

An orange silhouette of the African continent is centered on a white background. The silhouette has a rough, splattered edge. A pair of black headphones is superimposed on the right side of the map, with the earcups resting on the eastern coast of Africa.

SITUATING POPULAR MUSICS

2011
**Grahamstown
South Africa**

IASPM 16th International Conference Proceedings

Edited by Ed Montano and Carlo Nardi

IASPM | International Association for the Study of Popular Music

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Situating Popular Musics

IASPM 16th International Conference Proceedings

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Editorial note

In June 2011, twenty-four years after Accra, IASPM - the International Association for the Study of Popular Music - convened once again in Africa for its 16th international conference held at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. For the members of an association that is aimed towards internationalism, inclusiveness and interdisciplinarity, this was, as usual, a great opportunity to discuss relevant issues in popular music, to compare methodological approaches and to envision future developments of the field. The papers included in this publication, which comprises also a selection of unpublished works from previous IASPM international conferences, provide a good, although not exhaustive, sample of the wide range of themes, topics and approaches covered during the Grahamstown conference and, more broadly, a significant overview of current popular music studies.

Since the Grahamstown conference coincided with IASPM's thirtieth anniversary, one of the five parallel streams, *IASPM 30 years on*, was devoted to discussing the role of the Association in promoting the academic study of popular music. The other four streams included *Multi-sited popular music*, *Popular music and the culturalization of the economy*, *Popular music challenges* and *The power and politics of sound and body*. Thus, the conference was a chance for an appraisal of popular music studies as much as for contemplating future research directions. The papers in these proceedings are, among other things, witness to a propensity for establishing a dialogue between different epistemological paradigms—a feature that, so far, has been a common denominator of popular music studies. The many different theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches employed in the papers are testament to the diversity and vibrancy that characterises the study of popular music as truly interdisciplinary.

Aware that, more often than not, conference presentations offer partial results or a summary of wider research outputs, on this occasion we have opted for a “paper-length” or “long abstract” format, while not compromising on academic rigour. In this regard, we would like to acknowledge current IASPM Chair Martha Tupinambá de Ulhôa, who has been pivotal in encouraging a renovation of IASPM proceedings designed for a wider and more effective circulation of its members' outputs. Our hope is that these papers will generate further interest in the research of their authors and in the topics and concerns they have covered. Moreover, we wish that, especially in a time of crisis when humanistic disciplines are a favoured sacrificial victim on the altar of spending review policies, popular music studies, as

much as it draws on a wide range of disciplines, can continue to extend its impact well beyond its core field. We encourage you to engage in dialogue with those authors whose work you find of interest, and to circulate these papers to colleagues outside of the immediate IASPM network. With research and discussions located in Canada, Zimbabwe, New Zealand, South Africa, Finland, Bulgaria, India, the Czech Republic, Israel, Korea, Brazil, China, Austria, Chile, Cuba, Italy and elsewhere, the papers cover a broad geographical scope, lending the proceedings a global appeal and relevance, while also reflecting the international reach of IASPM. We hope this goes some way towards responding to the occasional criticisms that IASPM has been dominated by research situated on the Anglo-American axis.

Harbouring the confidence that the reader will find these papers as exciting and stimulating as it has been for us to edit them, we would like to dedicate our efforts to former IASPM Chair Jan Fairley, who, due to illness, was unable to join us in Grahamstown. Having contributed to the organisation of the conference with the rest of the team, including Helmi Järviluoma, Violeta Mayer, Héctor Fouce, Carlo Nardi and our host Michael Drewett, her personal touch to the conference was quite obvious for those who were familiar with her boundless curiosity, wide-ranging interests and radical social commitment. Besides that, Jan has been an inspiring force (and never was such an adjective as appropriate as to describe her determination, energy and passion) for popular music studies and for IASPM in particular. Being still shocked by her untimely departure, it is a small but cherished relief to realise that, in some way, Jan is still with us today.

Finally, we would like to thank the highly skilled Jacopo Tomatis for all his hard work in endowing these proceedings with a stylish layout. We also wish to acknowledge Michael Drewett, for having the marvellous idea to hold the conference in Grahamstown (and in concomitance with the annual National Arts Festival), for being such a dedicated host and, most of all, for helping to make it such a memorable experience. Last but not least, our warmest thanks go to Rhodes University and, in particular, the Department of Sociology for their welcoming support.

The success of the Grahamstown conference was marked by the significant number of scholars who travelled from all corners of the globe to attend. These proceedings act as a further reflection of that success, and of IASPM's position as an organisation that encourages and welcomes innovative, original and contemporary research. As we prepare for the 2013 conference in Spain, it is worth noting that we received a record number of abstract submissions, demonstrating not only that popular music studies continues to grow and develop, but also that IASPM itself is recognised internationally as the field's key association. Here's to the next thirty years. We hope to see you all in Spain.

Ed Montano and Carlo Nardi, December 2012

Entertainment tourism: Musicals at the Stratford Festival in Canada

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ABSTRACT

Many cities in Canada show their colonial heritage in their names. Stratford, Ontario was named for its English counterpart, and both have Avon Rivers and world-renowned theatre festivals featuring the works of Shakespeare. Canada's Stratford is fairly close to Toronto and major cities over the US border, including Buffalo and Detroit. The Stratford Festival has brought tourists to the small city of 30,500 for more than fifty years. As the centre of Canadian classical theatre, the Festival tends to focus on works by Shakespeare, Molière, Sophocles and other well-known authors in addition to plays by established Canadian playwrights. In its early seasons, operettas by Gilbert and Sullivan and comic operas such as Mozart's *The marriage of Figaro* and *Così fan tutte* were also included in the Festival. However, in recent decades, comic opera has all but disappeared; its place in the repertoire has been supplanted by musicals. Initially, given the nature of the Festival, the musicals were tied to Shakespearean themes (e.g. *West side story* and *Kiss me, Kate*) but as musical theatre proved to be an excellent commercial and tourist draw, more and varied musicals were included in the subsequent seasons. This paper will examine the place of musicals at the Stratford Festival in Canada. I will question how the inclusion of musicals changed the nature of the Festival, the types of audiences and the tourism associated with the Festival.

KEYWORDS: musicals; Stratford; festival; Canada; tourism; entertainment.

ENTERTAINMENT TOURISM

The Stratford Shakespeare Festival's current artistic director, Des McAnuff, makes the lofty claim that Stratford is the best place in the world to come if you love theatre (see *Stratford Festival* 2011), but sixty years ago, the idea of a renowned Canadian theatre company was somewhat laughable. Like many other towns in Ontario, Stratford was settled by British immigrants and named for a British town. To honour the Canadian Stratford's relationship with Shakespeare, local Tom Patterson dreamt of creating a Shakespearean Festival from the time he was a young man. In accordance with this ideal, Patterson determined that a British director and British classically trained actors could best lead a company of Canadians in the art of Shakespearean repertoire. Tyrone Guthrie thus became artistic director with enthusiasm for the opportunity to create Shakespearean productions in a city without entrenched traditions about the way Shakespeare should be done. Guthrie brought on Tanya Moiseiwitsch to design a thrust stage in the Elizabethan tradition. Alec Guinness brought star power and experience to the Festival's first season in 1953. Moiseiwitsch's innovative stage design was a semi-permanent structure housed under a giant tent that was taken down at the end of each season and raised in a picnic-like atmosphere by the townspeople for the next three summers.

The Stratford Shakespearean Festival was consciously created to facilitate a festive atmosphere. Picard and Robinson (2006, p. 1) wrote in their book *Festivals, tourism and social change* that "the concentrated time-space frame of the festival helped to make visible the social life of 'foreign' townscapes and landscapes". Guthrie promoted the idea of a tent as a perfect venue for its ability to create a fair-like, celebratory and intentionally temporary and thus special place. The plethora of bed and breakfasts that sprang up as the Festival became more established encouraged visitors to stay for a night or more, to take in multiple plays and wander around the town. Tourists at the Festival often stayed overnight and spent time and money in Stratford and the surrounding region, leading to the prosperity of the area, especially in the hospitality, restaurant and retail sectors.

Further, there was a conception early on that people visiting Stratford were *not* tourists – they were visitors, attending a cultural event and would be welcomed as such. Tom Patterson describes the distinction in his book *First stages*,

That was one of our smartest moves. Right from the beginning, we decided that we would not call anyone a 'tourist'. They were, rather, 'Festival guests'. All our advertising read that it was our obligation to look after 'our Festival guests'. And this created the attitude among Stratford people that 'these people are our guests. We've got to look after them'. (Patterson and Gould 1987, p. 149)

The bed and breakfast culture in Stratford helps to create the sense of being a guest. With many people returning year after year for the Festival and to the same bed and breakfasts and restaurants, friendships and relationships are formed between Stratford natives and their "guests" that go beyond usual local/tourist relationships.

Where does music enter this discussion? Well, as Tom Patterson (ibid., pp. 203-204) explained,

Louis Applebaum had been retained by Tyrone Guthrie as composer for the incidental music for the plays and for the fanfare that still heralds each performance. He also conducted the orchestra after the Festival opened. But at the same time, although no one knew it, [and] with practically no time at all to organize, [he] miraculously came up with sixteen afternoon concerts featuring such budding stars as Glenn Gould, Jan Rubes, Lois Marshall.

Music, in those first few years, was somewhat peripheral to the goings on of the theatre company. Yet, because of Applebaum's association with the Festival, the concert series developed into something quite remarkable. Guthrie was a vocal supporter of Applebaum's initiatives in creating a music festival and wrote him a letter of support in 1955 saying: "For a year or two, the Shakespeare plays may have to carry the music. Later, I suspect that the boot will be on the other foot" (cited in Pitman 2002, p. 108). As Guthrie predicted, the music festival took a loss for the first few years, but it wasn't long before Applebaum hit on a formula for drawing talent and audiences to the concerts, and eventually, the musicals at Stratford were able to finance lesser-known plays.

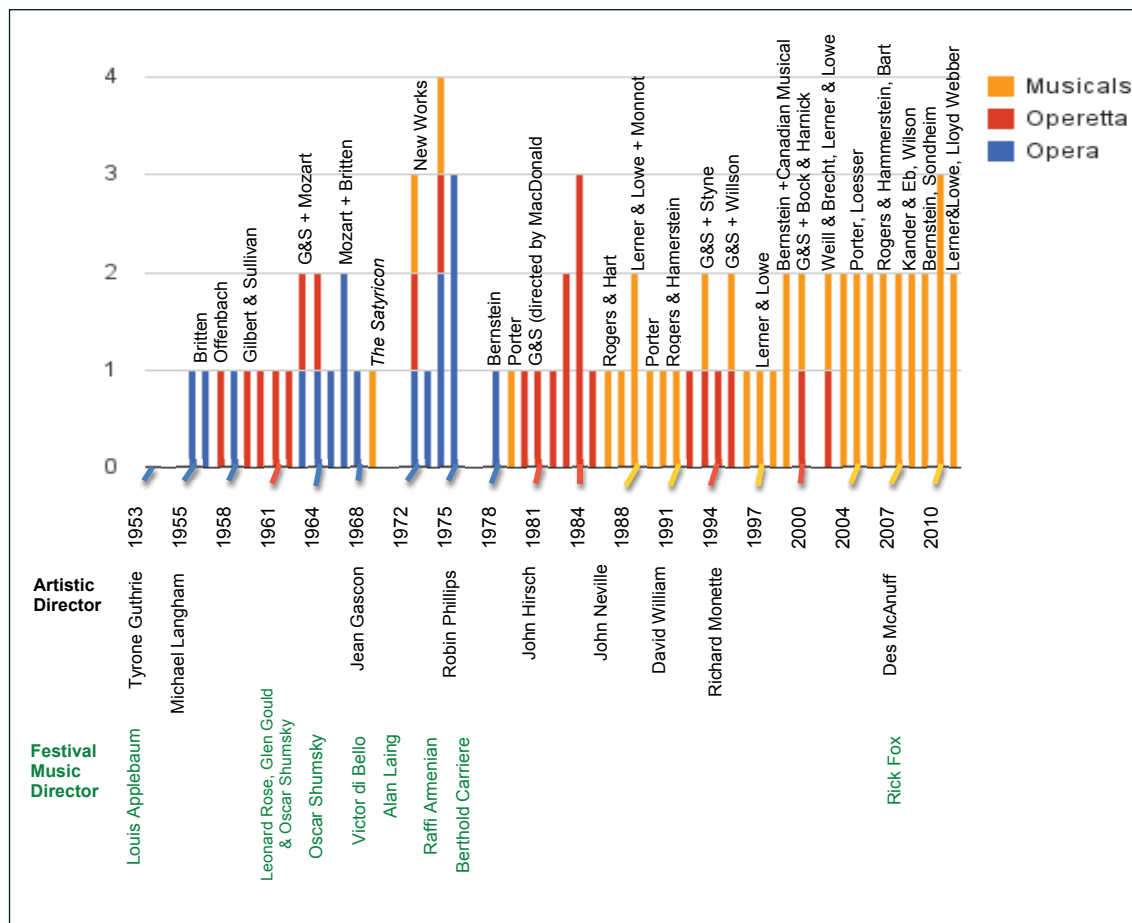
It wasn't until Michael Langham took over as artistic director in 1956, that a musical dramatic form was included in the Festival offerings. Benjamin Britten's *The rape of Lucretia* was directed by Applebaum, who wrote in the house program,

Stratford's presentation will, we expect, aim the attention of the audience on the essential dramatic and musical values of the work rather than divert it with the conventional operatic trimmings and trappings... Time and our audience should eventually let us know what to build on. (Applebaum 1956)

The following year, Britten himself conducted his *Turn of the screw* at Stratford. Starting in 1956, jazz greats Duke Ellington, Oscar Peterson and Art Tatum took part in the music concert series, finally drawing crowds in significant numbers and helping to legitimize jazz as an art form in the country. Thus, the Festival started its foray into music with incidental music in the plays, music concerts and with modern opera.

The Britten operas were less well attended than the jazz concerts and it wasn't long before lighter musico-dramatic works were staged. Guthrie, despite his derisive stance on musicals as "girlie-girlie shows," appreciated operetta, and he directed the first Gilbert and Sullivan production at the Festival in 1959 – *H.M.S. Pinafore*. It was a great success and the late 1950s and early 1960s were dedicated to operetta (see *Table 1*).

Table 1: Staged musical offerings at the Stratford Festival by year.



In a review of the 1963 Festival offerings, author Graham George (1964, p. 37) wrote:

The lesson seemed to be that the public thought of Stratford as a festival of theatre, but it was going to be choosy about what musical theatre it would attend. No Britten, despite his reputation as high as his brow; no *Beggar's opera*, despite its racy style and venerable age, but yes to G&S, despite its amateur associations [...] it is the drama festival that all Canada is proud of and all the world comes to see. Music – *The marriage of Figaro* gloriously excepted – still limps doggedly behind.

Perhaps it was opinion pieces like this that prompted the Stratford Festival under artistic director Jean Gascon, to attempt an opera festival to match the Shakespearean productions. In 1963, the Festival bought the Avon Theatre; a theatre, Gascon wrote, that was renovated “with a specific purpose in mind: to be the home of

an opera festival on the same scope as the drama festival, which already ranks as among the best known in the western world" (*Stratford Festival* 1964).

The ambitious plan of an opera festival never really found its footing; in 1970 and 1971 there were no operas staged at all. The musicals in these years tended to be modern, sometimes experimental works with music by Canadian composers that were housed in smaller theatres, yet still failed to fill all the seats. When Robin Phillips took over as artistic director, he continued the trend of mounting more experimental works and produced three operas in his first year. There was a dry spell of two years for music on stage as Phillips refocused the Company's attention on works by Shakespeare – drawing crowds with stars like Maggie Smith. Bernstein's *Candide* was part of the 1978 season, proving to be a bridge between operatic and musical genres. The dream of creating an opera festival to match the renown of the Shakespearean festival seemed to die then, and there hasn't been an opera in the Festival since the 1970s.

Berthold Carrière was appointed Festival Music Director in 1976. He musically directed the Festival's return to Gilbert and Sullivan with 1981's *H.M.S. Pinafore*. In the following years, there was a resurgence of G&S shows directed by Brian MacDonald that were hugely successful. However, when John Neville was appointed artistic director in 1986, he did away with the G&S. Robert Cushman (2002, p. 152) suggests that Neville was "perhaps irked by the extent to which Macdonald had created a company within a company, [and] remarked tartly that Stratford was 'never meant to be a Gilbert and Sullivan festival'". Instead of G&S, Neville mounted successful Broadway shows, starting, appropriately, with Rogers and Hart's 1938 musical based on *A comedy of errors* - *The boys from Syracuse*. Neville was upfront about his reliance on the ability of musicals to draw crowds and revenue to the Festival. Neville opened his first two seasons with musicals mounted at the larger Festival Theatre, as Cushman cynically notes, "on the principle that, if you have a cash cow, you may as well milk it to its greatest capacity" (ibid., p. 170). Neville's years were dominated by musicals such as *Cabaret*, *My fair lady* and *Kiss me, Kate*. Cushman notes that these were "brand-name shows [...] shows, to put it bluntly, that everybody has heard of" (ibid., p. 171).

In contrast to Cushman's depiction of Neville, a retrospective in the *Montreal gazette* stated:

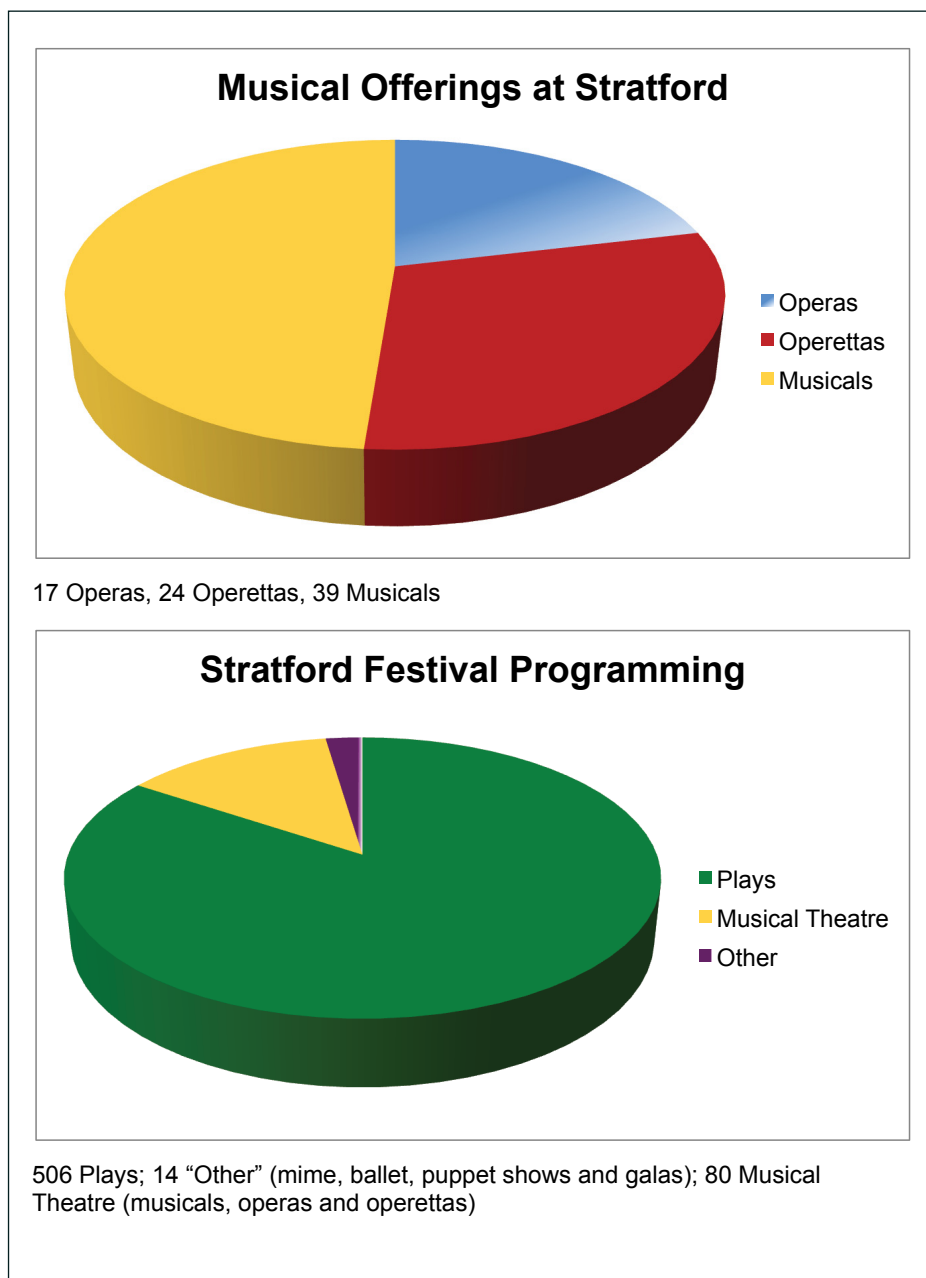
During his term as artistic director, John Neville publicly expressed his concern about the festival's growing dependence on big Broadway musicals. He deplored the prospect of a new generation of playgoers who perceive the festival primarily as a place to see musicals rather than as English Canada's major bastion of classical theatre. (Portman 1991)

Yet, musicals worked to keep the Festival as a whole afloat; large crowds filled the Festival theatre to see the musicals, helping to finance the Shakespearean plays.

Although the Festival might have begun with a focus on opera and G&S, almost half of the staged music since 1955 have been musicals. However, when compared

to the entire production history of the Festival, musical offerings make up only a portion (see *Table 2*). Their role in the continuation of the Festival is integral; Cushman (2002, p. 173) wrote that all the musicals “did well at the box office, usually better than anything else in the season. Musicals were at Stratford to stay. Everybody knew why. The outstanding questions were which and how”.

Table 2: Stratford Festival programming, 1953-2011.



Which musicals are included each year and how they are produced is part of an ongoing evolution. The current Artistic Director's background in musical theatre¹ meant that during his tenure at the Stratford Festival, musicals were prioritised. While the Festival stage housed such works as *Kiss me, Kate* and *Camelot*, the Avon theatre was home for the first time in the Festival's history to works by Andrew Lloyd Webber: *Evita* in 2010 and *Jesus Christ superstar* in 2011. For years the Festival had reinforced a core canon of musical theatre, but under McAnuff's artistic direction, and with musical direction by Rick Fox, certain types of snobbery about musical theatre were eradicated. McAnuff ensured that musicals of all types were produced by the Festival and were taken seriously by members of the company and the audience. In an interview regarding his direction of *Jesus Christ superstar*, he said:

The electrical musical has now been around for more than forty years and has a legitimate place in the classical theatre repertoire, at this point. Musicals themselves are, I think, one of the great theatrical genres and it would be, I think, well, just silly to exclude them. [...] We have actors who can go back and forth between *Titus Andronicus* and *Jesus Christ superstar* – how many companies in the world can say that? (cited in Ahern 2011)

Although McAnuff has announced that 2012 will be his last season at Stratford, he is confident that musicals will remain a central part of the Festival: "Musicals, I believe fervently, are an inherent part of the classical theatre repertoire and they deserve to be treated with great respect" (cited in Portman 2008). Musicals are definitely at Stratford to stay.

