductivity

46 There are, of course, moments when music is not directly referential to human thoughts and emotions, or operating in a tautological swirl of anthropocentric concerns. Music's mimetic capabilities allow it to reach out into the nonhuman world, to an extent. However, any mimetic translation of environmental entities or processes into music necessarily involves a radical *reduction* of their visual, tactile, olfactory, thermal, and other non-auditory dimensions. This is not to say that musicking itself isn't an intersensorial activity, involving bodies in motion, media, material, acoustic territories, and other real and imagined sensory stimuli along with the vibrations people call "sound."[43] Rather, it is to say that music's representational capacity is

concentrated within the sonorous realm. Put more crudely, a performance of Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* may occasionally *sound* like a wolf or a duck, but it doesn't *look* or *smell* like a wolf or a duck. It smells like however the performers smell. Peter and the Wolf references the nonhuman world chiefly through sound.

47 Sound is good at depicting some aspects of more-than-human life: motion, emotion, copresence, rhythmicity, and texture, for example. (In fact, it is so good at these depictions that I imagine you can hear an appropriate musical gesture with each of the words on that list as you read them.) But it is not well-positioned to depict other aspects. Some of these, as I have discussed, have to do with the inhuman size and distended temporality of many environmental phenomena. Others involve sensory modalities that are simply incompatible with sound. Dirt on a carpet is easier to visualize than to hear, for example; toxicity, malodor, and rot are better smelled than listened to. One might compose a musical gesture that mimetically depicts a rising gaseous plume or an ocean wave, but how would one musically differentiate a plume of steam from a plume of smoke, or a pre-oceanic-acidification wave from a post-acidification one? As a result of the *sensory exclusivity* of phenomena like dirt and toxicity and putrefaction, any musical depiction of environmental processes (especially slow violence) is almost certain to appear *cleaner* and therefore less complicated than the processes themselves. Music tends to simplify and cleanse the sullied environments it depicts.

48 Unlike the visual arts and architecture, whose materiality is always on display, the sonorous material of musicking is elusive. A painting or sculpture's material roots are undeniable and elemental; they can be seen, felt, sniffed, even tasted and made audible by a slap of the hand if you're bold enough. Not so with music, whose waves are invisible, ephemeral, and ungraspable. Music's reduction of worldly bodies to sound is in this sense a grand disappearing trick. Sound does have materiality of course, as the literature on acoustic violence amply attests.[44] However, under most conditions, the musical sounds encountered over the course of human history have been auditory more than haptic, heard more than felt. This *seeming* immateriality allows musicking to embody and amplify the sensation of separation between human and nature that is at issue here. It is particularly powerful as a metonym for the "humble" component of humilibris discussed above. For unlike many other human enterprises, musicking appears to leave no environmental residue: the atmosphere has a seemingly infinite capacity to absorb musical vibrations and remain unchanged.[45] The changes wrought by musicking are social and emotional, and so take place within the scale of human individuals and groups, not environment. We are not surrounded by Chladni plates that render our musical vibrations visible. As a performance without palpable environmental consequences, music is capable of projecting an image of the human as inconsequential to nature.

Siren

49 You may have noticed that, in the latter half of this essay, I appear to have collapsed the environmental and phenomenological registers, drawing upon my personal experience of music as human-sized, centripetal, instrumentalizing, and sensorially reductive, and extrapolating these qualities to all music ever. Let me plead guilty to this charge, and point out some extenuating circumstances. It is unquestionably the case

that, over the course of the 200,000-year era of musicking, many communities arose that did not frame the activity as enacting a cut that separates humans from nonhumans.[46] (For what it's worth, however, I think we can read Tolbert and Tomlinson, minimally, as acknowledging the profound power of musicking on the formation of human-centered collectives over the entirety of human evolution.) It is also true that many listeners—detainees subjected to music torture, to take one obvious example—have perceived music as having a fundamentally inhuman size.[47] It is likewise true that the "inner world" of imagined sound that I have outlined can be perceived, for listeners with different acoustemologies, as not "inner" at all: a voice or snippet of music stuck in one's head can be understood to be not "imagination" but "visitation," a social experience with a spiritual or distant corporeal interlocutor. In fact, as I have intimated all along, the qualities I attribute to music above do not in and of themselves *create* anthropocentric listeners. My claim is not that these qualities or affordances are totalizing or deterministic, but that, over time, their cumulative effect has been to subtly but consequentially amplify anthropocentric social structures and orientations, making them feel natural, intuitive, embodied, and real. And let's not forget that this naturalization takes place independent of the labor performed by the words of song lyrics and the intensely human sound of the singing voice. I will leave it to you, reader, to think back on all of the sung music you have ever heard, and decide whether or not the preponderance of it emphasizes narrowly human concerns, or environmental entanglements.

50 Within the deeply anthropocentric milieu of global modernity, one can make a stronger case for music's cumulative effect. In postindustrial life, music regularly guides, compresses, domesticates, harmonizes, *humanizes* thought. Musicking cathects "world," and it continues to project this humanized, audiotopic image of world, even if "the concept of world is no longer operational." It does so by drawing listeners' thoughts and bodies into a centripetal, human register of willful action and social relations, and away from the (centrifugal) environmental registers of more-than-human relationality and radical entanglement. Over the course of modern history, musicking has given voice to a multitude of perspectives—but in the end it has sung most convincingly a siren song, a song of separation from the buzzing, biting, vulnerable environment of which we are a constituent part. That sense of separation, widely dispersed and wildly durable, has been weaponized by some human collectives to recast creatures as resources, pollution as oblivion, and immiseration as progress. In other words, musicking may not have *caused* the end of the world, but it did provide it with an intoxicating soundtrack.[48]

Thriving

51 What, in the end, is one to do with the heretical notion that musicking may somehow have facilitated the slow violence of anthropogenic pollution and global warming? I honestly don't know what *you* should do, but here are my personal urges: first, I want—I need—to continue cherishing the music that helps me and my loved ones thrive, regardless of the humilibristic potentialities that music may harbor. Life continues after the end of the world, and human thriving cannot be taken for granted within it; as we (in the radically inclusive sense of that word) move into an unstable future we are going to need all the help we can get. I may continue to imaginatively project myself

into an environmental register, but I *live* in a human-sized one, along with you and many others, and that is where music reveals its deepest potential to create meaning and sustain life.

52 At the same time, I want to work to better understand and support communities whose musical practices explicitly contradict the humilibristic logics of anthropocentrism, promoting ideologies and aesthetics of relation and connection instead of separation and transcendence. Many of these practices are indigenous or non-Western; others are associated with one avant garde movement or another. All are experimental, in the sense that they propose aesthetics and ontologies of sound that come into conflict with hegemonic musical norms. As such, these musics have the potential to illuminate an urgent truth: that human thriving is not independent of environmental thriving—in fact, they are the same thing.[49] If ethnomusicology and ecomusicology have a profound contribution to make in the 21st century, it surely involves continuing to bring grounded knowledge of these traditions to a broad postindustrial audience. They will need to do this not so as to complete an exhaustive catalogue of human musical diversity, and not merely to draw attention to the plight of marginalized peoples and the many forms of violence they endure, but also in order to provide real, creative, alternative models for imagining the ties that join bodies—all bodies, everybody—together. At the same time, these disciplines and their readerships will need to respect a community's right to keep some registers private, and accept that some practices are site-specific, and not open to export or exploitation.[50]

53 A growing amount of work in music and sound studies has begun deconstructing human/nature dualism—by emphasizing music's intersensoriality and relationality (e.g., Eidsheim, Kapchan), decolonizing discourse on musical ontologies (e.g., Sykes), or exploring how music's invisible vibrations are inseparable from the material consequences of its "technosocial" underpinnings (e.g., Devine).[51] By reflecting critically upon music's "exclusive," "centripetal," "instrumental," and "reductive" potentialities, I hope to have contributed to this project in a small way. I further hope that this essay will help you imagine—or *remember*—music that is radically inclusive, centrifugal, transcorporeal, and irreducible.

54 Of course, if one listens awry or against the grain, *all* music can be heard—or made—to testify on behalf of environmental entanglement.[52] (My posthuman narration of the Yamashita concert at the beginning of the essay was an attempt to do just this.) What would music studies look like if it treated music as one ecological sound among others, one more interspecies choreography of bodies, one more perturbation of the biosphere? The challenge would be to do this without simply pulling the environment into a ready-made aesthetic frame, "tuning the world" by "treat[ing it] … as a macrocosmic musical composition."[53] Adopting an environmental register such as the one I have proposed here would radically decenter the human and defamiliarize our songs. It would open up the floodgates and allow the myriad sonic praxes of nonhuman species, long held at bay by the anthropocentric term "music," to come rushing into our considerations, overwhelming our human-centered auditory regimes and forcing us to sink or swim in the turbulent waters of more-than-human expression.