ENDNOTES

1. Des McAnuff had previously been artistic director at the La Jolla Playhouse in California, directing and bringing to Broadway such hits as *Tommy* and *Jersey boys*.

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Youth-centric discourse and pop-rock music

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ABSTRACT

In this article I will ask some questions and try to suggest some answers about youth, pop-rock music, and rebellion. I will start by tracing a short genealogy of the complex relations between these three concepts. Then, I will argue that in spite of some changes in the pop-rock discourse during recent decades, in many respects our contemporary relations with pop-rock are still inherently “youth-centric”. Finally, I will suggest integrating the concept of “becoming-child”, formulated by French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, into the way we think about music, as an alternative to the concept of youth.

KEYWORDS: youth; rebellion; politics; methodology; becoming-child.

YOUTH, MUSIC, REBELLION

“Rock music’s primary audience, youth, is expected to quarrel with institutional forces” (Lull 1987, pp. 13-14). This quote is taken from a book called *Popular music and communication*, but it really could have been taken from many other studies dealing with popular music. It states two seemingly obvious facts: first, that youth has a significant relationship with rock music as its primary audience. And second, that youth has an antagonistic relationship with “institutional forces”, and is expected to quarrel with them. Whoever or whatever these forces may be, youth is, in a sense, their primary rival.

My aim in this article is to problematise these allegedly evident relations between youth, pop-rock music¹, and rebellion. I want to begin by considering two texts

published in 1950. The first is David Riesman's (1990) famous essay, "Listening to popular music". It is famous because it was the first text that bluntly said: popular music is young people's business. It affects them, it matters to them, and it is an important part of their lives. Within a few years this would become a matter of common sense, but in the year 1950 it was something that needed elaboration. Riesman had to prove that music constituted a prime concern for young people. He quotes a seventeen-year-old girl who tells him that it is impossible for someone her age to hate music, since "that's all there is to do for kids [their] age" (ibid., p. 11). It is not a matter of aesthetic preferences but a sociological fact: one's interest in music corresponds to one's age, and part of being an adolescent is liking music.

Part of being an adolescent, according to Riesman, is also *not* being rebellious. While he does identify a "minority group" of teenagers that express some sort of rebelliousness by listening to more esoteric or unfashionable kinds of music, the majority is as conformist as can be, and the music they like only helps to enforce this conformism. The teenagers' "loss of innocence", writes Riesman, "has made them cynical, not rebellious; and they are seldom even interested in the techniques of their exploitation or its extent" (ibid., pp. 7-10).

The other text that I want to think about is a manifesto published the same year by French avant-gardists Le Front de la Jeunesse ("the front of youth"). This text puts forward the claim that all revolutions throughout history have failed because they did not take the oppression of the young into account, and that only a front of youth can serve as a truly revolutionary force (Le Front de la Jeunesse 1968). It calls for a revolution conducted by youth, carried out in the name of youth, and aimed at furthering the interests of youth. Unlike Riesman, Le Front do not care about music, but they do care about revolution. And for them, it is revolution, not music, that is young people's business.

So in 1950 we have these two texts. One proclaims the unity of youth and music, the other of youth and rebellion. In a couple of years, all three will come together under the moniker of rock and roll, but I am not going to repeat the story of what happened there. Instead I would like to fast-forward to the 1980s, where the post-punk, "death of rock" atmosphere prompted some theorists to reconsider the question of youth, music and rebellion. This often included broadening the potential meanings of the concept of "youth" while denying its necessary relations to any young people. Thus, we encounter claims such as "rock and roll celebrates youth, not merely as a chronological measure but as a difference defined by the rejection of the boredom of the 'straight' world" (Grossberg 1990, p. 116) or a definition of youth as a "floating symbol denoting 'modernity'" (Chambers 1985, p. 16). I find these statements interesting because they raise an important question: why is it so necessary to try and retain some sort of a conceptual relation between music and youth, even at the price of proclaiming that the concept of youth has nothing to do with actual, living young people? Riesman and Le Front had to go to some lengths to convince their readers that youth care about music or that they are rebellious, but neither of them turned them into an abstract sign. Why must the connection between music, youth and rebellion be held at all costs?

THE GROWING-UP NARRATIVE

What I will try to suggest is that pop-rock's relationship to youth is indeed abstract enough to exist without an actual audience of young people relating to it as "their music", but this is because the discourse of pop-rock has adopted some of the narrative structures that make up the story of youth, both as a mythological construct and as a real-life, class-mediated experience. Thinking about pop-rock is always, in a way, thinking about youth.

Youth cultures, by definition, are temporally limited. They apply only to people of a specific age, and when they take on a rebellious or oppositional character it is usually framed as a specific period in a predetermined course of life (Frith 1981, pp. 210, 259). A rebellious spirit, much like an immersion in pop music, is acceptable as long as one is of a certain age, but eventually it must be left behind for the young person to become adult. The image of the rebellious youth who grows up and accepts reality "as it is" haunts music in several ways, and its corresponding dramatic structure is reflected in several patterns of thought about music.

The first site where we encounter this story – let's call it the "growing-up narrative" – is in the discourse of authenticity and commercialisation. This discourse details a movement from a position of purity, honesty and inward-directed attentiveness to one's "inner truth" towards a position of cynicism, opportunism and outward-directed submission to society's pressures. It could apply to a single musician, band or genre, but its abstract structure remains the same. It corresponds both to a romantic conception of youth as a period of life characterised by total purity in opposition to the corrupt adult society, and to the material reality of middle and upper-class youth who are free to "explore themselves" during that period of life, with the family providing financial backing, before having to "settle down", get a "real job" and make the necessary compromises required to continue living in the style they have been accustomed to since birth. The authenticity discourse shuns the process of "selling-out", betraying the ideals of youth, but it also implicitly expects it, being familiar with the teleology of youth.

The second place where we can find the growing-up narrative is in the discourse of "maturity", or "ripening". Here, growing-up is understood as a positive change, as a movement towards higher levels of skill and sophistication. The tale is told like a *bildungsroman* – "the story of how young X, through trials and tribulations, grew up and became a *real* artist". This, for example, is how the story of the "invention" of rock music is usually described, with the rowdy, vulgar rock and roll of the 1950s becoming the serious, artistic rock of the 1960s. It also reappears later with "progressive" rock – this is basically the meaning of the word "progressive" in the pop-rock discourse – or the attempted move from 1980s acid house music, allegedly made for drugged-up lower-class folks, to 1990s IDM, "intelligent dance music"².

So we have got two versions of the growing-up narrative – one wants to stick to youth and the other tries to shed it. However, both of them actually tell the same story, they just interpret it differently. And these two interpretations converge in a very interesting way, creating a third version of the story. This version is personified by the mythological figure of the musician who died young, and thus remains

young forever. From Buddy Holly to Jimi Hendrix to Janis Joplin to Kurt Cobain to Biggie Smalls to Amy Winehouse, the dead youth is a focal figure of pop music. The level of obsession with the death of the young throughout pop-rock history is remarkable, and it would be easy to understand this obsession as part of the authenticity discourse – it is better to burn out than to fade away, isn't it? – but the story is not that simple.

As Roy Shuker (2001, pp. 117-118) notes, many pop-rock musicians who died young were to be regarded after their death as “auteurs”, as “producers of rock art, extending the cultural form and, in the process, challenging their listeners”. This is an important claim, because it manages to retain the aesthetic and ethical values of both versions of the growing-up narrative – these musicians managed to grow up, become artists, create serious music, but also to stay forever young, never having to sell-out or commercialise. This is possible because pop-rock's youth-centrism operates on two separate levels. Content-wise, the music or musician is expected to stay young – as in spontaneous, vital and creative – while on the formal level, there is a constant requirement to “grow up”, to make “mature” music, as serious as high art. These two levels can operate simultaneously only on the premise that a good musician is a dead musician.

The question of pop-rock's politics cannot be easily disentangled from its bind with youth. The music's “rebelliousness” is mediated by the particular concept of youth that emerged in the 1950s, and this equation always runs the risk of reducing any political potential that the music might have to the a-political concept of adolescent rebellion, while always expecting its “co-optation” or “incorporation”, since the young rebel, inevitably, has to either die or grow up. As a way to avoid this dead-end, I suggest that we should try replacing the figure of the youth with that of the child, by paying more attention to the music's immanent becomings.

POP-ROCK AND BECOMING-CHILD

The concept of “becoming” has been formulated by French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (1987). It describes the production of a set of connections between heterogeneous components. Becoming-child is not a regression to an infantile state, a nostalgic recollection of days gone by or a spiritual discovery of one's “inner child”, but an entering into a certain sort of childlike relations, experimenting with a certain measure of childlike intensities (ibid., p. 294). Deleuze and Guattari identify becoming-child as one of the becomings associated with music (ibid., p. 248), and though they are more interested in dealing with “classical” music, I believe that becoming-child is also one of the defining traits of pop-rock music.

The rallying cry of early rock and roll, “awopbopalooobop alopbamboom”, from Little Richard's 1955 single “Tutti Frutti”, later released on his *Here's Little Richard* album (Specialty 1957), is plain and simple baby-talk. It is not the voice of disaffected youth but the becoming-child of Little Richard; who is, by the way, 178 cm. He's “little” only in the sense of becoming-child. Ravers suck on pacifiers. It is not

because they are on drugs – they could chew bubblegum for the same effect. They suck on pacifiers because they are becoming-child through the mouth. Punks proclaim asexuality, they find sex disgusting. It is not another shock tactic – there is nothing really shocking about not having sex, is there? – it is a matter of becoming-child through the genitals.

Becoming-child, like the other becomings described by Deleuze and Guattari, means essentially becoming-minoritarian, both in relation to the majority of the regime and to the liberal concept of a personal, autonomous, stable identity (ibid., pp. 277, 291). It is a simultaneous critique of state fascism and micro-fascism. From this perspective, the discourse of youth culture and youth rebellion is a paranoid, majoritarian discourse: it portrays a ready-made struggle between two binary opposing forces, it erases differences of gender, race and class in the name of “youth”, it purports to offer some kind of rebellion or resistance, but only according to its set of predetermined regulations. Becoming-minoritarian, on the other hand, means producing lines of flight that have no teleology or linearity, that only act according to their own singularity. Pointing out pop-rock’s becomings might be more difficult than talking about “resistance” according to the well-known rules of adolescent rebellion, but as I see it, it also offers greater promise.

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ENDNOTES

1. My use of the term “pop-rock” is based on Motti Regev’s (2002, pp. 253-254) suggestion of it as an umbrella term for different styles and genres of popular music that share a certain set of creative practices, particularly “extensive use of electric and electronic instruments, sophisticated studio techniques of sound manipulation, and certain techniques of vocal delivery, mostly those signifying immediacy of expression and spontaneity”.
2. See also Simon Reynolds’ (1999, pp. 342-343) interesting discussion of the generational aspects of labels such as “progressive” or “intelligent” in electronic music.

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Challenges facing musical engagement and taste in digitality

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ABSTRACT

The ways in which technology mediates the relationship between people and music has increasingly evolved since the advent of playback devices. With the arrival of digital music, and its inherent culture of digitality, new issues have emerged regarding musical engagement at the level of fan and/or consumer. This paper will explore what and where people are engaging with music, as mediated by technology. These two issues will be categorized by: (1) the immense quantity of popular music available digitally is promoting a culture of eclecticism, whereby people are not tied to specific genres when defining their tastes. Personal genre alliance has fallen out of favour, and replaced by fluid definitions of genres and artists, that are user-driven and highly personalised and subjective: for example, folksonomies. (2) One of the primary ways in which people consume music is through portable media devices, such as the iPods. My data shows that people are predominantly utilising these devices in three sites of engagement: mobile, immobile and quasi-mobile activities. These issues are explored through the results of a large-scale, international study, utilising both quantitative and qualitative approaches, in the form of interviews and surveys, both conducted online and in person. Throughout this paper, I make distinctions between how digital youth, or digital natives, those under the age of thirty who have grown up entirely immersed in digitality, and those over thirty, or digital immigrants, have developed diverse systems of musical engagement. I argue that digital youth, whose relationship with music is increasingly mediated by digital technologies, such as the iPod, are no less emotionally engaged with music than their older counterparts, but their tastes are less genre-focused.

KEYWORDS: digitality; taste; musical engagement; youth; technology.

INTRODUCTION

Music remains a ubiquitous presence in contemporary society, with digital technology propelling the production, distribution, and consumption towards a saturation level akin to technological invisibility. This begs the question: how does a high level of music availability translate into music engagement which, like musical taste, is subjective in nature. In response, this paper empirically explores two aspects of musical engagement in digital culture through the following questions: how are listeners defining their musical tastes in the digital age, and how does technology affect engagement?

The empirical data is taken from a research study conducted at the University of Edinburgh (Avdeeff 2011). The dataset is comprised of 1243 surveys and 216 interviews. Based on interdisciplinary methods, drawn from the fields of media and technology studies, musicology and sociology, this paper first explores an eclecticism of musical taste, before examining sites of musical engagement for iPod users.

MUSICAL TASTE: A CULTURE OF ECLECTICISM

Music is an important aspect of cultural consumption, primarily because it is also an important aspect of everyday life for a strong majority of people. Numerous studies have documented the role of music in everyday life, from sociological examinations, such as Tia DeNora (2000), to psychological studies, such as those done by North and Hargreaves in their examination into the psychology of taste and the importance of music to youth (in particular North et al. 2004; North et al. 2000; North and Hargreaves 1999). Their findings, which were corroborated by my research, have found that music is important for a variety of reasons: the primary ones being mood alteration and regulation, memory formation, identity, relaxation, motivation and identity portrayal.

North's and Hargreaves' (ibid.) research into taste has helped define the field. Utilising sociologically influenced methods, within the field of psychology, it has been successful in examining how people define and acquire tastes, in relation to their leisure activities, socio-economic status and age. This approach builds on previous research conducted by Bourdieu (1984), by incorporating quantitative data, a much-needed addition to the field.

Peterson and Kern's (1996) work concerning omnivores continues to be influential in genre theory. Their theory states that omnivores, those who enjoy a wide variety of genres, as opposed to a select few, garner higher cultural capital. I, however, question if this remains true in digital culture and would argue that a culture of eclecticism has redefined the notion of cultural capital as it relates to musical taste.

This culture of eclecticism is influenced by the ease in which people discover, acquire and consume music. Stereotypically, youth tend to be the most active con-

sumers and downloaders of online music, which was confirmed by my findings. An ANOVA test showed that those under the age of twenty were statistically more likely, by a significant margin, to download music than those over twenty. The data also revealed that they are not cognisant of how much time they spend online, or with digital technologies. When asked how long they are online in a day, most students provided vague answers, such as:

FEMALE/GRADE 10: Sometimes when I get home, and then in the evening after I'm done homework, or after dinner, just kinda off and on when I have nothing else to do.

One of the difficulties in assessing time spent with a technology is due to its sense of *invisibility*. The Internet has moved past being indispensable (Hoffman et al. 2004), to the point of common place, as it has become a part of our every day landscape. Youth, especially, who are highly involved in digital culture, having grown up fully immersed in digital technologies, do not see the technology, only its outcomes (Tapscott 2009; Palfrey and Gasser 2008). The Internet, as well as mobile music playback devices, become a backdrop to the content accessed and an extension of their physical selves. While those not as well-versed in digital technology may initially feel intimidated or hindered by it, for others, it is as natural as turning on the TV is for the baby boomer generation.

This invisibility of technology translates into how people define their genres, especially youth. There is a difficulty expressing one's tastes, as they do not follow any conventional patterns. To address this issue, respondents were asked to name their top three favourite genres, as shown in *Table 1*. The following results are for all respondents, regardless of age, and demonstrate a very "safe" and "general" description of musical taste:

Table 1: Self-reported favourite genre responses.

GENRES	NO.	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RESPONSES
Rock	189	18
Indie/Indie Rock	134	13
Alternative/Alternative Rock	89	8
Pop	56	5
Rap/Hip-hop	34	3

GENRES	No.	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL RESPONSES
Metal/Heavy Metal	32	3
Folk	30	3
Country	29	3
Classical	24	2
Electronica	24	2
Punk	24	2
Jazz	20	2
Total	689	65

Respondents were also asked to select, from a tick-box style survey, how often they listen to different genres. When comparing these results to the top genres responses, there are some noticeable contradictions:

Table 2: Mean frequency of use, musical genres.

GENRES	No.	MEAN
Rock	1109	3,97
Singer/songwriter	1125	3,24
Pop	1112	3,14
Indie Rock	1126	3,11
Classic Rock	1128	3,1
Soundtracks	1106	2,74
Brit Rock	1124	2,67
Punk Rock	1035	2,67

GENRES	No.	MEAN
Punk	1035	2,62
Brit Pop	1125	2,62
Classical	1116	2,62
Blues Rock	1126	2,61
Folk	1115	2,56
Progressive Rock	1125	2,51
Jazz	1115	2,49
Dance	1114	2,48
Top 40 Pop	1127	2,48
Hip-hop	1128	2,45
Hip-hop/Rap	1117	2,44
Electronic	1126	2,41

Most noticeably is singer/songwriter as the second most selected genre, when it is not even present in the “favourites” list. Then there is the large number of rock sub-genres, as well as soundtracks at number six, which is not even a genre, *per se*, but a collection of music used for film or TV. This leads me to believe that (1) people are not aware of how they are defining their tastes; (2) their tastes are more varied than they self-report.

In the follow-up interviews, I asked respondents how eclectic they perceived their tastes to be. No one felt that they listened to only one type of music, and a variety of taste categories emerged. These included: (1) those who would listen to anything, regardless; (2) those that mentioned specific genres/artists in their preferences; (3) those who felt their preferences have changed with age; (4) those who felt their preferences changed according to mood/location/other outside factors; (5) those who were confused about genre classifications; (6) those who would listen to everything, except a few specific genres; (7) those who go through fads/phases in their musical tastes, and finally, (8) those who only listen to one type, but are open to suggestions. This is not meant as a way to essentialise one’s experiences with music, but merely a representation of the various answers the interview statement

received. Many responses could fall into more than one category, while others do not fit accurately into any.

ENGAGEMENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

While an established field of work exists, documenting technology's influence of musical engagement (Millard 2005; Coleman 2003; Kenney 1999; Hosokawa 1984), a subset of that field, examining the iPod's role in this relationship, is developing. Numerous studies examine the iPod and its role in musical engagement, most notably, Michael Bull's (2007) study of iPod culture in the urban environment. Bull found that the participants primarily used iPods to "warm up" unfamiliar environments or make the public space more private. The iPod can invest users with a sense of control over unknown situations, which is empowering in strange environments. The iPod can also be used as a shield from the urban landscape.

As discussed previously, I have found that people mediate their listening experience through their iPods for much the same reasons that they listen to music. My study also identified three sites of engagement: mobile, immobile and quasi-mobile.

MOBILE

Mobile situations are what the iPod was originally intended for; it is when users, and their devices, are mobile. In these instances, users are bridging the gap from one location to another through a personalised soundscape. Respondents noted a variety of mobile situations: travelling, commuting, biking, walking, and on planes, trains, and other forms of public transport:

MALE/29: I only use my iPod when on the train, whether commuting to/from work or travelling generally.

There were a select few respondents who noted that they did not use their iPods in mobile situations. These responses can be grouped into two categories:

- Those who preferred ambient noise/silence when in transit:

FEMALE/54: I personally like to hear nature when walking, so don't have an iPod.

- Those who felt that it was dangerous to use an iPod while in transit:

FEMALE/26: I rarely use my iPod walking around – I find it annoying to be that disconnected to what's going on around me – and the risk of getting hit by cars is the greater.

IMMOBILE

Even though the iPod is essentially a mobile device, a variety of ways to use iPods while not “in transit” emerged. I call these the “immobile” reasons, which is not to imply that the users are devoid of movement, but that the device is stationary. In immobile activities, the iPod may be plugged into external speakers, a docking station, or used in work settings, where the user sits at a desk for long periods of time. A small group of respondents also noted that they use their iPods while falling asleep. As with all these categories, though, they are not mutually exclusive. It is not likely that users only listen to their iPods when falling asleep, or while walking, but rather, tend to use their iPods in a variety of situations, both mobile and immobile:

MALE/36: I usually have to listen to something just before I go to sleep.

FEMALE/26: I also bring it with me to friends’ houses and plug it in to speakers.

FEMALE/40: I’m a graphic designer, I use it when I want to get some work done.

QUASI-MOBILE

Finally, people tend to use their iPods quite frequently during what I call “quasi-mobile” activities, or more specifically, during exercise, typically at a gym. In this scenario, users are mobile, in that they are “moving” about, but in a confined space. They are not in transit, but are nonetheless mobile:

MALE/37: Actually, [I use it] only when exercising. I don’t find it worthwhile just going from the parking lot to my office.

This research has shown *where* and *how* people are using mobile music devices, but the next step would be to bridge the gap between *what* people are listening and when they are involved in these activities.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

In one sense, digital technology can be conceived as both an enhancer and excluder of sociability. The Internet is used to download, discover and share music, and then the iPod is used to block out excess media and provide a buffer from the world. On the other hand, there are many consumers who use mobile music technologies as a way to share their musical tastes with others. There is no doubt that the symbiotic relationship between technology and music will continue to change notions and norms of sociability. Convergence of mobile technologies also ensures that music is readily available for consumption, as well as both personal and corporate dissemination. The widespread adoption of cloud computing will further enhance dissemination of digital music, as streaming becomes the dominant site of engagement.

Returning to my original question, how are people engaging with the large quantity of readily available online music, a cursory look would show that YouTube has

high levels of engagement especially with youth. Popularity is now marked by YouTube “hits”, instead of record sales, and in Twitter “mentions”, instead of magazine reviews.

Musical engagement, just as musical taste, means different things to different people, but what we must keep in mind is, because of their subjective natures, we cannot impose value judgments. The way in which one person engages with music may be very meaningful to them, but appears superficial to another. For many, music is an important facet of their life: how they spend their time, how they define their personality.

This paper has laid the groundwork for the development of a typology of listening behaviours associated with digital music devices. Although this research focused mainly on iPod/MP3 player use, the framework can be applied to any digital media device, in order to explore the symbiotic relationship between technologies and media consumption. The research suggests that mobile music devices are not socially isolating, but are instead encouraging a range of ways in which people can engage with technology, and each other. It can be noted that these relationships occur within a culture of eclecticism: just as the subjective nature of genre definitions results in eclecticism promoted by immense musical choice, various technologies promote differing ways of listening and interacting socially, as demonstrated by the survey and interview responses. The respondents reported a high level of emotional musical engagement, in spite of the incredible amount of music freely available on the Internet, and the perceived loss of traditional music gatekeepers.

In close, two of the considerable amount of responses received from respondents discussing their personal engagement with music:

FEMALE/14: I think music is life. You can express yourself through music in so many ways and I just can't go without music. There's always something going on in your life, and you might as well have music help you out.

FEMALE/29: It's not only like going to church, but it's having God come down from heaven and pulling you into his lap.