55 If the foregoing few paragraphs make you think I am bringing this reflection on music and slow violence to an optimistic, even utopian, conclusion, don't be fooled. Near the beginning of this essay, I mentioned the "asymmetry and temporal dynamism" of our environmental entanglements, and the unequal stakes they produce for the human and

nonhuman bodies involved. We (radically inclusive) are at the mercy of this asymmetry now. Recall my thesis: the cumulative effect of music on the environment has been to subtly reinforce the humilibristic worldview that made industrial-scale environmental violence thinkable. This process could only have taken place slowly, incrementally, over centuries, in multiple regions across the planet. If people agree to acknowledge the more-than-human voices that permeate and surround all music, then might music itself be deployed to facilitate a turn away from anthropocentrism, and with it, a global commitment to repair the environmental wounds of industrial modernity? Lamentably, no: there isn't enough time for slow violence to be undone by slow enlightenment. We don't have hundreds of years of climate stability left to allow that process to unfold. Given this temporal asymmetry, there can be no musical *strategy* for combatting climate change. Any deployment of music will always be a *tactic of the weak* (de Certeau), whose effects will only be palpable in local, social registers. Music has many potentialities: reinforcing humilibris in human bodies and collectives slowly over time is one of them; saving the world from environmental cataclysm is not. The idea of music-centered salvation is made even more unthinkable by the growing acceleration of environmental instability over the past several years. Music as an environmental force remains slow; climate no longer is.

56 In the midst of this grim state of affairs, I find myself engaging in senseless, Quixotic musical undertakings. They bear scant resemblance to the burgeoning and impressive corpus of climate-themed compositions and environmental sound art, which I admire and try to patronize.[54] I think of them as small Borgesian provocations, aimed at the heart of the era Amitav Ghosh calls "the Great Derangement." Ghosh imagines that future humans will look back aghast at our current time, "when most forms of art and literature were drawn into … modes of concealment that prevented people from recognizing the realities of their [environmental] plight."[55] My little pieces are designed to scratch through these concealing modes. To be clear, they are utterly ineffectual out in the world, but I find them strangely therapeutic—tactically, locally, for myself and perhaps my family and a few friends—especially when the abyss looms. With my colleague Joel Rust, I have begun composing operas for adult mayflies: half-second-long, soft, low-pitched *gesamtkunstwerke* to accompany their all-encompassing sex acts without taking up too much of their brief lives. I've also started writing a decade-long, heartbreaking torch song for the Siberian actinobacteria, a piece which, even if performed, they would never be able to hear. I walk around my neighborhood trying to turn birdsong and industrial sounds into earworms that loop and repeat in my memory as insistently as music does. I struggle to imagine musical sounds that smell of dirt and smoke and taste like acidifying oceans and car exhaust. I have crafted a requiem for the trees, mountains, elephants, habitats, shorn sheep, displaced fauna, smelting plants, copper miners, and poisoned lungs that are buried inside my old upright piano. This piece is simultaneously a paean to artisans, composers, music teachers, students, prodigies, hacks, audience members, piano movers and tuners and dusters—and to the vibrations, relations, emotions, revelations, and audiotopias that regularly visit the musicking masses. To most listeners, my piece would be indistinguishable from John Cage's famous composition *4'33"*. Except that this piece's duration is not four-and-a-half minutes but four-and-a-half billion years, the period at the end of which the sun will begin expanding on its Red Giant path to incinerate the inner solar system, marking a final, conclusive coda for all of our earthly performances.

[56] The piece is up and running now—can you hear it? It is titled "The Piano Is Always Burning." This title is, I think, a good mantra for understanding all music ever.

57 Speaking of burning pianos, I have often thought of how the 2008 performance of "Burning Piano" must have played out on the beach in Japan after the cameras and recorders were turned off. Did it create a fragile sense of music's profound environmental entanglements for the audience? If so, how long was it before the human-scaled, centripetal pleasures of musicking retook the foreground? In my imagination, it went something like this:

Fragility

58 *Eventually, the crowd began to disperse. Yamashita's lungs continued to contend with the smoke that had threatened to overwhelm them. He coughed again as he retreated farther along the beach, and felt his cheeks with his fingers; both were tender from the heat. The performance he initiated continued to smolder according to inhuman rules, slowly tracing its asymptotic decrescendo into the air. A solitary bird flapped by, encountered the blurred edge of the smoke plume, and altered its course in response. The audience members moved away from the scene and toward their cars in the parking lot. Starting them up, they initiated a series of unending combustion performances, adding a few more layers to the planet's palimpsestic archive. Smoke (a.k.a. piano, tree, mountain, sheep) clung to the fibers of their clothes, slowly infusing the air inside the cars as they turned, one by one, onto the coastal road.*