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Music, the word and the world; or the banality of (South African) classification

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ABSTRACT

Systems of classification pervade all aspects of our lives, prescribing our moral and aesthetic worlds, constructing our values, shaping our identities, creating the perspectives in which we view ourselves and others. Yet despite the fact that these systems impact so powerfully on people's lives, they remain largely invisible. This is a problem everywhere, but especially in societies whose conflicts are fuelled by issues arising from categories such as "race", gender, class or nationality. Is music – and the study of music – exempt from these concerns? If not, then how is it implicated, and with what consequences? What is its role? This paper examines the banality of classification in general and its entanglement with music in particular. Though the issues are of the broadest relevance, the paper focuses specifically on post-apartheid South Africa.

KEYWORDS: classification; categories; genre; race; South Africa.

In a classic understatement, Judith Butler (2004, p. 17) has remarked that "[w]hat makes for a livable world is no idle question". What's more, she says, "[i]t is not merely a question for philosophers". Clearly not: in my view, it is – or should be – also a question for music researchers. Let me try to say what I mean, by addressing this issue from an unusual perspective: that of classification.

All societies classify their world, and everything in it. Apartheid – and let's be clear that the term refers precisely to class-making and to classification – did so in ways that were especially brutal and dehumanising. So when South Africans went to the polls for the first time in 1994, they set out to reclassify their world as a precondition for recreating it. This new world would surpass the old one, with its wretched orders of things, its categories of people, its ways of including and excluding, of enabling and disabling, of conferring and denying... Not just privilege, but even life itself. There would be new ways of classifying, of course; but these would be an enhancement: they would set people free, help them thrive. With hindsight, we can now see that we seriously underestimated this task: that we let our guard down; in short, that we did not pay sufficient attention to what we might call "the banality of classification".

It's a strikingly apposite term. And it is so for reasons linked, not surprisingly, to the philosopher Hannah Arendt (1963), whose term "the banality of evil" it immediately brings to mind. Let's recall that Arendt wanted the term to convey her insight that Adolph Eichmann became a willing participant in the Nazi programme of genocide – not because he was intrinsically evil, but rather because of a profound failure of thought and judgement. Eichmann wasn't malevolent, Arendt argued; he simply took the world as it was presented to him, unthinkingly, without interrogating its classifications and categories: banally, in fact.

This has broader relevance. If systems of classification are banal insofar as their sheer given-ness makes them nearly invisible, then urgent questions arise. What opportunities does any ordained system of classification make possible? What possibilities for human flourishing does it shut down? Do our own classificatory systems enhance our powers, set us free, make us (in Roberto Unger's terms) bigger and more equal human beings? Or do they – again in Unger's terms – play into the "dictatorship of no alternatives" (Unger 2009)?

One way to approach these questions is to consider classification in relation to its arbitrariness – or if that's the wrong word, then at least its historical constructedness. Situate yourself outside your own classificatory system, and its terms, references and meanings slip towards the absurd. This was the starting point for Jean Genet's famous play *The blacks*. He tells us that one evening an actor asked him to write a play for an all-black cast. Genet (1960, preface, unpaginated) was puzzled: "But what exactly is a black?" he wondered. "First of all, what's his colour?".

Borges also comes to mind here. Nowhere is the arbitrariness of classification clearer than in those writings of Borges that deal with what he calls the "ambiguities, redundancies and deficiencies" of human attempts to classify the world. He writes, in a famous example, of "a certain Chinese encyclopaedia" that classifies animals into fourteen categories. The categories are:

- (a) those that belong to the emperor; (b) embalmed ones; (c) those that are trained; (d) suckling pigs; (e) mermaids; (f) fabulous ones; (g) stray dogs; (h) those that are included in this classification; (i) those that tremble as if they were mad; (j) innumerable ones; (k) those drawn with a very fine camel's-hair

brush; (l) etcetera; (m) those that have just broken the flower vase; (n) those that at a distance resemble flies. (Borges 1999, p. 231)

Foucault (1970, pp. xv, xvii) laughed “a long time” when he first read this, because the passage “shattered [...] all the familiar landmarks of thought – *our* thought, the thought that bears the stamp of our age and our geography – breaking up all the ordered surfaces and all the planes with which we are accustomed to tame the wild profusion of existing things, and continuing long afterwards to disturb and threaten with collapse our age-old definitions between the Same and the Other”. Borges’s point is that every classification of the universe is arbitrary. “We do not know what the universe is”, he says, though “we suspect that there is no universe in the organic, unifying sense” (Borges 1999, p. 231); or if there is, its aim escapes us. We don’t know the “words, definitions, etymologies, and synonymies of God’s secret dictionary” (ibid.). So we make up the world as we go along; we make up things and people and “races”, classifying to serve particular goals, interests, and ideologies.

The problem is that it’s the tendency of any system of classification to become a straightjacket, or a disabling device, or worse. Adorno’s metaphor for this process is the term “molluscan”: classifications, he says, eventually become molluscs. For Adorno (2003, pp. 121, 189; cited in Foster 2007, p. 150), the first precondition for any breaking free of the molluscan shell is that thought must give itself over to objects “without reservation”, even “without a lifebelt”; this is the only way that the categories of thought will be able to shape themselves appropriately to human experience.

Beyond that, the struggle to break free of the mollusc may also take a symbolic, or aesthetic, form. During the Paris Commune of 1871, workers took up positions on street corners throughout the city, and unloaded their firearms by shooting at clocks. These clocks were on palaces, on church towers, on city buildings; and shooting at them was a way of signalling the termination of one time continuum – one system of temporal and social classification – so as to allow the birth of another.

Let me give two brief examples of the human consequences of molluscan classification, both from South Africa, the first from the heart of the apartheid era, the second from the present.

The first example concerns the eminent journalist and short-story writer Nat Nakasa. Writing in 1964, Nakasa took issue with the way his identity had been classified. I quote:

Who am I? Where do I belong in the South African scheme of things? Who are my people? [...] I am supposed to be a Pondo, but I don’t even know the language of that tribe. I was brought up in a Zulu-speaking home, my mother being a Zulu. Yet I can no longer think in Zulu because that language cannot cope with the demands of our day. [...] I have never owned an *assegai* or any of those magnificent Zulu shields. Neither do I propose to be in tribal dress when I go to the United States this year. [...] I am just not a tribesman, whether I like

it or not. I am, inescapably, a part of the city slums, the factory machines and our beloved shebeens.

I'm not even sure that I could claim to be African. For if I were, then I should surely share my identity with west Africans and other Africans in Kenya or Tanganyika. Yet it happens to be true that I am more at home with [a white South African] Afrikaner than with a west African. Some of my friends who have been abroad say they got on best with [the white] Afrikaners they met in Europe, instead of Englishmen or west Africans. We saw some evidence of this when a number of Nigerian students passed through Johannesburg once. We took them to a party in Soweto where they were welcomed like long-lost brothers. After marvelling at their flowing robes and talking some politics, we didn't know what to do with them.

Being Muslims – and millions of Nigerians are Muslims – they did not drink. We could not offer them meat because that also would have gone against their faith. [...] They were perfect strangers, more so than the many South African whites who spend some of their time in the townships. To speak of those Nigerians as 'my people' would not make much sense, even though we all had flat noses. (Nakasa 1964, pp. 356-358)

The second example concerns a recent student of mine, whom I'll mention very briefly because I have previously spoken and written about her. Lerato is a twenty-five-year-old Venda-speaking graduate student in music. She comes from a rural part of South Africa. And her greatest musical passion, which she keeps strictly secret, is the British pop singer Cliff Richard. But "nobody knows", she says. "I listen to [him], but only when I'm alone, on campus, in residence. If anybody's coming, I just switch it off. I don't want them to ask me about it".

The reason for her secrecy is that she fears others will judge her – or worse. I quote:

People would think it was weird that I'm black and I'm listening to Cliff Richard. Most of my friends are black, and they listen to other stuff, R&B, whatever, South African music. So I just think people would not understand: here is a black girl and I'm so into this white guy's music. [...] I'm a big fan of Cliff Richard, who happens to be white. They wouldn't understand why I'm not into more R&B and other stuff that black people listen to, black people my age listen to. And [instead] I listen to things that probably they think some old white man should be listening to, or maybe just white youngsters. (Ballantine 2007)

In music, the classificatory system that looms largest is what we refer to as *genre*. Genres establish horizons of expectation – but, as Lerato painfully discovered, horizons can confine and foreclose, just as easily as they can open vistas and possibilities. Genre boundaries tend to be policed for correctness by gatekeepers of various sorts. Works, or authors of works, that break loose of genre-defining precepts, or that straddle genres, typically run into trouble – as for example happened

to Miles Davis when he started to fuse jazz with rock in 1970, or to Bob Dylan when he went electric at the Newport Folk Festival in 1965, or to Beethoven after the first performances of his Razumovsky Quartets of 1806, or to *marabi* in the urban ghettos of South Africa ninety-to-one-hundred years ago. Like other forms of classification, genres are “ideological in the strictest sense of the term”, as Fabbri and Shepherd (2003, p. 403) have argued, “[t]heir intention is that of confirming or criticizing established hierarchies of value”.

One thing is clear, then: for the same reason that the struggle for freedom and power is likely also to be a struggle against categories and classifications, so too is genre rebellion, within a particular socio-historical formation, very likely to be linked to rebellion elsewhere within the formation. That, to be sure, was the case with South African music in the climactic, final years of the anti-apartheid struggle. At a time when the inhumanity and contradictions of the apartheid system were reaching breaking point, the land overflowed with musical performers and idioms that embodied a range of potent cultural transgressions. New performing venues sprang up in the major cities: through these passed musical groups of breathtaking originality, offering syncretic styles of a range, depth and variety absent from the South African stage for decades, or in some cases never previously imagined. Bands such as Sakhile, Bayete, Sabenza, and Johnny Clegg’s Savuka played music in which the blend might be *mbaqanga* with traditional Nguni song; Cape-Coloured *klopse* idioms with bebop; *marabi* with electronic rock; Zulu *maskanda* with the Celtic ballad; and so on. These were genre *transgressions*: ways of breaking free of the mollusc. But they were also genre *integrations*: potent cultural and political discoveries that prefigured a new reality. Precisely in this way, and precisely for this reason, they offered hope: an often euphoric promise that the final struggle against apartheid could be won. Their music was an alchemy, helping, in its way, to corrode the old social order and to liberate the new.

That was then. It is now seventeen years since the end of apartheid – and this *taxonomic emancipation*, this rebellion against banal classification, this *jouissance*, has largely disappeared. Take the case of South African jazz, for example. Under the rubric of jazz, South African music had a long history of defiance; it stayed relevant and oppositional by responding unpredictably to changing socio-political circumstances. So it avoided prescription, and eluded molluscan classification. Ironically, 1994 changed all that. Democracy brought new freedoms, and, at least for some, a sudden explosion of opportunities to make money.

And as jazz musicians exploited the new commercial opportunities in a fun-seeking and supposedly “post-struggle” environment, the music itself changed: it became adaptive and conformist. As Nishlyn Ramanna notes (2006, pp. 180, 185), this is a point that critical commentators and musicians have made repeatedly. They have called post-apartheid jazz “impoverished”, saying that “the whole shape of South African music [has] become watered down”, lamenting that “the records coming out are just smooth, smooth”. They tell of trips abroad, where they’re asked why, “in the last few years”, so much of the South African music that finds its way onto record has lost its characteristic “rawness”, “soul” and “passion”, and has in-

stead come to sound “like American smooth jazz”. Noting the same turn, local critics have heaped scorn on the rise of what they call “café jazz”, or “soft serve jazz”. What has been lost, according to one prominent local musician, is the “whole experimental bit; [...] right now there’s nothing really interesting going on musically with jazz musicians” (ibid.).

And not only with jazz musicians. On some accounts, this malaise now affects South African popular music in general. In an article in the London *Financial times*, for example, David Honigmann (2006) puts the case as follows:

Recent releases paint an unhappy picture. Many old names are playing old standards. [...]

Pretenders to [Ladysmith] Black Mambazo’s pre-eminence are the Soweto Gospel Choir, whose [recent album is a] desperately safe collection. [...] [As for] the Mahotella Queens, [they are now] polite rather than muscular. [...]

What went wrong with South African music? Apartheid gave South Africans something to sing about. [...] Today, too many sing from a western songbook, whether aping gangstas or serenading tourists.

I want to suggest that these problems are at least in part a consequence of our post-democratic choices – central to which is a neo-liberal policy orientation that has spawned a complacent, *nouveau riche* commercialism, and, crucially, a corresponding epistemology. Our new social order is vested in fixed, or molluscan, identities (ironically, *exactly the same* “race”-based identities that underpinned apartheid), and unreflective, taken-for-granted, often primordial ways of naming, categorising and classifying the world. To the extent that the new South Africa, like the old, has tied personal and cultural identities to essentialist notions of personhood, it is profoundly at odds with what we fought for, what we expected in 1994, and what we anticipated in the new world we were about to build. I conclude with four linked thoughts.

1. At issue in such classifications are the powerful, legitimating ideologies of our social and political world. To paraphrase Göran Therborn (1999, p. 18): it is precisely through such classificatory ideologies that we become subjects, and inherit a world; this is how we recognize “what exists, [...] what does not exist, [...] who we are, what the world is, what nature, society, men and women are like [...] what is good, right, just, beautiful, attractive, enjoyable and its opposites [...] [and also] what is possible and impossible”;

2. Music plays an especially powerful role here. On Bourdieu’s argument, the “most successful ideological” work is done by those “institutional mechanisms” that “have no need of words, and [that] ask no more than complicitous silence”. In principle, of course, music is wordless. Bourdieu (1977, p. 188) stresses that each time we fail to interrogate these wordless processes, we make “a contribution to the efficacy” of the ideologies so insidiously embedded within them;

3. The music of South Africa’s young democracy shows relatively little evidence of a musical creativity that moves outside familiar or sanctioned comfort zones, or

that connotes transgression, challenge or resistance: which means that, so far, this music is of little benefit to a public sphere tasked with building the kind of society we so urgently need;

4. Walter Benjamin (1970, p. 257) once wrote that “[i]n every era the attempt must be made anew to wrest tradition away from a conformism that is about to overpower it”. In related vein, Adorno (1966, p. 43; cited in Foster 2007, p. 150) spoke of the need to move beyond the cages of “[t]raditional thinking and the habits of common sense”. Do that successfully, he said, and you provoke “the shock of the open” and the “dizziness” that accompanies it. The urgent task now facing South African musicians and music researchers, it seems to me, is to resist the conformism to which our post-1994 history has mobilised us. We must question such conformism and, where necessary, disrupt its classifications, practices and significations. In South Africa today, our aim should be to analyse our too-settled, too-formulaic social *and* musical worlds, and to destabilise and confuse their classifications, practices and identities. “Dizziness” is to be welcomed.

In keeping with that, I want to give the last word to Dr Das, of the Asian Dub Foundation. He makes exactly the same philosophical argument – but does so in just eight words. “My favourite Indian instrument”, he says, “is the bass guitar” (Sharma 1996, p. 32).

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Happy campers: The Topp Twins, queerness and New Zealand identity

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ABSTRACT

Vanessa Knights and Tony Biddle write that conceptualisations of the national have been somewhat sidelined in a world increasingly dominated by the processes of globalisation, deterritorialisation, transmigration and forms of cultural hybridity. As a multicultural postcolonial settler society, Aotearoa/New Zealand has a troubled relationship with national identity. In relation to local popular music, Tony Mitchell argues for homologies with landscape, using a psycho-geographical approach, while Nabeel Zuberi suggests that the emphasis on local identity is too prescriptive, especially given the ways it functions in public and institutional discourse. And clearly multiculturalism in New Zealand problematises any representation of unitary identity; rather it becomes a question of mapping multiple identifications. Cultural production, in this case popular entertainment, is ambivalently placed in relation to national discourses, both forming and responding to them. Popular entertainers may identify with minority groups that are excluded from the national hegemonic. Arguably performers identifying with minority positions are particularly aware of the performativity of identity. The Topp Twins, two lesbian singers, entertainers, cowgirls and good blokes to boot are a cultural institution in New Zealand. The paper explores how the Topp Twins negotiate identifications around the national in their performances, especially in terms of gender and ethnicity, for example in the recent documentary *Untouchable Girls*, and how reading the Topp Twins feeds back into the New Zealand musical identity debate.

KEYWORDS: gender; national identity; Aotearoa/New Zealand; postcolonial (settler) culture; performance.

The Topp Twins, yodelling lesbian twins from Huntly, New Zealand, are well-loved “Kiwi” entertainers (“Kiwi” refers to mainstream white/“Pakeha” culture). The recent documentary *Untouchable Girls* (2009), the highest-grossing documentary in New Zealand cinema history, represents them as uniting opposing elements in New Zealand culture: protest and entertainment; lesbian and straight; indigenous Maori and Pakeha; critical respect and popularity. They are singers, stand-up comedians, buskers, television stars, cross-dressers and burlesque entertainers, starting a local tradition of comedy/music double acts (the Front Lawn, the Flight of the Conchords). How have they gained this degree of cultural mobility? How does their identity as New Zealanders (indeed “Kiwis”) relate to their identity as “queers”? How do their performances unite disparate, indeed contradictory, elements in New Zealand identity? I have considered aspects of queer and postcolonial theory, focusing mainly on Jodie Taylor, Richard Dyer, Nick Perry and Judith Halberstam to explore the relationship between gender and cultural identity in the Topp Twins.

The Topp Twins’ “Kiwi” credentials are easily established – country girls, singing folk/country music and later constructing a series of comic national stereotypes, male and female. They started busking on Queen Street, Auckland in the late 1970s, where they attracted large crowds – busking is readily interpreted as “grass-roots authenticity”, both in terms of locality and lack of technological artifice. A series of campus tours in the early 1980s gave them “alternative” credibility, but they also appeared on television programmes and hosted a comic television series from 1997 to 1999. The latter especially showcased comic “characters” such as Camp Mother and Camp Leader, Ken and Ken (Kiwi blokes, farmers) etc. Their recorded musical output has been reasonably regular since 1982, totalling nine releases and gradually moving from alternative folk to country. This trajectory broadly follows that of “womyn’s music”, which might also explain why their recordings have received little attention from local rock critics (Dix 2005; Eggleton 2003).

Jodie Taylor (2009, p. 51) writes that womyn’s music, that is, lesbian folk acoustic singer-songwriters, was a 1970s reaction to male dominance in popular music: “Folk was already imbued with political themes and its sound was considered ‘softer’ [...] and therefore less masculine”, favouring “a DIY separatist [...] non-hierarchical, and participative [...] approach”. Taylor suggests that womyn’s music’s focus on “binarised gender differences proved problematic for future generations of women” (ibid., p. 52) – indeed, womyn’s music has remained marginal. But the Twins’ act is both popular, and more than music, demanding an alternative frame of reference – Richard Dyer’s “entertainment”.

Dyer (1992, p. 17) defines “entertainment” as “performances produced for profit, [for a] generalized audience by a trained paid group [...] which have the sole (conscious) aim of providing pleasure”, specific to contemporary Western capitalist culture: stage musicals, music hall, variety television spectacles, pantomime, caba-

ret. The Twins are entertainment because they are clearly not “art” – edifying, elitist, refined or difficult – and because they present “a string of short items [including] popular or vulgar reference [...] implicit sexuality and open sentimentality” (ibid., p. 13), aimed at a mass audience. The “good feelings” that entertainment provides are conveyed through an affective rather than a representational code: what Dyer terms non-representational signs – colour, texture, movement, rhythm, melody, which generate qualities of energy, abundance, intensity, transparency and community (ibid., p. 18). The Twins convey energy through vocal performance, constant movement, banter and slapstick; abundance through multiple comic *personae*. Intensity marks their singing style – two strong, clear, almost identical voices, with little vibrato, and occasional yodelling! Transparency is represented through improvisatory modes of performance, audience interaction, adlibs, singalongs and the acoustic folk mode, which also connotes community through local references, inclusivity, and egalitarianism through audience involvement and the “equal” relation between performers (as twins).

However, Dyer’s split between entertainment’s conservative comfort and art’s radical struggle overlooks how the Twins are both: “an anarchist variety act” (Billy Bragg, quoted in *Untouchable Girls*). Their roots in folk protest are obvious in their minimalist performance – two women with guitars and some funny costumes – and in the political content of their act. Dyer tends to emphasise entertainment’s being “for the people” not “by the people” (ibid.). But outside the UK, folk populist politics (for example Woody Guthrie) make more sense.

Dyer (ibid, p. 138) compares entertainment and gay culture: “Basically [camp] is a way of prising the form of something away from its content, of revelling in the style while dismissing the content as trivial”, hence the emphasis on non-representational signs. Camp appropriates entertainment’s vulgarity, tackiness, ephemerality, a Foucauldian reverse discourse by which “trash” is worn with pride. However, the Twins are also mainstream Kiwi, a culture not particularly accepting of gender and sexual deviance. Dyer uses camp readings of John Wayne to argue the danger of confusing heterosexual and homosexual camp, an idea picked up by Nick Perry (1998, p. 12):

Antipodean camp is distinguished by a generically nationalist inflection of the distinction which Dyer makes [...] the forms of cultural dominance to which it is a response are the master discourses of (m)other countries, and the versions of cultural identity that it prioritizes are those which amplify the accident of place.

Kiwiana, signifiers that connote “locality”, are examples of Antipodean camp: Marmite, Weetbix, tomato sauce, sheep, plastic *tikis*, lilos, jandals, beer (Bell 1996, p. 181). Paradoxically, all these signifiers come from somewhere else, and are mass manufactured, commercial products. Kiwiana is “trash” – fast food, cheap clothing, plastic souvenirs, symbolic of a New World, naïve but vigorous working class, rather than the Old World bourgeois coloniser culture. It is a kind of fakery, but

"the signs [...] go on working [...] to call up nationalist sentiments through cultural images [...] constructed in accordance with bricoleur tactics, placed in quotation marks by the signalling of their own fabrication and asserted through self-mockery" (Perry 1998, p. 12). The relationship between camp and Kiwi, queer and national identity is based around the common identification of both with and as (white) trash. The Topp Twins reveal the latent queerness of "Kiwi" culture.

Perry (*ibid.*, p. 8) argues that both camp and postcolonial cultures "offer ways of making something out of marginality through representations which otherwise serve to confirm and reinforce it". But he reads a sinister quality into such practices; a "bleak edge to the style's surface whimsy, the difficulty of determining whether its practitioners be categorized as affirmatively comic or resignedly ironic [...]. Wavering between parodying, and participating in, received critical assumptions about New Zealand popular culture" (*ibid.*). He discusses an oscillation between dark drama and banal comedy characteristic of New Zealand film ("Kiwi Gothic"). But bleakness seems foreign to the Topp Twins. There is a self-deprecating, self-mocking quality to their performances, but integrated into a spectacle of entertainment. They are ironic, but affirmative. How can they be both?

The problem and solution lie in Dyer's John Wayne example, cited by Perry. Camp for Dyer is gay male while "straight camp allows images of butchness to retain their hold even while they are apparently being rejected" (Dyer 1992, p. 145). "Butchness" pejoratively implies straight masculinity. But "butch" men can be homosexual, too. And what about butch women like the Topp Twins? Two points arise – how can camp be wrested away from Dyer's definition of it as exclusive to gay men? And does this reformulation allow a more affirmative reading of Antipodean camp?

Judith Halberstam (1998, p. 1) argues that if gender has no necessary relationship with sex, then female masculinity should be just as valid as male masculinity. But she finds that ideologically, gender is not reversible – men can perform femininity, but not the other way round, because while femininity is masquerade, masculinity is "real". Halberstam (*ibid.*, pp. 125-131; 232-240) discusses two examples of "female masculinity": the stone butch and the drag king. The stone butch is a hard woman, the masculine end of the butch/*femme* continuum. She is defined as an active partner who spurns reciprocation – "untouchable", a term which also occurs in the Twins' theme song "Untouchable Girls". Drag kings are female impersonators of men, clearly relevant to the Twins' Ken and Ken. Halberstam argues that the masculinity of the stone butch renders her marginal within both queer and straight communities – but once again, this doesn't seem to apply to the Topp Twins. Queer scholars dispute whether camp is assimilable to lesbianism, Halberstam (*ibid.*, p. 238) stating that "it tends to be the genre for an outrageous performance of femininity (by men or women) rather than outrageous performance of masculinity". Halberstam's accounts of drag kings emphasise awkwardness in performance, because of the "non-theatricality" of masculinity. However, I don't detect a similar "awkwardness" in the Topp Twins' Ken and Ken, perhaps because the Topps' double act format allows them to theatricalise masculinity more effectively – homosocial banter and "mateship" depend on dialogue.

Dyer suggests that some kinds of camp are more authentic than others. But “authentic camp” is a contradiction in terms. Perry applies a similar distinction to New Zealand culture, to suggest the ongoing ambivalence of being “authentically Kiwi”. But camp recognises this as a false opposition – appearances are reality; there is nothing underneath. Antipodean camp is a reformulation of cultural cringe – post-colonial anxiety about authenticity. The Topp Twins do not cringe. They truly are “happy campers”.

Notably Perry’s examples of Antipodean camp are mostly masculine, which is strongly associated with local discourses of national identity (Bannister 2005). But precisely because masculinity is supposed to be “real”, New Zealand national identity is always troubled by inauthenticity. As queer Kiwi women entertainers, the Twins have a foot in both camps, celebrating Kiwiana on the one hand but also with a queer awareness that identity is always performed. A Topp Twins performance creates communal identity – indeed they note in the documentary the role singing has in creating communities. The Twins are experienced at creating identity and solidarity through performance, and this is a role they continue to perform.

The Topp Twins also “play men” in a way that seems to challenge Halberstam’s contention that gender impersonation is a male-only affair. A comparative study by FCB New Zealand of advertising semiotics in the United States and New Zealand suggests that sexual difference is less emphasised in the latter, what is termed “the gender-blender phenomenon” (Barton 2005). Halberstam (1998, pp. 57-58) also notes that “some rural women may be considered masculine by urban standards”. The Twin’s androgyny facilitates gender ambiguity, but also renders their female characters as constructed as their male ones (*ibid.*). Because of the strong rural iconography of “Kiwi” culture, perhaps female masculinity is more tolerated in New Zealand than the United States, albeit serving patriarchal interests, but such practices are always also available for appropriation, as has occurred with the Topp Twins.

CONCLUSION

I applied five approaches to the Topp Twins: womyn’s music, “entertainment”, Antipodean camp, female masculinity, and advertising semiotics, employing each to critique the last: womyn’s music didn’t sufficiently encompass the range of the Twins’ repertoire and modes of performance; entertainment overlooked the possibility of a folk populist politics. Antipodean camp develops the parallel between queer and postcolonial cultures as types of marginality, ironically appropriating “trash” but with lingering doubts about inauthenticity, which relate partly to New Zealand’s historic identification with masculinity. Female masculinity, however, provides a non-essentialist way of thinking about masculinity and opens it up for appropriation by queer groups, and studies of advertising semiotics suggest some local acceptance of this. The Twins’ “blokiess”, combined with their participatory, comic and campy approach, allow them to “pass” as “normal Kiwis” despite or because of being queer women. Such cultural mobility and ambiguity combine contradictory elements in their audience and represent New Zealand as an inclusive rather

than exclusive culture, to celebrate a shared local “uniqueness” and marginality, in a queer, not essentialist, way.

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What does jazz group assessment offer the undergraduate music environment?

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ABSTRACT

With the growth of popular music studies in universities, research is focusing on assessment of popular music performance, particularly rock and jazz, and therefore group music-making. This paper investigates a second-year undergraduate cohort studying jazz performance, asked to choose criteria for self- and peer assessment, and asks: what does jazz group assessment offer to thinking about tertiary assessment in general; and what does jazz group assessment offer to thinking on group assessment? It finds the rehearsal process, recognition of soft skills, and student participation in assessment criteria important, with popular music requiring the questioning of default positions inherited from the assessment of classical music.

KEYWORDS: assessment; jazz; tertiary music education; rehearsal; performance.

With the growth of popular music studies in the university environment, the literature is slowly turning its enquiring gaze to assessing popular music performance, particularly rock and jazz, and group music-making becomes the predominant theme. This paper aims to add to discussion on group assessment in popular music

by raising two specific questions – what does jazz group assessment offer to thinking about tertiary assessment in general; and what does jazz group assessment offer to thinking on group assessment? In doing so, the paper builds on our previous research findings to suggest that in the importance of the rehearsal process, recognition of soft skills, and student participation in assessment criteria, the impact of popular music in the academy can contribute strongly to music education thinking through the questioning of default positions inherited from the assessment of classical music.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on jazz performance and assessment in the tertiary environment raises several issues. Consideration of the individual, rather than the group, an approach inherited from solo classical music programs (Barratt and Moore 2005, p. 303), results in students “moving away from the natural group interactions, the improvisatory flair, and the democratic contrapuntalism necessary for most fine jazz performance”. After consultation with staff and students, Barratt and Moore introduced new assessment criteria to ensure that group interaction is encouraged and accessible, focusing on the performance event as the sole site of assessment and noting a perceived division between jazz “in the institution” and “in the real world” (ibid., pp. 304-305). Kerr and Knight (2010, pp. 304-306) report that the Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music has attempted to bridge that divide by taking their entire cohort of jazz undergraduates to Hamilton Island periodically for concentrated periods of performance (perhaps a week at a time) in a variety of resort venues. Their accent on real world experience, combined with the scrutiny of assessment in a university, resulted in a concentration on parameters that may easily be overlooked by in-house assessment – performance skills that relate to the reading of an audience, encouraging an awareness of the performers’ own body language and physical gestures. The experience also brought to the fore the importance of balance within a group, the overall volume of the group in relation to the variety of environments experienced as performers (ibid., pp. 307-308), as well as the consideration of appropriate repertoire for various contexts (ibid., p. 308).

Dealing with rock rather than jazz groups, but still under the broad umbrella of popular musics, Pulman (2009, p. 121) emphasises the rehearsal process, concentrating exclusively on the relationships between people in a group, rather than their technical or otherwise musical skills: “Band rehearsing [...] is a highly collaborative activity [...]. Individuals’ contributions themselves will, in part, be communicated through the interpersonal skills and attributes of each participant”.

Working in inadvertent parallel with these researchers, teaching and research in the undergraduate music degree at the University of Western Sydney has long pursued a strategy where both rehearsal process and performance outcome are deemed significant. In our paper for the *British Journal of Music Education*, (Blom and Encarnacao 2012) we have used the terms “hard” and “soft”. Drawing from Coll and Zegwaard (2006, p. 31), hard skills comprise technical, analytical, and ap-

preciative skills that we feel can be comfortably mapped onto musical technique, preparation and interpretation. Soft skills refer to personal, interpersonal and organisational skills – the ways in which an individual works with others and facilitates collaboration. We suggest that hard and soft skills exist on a continuum – for example, incorporating the ideas and playing of collaborators draws from both skill sets. We would classify as soft skills those that Beale (cited in Barratt and Moore 2005, p. 305) identifies as important to jazz, “interactive skills such as the musical expression of ‘fellow feeling’, respect for each band member’s musical ‘space’, and the ability to respond spontaneously and sensitively to other musicians’ ideas”.

Jazz, with its improvisatory basis, offers distinct ways of thinking about performing. Seddon (2005, p. 52) observes six different modes of communication within two main categories, verbal and non-verbal. Each contains three distinct modes of communication: instruction, cooperation and collaboration. In verbal instruction, “musicians are told what and when to play in pre-composed sections (the heads)”, while in non-verbal instruction, “musicians learn [the] pre-composed part by ear or read from music notation”. Through verbal cooperation, “musicians discuss and plan the organization of the piece prior to performance in order to achieve a cohesive performance”, and through non-verbal cooperation, “musicians achieve sympathetic attunement and exchange stocks of musical knowledge, producing cohesive performance employing: body language, facial expression, eye contact, musical cues and gesticulation”. In verbal collaboration, “musicians discuss and evaluate their performance of the music in order to develop the content and/or style of the piece” and through non-verbal collaboration, “musicians achieve empathetic attunement, tak[ing] creative risks which can result in spontaneous musical utterances. When they do, this signals empathetic creativity” (ibid., p. 53). This accent on empathy, and on the process that occurs between people during musical activity, seems crucial to not only acknowledge, but to establish a place for in the assessment of popular music activities in the undergraduate sector. Through our focus on peer assessment and student-chosen criteria, we have come to the conclusion that these aspects are of great importance to student musicians.

METHODOLOGY

The case study that underpins this paper is the experience of a second-year undergraduate cohort studying jazz performance at the University of Western Sydney, who were asked to choose criteria for self- and peer assessment. The thirteen participants (three females, ten males) playing in three groups (JazzOne, JazzTwo, JazzThree) were studying in a three-year music program where performance is not taught on a one-to-one basis but adopts a “broader class-based approach” (Blom 2008, p. 101). Students playing in jazz, rock and classical groups were asked to choose three criteria with which to peer- and self-assess their own and their group’s rehearsal process and three criteria with which peers from other groups could evaluate their final performance. This was part of a written task for a semester of group performance. Performance staff designed two more criteria for each part of the

task making a total of five criteria for assessment of each group's rehearsal process and five for each group's performance outcome. The staff-chosen rehearsal process criteria were soft skills of participation and preparation; and for the performance outcome the hard skill musical quality (that is: technique; pitch accuracy/attention to tuning; groove/rhythmic accuracy and precision; timbre; balance) plus presentation (presence, confidence, communication and staging/stagecraft), a combination of hard and soft skills. Students were also asked to explain the meaning of all criteria. Their assessment of self and peers was not included in the final mark for the unit but was designed as an exercise in the understanding of group music-making and assessment. Criteria given in the unit outline plus lectures on peer assessment, stagecraft, group dynamics and concert production were designed to introduce students to a range of terms and possible issues.

ANALYSIS

A coding table compiled to show what students feel is important when peer assessing tertiary rock groups in rehearsal and performance (Blom and Encarnacao 2012, pp. 32-33) provided a model for the analysis of jazz participants' responses. The jazz responses came from three areas: criteria chosen by student jazz groups, individual jazz participants' explanations of these criteria, and student explanations of criteria given by staff. The coding table lists assessment issues in rehearsal and performance, and categorizes them according to Birkett's (cited in Coll and Zegwaard 2006) taxonomy of "soft" and "hard" skills.

FINDINGS

Technical and analytical skills are underrepresented as we chose to exclude responses of students that duplicated descriptions of criteria given by staff. And where repeated wording occurred amongst students within a group we concluded that students were copying from, or repeating each other. These remarks have not been counted twice. Given these disclaimers, there is a strong argument for the significance of the issues that appeared three times or more from such a relatively small sample of students (thirteen; see *Table 1*). These are:

PERFORMANCE

- Attitude/energy/spirit (3; Soft-personal)
- Issues around group identity and unity (5; Soft-interpersonal)
- Communication within the group (4; Soft-interpersonal)
- Communication/connection with audience (3; Hard-Soft-appreciative)
- Group's stage presence and persona (3; Hard-Soft-appreciative)

REHEARSAL

- Sharing, contributing and cooperating (6; Soft-interpersonal)
- Individuals rehearsing in their own time (5; Soft-personal)

- Group unity and communication (4; Soft-interpersonal)
- Being sensitive and respectful (4; Soft-interpersonal)
- Attitude and positivity (3; Soft-personal)
- Interpretation of musical material (3; Hard-technical)
- Enthusiasm and excitement (3; Soft-personal)

Table 1: What students feel is important when peer assessing undergraduate jazz performance and rehearsal.

PERFORMANCE ISSUES	HARD/SOFT	REHEARSAL PROCESS	HARD/SOFT
(NO. OF COMMENTS IF MORE THAN 1)		(NO. OF COMMENTS IF MORE THAN 1)	
Begin and end together/ playing together (2)	H - appreciative	Individual interpretation/ability and improvement during solos (3)	H - analytical
Playing when meant to be	H - appreciative	Technical appropriateness	H - analytical
Using body movements	H - appreciative	Overall skill with playing jazz	H - analytical
Not making mistakes	H - appreciative	Expression and nuance	H - technical
Don't overshadow others (2)	H - appreciative	Tuning	H - technical
Giving space musically	H - appreciative	Technical fluidity/ level of musical difficulty (2)	H - technical
Follow instructions	H - appreciative	Engagement within others' solos	H - appreciative
Different styles of music incorporated	H - appreciative	To show a variety of musical genres	H - appreciative

PERFORMANCE ISSUES	HARD/SOFT	REHEARSAL PROCESS	HARD/SOFT
Playing in role/research into specific instrument	H - appreciative	Attention to details of sound	H -appreciative
Change aspects of a piece/how individual develops piece (2)	H - appreciative	Awareness of others (musical)	H-S appreciative
Distinction of solo parts/ solo performance (2)	H - appreciative	Openness to new approaches	S-H -interpersonal
Fluidity of arrangement	H - appreciative	Honesty	S - interpersonal
In tune (2)	H - technical	Being sensitive/ respectful (4)	S - interpersonal
In time/sticking accurately to specific rhythm (2)	H - technical	Sharing dominant role	S - interpersonal
Instrumentation used	H - analytical	Giving of ideas and feedback/ contributing to rehearsal/contr. to group discussion (6)	S - interpersonal
Overall quality of sound	H - analytical	Being united as a band/ communicating as a unit, not tension between musicians (4)	S - interpersonal
Look like you're playing as a band/group persona/ group's stage presence (3)	H-S Appreciative?	Being approachable/ ability to listen to others	S - interpersonal

PERFORMANCE ISSUES	HARD/SOFT	REHEARSAL PROCESS	HARD/SOFT
Communication with audience/how enthusiasm translates /connecting with audience (3)	H-S Appreciative?	Being prepared to attend extra rehearsals	S - personal
Creativity	H-S - personal	Commitment to repertoire	S - personal
Time management	S - personal	Helping each other set up	S - personal
Confidence	S - personal	Responding to tutor direction	S - personal
Looking like they're involved	S - personal	Remembering sheet music and instruments	S - personal
Preparation (general) (2)	S - personal	Attitude/application/ conducting themselves in a positive manner (not acting like a jerk) (3)	S - personal
Attitude/Enthusiasm/ involved in spirit of the music (3)	S - personal	Attendance (2)	S - personal
Help each other set up	S - personal	Organisation (2)	S - personal
Effort	S - personal	Persona	S - personal
Preparation (of piece)	S - personal	Mental preparation/ always being in the mood (2)	S - personal

PERFORMANCE ISSUES	HARD/SOFT	REHEARSAL PROCESS	HARD/SOFT
Individual unified with group/corporate consistency/contribution to group identity (5)	S - interpersonal	Private rehearsal/ in own time/outside of class/individual work/remembering song structures (5)	S - personal
Communication within group, including visual/ connecting within group (4)	S - interpersonal	Setting up/setting up in a swift, timely manner	S - personal
No stuffing around/not wasting time (2)	S - interpersonal	Punctuality (2)	S - personal
Being silent (once sound-checked)	S - interpersonal	Energy produced and conveyed in performance/ enthusiasm, excitement and energy (3)	S - personal
Exchange ideas	S - interpersonal		
Communication through audio cues	S - interpersonal		

The criteria themselves, students' descriptions of them, plus students' descriptions of the four mandatory staff criteria, often revealed multiple meanings within a group for a one-word criterion. Students did not seem to have the vocabulary to talk about the improvisation process itself. For example, "proficiency and distinction of solo parts" (M1 JazzTwo) was one description of the criteria "improvisation". Interpretation for JazzThree was about "the individual's own distinct way of understanding the piece and delivering it in a unique way which is different to the original" (M2 JazzThree). Group distinction (JazzThree criteria) was described from the different viewpoints of the individual and the group but encompassing the same meaning. From the individual's perspective it was "how the [individual] player contributes to the group's identity" (M4 JazzThree) while for the other two members of this group it is about "how we work as a band" (M3 JazzThree) "...and not about seven individual solo performers being assessed" (M1 Jazz Three).

In rehearsal, whether the criterion was “team player” or “commitment”, the descriptions focused on when to, and when not to, solo and the related but not identical aspect of the sharing of responsibility within a group. Descriptions of the criterion “performance standard” were all about jazz style, and the creativity of each player (JazzOne).

Proficiency was all about “fluidity” (M3 JazzTwo) of technique and jazz style, hard issues, but also touched on “attitude applied throughout pieces/group work” (F2 JazzTwo), a hard/soft combination. The criteria improvisation and solo performance focused on “ability and improvement during solos plus the engagement within other’s solos” (F2 JazzTwo) and included “expression of own individual interpretation [and] level of musical difficulty of solo” (M3 JazzTwo). Passion is about “energy produced and conveyed in the performance” (M1 JazzThree), a soft skill, and involvement “in the spirit of the music” (M4 JazzThree), a soft/hard skill.

CONCLUSION

What does jazz group assessment offer the undergraduate music environment? It offers:

1. Ways of thinking about and undertaking group music assessment (beyond solo classical assessment) because it is largely a group activity;
2. Ways of thinking about assessing different styles and music approaches, for example improvisation;
3. Understanding there are different stages of accomplishment, some of which may not be achievable during undergraduate study (Seddon 2005);
4. The need to teach students vocabulary with which to clearly articulate issues they encounter during rehearsal/performance, and for assessment discussion.

What does jazz group assessment offer to the thinking about undergraduate music assessment in general? It reveals:

1. The importance of understanding what students feel is important in their rehearsal process and performance;
2. The role of energy and passion within a group (soft skill which results in a better hard skill group outcome);
3. The issues of balance and overshadowing which are also relevant to chamber music playing in a classical environment, a soft and hard skill combination;
4. The different thinking and activity required when playing what Stephen Davies (2001) describes as a “thin” scored work, that is, a chart, as opposed to a “thick” score which is fully notated. This involves arranging, improvisation, instrument choices;
5. The importance of assessing jazz students as a group, rather than just as individuals, because group dynamics encourage spontaneity (Barrett and Moore 2005) and allow passion to emerge, something our students value.

What does jazz group assessment offer to thinking on group assessment? It focuses attention on:

1. The importance of soft skills which can overshadow hard skills if the group is not functioning well;
2. Students need to practice individually to be able to contribute to the group music-making and social dynamic;
3. The need to equip students with terms to describe accurately what they are trying to do, whether these are describing aspects of improvisation or technical proficiency;
4. The understanding that groups achieve different levels. While some remain focused on soft skills because of poor group dynamics, other groups with no people problems move into more detailed musical issues, hard skills (Blom and Encarnacao 2012, p. 41), and some, (perhaps not during undergraduate study) will move into "empathetic attunement, making empathetic creativity possible" (Seddon 2005, p. 58).

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“Your silence can seriously damage someone’s health”: Getting Zimbabwe protest songs heard

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ABSTRACT

It is not until the 1970s and 1980s that popular music becomes the medium for the message in the protest songs of Zimbabweans. The protest song becomes a voice for many who suffer in silence because they cannot speak up against what is going on – what is called *mubikira*. This article discusses how two recent popular protest songs about the ongoing political, social and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe disseminate their message through lyrics, musical style and the media and technology, engaging with Street’s (2006) distinction between music which intends to be political and music in which the politics derive from the interpretation.

KEYWORDS: Africa; protest song; Zimbabwe; musical style; political.

INTRODUCTION

African popular music has a history of “express[ing] group conflict within the context of social change” (Collins 1992, p. 190) in many countries of the continent. This article discusses Zimbabwean popular protest songs, focusing on two songs about the recent and ongoing political, social and humanitarian crisis in the country, where protest song has become a voice for many who suffer in silence because they cannot speak up against what is going on. Through discussion of the songs and their songwriters – one Zimbabwean, one non-Zimbabwean – an understanding is sought of how protest music’s message is disseminated through lyrics, musical style, the role of media and technology, and also the *persona* of the singer/musicians. The article engages with Street’s (2006, p. 50) distinction between “intention and interpretation - [...] music [...] intended to be political and [music] in which the politics derive from the interpretation of that music”. After a brief overview of Zimbabwean popular protest music follows discussion of the two songs and how they disseminate their message.

PROTEST SONG

For John Shepherd (1991, p. 83), “music stands in the same relationship to society as consciousness: society is creatively ‘in’ each musical event and articulated by it”. Protest songs position themselves within society and communicate “even to those who can’t read and write”, says Denselow (1989, p. xvi), yet this communication requires effective lyrics, musical style with which the disaffected can identify, ways of being heard, and a person/group to sing the songs. Drawing on Dave Laing’s (cited in Street 2006, p. 50) distinction between “protest music” and “music of resistance”, in which the former are “explicit statements of opposition” and the latter “coded or opaque”, Street describes Laing’s former as where “politics are a product of an explicit intention of the performer”, contrasted with where “music is interpreted as being political [...] irrespective of the intentions of the performer”. He finds that state censorship can interpret songs as being political where the intention was not.

With Western popular protest songs, Street (ibid., p. 51) notes, “the more explicitly political the song, the lower the chart placing”. Correlating “how particular times and experiences become incorporated into the music [...] impl[ies] [...] a causal chain” (ibid., p. 53), but does not explain how it operates and why certain artists or types of music are affected. He says “genre is an important determinant of the credibility and possibility of political engagement” (ibid., p. 59) and cites how Geri Halliwell (ex-Spice Girl) and George Michael failed to be taken seriously when engaging musically and as ambassadors with political issues. Their “moral capital” (Street is using John Kane 2001’s term) is not convincing. Street (ibid.) finds that “those genres that accommodate politics may differ in the type of politics they sustain”. But genre does not determine political engagement, rather “the politics of a given genre are a product of its relationship to, and the influence of, political parties and movements” (ibid.). He suggests that “we need to look more closely at

how particular aesthetics and particular politics are linked" (ibid., p. 61), an issue relevant to this article.

Within liberal democratic regimes, states can be agencies for connecting music to politics in relation to authoritarian political structures, political parties and social movements (ibid., p. 56). However, where the state is not democratic, musicians become "political as a result of a political process" because "social movements create a context within which music assumes a political role" depending on performers to act as "truth-bearers" (Eyerman and Jamison 1998's argument, cited in Street 2006, p. 56). While the personal biography of musicians may have something to do with their engaging musically with political issues, the political processes of the country also play a large part, as well as "the networks that organize them into (or exclude them from) political activity" (ibid., p. 57). The biography of the politically engaged musician may tell us about personal values and commitments which have shaped this engagement, but "songs emerge because of what the performer sees and thinks" (ibid., p. 53). Yet Street (ibid., p. 54) finds, "we are left to wonder why as *musicians* they become politically engaged". One underlying reason is that "any attempt to connect musical expression to political conditions must place the pleasure derived from the culture at the centre of the explanation" (ibid., p. 55).