59 *One of the drivers switched on her car radio; it was tuned to Radio Hayama, a jazz station that had been playing Yamashita's classic 1975 album* Breathtake *on the way out to the beach. Now, Ella Fitzgerald was midway through an achingly slow and soulful rendition of an old Cole Porter number.[57] Her voice, accompanied by Tommy Flanagan on piano and bearing the traces of six decades of use, flooded the car:*

> When you're near
> There's such an air of spring about it.
> I can hear a lark somewhere
> Begin to sing about it.

60 *Something about the song, coming right on the heels of "Burning Piano," ushered the driver into a kind of surreal reverie. Fitzgerald's breathy voice and the thin trail of piano smoke in the distance briefly appeared to fuse together in her mind, smoke and sound pointing equally to the fragility of bodies within the vastness of air. Her familiar surroundings took on an uncanny aspect, as the smoke, and the road, and the voice, and the pianos (Flanagan's and Yamashita's) began to tangle in her imagination. The clear lines once separating them had vanished. Fitzgerald's voice—or was it the smoke plume?—sang:*

> There's no love song finer
> But how strange the change from major to minor

61 *She felt time stretching, an abyss opening up, a brief wave of vertigo. A precarious future appeared to loom before her, dark as the encroaching dusk, and her sense of fragility and entanglement grew. Fukushima was still three years off, so she couldn't have been thinking about that. So too were Hurricane Sandy, Deepwater Horizon, the Syrian conflict, the climate-influenced migration crisis, deadly heat waves across Europe and South Asia, the South African water shortage, and a billion animals dead in the Australian wildfires of 2019-20. She thought of none of these. Rather, a vague, rootless sense of foreboding enveloped her as the voice reached the last line of the chorus:*

Every time we say goodbye.

62 *And then the song ended, and was replaced by a news update. The car continued down the road. As the final cadence resolved and died out, the driver's brief moment of dread subsided. Fitzgerald's last phrase, now looping slowly in the driver's imagination, smoothly and methodically wiped out her memory of the entire surreal episode. "What a beautiful voice," she whispered, as, on the horizon, the last vestige of piano disappeared into air.*

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NOTES

1. YAMASHITA Y ōsuke, "Burning Piano", 2008 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpKT_eeCVNI&t=1s, consulted on 27 February 2020).

2. This counterintuitive thought was born in conversation with the composer Joel Rust.

3. ALAIMO Stacy, *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self,* Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2010.

4. BARAD Karen, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning,* Durham, Duke University Press, 2007.

5. See for example MALKKI Liisa H., *Purity and Exile: Violence, Memory, and National Cosmology among Hutu Refugees in Tanzania,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1995; PETTAN Svanibor (ed.), *Music, Politics, and War: Views from Croatia,* Zagreb, Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research, 1998; CUSICK Suzanne, "'You Are In a Place That Is Out of the World...': Music in the Detention Camps of the 'Global War on Terror'", *Journal of the Society for American Music*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2008, pp. 1-26; O'CONNELL John Morgan and CASTELO-BRANCO Salwa el-Shawan (eds.), *Music and Conflict,* Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2010; PAPAETI Anna, "Music, Torture, Testimony: Reopening the Case of the Greek Military Junta (1967-1974)", *The World of Music (New Series)*, vol. 2, no.1, 2013, pp. 67–90; DAUGHTRY J. Martin, *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq,* New York, Oxford University Press, 2015.

6. My thinking on the importance of scales and registers owes a great debt to conversations I've had with Jairo Moreno and Mike Beckerman over the years.

7. See for example DASTON Lorraine, "Objectivity and the Escape from Perspective", *Social Studies of Science*, vol. 22, no. 4, 1992, pp. 597-618; FLUSSER Vilém, "Orders of Magnitude and Humanism", *Writings*, translated by Elizabeth Wilson and Andreas Ströhl (ed.), Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2004, pp. 160-164; and BARAD, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.