ZIMBABWEAN POPULAR PROTEST MUSIC

Zimbabwean protest music dates back to early nationalist resistance to colonialism in the 1890s and more intensely in the early 1960s, when it was mainly derived from church hymnals and folk songs with use of politically inspired text. Later use of popular musical instruments began to gather momentum. In the early years of popular music in Zimbabwe, Zexie Manatsa, Thomas Mapfumo, Oliver Mtukudzi and Tineyi Chikupo were some of the proponents of protest music (Turino 2000; Chitando 2002). These singers projected a subtle *persona* as their lyrical content was mostly disguised to portray traditional and social beliefs. Few musicians specialised in one genre; a wide variety of musical styles was heard through local radio and the guerrilla station – Voice of Zimbabwe radio based in Mozambique. *Chimurenga* (liberation war) songs of the mid-1970s focused on the guerrilla war against Ian Smith's regime in Zimbabwe. While Thomas Mapfumo, a contemporary *mbira* artiste, played a strong role in the struggle for liberation from white rule, his music won international support as a form of "'world beat' music" (Lipsitz 1994, p.12). Leonard Zhakata and Hosiah Chipanga are some of the locally-based *sungura* pop stars who perform protest music with socio-economic and political connotations. Border Jumper (Timothy Rukombo), a Zimbabwean whose music was judged by the Central Intelligence Organisation to be "inciting the public to rebel against the octogenarian leader" (Ncube 2010), has found an outlet/audience for his music with Zimbabwean long-distance bus operators.

Today, in an effort to appeal to all sections of society, Zimbabwean protest music encompasses a variety of music genres, including reggae, rhythm and blues, *sungura*, *jiti*, *kanindo*, *mbira*, jazz and urban grooves¹. The use of political idiom in

both Shona and English is a common trait. However, some recent popular protest songs have both explicit and hidden lyrical content. In Zimbabwe, music with a slant toward political protest gets censored by the government as radio and television stations are state-owned but the government does not have a legal instrument to completely banish recording of protest music.

“SAKUNATSA” AND “O ZIMBABWE!”

Two songs about the recent and ongoing political, social and humanitarian crisis in the country represent different ways popular songs can serve as protest *mubikira*, that is, as a voice for many suffering in silence because they cannot speak up against what is going on.

“Sakunatsa”, a *sungura* song, on the album *Mubikira* by Leonard Zhakata (ZMC 2001) has been banned from the Zimbabwe Broadcast Corporation (ZBC) and Zimbabwe Television (ZTV) stations. To date, Zimbabwe does not have privately-owned television and radio stations. Shortwave (SW) radio broadcasts from the UK and Studio 7 from the US can be received in Zimbabwe, but neither offer substantial time to protest music and also suffer incessant interference and loss of transmission from the current regime. Nevertheless, songs such as “Sakunatsa” reach listeners both in and outside Zimbabwe. Digital technology has given edge to piracy of music CDs/DVDs and *Mubikira* is one of many albums sold cheaply through illicit sales in a wide variety of distribution media. Zimbabweans can purchase music CDs/DVDs for just US\$1.00 each instead of the retail price range of US\$5.00 to 8.00. The perpetrators of piracy sell different types of music, whether censored or not. A demerit of digital technology is that the master is identical to its generational duplicates which are easily made on the computer. Furthermore, the introduction of DVD/CD players, home theatres, computers, car Frequency Modulation (FM) transmitters, the Internet, bluetooth, cell phones and other metadata files have increased transfer of recorded music.

So, despite banishment, “Sakunatsa” remains publicly available; the fight against piracy seems not to have had any notable impact. However, the disadvantage to Zhakata, the composer and musician, is that much of what he is likely to gain as royalties is lost to piracy. It seems that he, and other protest musicians, have sacrificed their careers. In an interview with Freemuse, Zhakata (2005) says: “I sing for Zimbabweans, and rightly so I sing in my native Shona language. I do not sing in English, and in singing my native language I endeavour to be as elaborate as possible in my messages”. Zhakata’s target is people who understand the Shona language; Shona lyrics ensure his own expressive eloquence. He posits that “my music remains provocative and creates debate among the Zimbabwean society”, and says “I have a duty to serve my people [...] sing about man’s injustices to another [...] rebuke those who manipulate others by virtue of being in powerful and authoritative positions” (ibid.). Zhakata’s exclusive Freemuse interview indicates that local media have not afforded him space but are biased towards the current regime. He is nevertheless optimistic that one day his music will receive deserved recognition:

"The next time, I will be talking about my once-banned music receiving airplay on radio and television. Like the great reggae star Bob Marley sang: 'Time alone will tell'" (ibid.). Sibanda (2008) cites Zhakata: "The people of Zimbabwe deserve better [...] as musicians we are encouraging them to fight on as there is light at the end of the tunnel. As artists we have no power to stop [...] violence but through songs we have been advising people against this". Zhakata emphasizes: "Music has become my weapon, it is my contribution to the struggle of Zimbabwe" (ibid.).

"O Zimbabwe!" (Self-published 2008) is a consciousness-raising rather than a political song, written, performed and recorded at the end of 2008, in Australia, by Australian musicians, to protest the situation seen on television and heard on radio. Diana Blom, the songwriter of "O Zimbabwe!", had attended a music conference in Harare in 1998 and despite having been warned to be careful, found Harare a modern, thriving city. Its breakdown in infrastructure, resulting in news that cholera had become a major health threat, triggered the song. Neither the song style, with its triple-time gospel feel, nor the instrumentation, try to be "Zimbabwean". Instead the style is that of Americans taken from Africa as slaves: in "O Zimbabwe!" it is turned around to serve a part of Africa not associated with US slavery. The words, plus the lilt of triple time, a metre often encountered in US and European protest songs, and the gospel feel, give the song the quality of a lament, relating to DuBois's (cited in Eyerman and Jamison 1998, p. 74) notion of "sorrow songs", his term for spirituals. Through both metaphorical and direct language, the words aim to educate the listener yet try to capture the listener's creative ear as well.

Distribution of "O Zimbabwe!" has proved difficult. Australian radio stations have not shown interest and so, as academics, we have chosen to discuss protest songs at conferences. This has provided the outlet for some singing of the song by music educators around the world interested in protest music. Aiming to "send the song around the world and sing the song around the world", a website was established (MySpace 2008) with the song's score and lyrics, plus an MP3 file of the recording. The one track CDs, containing the song, information about the website and an email contact address, have been widely distributed. People are encouraged to sing the 3'12" song everywhere and play the recording. While moving slowly, "O Zimbabwe!" is spreading its message and the message remains current.

CONCLUSION

Strong reasons remain for finding ways to be heard in the context of a response to the Zimbabwean situation. Both songs have "intention" (Street 2006) in relation to political issues and because of this, it will take longer for Zhakata to receive his rightful royalties and for the Australian song to be broadcast. Meanwhile the songs, through piracy and less orthodox channels, plus discussion at conferences, are an important voice for the suffering, because, as the warning on a Movement for Democratic Change (2009) pamphlet with DVD containing strong images and text of the crisis in Zimbabwe human rights, states: "Your silence can seriously damage someone's health".

ENDNOTES

¹ The most popular, best-selling genre is *sungura*, a fast paced musical style resulting from the fusion of *benga*, rumba and the traditional musical genres of Zimbabwe, largely because of its appeal in both rural and urban areas. Contemporary *mbira*, music fused with western musical instruments or simulation of *mbira* on western instruments, is also popular among rural and urban, young and old, and the modern Christian church movement. Urban grooves, a category of music that is computer or software generated and characterized by loud levels of sound, is very popular among urban youths with a focus on protesting over social rather than political issues.

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33 1/3 revolutions per minute: Isaac Hayes' *Hot buttered soul* and the myth of the black consumer

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the role of Isaac Hayes and the 1969 LP *Hot buttered soul* in the transformation of the political economy of the black popular music industry. An argument will be made that the radical nature of *Hot buttered soul* led to unprecedented cross-genre sales and consequently made it possible for artists such as Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield and Parliament/Funkadelic to create album-length works. The net result was that, in addition to transforming the political economy of black popular music, the artistic possibilities of black popular music were irrevocably changed.

KEYWORDS: Isaac Hayes; Stax Records; soul music; rhythm and blues; political economy.

It is a commonplace within popular music histories that in the 1960s Stax Records developed a unique, readily identifiable sound. I contend that the "Stax sound", for all intents and purposes, served as the basis for the genre known as "southern soul". This sound was nearly exclusively produced and consumed via the 7" 45 rpm record. As Stax owner Jim Stewart (1986) told me, in explaining the fact that two of the label's first albums, Carla Thomas' *Gee whiz* and the Mar-Keys' *Last night*, failed to chart despite the fact that they were follow-ups to massive hit singles, in the first half of the 1960s "you couldn't sell black LPs". Jerry Wexler (1986), co-owner of

Atlantic Records, told me exactly the same thing. Such was industry wisdom at the time.

Precisely summing up the sound on the several hundred 45's issued on Stax and its subsidiary Volt in the 1960s is a nigh-on impossible task. One can, though, delimit in general terms the main features of the Stax sound in the 1960s, all of which stand in stark contrast to the musical practices of Detroit's Motown Records, Stax's main rival in this period. The Stax sound consisted of (1) an emphasis on the low end; (2) the prominent use of horns which often took the place of background vocals; (3) pre-arranged horn ensembles often serving as bridges in place of the more typical "improvised" guitar, keyboard or sax solos heard on many popular music recordings (this concept was originated by Otis Redding); (4) a "less is more" aesthetic manifested in sparse textures, the absence of ride cymbals on a lot of vocal recordings, unison horn lines and the absence of strings until late 1968; (5) a mix that placed the vocalist in the middle of the sound box rather than way out in front; (6) a prominent gospel influence as heard in the juxtaposition of organ and piano, the extensive use of the IV chord and, most importantly, in the deployment by vocalists at Stax of extensive timbral variation, pitch inflection, melismas and highly syncopated phrasing all in the service of emotional catharsis; (7) a limited harmonic vocabulary largely restricted to major chords; and (8) a delayed back beat.

The sound of Stax was to change dramatically in the late 1960s, largely due to the efforts of Al Bell. Born in Little Rock in 1940 to a family that stressed middle class values that foregrounded hard work, achievement and economic advancement, Bell got his start in the music industry as a disc jockey, initially at KOKY in Little Rock in the late 1950s. After stints at Memphis and Washington stations, Bell came to Stax in the fall of 1965, initially as a promotion man. Within three years he would co-own the company, by October 1972 he owned it outright. A larger-than-life character, Bell transformed Stax from top to bottom. Described by keyboardist Booker T. Jones as the front office equivalent to Otis Redding, Bell took what had been a mom and pop, cottage industry enterprise and in a few short years guided it to the level of rhythm and blues powerhouse. In the process Stax tremendously expanded its output, for the first time devoting considerable energies to the release and marketing of LP's in addition to its staple diet of forty-fives. Al Bell did not believe the myth that the black consumer would not buy LPs.

Prior to Bell's arrival, Stax had been unable to sell substantial quantities of its 45's or LPs in key non-Southern markets such as New York and Los Angeles.

"The problem we had then was that Stax was viewed as a company that was coming up with that 'Bama music'", stressed Bell (1983).

We had a problem in getting the product played outside of the South, across the Mason-Dixon line. When you got into the bigger urban centers, they were doing the Motown stuff. Being a jock I knew that and then traveling all over the place, I knew what was happening to us in the record stores and what was happening to us at the radio level and on the street level with our music. I started looking to diversify the company and, at that time, I was talking to everybody in

there about broadening the music so we could go into New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, and Baltimore much more formidably. (ibid.)

Al Bell's desire to diversify the company's sound and thereby eliminate the 'Bama stigma that had plagued his early marketing efforts would eventually have an impact on much more than the sound of Stax and the consequent economic fortunes of the company. In 1969 he made a move that would ultimately transform the political economy of the entire black music industry in giving songwriter Isaac Hayes (who along with David Porter had penned and produced such classic southern soul records as "Soul man" and "Hold on! I'm comin'") free reign to record the solo album of his dreams.

The Hayes album was part of a campaign Bell was launching where the company would simultaneously release twenty-seven albums in May 1969. This audacious move was orchestrated with the singular purpose of creating an instantaneous catalogue to replace what had been lost when Stax severed their distribution deal with Atlantic Records in May 1968 and, in the process, lost their entire back catalogue. To put the size of this release in perspective, in 1965 the company had issued only two LPs; under Bell's auspices that number increased to twelve in 1966 and sixteen in 1967. In total the company issued only forty-three albums from its inception in 1960 through the dissolution of the agreement with Atlantic in May 1968. In the company's second period 205 albums appeared on Stax.

Significantly, *Hot buttered soul* (Enterprise 1969) had nothing whatsoever to do with the "Stax sound" and, equally significantly, no single album had a greater impact on the direction of black music in the first half of the 1970s. Reflects Hayes (Hayes 1986),

When I did *Hot buttered soul* it was a selfish thing on my part. It was something I wanted to do. Al said, 'however you want to do it'. I didn't give a damn if it didn't sell because I was going for the true artistic side, rather than looking at it for monetary value. I had an opportunity to express myself no holds barred, no restrictions, and that's why I did it. I took artistic and creative liberties. I felt what I had to say couldn't be said in two minutes and thirty seconds. So I just stretched [the songs] out and milked them for everything they were worth. I didn't feel any pressure that it had to sell because there were twenty-six other albums out there.

Only four songs were cut for *Hot buttered soul*; an eighteen-minute version of Glen Campbell's 1967 hit "By the time I get to Phoenix", a twelve-minute version of Burt Bacharach and Hal David's "Walk on by" which had recently been a hit for Dionne Warwick; a nine-minute track Al Bell called "Hyperbolicsyllabicsesquedalymistic", and a relatively short five-minute take on Memphis songwriters Charlie Chalmers and Sandra Rhodes' "One woman".

It surprised many that the man who had co-written such incendiary pieces of gospel-inspired soul as "Soul man" and "Hold on! I'm comin'" would record an

album three-quarters of which he didn't write, and half of which were white pop tunes. It was quite a radical move.

"What it was, was the real me", proclaimed Hayes (1986) when I first met him:

I mean, OK, the real me had written those other songs ['Soul man,' 'Hold on! I'm comin'', etc.] but they were being written for other people. As for me wanting to express myself as an artist, that's what *Hot buttered soul* was. Although I was a songwriter, there were some songs that [other people wrote that] I loved, that really touched me. Came the opportunity, I wanted to record these tunes. I wanted to do them the way that I wanted to do them. I took them apart, dissected them, and put them back together and made them my personal tunes. I took creative license to do that. By doing them my way, it almost made them like totally different songs all over again. I was targeting the black listening audience. Very few black people knew about 'By the time I get to Phoenix'. But I broke it down and rearranged it where they could understand it, where they could relate to it. Music is universal [but] sometimes presentation will restrict you or limit your range. Glen Campbell and Jim Webb were targeting the pop audience. But, when I did it, I aimed to the black market, but it was so big, it went all over. It sounds radical because it had gone against everything that Stax had represented up to that point. All before then I would ask Jim Stewart to record me and he would say, 'Isaac, your voice is too pretty!' Jim was hard-core Otis Redding, Albert King, that sort of thing". (ibid.)

The basic rhythm tracks were cut for the album in a mere eight hours. Strings and background vocals were added in Detroit. Al Bell (1993) told me:

I wanted the remainder of it, the horns and the strings, to be a soundtrack to a motion picture and the motion picture was what Isaac was rapping about. I talked to [the arrangers] about adding the European influence. [It was] done in a very creative manner where it all embellished and enhanced the story. The idea was to go and put the package wrapped around him as opposed to taking a package and putting him in the package.

Hayes, in fact, had long felt frustrated by Jim Stewart's insistence that the company continue to create records that were limited to what had become the stereotypical Stax sound. From Jim Stewart's perspective, the black consumer was not only not interested in buying LPs, but they would also not be willing to support a black artist singing white pop tunes that lasted many minutes beyond the standard three to three and a half minute single.

It is important to quickly provide context for the attitude of Jim Stewart and other record executives with regard to the black populace's interest in, and ability to, purchase albums, as opposed to singles, in significant numbers. When the long playing 12" 33 1/3 rpm album was first introduced in 1948 by Columbia Records, it was viewed as an ideal vehicle for genres such as classical music, Broadway sound-

tracks and jazz. Classical and jazz performances were routinely too long to fit onto the older 78 or new 45 rpm mediums that could accommodate approximately three minutes of music per side and soundtracks, by their very nature, were best appreciated in their entirety, rather than as single tracks.

All three genres, by and large, appealed to an adult and, for the most part, middle class demographic with a modicum of disposable income. The industry correctly assumed that this demographic would be interested in spending some of that disposable income on a leisure item that signified modernity as one of the latest products of technological innovation. Such was the more expensive and, certainly for genres such as classical, Broadway and jazz, more satisfying album medium.

Rhythm and blues, country and rock and roll were largely relegated to being sold as cheaper two sided discs, for awhile in both the 78 and 45 rpm mediums before the 45 came to dominate. These musics were generally thought of as ephemeral and disposable cultural products purchased by either adults from the economic underclass or teenagers with limited disposable incomes.

In the 1950s, only a handful of the most commercially successful R&B or rock artists had their recordings released on albums. In the case of those that did, the albums were usually hastily packaged after three or more hit singles and consisted of their earlier hits, B-sides and another five or six quickly recorded tracks, most often as not consisting of cover songs. Packaging was cheaply done, showing little thought or care, and sales, with the exception of Elvis Presley, were expected to be minimal.

In a story that will be familiar to most, this was to change with the explosion of the Beatles in 1964, their successors such as the Kinks, the Rolling Stones and the Who and the movement of folk artists such as Bob Dylan into the world of teenage pop and rock beginning in 1965. All of these artists, with the exception of Dylan, achieved their initial success via 45s but quite quickly achieved substantial, in the case of the Beatles massive, album sales.

Recognizing this shift in the market place and the economic power of teenage baby boomers, by the mid-1960s white rock and pop artists routinely released albums as well as singles. Reflecting the increase in capital involved in the consumption of albums, rock artists spent more and more time on the recording of albums creating ever longer and more complex tracks, the accompanying art work and promotion.

By 1966, the first rock magazine, *Crawdaddy*, was discussing these albums in detail and that same year, KPFA in San Francisco, became the first FM station to program a steady diet of rock and album tracks. While some of the early free-form rock-oriented FM stations played a handful of blues and soul recordings by black artists, for the most part the rise of the LP, a dedicated music press and FM radio impacted the political economy and creative possibilities of white artists only. In the world of soul music, it was business as usual: the 45 rpm single was the dominant medium of commerce, there were no specialist magazines devoted to the music and no FM radio stations broadcasting soul album tracks. In the second half of the

1960s black FM stations were a relatively new phenomenon and the handful that existed were nearly exclusively devoted to jazz programming.

With Al Bell giving Isaac Hayes total freedom in the studio, the resulting album *Hot buttered soul* was a drastic departure from the norm including only four songs, two of which were twelve and eighteen minutes long. The length of the songs, the arrangements that equally fused rock, soul, pop, jazz and classical, the massive and majestic orchestrations, the long spoken rap that preceded Hayes' cover of "By the time I get to Phoenix", and Hayes's crooning baritone vocal style were all radically different from what was going on in mainstream R&B at the time.

No 45s were originally envisioned for *Hot buttered soul*, and none were scheduled amongst the thirty singles that were released alongside the twenty-seven albums at the Stax sales meetings in May 1969. Al Bell had planned to try and break the record as an album in Los Angeles on a jazz station, but to his surprise it was broken in Detroit by Sonny Carter on station WGPR-FM. Carter was general manager of the station and hosted his own jazz-based show. He tells an interesting story. Pat Lewis had arranged the innovative background vocals on "Walk on by". Lewis had a tape of the album before it was released to the public and, for one reason or another, she needed to copy it. She took it to Carter and asked if he would copy it at the station, making him promise not to play it on the air. Carter loved the eighteen-minute version of "By the time I get to Phoenix" and broke his promise. "Overnight, it was like a sensation", laughs Carter. "That was possibly on Friday. We got so many requests for it, by Monday it was just ridiculous" (Carter 1993).

The reaction to *Hot buttered soul* in Detroit was so strong that Bell realized instantly that the record was potentially a gold mine. Within four weeks of its release, Stax took out a full-page ad in *Billboard* citing the record's sales in Detroit, Chicago, Philadelphia, and New York. Isaac (Hayes 1986) claims: "We were getting reports about people in Detroit burglarizing record shops and the only thing they'd take out was *Hot buttered soul*. That's making a statement".

Hot buttered soul went on to sell over one million copies, an unprecedented showing for what was nominally an R&B album. Equally unprecedented was the fact that the album charted in the upper reaches of four different charts – jazz, pop, R&B, and easy listening – simultaneously, a feat few – if any – artists have ever achieved! This was the kind of across-the-board success that Al Bell had envisioned for Stax.

Up to this point, as I mentioned at the start of this paper, virtually everyone in the record industry simply assumed that the black audience was neither economically equipped nor aesthetically interested in purchasing LPs in large numbers². Consequently black artists had not been afforded the luxuries enjoyed by their white counterparts in crafting extended songs or album concepts. Instead, most black LPs were hurriedly and cheaply recorded to capitalize on a string of hit singles. Little thought, effort, or expense was put into cover art design or marketing. According to Atlantic Records owner Jerry Wexler, if a black album sold 30,000 copies the market had been saturated. Super stars such as James Brown and Otis Redding were the exception in that they *might* over several years sell 200,000 plus copies

of a given album. *Hot buttered soul* unquestionably proved that black artists could sell LPs in massive numbers, and consequently single-handedly revolutionized the notion of the length and musical palette appropriate for black recordings. Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, and Funkadelic would all follow Hayes's lead and, over the next few years, all four would record a series of utterly brilliant albums breaking for all time the myth that black consumers were not interested or financially able to support album-length R&B masterpieces.

ENDNOTES

1. The term "'Bama" music is a contraction of the name of the state of Alabama. It is meant pejoratively to suggest that the music is somehow backwoods and rough-around-the-edges, thereby implying that more Northern and urban listeners would not be interested in it.
2. In various interviews Al Bell, Jim Stewart and Jerry Wexler have all told me that the primary consumers of Stax Recordings were black. This is supported when one looks at the relative success of Stax recordings on the R&B and pop charts.

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Atlantic flows: Brazilian connections to Cape Verdean popular music

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ABSTRACT

Cape Verdean musical genres, especially the *morna*, cannot be understood with exclusive reference to the Portuguese and African peoples who settled in this archipelago. These two cultural heritages were interwoven with other heterogeneous elements, building a much more complex music scene. The focus of this work lies on the Atlantic flows that allowed for the arrival of music and musicians from Brazil in Cape Verde. It is an analysis of the discourses elaborated by Cape Verdeans about the role that Brazilian music (as they perceive it) plays in their own musical productions.

KEYWORDS: Cape Verde; *morna*; Brazilian music; Atlantic encounters.

INTRODUCTION

Musical exchanges involving Brazilian musicians outside of the country have been going on for some time, following diverse routes. Both the media and academic literature report on the circulation of Brazilian music, emphasizing two kinds of flows. The first one relates to the global music market. Sérgio Mendes' Grammy-winning album *Brasileiro* (Elektra 1992) is just one example of a successful trajectory developed by Brazilian musicians in the world music scene¹. The second kind of musical flow usually mentioned is the one that follows current transnational movements of people. When going abroad, Brazilian migrants carry with them their musical practices².

These two topics have been extensively discussed, focusing not only on Brazilian music. Significant studies examine musical experiences in contexts characterized by transnational migration (Connell and Gibson 2002; Baily and Collyer 2006; Côte-Real 2010, among others). The world music scene has equally received great attention from ethnomusicologists (Feld 1995; Taylor 1997; Erlmann 1999; Frith 2000). However, I would like to stress that the presence of Brazilian music outside of the country's borders is not necessarily related to the global cultural industry, neither to the impact of recent migration processes. My objective is to draw attention to a particular trajectory that some forms of Brazilian music have taken. I refer to the Atlantic flows that allowed for the arrival of music and musicians from Brazil to Cape Verde, influencing musical productions in this West African archipelago.

This article is neither a search for historical links nor a comparative musicological analysis. Opting instead for an anthropological approach, the aim is to engage with discourses articulated by Cape Verdeans on the relationship between the music produced in Cape Verde and the "Brazilian music", as they understand it.

MUSICAL ENCOUNTERS

Luís Rendall, a guitar player, was born in Cape Verde, in the São Vicente Island, in 1898. Working in the customs services, he was in regular contact with foreign ship crews passing by the Porto Grande de Mindelo ("Great Port of Mindelo"). In a context characterized by intense circulation of people and goods between Europe and the Americas, the archipelago was a crucial refuelling stop for steam ships crossing the Atlantic. Mindelo, the main city in the São Vicente Island, was usually described as a door open to the world, an expression of cosmopolitanism and of a hectic life. Eutrópio Lima da Cruz (1988), who published a booklet in honour of Luís Rendall, highlights the significance of this fact in the musician's career. He states that the many hours Luís Rendall spent on board Brazilian ships intensified the fruitfulness of the musical exchanges he was engaged with. Luís Rendall's connections with Brazilian music are explicit in the following excerpt of the biography written by Cruz:

With much humor, Luís Rendall would remember the episode in 1930 in which, in the Church Square in São Vicente, after giving his 'show' with the guitar, he is 'demoralized' by the summary decree of João Damata, with his big hands and dirty fingernails, a navigator of a Brazilian steam ship making a stop in Mindelo! Self-possessed, Luís Rendall has to lend the guitar to João Damata who, in the end, returns it with the incentive 'if you keep doing it, you will learn it'. The amusement of Luís Rendall cannot be hidden in the face of the art of João Damata on the guitar. (ibid., p. 6; my translation)

To this day, Cape Verdeans repeatedly comment on the famous guitar solos by Luís Rendall, usually making reference to his affinity to Brazilian music. João Damata, on the other hand, followed a less visible pathway. He never reached notoriety

among his fellow countrymen – even though he had carried out the significant role of spreading Brazilian musical productions abroad.

Another outstanding Cape Verdean musician whose life history reflects the influence of Brazilian music is Francisco Xavier da Cruz, better known by his nickname B.Léza. He was also born in São Vicente and was one of the most important Cape Verdean composers. B.Léza was born in a poor neighbourhood in Mindelo. In this area surrounding the port, he developed his distinctive style of guitar playing. B.Léza is especially remembered for imprinting his mark on the execution of the musical genre known as *morna*. According to the Cape Verdean writer Baltasar Lopes da Silva (Laban 1992, vol. 1, pp. 17-18, my translation), “there is clearly one *morna* before B.Léza and one *morna* after B.Léza. [...] B.Léza introduced, through the influence of Brazilian music, an accident, a chord transition, here called the Brazilian half tone”.

This is not the only account about B.Léza in which his close contact with sailors and players from Brazil is mentioned. I quote again from Baltasar Lopes da Silva (*ibid.*, p. 17).

He used to be called B.Léza, at least this is the information I have: his name means the following – in the first years of the 1920s, there used to be a great Brazilian influence here. [...] There were many Brazilian ships that stopped here at the port and they came on shore. [...] [T]he Brazilians are amicable, they associated with the locals and, once in a while, they joined them in picnics and cocktails, gatherings and *tocatinas*, as we would say at that time. In fact, the guitar playing technique of São Vicente is the Brazilian technique, learned from the Brazilians, it is not the Spanish technique, it is the Brazilian style. And B.Léza also learned the Brazilian *lubie* [‘whim’], he used to pronounce many terms in the Brazilian way, instead of *beleza* [‘beauty’, in Portuguese], he used to say *bèléza* [‘beauty’, in Portuguese, with a Brazilian accent].

The encounters between Cape Verdean and Brazilian guitar players in Mindelo reveal a set of themes that deserve consideration. They show us what everyday life in that port city was like during the first decades of the twentieth century, immersed as it was in a bohemian and cosmopolitan atmosphere. They mention movements of people and musical exchanges across the Atlantic. Above all, these encounters reveal how sounds become cultural constructions as names and meanings are attributed to different ways of playing, speaking and singing.

CULTURAL IDENTITY IN A CREOLE SOCIETY

The above-mentioned quotes are Cape Verdean representations about the relationship between Cape Verde and Brazil. This connection between the two countries is a way for Cape Verdeans to talk about their place in the world. The importance attributed to Brazil by Cape Verdeans is closely related to the perception of Cape Verde as a creole society. As a product of the colonial encounter, Cape Verde is

structured on the fundamental opposition between an African universe and a Europeanized one. Debates on the classification of Cape Verde as an African, a European or simply an Atlantic country are far from being a banal question. This discussion is present in many national identity projects, sustained by different groups within Cape Verdean society. In this context, the relationship with Brazil, as a country with similar social formation, acquires a special significance. Brazil often appears as an important reference in order to address Cape Verde's fundamental ambiguity and to mediate these different senses of belonging, interconnecting Europe and Africa.

The encounter between Brazil and Cape Verde has served to articulate the meaning of being Cape Verdean. In this sense, I highlight the importance of narratives about music as an allegory of Cape Verde. When Cape Verdeans describe the *morna* (their national musical genre), stressing its ties with Brazilian music, they define Cape Verde's position in the Atlantic space. This is especially evident in the debate about the origin of *morna*. Cape Verdeans are immersed in a discussion about the history of this musical genre. The debate often turns into a play of forces between Portuguese and African cultural heritages. Some Cape Verdeans defend the major Portuguese influence on the *morna*; others believe in the hypothesis that privileges the African heritage on the origin of this genre. It is then that the connections to Brazil emerge as quite significant, mediating African and Portuguese cultural references.

One example of this may be found in the work of Vasco Martins (1989, pp. 49-52), a Cape Verdean musicologist. Presenting his version for the evolution of the *morna*, the author suggests that the Cape Verdean national genre was influenced by the *modinha* – a musical style also known for its uncertain origin, related to either Brazil or Portugal. However, according to him, this musical encounter only happened during a second phase of the *morna*'s development. When the *modinha* arrived in Cape Verde, a "primordial *morna*" already existed. The latter would have had its genesis in the *landu* (or *lundum*), a kind of music of African origin. As pointed out by Martins, the *landu* arrived in the archipelago through one of two possible paths: directly from the continent or, in an alternative route, brought to Cape Verde by Afro-Brazilians. We can notice, therefore, Brazil's role as a mediator. The idea of "Brazilian music" in this narrative encompasses both the *modinha* and the *lundum*, cultural elements of Portuguese and African origins, respectively. Similar to the *morna*, Brazilian music is represented as a result of diverse fluxes, functioning as a tool to describe the double link that characterizes the *morna* itself.

NEW TRAFFICS OF SOUNDS

I would like to add to this discussion another example of musical exchange, made evident in the so-called "Cape Verdean *zouk*". This musical genre is related to other global movements of people, revealing the vitality and dynamic nature of Atlantic flows. The beginnings of the *zouk* can be found in the 1980s, when the group Kassav' introduced this new style of music, created out of the mixture of multiple Caribbean rhythms, added to new technologies from the recording studios of Paris.

The *zouk* achieved a surprising success. It conquered audiences in the Caribbean, Europe and Africa. Among Cape Verdeans, the *zouk* encountered a significant source of recreation. Cape Verdean immigrants in European cities entered into direct contact with the new genre and began to incorporate the *zouk* into their musical habits. With lyrics sung in Cape Verdean creole, the new *zouk* captivated audiences in the archipelago and abroad. Created out of multiple encounters of diverse creole cultures, the Cape Verdean *zouk* developed itself as a product of the diaspora.

The presence of Brazilian music can also be observed in this set of productions. I refer to one representative example, the Brazilian song “Morango do Nordeste” (Sons D’África 2000). This song, composed by Walter de Afogados and Fernando Alves, achieved enormous success in Brazil in the year 2000. It was recorded by innumerable groups and singers. Among these many versions, there is a special one, in the rhythm of *zouk*, sung by Roger, who is from Guinea-Bissau, son of a Cape Verdean father and a Senegalese mother. This version of the song was mixed by a Portuguese DJ and recorded by Sons D’África, a musical label owned by a Cape Verdean and located in a Lisbon suburb. In 2001, this album became a best seller in the Lusophone African countries.

Musical flows between Brazil and Cape Verde keep occurring, in great intensity, even though this happens through very different processes. Technological advances allow for new kinds of appropriations. New migratory dynamics favour other forms of musical exchanges. Moreover, the meanings attributed to these processes have also changed. As a product of the diaspora, these new musical creations have another relationship with notions of identity and territory. In the *zouk*, the meaning of being Cape Verdean was never as relevant as in the *morna*. Similarly, the appropriation of Brazilian music in the *zouk* is not necessarily elaborated as evidence of the profound relationship between the two countries.

As a final remark, I want to stress that the narratives mentioned in this article are Cape Verdean representations about different forms of speaking, singing and playing that crossed the Atlantic, producing new syntheses. At times, these narratives make explicit reference to music. They are cultural constructions about “the Brazilian style”, the musical technique called “the Brazilian half tone”. At other times, this idea is extrapolated to the domain of speech. It is in the “Brazilian *lubie*” acquired by the musician B.Léza. All these are examples of cultural constructions that attribute meanings to the fluxes and encounters of sounds across the Atlantic.

ENDNOTES

1. For an analysis of the increasing presence of Brazilian music in the global market and its image in international media, see Lucas 1996.
2. For an example, see Ribeiro 1998.

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Understanding Live Nation and its impact on live music in the UK

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ABSTRACT

Despite being less than a decade old, Live Nation has dramatically changed the power structure of the global music industry. Live Nation is the largest live entertainment company in the world, and more economically significant than any of the three major record companies apart from Universal. Its recent merger with Ticketmaster has led its critics to claim that now more than ever, its corporate agenda will have lasting destructive effects on the health of UK concert promotion. But with most of the company's key personnel, venues, and assets having operated interdependently for decades, what exactly has changed? This paper will discuss the impact Live Nation has made on the British live music sector, and illuminate some of the changes in the complicated ownership structures in the British live music sector. The paper will also shed new light on how some of the most senior personnel from Live Nation's UK division perceive their own company and its role in live music, based on interviews with Paul Latham (UK President and COO International Music), and Barry Dickins (International Talent Booking).

KEYWORDS: Live Nation; live music; concert promotion; music industry; music industries.

INTRODUCTION

Something important happened in 2008: British consumers spent more money on concert tickets that year than they did on recorded music, even with physical and digital sales combined (Prynn 2008). This moment represented the culmination of

a gradual shift that had been occurring since the mid-1990s: music revenue was moving away from a record-sales based paradigm that had dominated the last half of the twentieth century and towards an increased emphasis on live performance. Around the same time, Martin Cloonan and John Williamson (2007) argued that the term “music industry”, which has traditionally been used as a stand-in term for “recording industry”, was no longer fit for purpose; instead they proposed that it is more accurate and less misleading to use the pluralised *music industries*, denoting the different sectors that make money out of music, including recording, live, publishing, and so on.

2008 was also the year that I joined a research team comprising Simon Frith, Martin Cloonan, and Emma Webster to work on a three-year research project entitled *The Promotion of live music in the UK: An historical, cultural and institutional analysis*¹. The aim of the project was to reposition the live music business in academic and public discourse, and demonstrate that any account of the “music industry” in the singular which did not seriously consider the live music industry was bound to inaccurately reflect how the music industries currently work. A change in approach seems especially urgent when one considers that in 2010 Live Nation Entertainment boasted a bigger annual turnover than any of the major record labels apart from Universal – a figure which didn’t even take into full account the additional revenue from its recent merger with Ticketmaster. Now that Live Nation and Ticketmaster have merged into Live Nation Entertainment, it is possible that Live Nation may eventually become (if it isn’t already) the biggest music company in the world². The maturation of Live Nation, which only came into existence in 2005, represents a huge change – at both discursive and industrial levels – in the economics of music.

LIVE NATION AND THE UK CONCERT PROMOTER OLIGOPOLY

The last twenty years has seen a consolidation of ownership of concert promotion companies and live music venues in the UK. There are now in fact only five main promoters that control the vast majority British of the live music economy: Live Nation Entertainment, AEG Live, Gaiety/MCD, SJM, and Metropolis Music. Unlike the major record labels, however, these promoters frequently cooperate and collaborate; they sometimes work together to promote big tours and concerts, and even share ownership of many major concert venues in the UK. Take the case study of the city of Glasgow, which is home to the biggest Scottish concert promotion company – DF Concerts. DF promotes everything from one hundred-capacity venues to stadium gigs and festivals including Scotland’s biggest music festival, T in the Park. But exactly what makes this company Glasgow-based, or even “Scottish” unravels quickly when you start to look at who owns it. DF is 67% owned by LN-Gaiety Holdings, which combines the interests of the multi-national Live Nation based in Los Angeles, and the Irish concert promotion company MCD (represented as Gaiety in the UK and controlled by Denis Desmond); the remaining 33% is owned by SJM Concerts based in Manchester (Latham 2009).

Along with Metropolis, Live Nation, Gaiety and SJM also have controlling shares in the Academy Music Group, which in Glasgow alone owns the 1300-capacity O2 ABC and sister venue 300-capacity O2 ABC2, as well as the 2500-capacity O2 Academy. Through their shares in DF, LN-Gaiety and SJM also own King Tut's, perhaps Glasgow's most famous small (350-capacity) live music venue. This is not to mention their ownership of similar venues in cities across the UK and most of the major pop festivals over the summer (see *Figure 1*). On the one hand, you could look at festival and venue ownership in the UK as an oligopoly, but on the other hand, because the five big companies tend to share ownership in big venues and even own shares in one another, it is actually closer to a duopoly between Live Nation and its subsidiaries on one side and AEG Live on the other.

One way of thinking about the health of the British live music industry is in terms of an *ecology*. In a recent article, my colleague and I argued that "an ecology of live music events and venues (small, large, 'professional', 'amateur') must be in place, it seems, for a healthy local musical scene" (Brennan and Webster 2010, p.12). We went on to suggest that:

The growth of corporate concert promotion, Live Nation style, is bound to have effects on the ecology of live music. If the live music sector is to be sustained, new talent must develop, and for this to happen venues are needed for new 'amateur' artists as well as for established professionals. Indeed, live music needs an environment in which the amateur and professional spheres overlap and interact. This is why 'top-down' organisations such as Live Nation are potentially problematic: if the balance between venues and ownership leans too far in one direction, then the whole ecology is endangered. On the other hand, the fact that live music is inevitably embedded in particular localities with their own unique set of contingencies makes it difficult for a corporate promoter ever to impose a completely standardised network of facilities. It will be interesting to see if the Live Nation model of promotion will continue to grow – it could just as easily collapse. (ibid., p. 17-18)

To explain why we raised the question about collapse, I now offer a nutshell history of Live Nation. In 1996, the American businessman and entrepreneur Robert Sillerman began to acquire concert promoters, venues, and other assets, and roll them into a pre-existing entertainment conglomerate called SFX. He then convinced the multi-national corporation Clear Channel that together these assets had "synergies" which made them more valuable than the sum of their parts. Clear Channel bought SFX in 1999, only to realise that most of them carried significant debts which were affecting Clear Channel's stock value; it therefore spun off most of these assets into a new company in 2005, which became Live Nation (Lefsetz 2010; *Funding Universe* 2011). Or as John Giddings (head of Live Nation Global Touring) put it in an interview: "We were all mugs, we were all fighting each other and he [Sillerman] spotted it from a distance and joined everybody up, then sold it down the river and walked away with the cheque. Good on him" (Giddings 2010). Live Nation has a

represents many artists including Neil Young, Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, and new acts too. It was bought by Clear Channel and Live Nation still owns it.

MB: What effect, if any, [did] the Live Nation buyout have on the way you operate as a business?

BD: Exactly the same. [...] Because you gotta remember the people that pay us – I shouldn't say pay us 'cause Live Nation pay us – but physically bring the money into ITB, are the clients. And our job is to do the best deal for the clients. Now there's a lot of situations where it may not be in the client's best interest, or Live Nation don't value it, and somebody else does. And you make that decision. We work a lot with them, but we work a lot with other people.

Neil Young answered it great. [On a recent tour between songs, Young] destroys Clear Channel, hates it, all this corporate nonsense. And someone yells out in the audience, 'well why are you being promoted by them?' And [Neil] said, 'I've had the same promoter [...] for thirty-five years, and as long as I've got him, if he wants to cash in his chips or whatever, I don't have a problem. It's a people business'. And it is a people business. And as long as those people don't change, in the way that I work, in the way that they work, I have no problem. (Dickins 2009)

Another criticism sometimes launched against Live Nation is that it is a recently formed company which is sealing its own fate by creating a strategy for live music based on short term gain rather than long term sustainability (see Lefsetz 2010). However, although some may see Live Nation strictly as a *music* company, Paul Latham (2009), president of Live Nation UK, perceives the long-term vision of the company in starkly different terms. Consider this quote:

PL: The fact that the business is so much more ephemeral now, it's a problem to see which acts are going to be playing in twenty or thirty years time. But there's an element of 'does it really matter?' [...] When I'm pitching to local authorities or the management of their buildings, they'll say to me 'that sounds all very well and you're good at being music promoters, but what if musical tastes change?' And I say, all entertainment changes. To be honest, if I was sitting here 2000 years ago, you'd be talking to me about public hangings and floggings that people came to, or bear baiting. Now I'm not proposing to put those back into the public portfolio, but ultimately these are spaces that we sell, and we will sell what people want, and that's what happens. [...]

MB: [Do] you mean that a longstanding career in arena music might be a thing of the past?

PL: Correct.

CONCLUSION

I would like to conclude by making two brief points. First, anyone who is interested in understanding the music industry or industries, singular or plural, needs to put

more emphasis on the live music industry and the history of the dynamic relationship between it and the other parts of making money out of music, particularly recording. Second, the corporatisation of the live music industry has resulted in certain industrial changes, especially in terms of competition, cash flow, and having live music subsumed within business plans that extend far beyond music into other forms of live entertainment. I hope these will serve as starting points for continuing research into this area, which I think is vital for any scholarship focused on how artists and institutions operate to make money out of music in the present day.

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ENDNOTES

1. This project was funded by AHRC research grant F00947/1.
2. The 2010 Live Nation Annual Report (*Live Nation* 2010, p. 51) states its annual turnover in that year was \$5.063bn. The 2010 Vivendi Annual Report (*Vivendi* 2010) states the turnover for the Universal Music Group was €4.449bn (or US\$5.961bn). The accounting periods for each company are likely to be different so it is difficult to say with certainty which company's turnover is actually the greater, but it is likely that the Live Nation figure did not yet include revenue from its 2009 merger with Ticketmaster. That said, Universal's acquisition of EMI Records in late 2011 will also have an effect on its own turnover.
3. This diagram was first published in the UK Festival Awards Conference programme (Brennan and Webster 2010).

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Live music as ideology

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ABSTRACT

The current crisis within the recording sector has been accompanied by an apparent boom in live music. In 2008 and 2009 the economic value of live music in the UK exceeded that of recorded music and the gap appears to be growing. While such trends have been commented upon in numerous places, what has been less common is to examine the ways in which the accompanying discourse around live music has held it to be the popular music experience. Where once consumers were told that hi-fis were the best way to experience music, now the uniqueness of being there is stressed by promoters keen to maximise profits. Based on research carried out in the UK between 2008 and 2011, this paper examines the implications of these changes. It suggests that the rise of live music has been accompanied by an ideology which has sought to re-define the definitive musical experience and speculates about the implication of this for musicians and fans alike.

KEYWORDS: live music; ideology; promoters; fans.

INTRODUCTION

I want to begin this paper with a bit of context. It is born out of a project which was funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council entitled: *The promotion of live music in the UK: An historical, cultural and institutional analysis*. The project began in April 2008 and finished in April 2011 and in addition to myself included Matt Brennan, Simon Frith and Emma Webster; all of whom have contributed in various ways to this paper.

The project had its origins in an earlier project which Simon and I, along with another colleague, John Williamson, were involved in in 2002, which sought to “map” the value of the music industry in Scotland. One of the findings of that report was that live music in Scotland was economically dominant, in reasonably robust health and far more important than the recording sector.

This finding came at a time when media and some academic accounts of “the music industry” routinely assumed that this meant the recording industry. From our Scottish point of view this made no sense. So John and I wrote an article in which we questioned the very term “music industry” and suggested that we move to the term “music industries” plural (Williamson and Cloonan 2007).

Our experience in writing the mapping report also increased our interest in what might broadly be called the political economy of live music. We became convinced that examining popular music history through the prism of live music would make the world seem like a very different place, and indeed it did. And you can read more about that in the three-volume history of live music in the UK which will emerge from the project.

In the rest of this paper I want to say a little more about the project, then look at the ideology of concert promoters and in particular their notions of risk taking and what it is they think they are selling. And I’ll conclude with a few remarks on what I think the importance of all this is.

THE PROJECT

Moving on to the project itself, again a bit of contextualisation is useful. Putting it bluntly, our timing was perfect. The research took place at a time when live music was in ascendancy. As noted before we began in April 2008 and in 2009 PRS For Music reported that for the first time in living memory the value of live music in the UK in that year exceeded the value of recorded music (Page and Carey 2009). The following year the same organisation reported that the gap had widened in 2009 (Page and Carey 2010).

Now there are lots of caveats to the figures and some evidence that live might also be suffering. It should also be born in mind that the figures mask great discrepancy with the so-called “boom” in live music being largely driven by a handful of top, largely “heritage”, acts. Nevertheless there is some evidence that live music is economically dominant and that the economic dominance of the recording sector is a thing of the past and unlikely to return.

Meanwhile a key figure in our research was the concert promoter, those people responsible for putting on gigs. We sought to understand the live music industry through the prism of the promoter and interviewed around one hundred of them, ranging from people who put on gigs in their local pub up to the head of Live Nation in the UK and Harvey Goldsmith, the best known promoter in the UK and best known for staging Live Aid.