8. Vilém Flusser uses the *matryoshka* or Russian nesting doll as a metaphor for this irreducible complexity, arguing that we are always-already embedded within, and susceptible to, all "orders of magnitude" at once; see FLUSSER, "Orders of Magnitude and Humanism". Symbolic violence thus occurs when this holistic scenario is reduced to a single order of magnitude or register. Decades earlier, in the mid-20th century, Fernand Braudel and other members of the Annales school began writing histories that were arrayed along multiple temporal scales. One of these was the *longue durée,* a scale measured in centuries or millennia that captured slow environmental, geographical, and demographical processes.

9. Most of the human-sized registers scholars have used to frame music have participated in what Nina Sun Eidsheim calls "the figure of sound," a complex of naturalized tropes dealing with the correlation of sound, music, and human listeners. Together, these tropes amount to a default acoustemology that reduces the intersensoriality of sound to a more or less static aesthetic object (see EIDSHEIM Nina, *Sensing Sound: Singing and Listening as Vibrational Practice,* Durham, Duke University Press, 2015).

10. BOURDIEU Pierre and WACQUANT L. J., *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1992.

11. For more on hot and cold violence, see WIEVIORKA Michel, "Violence and the Subject", *Thesis Eleven*, vol. 73, no. 1, 2003, pp. 42-50.

12. NIXON Rob, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor,* Cambridge (MA), Harvard University Press, 2011, p. 2, my emphasis.

13. For a discussion of "the gap between phenomenon and thing," or the difference between an imperceptible process like global warming and the perceptible effects of that process, see MORTON Timothy, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2013, pp. 47-51.

14. See for example DIRKSEN Rebecca, "Haiti's Drums and Trees: Facing Loss of the Sacred", *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 63, no. 1, 2019, pp. 43-77; MANABE Noriko, *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised: Protest Music after Fukushima,* New York, Oxford University Press, 2015; REES Helen, "Environmental Crisis, Culture Loss, and a New Musical Aesthetic: China's 'Original Ecology Folksongs'," *Ethnomusicology*, vol. 60, no. 1, 2016, pp. 53-88; SAKAKEENY Matt, *Roll With It: Brass Bands in the Streets of New Orleans,* Durham, Duke University Press, 2013; SCHWARTZ Jessica, "A 'Voice to Sing': Rongelapese Musical Activism and the Production of Nuclear Knowledge", *Music & Politics*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2012, https://dx.doi.org/10.3998/mp.9460447.0006.101.

15. MORTON, *Hyperobjects,* p. 6.

16. COLEBROOK Claire, "Fragility, Globalism, and the End of the World", lecture at Yale University, 2017 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_l0Qpyu84WA, consulted on 27 February 2020).

17. TOLBERT Elizabeth, "Music and Meaning: An Evolutionary Story", *Psychology of Music*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2001, pp. 86-87, my emphases.

18. GRANT Morag, "On Music and War", *Transposition*, hors-série 2, 2020, https://doi.org/10.4000/transposition.4469, my emphasis.

19. TOMLINSON Gary, *A Million Years of Music: The Emergence of Human Modernity,* New York, Zone Books, 2015 pp. 48-49, author's emphasis.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 50, my emphasis.

21. This is one of the principal critiques of the term "anthropocene": namely, that it implies that the entire human species is responsible for global warming, and therefore that there is no difference between the activities of a rural goatherder and an international oil magnate. For a

powerful argument in favor of the term "capitalocene," see MALM Andreas, "The Anthropocene Myth", *Jacobin,* 30 March 2015 (https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/03/anthropocene-capitalism-climate-change, consulted on 27 February 2020).

22. PLUMWOOD Val, *The Eye of the Crocodile,* edited by Lorraine Shannon, Acton, Australian University Press, 2012, p. 15.

23. In doing so, this work fails to recognize the contributions of the vibrant group of scholars working under the rubric of perspectivism and/or in the environmental humanities and animal studies. These intellectual movements are committed to dismantling the anthropocentric framework that has undergirded the humanities for centuries. See for example VIVEIROS DE CASTRO Eduardo, *Cannibal Metaphysics,* translated and edited by Peter Skafish, Minneapolis, Univocal, 2014 [2009]; TSING Anna Lowenhaupt, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2015; CHAUDHURI Una, *The Stage Lives of Animals: Zooesis and Performance,* New York, Routledge, 2016; TSING Anna Lowenhaupt et al. (eds.), *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2017; PLUMWOOD Val, *The Eye of the Crocodile*; and WOLFE Cary, *What is Posthumanism?*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2009. Within music studies, scholars working in an ethnographic register with indigenous communities have long contributed to the critique of anthropocentrism. See for example FELD Steven, *Sound and Sentiment: Birds, Weeping, Poetics, and Song in Kaluli Expression,* Durham, Duke University Press, 2012 [1982]; SEEGER Anthony, *Why Suyá Sing: A Musical Anthropology of an Amazonian People,* Champaign (IL), University of Illinois Press, 2004 [1987]; DIAMOND Beverley, CRONK M. Sam and VON ROSEN Franziska, *Visions of Sound: Musical Instruments of First Nations Communities in Northeastern America,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994; CRUIKSHANK Julie, *Do Glaciers Listen? Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination,* Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 2005; BRABEC DE MORI Berndt, "Music and Non-Human Agency", POST Jennifer (ed.), *Ethnomusicology: A Contemporary Reader,* vol. II, New York and London, Routledge, 2017, pp. 181-194; and LEVINE Victoria and ROBINSON Dylan (eds.), *Music and Modernity among First Peoples of North America,* Middletown (CT), Wesleyan University Press, 2019.

24. OCHOA GAUTIER Ana María, "Acoustic Multinaturalism, the Value of Nature, and the Nature of Music in Ecomusicology", *Boundary 2*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2010, p. 125.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

26. For an influential study of alternative modernities, see GAONKAR Dilip (ed.), *Alternative Modernities,* Durham, Duke University Press, 2001.

27. As Marcello Sorce Keller has written, "There are things that non-human animals apparently never do. [...T]he embedding of words in a melody, following a metrical pattern, appears to be uniquely human" (2012, p. 176, quoted in BRABEC DE MORI, "Music and Non-Human Agency", p. 183.

28. Take for example John Cage's *ASLSP (as slow as possible)*, a 639-year-long piece for unmanned pipe organ, currently being performed in Halberstadt, Germany (https://universes.art/en/specials/john-cage-organ-project-halberstadt, consulted on 27 February 2020).

29. In 2014, as part of an exhibition at the New Museum in Manhattan, Icelandic artists Ragnar Kjartansson and Kjartan Sveinsson organized a performance of "Take Me Here by the Dishwasher: Memorial for a Marriage," a short piece for live musicians, which was repeated continuously during the museum's open hours throughout the exhibition. The total performance lasted for roughly 360 hours, spread out over more than a month.

30. Mayflies have antennae that may pick up some low-frequency vibrations that are audible to most humans. Actinobacteria have no such mechanisms. If a mayfly cannot perceive vibrations above 100 hz, then a mayfly-sized pop tune would be physically inaudible by any creature, as it would be much shorter in length than a single cycle at that frequency. An extended mayfly

opera, roughly equivalent in duration to Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* for humans, would register as about a half-second of sound.

This observation is not in any way intended to dismiss the vibrant culture of human "Deaf listening" that has been recently documented by scholars of disability studies. See for example DIBERNARDO JONES Jeannette, "Imagined Hearing: Music-Making in Deaf Culture", HOWE Blake et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Disability Studies,* New York, Oxford University Press, 2016, 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199331444.013.3.

31. For a discussion of the parameters of animal tolerance of and/or attraction to human musicking, see STRYKER Noah, *The Thing with Feathers: The Surprising Lives of Birds and What They Reveal About Being Human,* New York, Riverhead Books, 2015; ROTHENBERG David, *Thousand-Mile Song: Whale Music in a Sea of Sound,* New York, Basic Books, 2010; and BOWMAN A. et al., "'Four Seasons' in an Animal Rescue Centre: Classical Music Reduces Environmental Stress in Kennelled Dogs", *Physiology and Behavior*, vol. 143, 2015, pp. 70-82.

32. HARAWAY Donna, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness,* Chicago, Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003.

33. While the ubiquity of digital music in public and private spaces has certainly exacerbated this phenomenon for people in post-industrial societies, ample evidence exists that the "earworm" predates the era of recorded sound. The repetition of music in ritualized contexts from work to worship has for millennia created opportunities for songs to lodge in people's imaginations and memories. For a provocative analysis of earworms, see PRIEST Eldritch, "Earworms, Daydreams, and Cognitive Capitalism," *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2018, pp. 141-162. For a phenomenological account of the auditory imagination, see DAUGHTRY J. Martin, "Listening Beyond Sound and Life: A Fragile Phenomenology of the Auditory Imagination", BERGER Harris and SZEGO Kati (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Phenomenological Ethnomusicology,* New York, Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

34. KUN Josh, *Audiotopia: Music, Race, and America,* Berkeley, University of California Press, 2005, p. 2.

35. I thank Kati Szego for guiding me toward this thought.

36. TOMLINSON Gary, *A Million Years of Music.*

37. DIAMOND et al., *Visions of Sound*, p. 6.

38. ADEGBITE Ademola, "The Drum and Its Role in Yoruba Religion", *Journal of Religion in Africa*, vol. 18, no. 1, 1988, pp. 15-26.