Now I want to draw upon Marx’s idea in the *German ideology* that “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas” and I want to suggest that

the economic reports I've just quoted show promoters are the new ruling class in the music industries. So that if you want to understand something about the state of the contemporary music industries, then understanding the worldviews of concert promoters is a pretty good place to start. In case you are not convinced by this, consider the fact that the most important music company in the world now is not a major label, but Live Nation Entertainment – an amalgamation of the world's biggest concert promoter, Live Nation, and the world's biggest ticket agent, Ticketmaster¹. There is lots to say about Live Nation, but I'll stop there and move on to the ideology of live music.

IDEOLOGY AND PROMOTERS

First it is important to note that promoters cannot simply be lumped in together. In fact our research suggested that we can think of three types of promoter – enthusiasts who just put on acts they like (whether for profit or not), professionals who put on acts in order to make a living and governmental who put on acts in order to fulfil certain government policies. This division is of necessity a little crude but it is true to say that a promoter's position and motivation will affect their worldview. Nevertheless, they all face common problems – getting an act, venue, setting the price (always a very risky business), selling tickets and producing the event. In thinking through how to deal with these issues, a certain worldview emerges and it is this that I want to explore.

Here I want to use the term “ideology” in the sense of encapsulating the promoter's worldview. I am *not* suggesting that this worldview is some sort of objective reality, more that if we want to understand the music industries in 2011 then we need to understand that worldview.

Meanwhile I would also note that one of the things that characterises promoters is the amount of people they have to deal with – artists and/or their representatives, venues, ticket sellers, advertisers, audiences, regulators, etc. All of these people have the potential to ruin the promoter's plans and they are laden with risk, of which more in a moment. During our interviews with promoters they had a number of comments about such interactions but I want to limit my discussion to two aspects of promoters' view – their perceptions of themselves as risk takers and what they think they are selling.

TAKING RISKS

In order to understand promoters' views of themselves it is useful again to think of how many people promoters interact with. If they book artists, venues, advertising and then produce the show there is risk in every step. Above all there is the risk that the audience simply won't come.

Our work was partly historical and so that context is needed. Here we were repeatedly told that the concert promoting business is becoming riskier. We were told that back in the 1960s artists generally worked for a set fee but now always worked

for a percentage of the gross (Betesh 2010). Moreover, that percentage had shifted from something like 50/50 or better (in the promoter's favour) to more a norm of something like 85/15 or 90/10 in the artist's favour. One promoter said that the industry margin was around -3/4% (Ellis 2011)², so this is a risky business in which margins are tight. And there is more competition now than in the 1960s (Betesh 2010).

Paul Latham (2009), the UK CEO of Live Nation, told us that one of the things that his colleague Barry Clayman,

has sleepless nights over now is how much you have to put on the line to guarantee. So when he was talking about 70/30, 75/25 deals, the fact now that they're 90% plus deals and the agents representing the acts are saying, oh by the way can you stick a few on the secondary market and make a few extra quid, and then can you guarantee it, so you get into a situation where you're putting everything on the table and guaranteeing it.

Promoters also said that bigger productions meant that artists often wanted more upfront in order to pay for stage design and construction (Boyd 2008) or for whatever reason (Latham 2009). Overall, they felt themselves to put under a number of pressures. As veteran promoter Danny Betesh (2010) put it to us:

A promoter's life is quite difficult, you got to be making sure when you're promoting, that you're getting it right more [...] a lot more than you're getting it wrong. 'Cause when you lose, you lose 100%, and when you make, you usually make 15%.

Similarly, Glasgow promoter Peter MacCalman (2009) told us that "promoting music's [...] quite a harsh game and it's difficult to do financially successful".

But the idea that promoter's are risk takers is an important part of their psychology. Giving evidence to a parliamentary enquiry into ticket touting, Rob Ballantine, chair of the promoters' collective body, the CPA, said simply: "We are risk takers" (*Culture, Media and Sport Committee* 2008, Ev. 22). In interview veteran promoter John Giddings said that his immediate predecessors were "all cowboys making it up [...] like the original frontiersmen" (Giddings 2010) while another older promoter, Jef Hanlon (2010) described the 1960s generation as "larger than life characters with lots of energy and fight".

On a more practical level Mark Mackie of Edinburgh promotions company Regular Music told us that taking a risk was one of the two things promoters were paid for, the other being to actually produce the show (Mackie 2008). Such was the risk in all this that promoters referred to themselves as gamblers, as the following quotes show:

It's a gamble, but you've got to be sure [...] you've really got to get it right six or seven times for every one time you get it wrong. (Betesh 2010)

Sheffield promoter Alan Deadman (2008) agreed that “it’s a bit like gambling, it’s a bit like an addiction”.

In the same city Mark Hobson (2008) told us:

So yes, it is a financial gamble, and sometimes it’s a white knuckle ride when there’s a lot of money on the line, and you’re looking at it, and you’re looking at how many tickets you’ve sold, and you know what the fee is, and you’re going, ‘oh no!’.

Another Sheffield, promoter, Stuart Basford (2009), agreed that “you are gambling; you are almost a professional gambler, in that it’s my money”.

So the point became to minimise the gamble, as he continued: “You have to work out the finances of it and then gamble” (ibid.). Such a notion was pickled up by veteran promoter John Giddings (2010), who said:

I told someone the other day they were stupid for betting on horses. And they said, ‘but you bet on people with two legs every day’, which is so true. At least I think I know what I’m doing to an extent.

Nevertheless a certain frame of mind was required. According to Basford (2009):

I think you have got to have a gambling mentality, because you are – as I said to you – you are a gambler – I always say this – we are gamblers, really, ‘cos there’s money involved. It’s not a bit of fun; it is a bit of fun but it’s not [...] pleasure, really.

Back in Glasgow MacCalman (2009) was somewhat dismissive of the idea of promotion as gambling:

I think that if I want to gamble, I’ll go and play cards; I’ll go and play poker or something. That is gambling. Promotion’s not *quite* gambling. Because I *like* games of chance actually, which is possibly like a lot of promoters anyway. I like poker... But then, it’s one thing to gamble on a ten pound game of poker, it’s another thing to gamble five thousand pound against a gig. And if you totally think it’s a gamble, then I don’t think that’s a very healthy attitude to have with it. Also, then you’re essentially gambling with people’s careers and gambling with people’s reputations. I take promotion much more seriously than a game of cards. And *actually*, something that may be why people maybe compare it is that actually the odds are maybe better in a game of cards than on a gig really, and how much money you make on gigs, proportionally. But nah nah, I wouldn’t say that it’s totally gambling.

MacCalman saw his job as being of “more intellectual than gambling”, while the Director of Scottish Opera, Alex Reedijk (2009) denied that he was gambling

as that this implied being reckless when his job was “minding the shop on behalf of the audience of Scotland”. Here the promoters who embraced the term “gambler” seemed to see it as glamorous while those who disliked it saw it as disreputable.

MINIMISING RISK

All the promoters could see that promotion involved risks and so they constructed way of ameliorating risk, especially in a context where if the deal gets to 90/10, then risks may not be proportionate to return (Marshall 2011). So we became aware of a number of ways of minimising risk. These might include:

- At the lower end shifting the burden to the artist and only allow bands on to your bills if they sell tickets.
- Co-promotions, especially with other promoters who had better local knowledge and a practice which dates back to at least the 1950s. The advantage is to spread the risk but this entails a loss of control and lower return.
- Get other revenue streams from the gig – of which perhaps the most important at the moment is the kickback promoters get on booking fees (see *Competition Commission* 2009), but depending on what your relationship is with the venue, it might also include deals on the merchandise or on the bar takings. Of course, if you actually own the venue that can help and promoter Vince Power (2009) said that beer sales are “where the profit is. [...] That is what enabled me to pay [money]”. In the case of Live Nation they may also try and own all the car parks in the areas surrounding their venues.

Another way of ameliorating risk was thinking long term, so that you get involved with an artist an early stage and hope they stay loyal. Here Edinburgh promoter Mark Mackie (2008) told us:

We work with a band like Glasvegas, right? Now those shows weren't all about this time, it's all about next time. It's all about what we'll do next time – you plan ahead. [...] So you're always thinking *next* time.

Similarly Geoff Ellis (2011), CEO of DF Concerts, who promotes Scotland's biggest festival – T in the Park – told us that “our philosophy with the festival isn't to squeeze it for every penny that we can, because it's about longevity”.

There were also sound business practices such as trying to stop acts touring too much and not overpricing, two concerns which recurred in our work.

Then there are some more shady practices such as:

- Crushing the opposition: in Glasgow we were told that any new competition would be crushed, that promoters pull down others' posters and of a whispering campaign against a female-owned promotions company.

- Colluding with secondary ticket agents – or selling tickets directly to touts. This is in fact a longstanding practice, with the difference now being that it is more overt and promoters will speak of selling a percentage of tickets to the secondary market, sometimes as a form “dynamic pricing”.
- More overt dodginess – of which we got told numerous tales (such as what happens at gigs where it is cash on the door, deducting from artists fees the price of promotional posters you haven’t put up and so on).

Meanwhile, as self-perceived risk takers the promoters tended to have some disdain for those they perceived as not taking risk. Prime amongst these were agents who got their percentage regardless of how many tickets are sold. So veteran promoter Barrie Marshall (2011) told us:

The promoter takes the risk. And that’s a big difference. And if you’re taking the risk, the motivation to make sure it’s successful is even higher than – it has to be. And you’re at the point then where the theory isn’t there; it’s all about practice – you’ve got to make it work. You’ve got to sell the ticket, you’ve got to produce the show, you’ve got to deal with all the people that it takes to do that on all levels. That’s the difference. And that is a pretty comprehensive responsibility.

Similarly the songwriters’ collecting agency, PRS for Music, which has a 3% levy on concert tickets to pay the songwriters for the use of their songs, were dismissed by promoter Stuart Littlewood (2010) on the grounds that “they don’t risk anything” and Jef Hanlon (2010) told us that he hated the touts who he saw as benefitting from the risks he was taking while taking none themselves.

So, to summarise this section, promoters see themselves as risk takers, even as gamblers, who take certain steps to ameliorate risk but nevertheless have a certain disdain for those they view as taking no risks. But the nature of the risk is mediated by the product that the promoters are trying to sell, and they had some views on that as well.

SELLING LIVE MUSIC

Unsurprisingly there was a feeling amongst our interviewees that what they are selling is something intangible – an experience. So Vince Power (2009) told us that “the value of the festival is in the person’s head” and Graeme Howell (2010), Director of Bristol’s Colston Hall, said: “What you’re buying is access to an experience, that’s what a ticket is”. Moreover there was a feeling that in an age where everything was reproducible live music remained the ultimate un-reproducible experience. Of course this was at a point in history when live music is more routinized than ever and ever more mediated. Nevertheless the *ideology* of the un-replicable experience as clearly important to promoters. So Hayley Pearce (2008) promoter at the Thekla venue in Bristol told us:

You know, you can download music for free, you can download films for free, you can watch TV on the Internet, you can buy cheap booze in shops, you can have a home cinema at home; you can have all of that stuff in the comfort of your own home, but *watching* live performance on TV is nowhere near the same as being there.

Or as Paul Latham of Live Nation (2009) put it:

You can walk on this high street, down Oxford St, and you'll get band t-shirts [...] and it's the same for recording. You can now get it in so many forms, everything's ephemeral. Everything is disposable. [...] The only thing you can't replicate is you were there when that person you idolized was there. You shared that room, that breathing space, with that person. [...] I was there when [...].

For Peter MacCalman (2009) the value of live music to the audience is:

Because it's real. Access to the act. It's collective. And it's an experience, whereas your MP3 isn't: it's just disposable and it's just promotional rather than anything else nowadays. [...] It's always been surreal, recorded music, anyway, and a step removed from that. And people want the live thing. Always will.

Importantly, promoters frequently expressed feelings that seeing an artist live was the *definitive* popular music experience. So, reflecting on promoting the reformed Specials Paul Latham (2009) said:

That's what is live, having the circle at Manchester Apollo bounce, and the walls sweat, and 3,500 people with one voice singing 'Ghost Town', that you can never replicate. But that was live, and probably as raw as you're going to get.

Conal Dodds (2010) of the Metropolis promotions company told us that "you're never going to be able to replace the live experience of going to a concert". Comparing it to other experiences of live music Mark Mackie (2008) told us:

Thankfully for us, as promoters, concerts are shite on telly [...] it's different, it's not the same. So that live music experience that you can't replicate is what people are buying into. And that's what's built the industry, that's why it's so big.

For Paul McCartney's promoter, Barrie Marshall (2011):

The demand is still there, if the artist you're seeing is unique: Gaga, Pink, whatever it is. These are artists that people think: the only way I can really [...] first of all, I want to enjoy it and be a part of the experience, and secondly I want to give my adulation to them for what they've done and share it. And that is

unique: you can't get it on television, you can't even get it on the Internet. It doesn't work the same way, it's not the same.

For T in The Park promoter Geoff Ellis (2011):

The one thing I think we all know... Or I guess most people know... Is that you've got to offer something special, for people to want to come back; you're not just selling something off the shelf – we're selling experiences. I think that's something that people from the outside, looking in, might not get. I think the audiences get that, because they're not just buying a ticket to go and see a band performing on stage – it's the whole experience. And that's why the live is strong, because you can't download that experience; you can't buy a DVD or watch it online. Yeah, you can go and see a great gig, but it's not just about watching the band on stage – it's about the chat with your mates, it's about basic boy meets girl, or whatever. And just sharing those memories, and how many times, people: 'Yeah, I was at that gig! I remember, yeah!'.

What is important to note here is that why all this may or may not be true it is expressly linked to business strategy. So Latham said that:

There will only be one performance of Paul Weller, or Christy Moore, or Tom Jones, and you were at it. That was you sharing time with that person. *That's what people pay a premium for.* (Latham 2009, emphasis mine)

He also spoke of Live Nation becoming a brand that was trusted to bring audiences that much sought after experience.

Importantly promoters know that the experience is based on full venues. So in evidence to a Culture, Media and Sport Committee enquiry into ticket touting, the CPA said that "the excitement generated at live concerts derives from full houses and the audience inside knowing that there are others outside who would love to trade places" (*Culture Media and Sport Committee* 2008, Ev. 16). Their chair, Rob Ballantine, told the Committee:

We are not a supply and demand industry. What we are trying to do is fill every venue and leave a small demand left over and hope that we can entice those people either to the next concert we are promoting, or the next tour that the band are doing. You would not enjoy a concert if you went along to Wembley Stadium and there were 10,000 people there because there would be no atmosphere. You have to generate full houses to keep the atmosphere going. It is a very, very careful balance that we do, and we keep those ticket prices low and affordable to ensure that those venues are full and full of fans who want to spend their money on concerts, want to go to ten concerts a year and not two concerts because it is costing them £250 a ticket. (*Culture Media and Sport Committee* 2008, Ev. 22)

And in interview Geoff Ellis (2011) explained how important it was that in its early years T in The Park moved to sell out status: "We want to be selling out, we want [...] if you sell out, people aspire to get a ticket, and it self-perpetuates, really".

So there you have it – the experience is only really an experience if the house is full and part of the audience's appreciation is built on the fact that other people are being denied the experience that you are having. This helps to explain the antipathy of many promoters to touts. If their business model is one which is based on some people *not* being able to attend, the secondary market says that experience can *always* be got – albeit often at a considerable price.

There are also two other points worth making here. The first of which is that it's very hard to disagree with the sorts of arguments that promoters are putting forward. It's almost a form of commonsense that live music can be a life affirming experience. But we need to remember that the economics of live music are based around the commercial exploitation of that experience.

But it's not so long ago that articles were appearing in the British press asking why on earth people went to gigs – overcrowded, bad sound, expensive, etc. (see, for example, Barber 1996; Simpson 2000). Now facilities might have improved, but going to a gig still involves the audience taking a certain amount of risk. It could still well be crap.

Secondly, the idea that live music is the definitive musical experience because it is capable of reproduction is an interesting one. Because we are still told by various sellers of audio equipment that the ultimate experience of popular music is that of listening to recordings at home on the latest hi fi equipments (see, for example, Sony Ericsson 2007; *Ipod Outlet* n.d.). Perhaps the ideological victory of live music has been aided by the rise of the MP3 – perhaps the first sound carrier *not* to suggest that it was a superior listening experience to its predecessors.

CONCLUSION

As noted at the beginning the inspiration for this paper was Marx's idea that the ruling ideas at any time are those of the ruling class. I've assumed that in the case of the contemporary music industries that means promoters and I examined their ideology via their self-description as risk-takers, the ways they can minimise risk and through their view of the product they are selling as being that of an experience. And I do believe that these are important things to understand if we want to understand the state of the music industries in 2011.

Meanwhile, in the longer term promoters have to be ensured that they don't kill the goose that laid the golden egg by overpricing and taking too many risks. If we think back to an ideology of the 1960s where artists and audiences were pitted against "The Man" – then that Man is now more likely to be a promoter than a record company. And if a lot of what promoters told us appears to be simple commonsense, then perhaps they've already won the ideological battle and the ruling ideas of this epoch are those espoused by promoters. For us punters the fact that our passion is a commodity is not necessarily news but it does mean that we have to be

careful to ensure that the value of being there does not mean that we are taken for a ride, ideological or otherwise.

ENDNOTES

1. Or the fact that in 2002 Paul McCartney earned US\$2.2 million from recordings, another 2.2 from publishing and 64.9 from concerts (Connolly and Krueger 2006).
2. Ellis also noted that this compares with ticketing which he thought was a 20% business. Such figures help to explain why the world's biggest concert promoter, Live Nation, acquired the world's biggest ticket agency, Ticketmaster.

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Hugh Tracey, authenticity and (African) popular music

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ABSTRACT

Hugh Tracey (1903-1977) positioned himself as a discoverer of African music. His dominant representation constructs authentic African music as traditional folk in opposition to Westernised “town music”, often portraying popular urban-based forms as degenerate and inferior. Nonetheless, Tracey recorded hits in partnership with Gallo Records and helped set several artists on the road to commercial success. This paper offers an exploration of the complex relationship between Hugh Tracey and popular music.

KEYWORDS: Africa; tradition; colonialism; modernity; world music.

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

In 1921, Hugh Tracey (1903-1977) moved from England to Zimbabwe, where he developed an interest in indigenous music. A successful career in radio broadcasting followed relocation to South Africa in 1934. Tracey made African music his main occupation from 1946. He undertook a series of recording expeditions in central, east and southern Africa, founded the International Library of African Music (ILAM) as an independent organisation in 1954, amassed and arranged a substantial archive, published and disseminated recordings in two major series, founded and edited the journal *African Music*, published books and articles, and presented numerous talks and broadcasts promoting his subject.

COLONIAL AUTHENTICITY, MODERNITY AND THE IDEAL AFRICAN

Tracey's dominant representation of African music constructs the "authentic" product as traditional folk music and places it in opposition to Westernised "town music", which he generally portrays as inferior. His construction of authentic African music is nuanced, however, and recognises social complexity and geographical and temporal variation. He speaks, for example, of "*a great variety of music in Bantu Africa*, from the simplest flute tune to the most complex ensemble playing" (Tracey 1954a, p. 238; italics original). Languages and environments influence musical styles and the types of instruments commonly used. Further divisions exist within each local variety: the *Catalogue to the Sound of Africa* series lists "types of performance" under twenty-five main headings, ranging from songs "for children and young people" to "instrumental tunes without words", including songs related to love, death, religion, work, drinking, politics and war (Tracey 1973, v. 1, pp. 19-45). Tracey was unusual in allowing for indigenous *composition*, at a time when many ethnomusicologists spoke only of improvisation. Noting music's social importance and participatory emphasis, Tracey's work also admits that African music-makers sometimes perform alone. It does not subscribe to the myth that all Africans are equally musical, but regards the leading musicians as a minority in any time and place. On tour his approach was primarily aesthetic, not anthropological; he took pains to identify the recognised musicians in any community and considerations of assumed musical value played a large role in his selection criteria.

Tracey (1954a, p. 235) states emphatically that "*African music is not a museum piece*" and that "[oral] music evolves, all the time – it can never be static" (italics original). He analyses the musical effects of colonialism as resulting in the contemporary co-existence of

three facets of Bantu music side by side: *the original folk music* [...] still the music of the great majority, [...] far more active than some would have us believe; *music in decay*, eclipsed both by foreign prejudice and by indigenous gullibility, and thirdly, *music in reconstruction*, a state of affairs in which the melting pot is throwing up new forms of music, good, bad and indifferent, all of them strongly coloured by intrinsically African characteristics. (Tracey 1954b, p. 32; italics original)

Tracey thus recognises "traditional" music as diverse and complex in itself *and* locates this prior complexity in dialogue with influences of colonial modernity. He even accepts the possibility of positive combinations of African and foreign influences. The negative characterisation of urban-based popular forms persists nonetheless. He expands on "music in decay":

Wherever this process [of Westernisation] has most succeeded there is a sorry state of affairs. Original forms of music and dancing give place to imitations of foreign styles, the arts lose their meaning and their contribution to social integration is wasted. Taste is destroyed and licence extolled. Violence is the

quality in a 'cowboy' film which is most admired and the songs of the bawdy house eclipse all others. (ibid., pp. 34-35)

Tracey did not set up a simple binary in reverse, marking African music superior and Western music inferior. He certainly appreciated Western classical and folk music, while disparaging mass-produced forms aimed at the "lowest common denominator". The idea of popular music as a field for serious musicological study would probably have been rather strange to him and he would not necessarily have been comfortable with the current marketing of African music as world music within the popular industry. The rhetorical tone of some of the writing about Tracey on the web, in the wake of Michael Baird's compilations, is thus rather ironic. For example, George De Stefano referring to a concert by Amadou and Mariam in Central Park, New York, says that "Hugh Tracey would have dug the Malian couple and their high-powered band" and "shook his English hips to their dance beats" (De Stefano 2006). From my reading, Tracey would have been appalled by the notion of shaking his hips in any public situation and would certainly never have admitted such a thing. Aural, written and photographic records of his interactions with African musicians suggest that a level of ease and rapport was accompanied by the maintenance of a certain polite distance and general tone of formality throughout.

Tracey (1961, p. 158) believed that "foreign" influences might "destroy [Africans'] ability to make effective music" and bemoaned the fact that "commercial records" were strongly influenced by "converted American Jazz and so on". Yet he also recorded and helped promote examples of the same types of popular African music he spoke negatively about. What exactly was going on?

There were certainly pragmatic imperatives. ILAM was not associated with a university until after Tracey's death. He had to manage his research enterprise largely without support from academia, and partnership with commercial enterprises such as Gallo Records was crucial in getting and keeping it going. There was also the motivation of documentation. He was interested in collecting examples of all types of music performed by Africans, while also promoting certain forms as more authentic and of greater musical interest and social value than others.

There are also indications that Tracey enjoyed some of the music he argued against, whether or not he swung his hips to it. For example, his description of an East African dance band, recorded in 1949 (Tracey 1950, p. 41), reads: "The general effect was what Americans would call 'corny', but so vital and full of rhythm that it raised everyone's immediate enthusiasm".