39. The instrumentalization of the world takes place in many musical contexts globally. Steven Friedson's account of the *brekete* drum made for him by his Ewe colleagues in Ghana makes this clear: "Any used metal barrel about two to two and a half feet long will do—mine had stickers on it picturing an umbrella with raindrops and the warning 'Dangerous When Wet'—as long as it can produce the requisite sound. What is significant about a *brekete* drum is the fact that it has been consecrated, thus activated. The drum I was playing had been given drink, had been fed with the blood of several chickens, and contained Kunde's kaolin and kola." (FRIEDSON Steven, *Remains of Ritual: Northern Gods in a Southern Land,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009, p. 124). Spiritual practices that infuse instruments with energy and even consciousness often treat raw environmental material in the same way as Steinway manufacturers: as a means to an end. I am grateful to Beverley Diamond for alerting me, in conversation, to a number of indigenous counterexamples where communities acknowledge the identity of the entities that make up a musical instrument.

40. This part of the essay tracks closely with the methodologies of Actor Network Theory—for a classic in the genre, see LATOUR Bruno, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory,* New York, Oxford University Press, 2005; also, for an Actor Network-influenced analysis

of a single musical instrument, see RODA Allen, "Tabla Tuning on the Workshop Stage: Toward a Materialist Musical Ethnography", *Ethnomusicology Forum*, vol. 23, no. 3, 2014, pp. 360-382.

41. For a critique of ideologies of purity see SHOTWELL Alexis, *Against Purity: Living Ethically in Compromised Times,* Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

42. Daniel Oore recently drew my attention to this aspect of the music-violence relationship.

43. See EIDSHEIM Nina, *Sensing Sound,* for an extended discussion of the intersensoriality of music.

44. In the active combat zones of the Iraq war, "people listened with their ears—but also with their skin, their chest cavities, the hair on the back of their necks, their viscera. The loud sounds of weaponry regularly bled into the realm of the haptic when they were this close up. When they were even closer, and even louder, these sounds lost their capacity to serve as a resource, a text to be interpreted, an illuminating index of a nearby violent act: at the closest distances, the loudest sounds assaulted bodies, and they often did so before any tactical judgment or meaningful interpretation could possibly be made" (DAUGHTRY, *Listening to War,* p. 92).

45. Despite appearances, musical vibrations do have a small but real effect on atmosphere. Like all other mechanical vibrations, music incrementally raises the temperature of the medium through which it passes. The atmosphere, in other words, treats sound as heat. The amount of heat sound creates is negligible, however, and not part of any scientific understanding of global warming. I thank Tyler Volk for this insight.

46. Steven Feld's seminal volume *Sound and Sentiment* (*op. cit.*) in many ways set the agenda for taking nonanthropocentric musicking seriously.

47. See CUSICK, "'You Are In a Place'"; an extended description of sounds as big relative to humans in combat zones can be found in DAUGHTRY J. Martin, "Thanatosonics: Ontologies of Acoustic Violence," *Social Text*, vol. 32, no. 2 (119), 2014, pp. 25-51.

48. The youtube video "Star Wars Minus Williams: Ewok Celebration" provides a decent illustration of the cumulative role music has played in naturalizing slow environmental violence. By replacing John Williams's lush musical soundtrack with the ambient sound of birds, woodland insects, fire, and explosions, the scene, which involves the incineration of Darth Vader's corpse and an ostentatious fireworks display, reveals layers of environmental fragility and entanglement that are impalpable in the original (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9WVDvVd0E, consulted on 27 February 2020).

49. As Ochoa Gautier writes, "recognizing potentialities is not the same as proposing an inherent ontology or political outcome in which such potentialities are prefigured as actualizations that only take one form: as a positivity of the political in music, sound, and listening" ("Acoustic Multinaturalism," p. 129).

50. See LEVINE and ROBINSON (eds.), *Music and Modernity* for a number of perspectives on this issue. Trevor Reed's essay in that volume states the case clearly: "...Indigenous ceremonial performances are originally owned by those who create and perform them and, if the creators or performers are no longer living, their lineal descendants or those who carry on the ceremonial practices. Indigenous peoples, therefore, have the right to control how recordings of their ceremonial culture circulate" (REED Trevor, "*Pu-Itaaqatsit aw Tuuqayta* (Listening to Our Modern Lives)", LEVINE and ROBINSON (eds.), *Music and Modernity,* p. 260).

51. On intersensoriality, vibrational practice, and materiality, see EIDSHEIM Nina, *Sensing Sound*; on relationality and "sound knowledge", see KAPCHAN Deborah, "The Splash of Icarus: Theorizing Sound Writing / Writing Sound Theory", KAPCHAN Deborah (ed.), *Theorizing Sound Writing,* Middletown (CT), Wesleyan University Press, 2017, pp. 1-22; on respecting multiple musical ontologies, see SYKES Jim, "The Anthropocene and Music Studies", *Ethnomusicology Review*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2019, pp. 4-21. Kyle Devine's 2019 monograph *Decomposed: The Political Ecology of Music* (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 2019) participates powerfully in this project by tracing the material

roots of the music recording industry, from shellac to petrochemicals to the internet's many human and environmental entanglements.

52. For a meditation on "listening awry," see DROBNICK Jim, "Listening Awry", DROBNICK Jim (ed.), *Aural Cultures,* Toronto, YYZ Books, 2004, pp. 9-15.

53. SCHAFER R. Murray, *Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World,* Rochester (VT), Destiny Books, 1994 [1977], p. 5.

54. Here I have in mind works by people such as John Luther Adams, David Dunn, Brother Nut, Andrea Polli, Juliana Snapper, Tanya Tagaq, Barry Truax, Hildegard Westerkamp, the Ear to Earth community, and especially Annea Lockwood, who composed the first set of instructions for burning (and sinking, and burying) pianos.

55. GHOSH Amitav, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable,* Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2016, p. 11.

56. The final movement of earth's biospheric performance will be quite complex. For one chilling projection, see Ethan Siegel, "How Our Solar System Will End in the Far Future", *Forbes,* 27 January 2017 (https://www.forbes.com/sites/startswithabang/2017/01/27/how-our-solar-system-will-end-in-the-far-future, consulted on 27 February 2020).

57. FITZGERALD Ella with Tommy Flanagan, "Every Time We Say Goodbye" (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gF5vjdrEuy4, consulted on 27 February 2020).

ABSTRACTS

This essay seeks to clarify the relationship between music and environmental violence. After a reflection on the distortions and insights that different frames of reference produce, it places music within an expansive environmental register that encompasses the entirety of human history, up to and including our current era of "slow violence," industrial pollution, mass extinction, and global warming. Throughout, human musicking is presented as always-already entangled with nonhuman entities and processes. The essay focuses on four of music's potentialities—its *exclusivity, centripetality, instrumentality,* and *reductivity*—and argues that the cumulative effect of musicking has been to help perpetuate a type of anthropocentrism that made industrial-scale environmental violence possible. It concludes by suggesting a number of small tactics for musical thriving in an age when, in Timothy Morton's words, "the concept of *world* is no longer operational".

Cet article propose de caractériser la relation entre musique et violence environnementale. Après une réflexion sur les perceptions et distorsions découlant des différents cadres de référence, il s'agit d'examiner la musique dans le registre environnemental le plus large, qui couvre la totalité de l'histoire humaine jusqu'à notre ère de « violence lente », de pollution industrielle, d'extinction de masse, et de réchauffement planétaire. Le musiquer humain doit alors être présenté dans son enchevêtrement systématique avec des entités et processus non-humains. L'article se concentre sur quatre potentialités de la musique – *exclusive*, *centripète*, *instrumentale* et *réductive* –, et défend qu'elle a eu pour effet cumulatif d'aider à la perpétuation d'une forme d'anthropocentrisme qui a rendu possible la violence environnementale à une échelle industrielle. Il se conclut sur quelques petites tactiques d'épanouissement musical à une époque où, à en croire Timothy Morton, « le concept de *monde* n'est plus opérationnel ».

INDEX

Mots-clés: musique, violence, environnement, pollution, anthropocène, réchauffement planétaire, apocalypse, anthropocentrisme, trans-corporéité, fragilité, non-humain
Keywords: music, violence, environment, pollution, anthropocene, global warming, apocalypse, anthropocentrism, trans-corporeality, fragility, nonhuman

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