On the one hand, we have Tracey offering nuanced readings of African musical practices, in variety and specificity. On the other hand, we find frequent generalisations about "the African" which reify racial difference and hierarchy. Tracey's brand of exploration differs from that of the earlier colonial explorers with whom he identifies. His "discovery" is cultural, not geographical (Tracey 1961, p. 156). He affirms the value of authentic indigenous music both for "the African" and for humankind as a whole. Such recognition of the value of African cultural products contrasts with the completely dismissive attitudes of some colonialists. It none-

theless portrays blackness as deficient, and whiteness as superior, in the sphere of cultural knowledge production and reception (Tracey 1954b, p. 32): "We have found that the African is pathetically incapable of defending his own culture". In a symbolic reversal of actual population demographics, "the African" is outnumbered on "his" own musical ground and found wanting with regard to its upkeep. For Tracey, Africans are cultured but not yet civilised; they produce art, but do not understand its value (ibid., p. 34). They, and their music, require intervention.

One could argue that Tracey practices a form of strategic essentialism in his construction of "African personality", to entrench rather than subvert imperialist power. His "essential African" is a prescriptive as much as a descriptive construct. Addressing members of the Royal African Society, a British colonial establishment body, in 1954, he argues that "*homemade African music is one of the most important [...] integrating factors in their social life*"; its promotion, he clearly implies, can aid in the "practical administration" of human capital in an era of industrialisation and intensifying political resistance (Tracey 1954a, p. 235; italics original). Tracey's ideal traditional African is far from the "primitive" stereotype associated with sexuality, violence and witchcraft. Instead he depicts tribal life as simple, cohesive and apolitical, with strong social sanctions for those who flout moral norms. The promotion of traditional music in contexts such as factories and mine compounds, as in ILAM's scheme for corporate members which supplied recordings to be played to black workers, would ideally recreate the qualities of the rural village and provide protection against the pleasurable and political dangers of urbanisation. Authenticity is thus constructed as happily subaltern, compliant and domesticated – a desirable stereotype for a ruling minority dependent for its prosperity on, but also threatened by, the presence of an oppressed majority.

Popular "town music", by contrasting implication, is associated with problems of drunkenness, crime and sexuality which complicate the management of urban spaces, and also with

hypothetical political questions which are the urgent concern of a small but vocal section of the African public who may, however, be able to coerce the simple-minded into supporting their cause with local acts of enjoyable irresponsibility. (Tracey 1958, p. 1)

CHEMIROCHA – JIMMIE RODGERS

My closing example complicates Tracey's binary between the authentic and the popular. It also shows him simultaneously acknowledging and attempting to smooth over the complication. In 1950, he recorded in East Africa, from May to November. In an article on the tour, he writes that the

Nandi on their grass-covered hills, and their cousins, the Kipsigis, on the hills on the opposite side of the great Kavirondo valley which separates them, were two of the most attractive and cheerful of all the African communities

we have had the pleasure of recording [...] their performances were simple, unpretentious and pentatonic [...] we experienced the full charm of their little wishbone-shaped lyres played softly to songs of unusual poetic virtue. (Tracey 1951, pp. 47-48)

An African Eden, untouched by Western modernity, is evoked. Yet, no less than three tracks recorded among the Kipsigis, all sung to the accompaniment of a *chepkongo* lyre, have the same strange title, “Chemirocha” (ILAM 1973). Tracey’s notes explain that the song title stands for “their pronunciation of ‘Jimmy Rodgers’ [sic] whose gramophone records were the first to be heard in the district. It is now synonymous for anything strange or new”.

The first “Chemirocha” song is performed by Bekyibei Arap Mosonick with Cherwo Arap Korogorem. Like other recordings by Tracey, it warrants further analysis supported by knowledge of its language. Although Tracey (1973, v. 2, p. 371) asserts that the “main theme” is “affection for the Kipsigis country”, the song seems to contradict an apolitical rural stereotype, since it “asks why the whitemen should have taken over the country”. How, we may ask, is Jimmie Rodgers invoked in connection with a statement on white occupation? Did the composer(s) view Rodgers as a colonial symbol or appropriate references to his sound as part of their expression of resistance?

The next two tracks are two versions of another song, sung first by young men and then by young women. The commentary offers the following translations or interpretations:

Chemirocha the mystical singer [...] is at Kericho, they say [...]. He is said to have visited a friend of his at Ituna! The similarity of the two instruments, the guitar and the local lyre has given rise to the legend of this wandering player whose records have been heard but whose presence is a mystery. [...] The mysterious singer and dancer, Chemirocha has been turned into a local god Pan with the feet of an antelope, half beast, half man. He is urged by the girls to do the leaping dance familiar to all Kipsigis so energetically that he will jump clear out of his clothes. (ibid., v. 2, p. 372)

Tracey implies that a synergy between the sounds of Rodgers’ guitar and the *chepkongo* lyre has allowed the “mysterious singer” to be thoroughly incorporated into indigenous mythology. This transformation of Jimmie Rodgers to Chemirocha involves more than a representation of pronunciation. It minimises the impact of global modernity and preserves Tracey’s idea of the traditional. Yet the very variation in pronunciation means that knowledge of Chemirocha’s origins – as a popular American country singer – could only have come from the Kipsigis themselves. The choice to indigenise (or exoticise) the spelling of Rodgers’ name was Tracey’s, however. His text elides the implication of his own decision and naturalises his construction of African authenticity.

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Popular music, folk music, African music: *King Kong* in South Africa and London

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines how *King Kong: An African jazz opera* (1959), which was based on the life of a legendary boxer, challenged three modes of thinking about music that constituted its reception: popular, folk and African music. For black South Africans, *King Kong* was a staged spectacle of their everyday popular township jazz music. White South Africa's widely covered reception of the production was unpredictable and varied, framed by the idea of "folk". When *King Kong* opened in London in 1961, its music underwent different interpretations, framed by the idea of jazz as black music, and black music as African.

KEYWORDS: jazz; folk; African; apartheid; London.

INTRODUCTION

Mandlenkosi Ezekiel "King Kong" Dhlamini ruled Sophiatown's boxing legend as the undisputed "non-white" heavyweight icon during the first decade of apartheid. *King Kong: An African jazz opera* dramatizes the events that led to his death in 1957. It premiered in 1959 at the University of the Witwatersrand's Great Hall in Johannesburg. *King Kong's* scholars have repeatedly stressed that white critics' and audiences' responses, from all sides of South Africa's political spectrum, fell within two interpretive frames: primitivism and naturalism (Kavanagh 1985; Kruger 1999; Titlestad 2004). Thus Michael Titlestad (2004, p. 104), for one, concludes his

analysis by acknowledging that *King Kong's* reportage reduced the musical to a site across which debates about South African whiteness and postcolonial Englishness could be staged, although he homogenises these two forms of whiteness. While primitivism and naturalism were pervasive tropes in this reception, they are not equally productive when tracing how music was used to corroborate these claims. Assuming otherwise traps us into what Philip Bohlman and Ronald Radano (2000, p. 1) describe as a "commonplace opinion [that] what distinguishes the musically racial from the not-racial is as simple as telling the difference between black and white". In this paper, I analyse how the tropes used to critique the play have more to do with how its music was identified: the styles to which it was perceived to belong and knowledge about these styles' historical roles in the lives of its practitioners by those outside the observed musical culture. Examining how *King Kong's* white creators viewed black musicking allows us to hone in on more than an evanescent discourse to which *King Kong* and its reception, in South Africa and in London, become but one example.

POPULAR MUSIC, FOLK MUSIC: KING KONG IN SOUTH AFRICA

King Kong occupied two sites in South Africa's racialised imaginary. In black South Africa, firstly, its eclectic soundtrack transposed popular township music, most importantly African jazz/*mbaqanga* and its vocal variants. *Marabi's* foundational influence as the first improvised pan-ethnic urban black musical performance style saw South African jazz bands from the 1930s onwards combine this musical inheritance with swing to create *mbaqanga* in the 1940s (Ballantine 1993). Todd Matshikiza, *King Kong's* musical creator, was integral to this scene. *King Kong's* use of *kwela*, a jazz-influenced style that was popular with whites and blacks, and with audiences outside South Africa (Allen 2005), repeats this commitment to township popular music.

The second ("white") site imagined *King Kong* as an expression of folk-ideals¹. I am not arguing here that *King Kong's* white creators viewed the music with which they were confronted as "folk music" in the narrow sense. Rather, I propose that they saw this music functioning in a particular manner that strongly resembles how folk music has been interpreted by others who consider their genres to have a folk function. For this, I focus on the white "King Kongers" who formed the musical's production team: the scriptwriter Harry Bloom, the producer Leon Gluckman, and the musical director Stanley Glasser. I examine their relationships to black South African culture, and how these informed their perceptions of black jazzing practices.

According to Mona De Beer (1960, p. 11), *King Kong's* documenter, Bloom envisioned *King Kong* as a series of vignettes strung together by a calypso-style singer with a guitar. The looseness of this initial conception underlines its debt to the traditions of black vaudeville, though it is also uncomfortably close to Alfred Herbert's controversial *African Jazz and Variety* burlesques that had been staged since 1952. In the 1950s South Africa's segregated public sphere ensured that while the black press – spearheaded by writers like Matshikiza – were cynical about Her-

bert, his shows were still popular with whites. Matshikiza's distaste for Herbert-style burlesque surely led to this idea's early dismissal. Musically, Herbert's productions projected well-worn stereotypes of blackness onto musical practice by placing their emphasis on so-called "pounding rhythms" (Titlestad 2004, p. 83). Thus we note here a contradiction: pounding rhythm in South Africa's *marabi*-derived subcultures was a relatively recent inclusion that signalled an affirmative Africanisation of musical expression and a significant political moment (see Ballantine 1993, pp. 60-61); Herbert turned them into musical markers of regressive primitivism, interpreted as "natural".

The white King Kongers held rather different political ideologies to Alfred Herbert, so their resort to his profit-oriented innovations leads to our second contradiction. Bloom's contribution to *King Kong* was shaped by his left-leaning political commitments and by an artistically mediated awareness of South Africa's "race relations" worked out in his anti-apartheid novel, *Transvaal episode* (Bloom 1956)². Leon Gluckman had extensive experience, first at the Old Vic and the Nottingham Playhouse and later with the vanguard of South African theatre's adversarial tradition (notably Athol Fugard). Gluckman's liberal humanist conviction in theatre's humanising function predated *King Kong*. From *The Zionist Record* (Stein 1948) we learn that his strongest belief was that the only way to revive theatre in South Africa was to take it to the people living on the soil, to appeal to the Afrikaner's natural bent for acting, to include the African by building their ritual into dance drama against an indigenous background (Stein, 23 July 1948). Gluckman's statements reify and romanticise Afrikaners, they desire an inclusive theatrical tradition to express a broad nonracial South Africanism and they romantically emphasise African reliance on what he perceives as ritual; for him, both Africans and Afrikaners are imbued with folk-ideals that differ from Bloom's emphasis on black urbanites as a proletariat (a different type of "folk"). Gluckman's liberalism influenced the people he chose for *King Kong*, including the composer Stanley Glasser, who was engaged as the musical director in 1958 after studying music at King's College, Cambridge. Between 1951 and 1955, Glasser spent some time with the ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey at Msaho, the centre of the African Music Society. His fieldwork among the Pedi of the former northern Transvaal and the Xhosas of the former Transkei involved him in those broader musicological and anthropological trends concerned with "folk" in the 1950s. Glasser soon incorporated such musics into his early compositions. His appointment at the University of Cape Town's music department allowed him to continue pursuing his "ever-present interest in the indigenous music of Africa" (De Beer 1960, p. 14). Like Gluckman, Stanley Glasser imagined a fully multi-racial South Africa as dependent and necessarily constitutive of indigenous South Africa³.

When these creators were faced with *King Kong*, they had to reckon with the popular, which often undercut their folk-ideals. The extent of the unlearning required was considerable. Black city music by the 1950s was a mass industry in which black musicians wanted a larger stake; it did not subscribe to folk's first ideal of non-commercialism and linkage with pre-capitalist modes of music production (Frith 1981). While Glasser's early encounters with black musicking were

part of Tracey's preservationist drive antipathetic to commercialized town music, Matshikiza's music in *King Kong* was popular and urban, as Glasser soon recognised. The second folk-ideal, identified by Frith (ibid.), isolates certain musical features as aesthetic conventions. The white King Kongers also fell prey to this idea, going as far as stating that "music which is improvised becomes folk-music – an expression of the people" (De Beer 1960, p. 9), characteristically privileging spontaneity, a non-intellectual relationship to one's music and artistic egalitarianism. While this might point to primitivist gesture, it is worth noting that it is arrived at by interpreting *music* in a certain way, rather than by the fact of blackness observed (see Bloom 1961, p. 11).

A third folk-ideal presumes folk music's ability to express communal values as a political function. Bloom underwrites this in his foreword to the *King Kong* book. For him, black musicians "were at their best when singing of the simple things of their own world, or about events in the newspapers" (ibid., p. 8). Such songs did not form the bulk of 1950s musicians' repertoire. Political relevance was often encrypted by using cosmopolitan or seemingly innocuous styles (Allen 2003), rather than the directness folk connotes. The fourth folk-ideal involves "the people" to whom this music is meant to speak. The white King Kongers were aware of class stratification and differentiation in Johannesburg's black society of the 1950s. Nevertheless, in *King Kong*, they insisted on the full coincidence of the musician-actors with the people they represented on stage, and interpreted this mimesis as the ultimate virtue of their project: their black cast was not subservient to the roles that they had created and merely had to illustrate the story "with their natural exuberance, and without the inhibitions imposed by acting roles" (Bloom 1961, pp. 15-16). A generous interpretation might see this desire to stress the staged as natural as a continuation of the dynamics of collaboration characteristic of the *King Kong* project. The problem is that this methodological compromise became an essentializing gesture. What began as a workshop of theatrical conventions became naturalised as a style, then an idiom and finally as intrinsic (see De Beer 1960, p. 33).

What the white King Kongers failed to realise is that the non-distinction they perceived between their cast and the black world they represented on stage was a *structurally constituted* similarity: being black in apartheid South Africa. The black actors could assume and exchange roles within this structure – they lived out the contours and determinants of the structure on stage, rather than their lives. This is why Bloom's and De Beer's statements cannot square with Gluckman's reported address to his cast on the first day of rehearsal: "Tradition (acting is alien to most of you)" (in De Beer 1960, p. 31). These contradictions show that although they were different as people and as artists, the white King Kongers encountered black popular music in ways that were structurally organised around certain folk-ideals, of which Herbert's burlesques differed more by degree than kind: in *King Kong* the boxer became a folk hero, the variegated black urban population assumed the coherence of a folk community, while popular music disseminated by a powerful recording industry was awarded the virtues of folk music.

JAZZ AS AFRICAN MUSIC: KING KONG IN LONDON

When *King Kong* opened in London's Princes Theatre in 1961, it did so as *King Kong: All-African musical*. Its musical changes were extensive, although this was often underplayed: the orchestra was expanded and the arrangements bore more resemblance to standard dance band formats and American swing. South African writers who favoured Africanising influences in *mbaqanga* bemoaned the new arrangements as inauthentic (Ansell 2004, p. 223), while others argued that inclusions of neo-traditional styles like the gumboot dance and the "all-African musical" appellation undermined *King Kong's* modernising (jazz) features.

London audiences also expressed their suspicion of the musical's authenticity in terms of loss or absence of African features, but their frames of reference differed. *King Kong* entered the British jazz scene at a time when debates about what constituted "true jazz" were peaking⁴. British reviews of *King Kong's* music⁵ are framed by the modernist trope of hot rhythm as black music's "vital essence", whose conflation of musical and racial discourses aimed to "project an illusory folk authenticity" (Radano 2000, pp. 459, 462). If we bear in mind the time-lag of jazz's presence in the United Kingdom, and the arrival of *King Kong* as an all-African musical whose soundscape was African jazz, then the focus on "hot rhythm" is predictable: *King Kong* came from, meant to represent, the "source".

Stumbling onto the notion of "folk" and its uses in *King Kong* illuminates surprising consensus on theatre and music performed by blacks in 1950s South Africa, and on transnational myths of "the folk" as "a temporal concept of descent" (ibid., p. 460). However, *King Kong's* reception in London also exposes the tensions of postcolonial Englishness. With South Africa no longer one of its marvellous possessions, older codes of colonial England were easily displaced as problems of "race relations" peculiar to South Africa, even while *King Kong's* reviews easily segued into discussing "the immigration problem" inside the gates (*Daily Mail*, 1961).

CONCLUSION: APARTHEID'S FOLK

When South Africa left the Commonwealth in 1961, South Africa House's propaganda rationalized King Kongers as exemplars of "Bantu folk ability to interpret the world in their own way", praising their "flair for enjoying themselves on stage and spreading that joy" in "[their] own music, [their] own language, and [their] own dancing" (*Yorkshire Post* 1961). But apartheid's appropriation of folk-ideals points to more than their inability to read South African jazz beyond primitivism and naturalism. The failure to hold South Africa to account for the 1960 Sharpeville massacre is manifest in the silence around the human violation *King Kong* places on stage, displaced but not silenced by ringing reviews of vitality and jollity. This would change as anti-apartheid agitation demanded more committed engagement, but South African jazz would remain trapped by the demands of folk expression that, ironically, would be fulfilled by conservative productions like *Ipi tombi*; not by other South African jazz musicians in London, who had different battles to wage.

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ENDNOTES

1. The following argument is more than a little influenced by Simon Frith's (1981) examination of how ideas that informed interpretations of folk music influenced the myth of the rock community. I am also aware that the use of "folk" in South Africa has its own historical trajectory.
2. *Transvaal episode* (Bloom 1956) won the British Authors Club First Novel Award in May 1957. Originally titled *Episode*, it was published by Collins (UK) in 1956, also appearing in South Africa in this year, where it was labeled "undesirable". In 1981 it was one of six books chosen by Second Chance Press (US) and, a year later was resurrected in South Africa by David Philip's Africa South Paperbacks imprint as *Transvaal episode* (1982).
3. In Cape Town, Glasser was also more interested in urban popular themes. In 1961, he composed a ballet called *The square* – a depiction of gang life in Cape Town's District Six and in 1962 he collaborated with Chris McGregor in the musical *Mr Paljas* (McGregor 1995, p. 22).
4. 1950 inaugurated what Jim Godbolt (1989) has termed "Britain's First Real Jazz Age". It saw significant changes in the British jazz scene, with big bands collapsing, styles dividing into "trad", "bop" and "mainstream" and jazz becoming increasingly professionalised, spurred by post-war Britain's infatuation with all things American.
5. These are contained in the Jack Hylton Archives, University of Lancaster, England.

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Singing the body electric: Real-time and virtual performance

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ABSTRACT

Bruce Cassidy's Body Electric appeared briefly in the 1990s in Johannesburg to perform a number of concerts there, including two concerts at the University of the Witwatersrand. Led by the Canadian-born Cassidy and formed as a "healing band", the free improvising Body Electric drew on the experience and attitudes of musicians from fairly eclectic backgrounds (the late David Hoenigsberg, a Western art music composer, as well as more ostensibly "jazz" improvisers like Rashid Lanie, Rob Watson, and myself). Examining extracts (posted by Cassidy on YouTube) from Seth Asch's documentary film on the Body Electric's April 1993 performance at the University of the Witwatersrand's Bozzoli Pavilion raises questions around the legacy of exploratory music of this kind. Considering the differences between the original live performance and its current digitised state as historical record, the question arises as to whether and how these performances may be compared to one another.

KEYWORDS: Body Electric; Cassidy; embodiment; free improvisation; phenomenology.

The challenge facing the human science researcher is to describe things in themselves, to permit what is before one to enter consciousness and be understood in its meanings and essences in the light of intuition and self-reflection. (Moustakas 1994, p. 27)

INTRODUCTION

Bruce Cassidy lived in South Africa from 1981 until 2003, whereupon he returned to his native Canada. A member of the jazz-fusion group Blood, Sweat and Tears from 1979 to 1980, he plays trumpet and flugelhorn as well as the Electronic Valve Instrument (EVI), an electronic MIDI-based trumpet synthesizer interface invented by Nile Steiner (*Patchman Music* n.d.). During the 1990s Cassidy formed an ensemble called the Body Electric, which performed a number of concerts in Johannesburg, including two concerts at the University of the Witwatersrand.

The group comprised Cassidy (brass and EVI), David Hoenigsberg and Rashid Lanie (keyboards), and a rhythm section of Rob Watson (drums) and myself (bass guitar and keyboards). The musical focus of the ensemble was twofold: in addition to extensive sections of freely improvised music, we also played Cassidy's transcriptions based on devotional music. The documentary film-maker Seth Asch recorded the rehearsals and filmed the April 1993 concert at the Bozzoli Hall at Wits. My aim in this paper is to explore grounds for comparison between the original live performance and the digitised YouTube version.

FREE AND COLLECTIVE IMPROVISATION

In South African jazz history, there has been a relatively small number of ensembles that have set out deliberately to explore free improvisation¹. This approach to improvising is a far cry from what Gary Patrick characterises as "the group-improvisation methodology of Dixieland" in his 2004 review of Weather Report's reissued CD */sing the body electric*. In the Dixieland style, there exists an underlying melodic/harmonic schema which determines and limits the note choices available to improvisers. In contrast, free improvisation presupposes the abandonment of such schemas from the outset – temporary frameworks of this kind may or may not emerge during the course of the performance.

Further, in Dixieland, the roles of the front-line improvisers as well as the rhythm section refer to the common practice of the style period in question, and there is little room for deviation from this if one wishes to maintain the idiomatically appropriate characteristics of the genre.

In the Body Electric, the group performed a mixed repertoire of completely unscripted free compositions and Cassidy's original compositions drawing from various devotional musics from the Hindu and Buddhist traditions (in keeping with Cassidy's conception of the group as his "healing band"). "The Creation", as performed at the Bozzoli auditorium in 1993, typifies this latter category of material, in which there is no notated music and the composition unfolds in real time as a creative collaboration.

My recollection of playing Cassidy's material in the concert was that it demanded a high degree of concentration and listening, but that, in informal discussions immediately after the performance, we all felt that it had been successful and energizing and – in short – "worth the effort". It is debatable whether these positive feelings were a result of the musical content of what we had performed (especially in the

context of the devotional music) or whether they were grounded in the attainment of what R. Keith Sawyer (2007; 1997) has defined as group flow². Certainly there seemed to be consensus among us that our engagement had been a liberating experience, an opinion shared by some of the audience members in conversations after the concert.

It was felt that we had successfully negotiated the kind of musical space that Wayne Bowman (1998, p. 273) describes in this statement: "Musical space is a field of action, and the human body our instrument of musical comprehension".

THE ELECTRONIC VALVE INSTRUMENT (EVI)

For much of the concert, Cassidy played the Electronic Valve Instrument (EVI), invented by Nyle Steiner. The EVI is an electronic wind controller which generates MIDI data such as pitch, volume, vibrato, and so on. Designed to be connected to a synthesizer for sound production, it is capable of producing a theoretically infinite variety of timbres and has a far wider range of available notes than its acoustic counterpart, the trumpet. The only truly acoustic instrument in the concert was Rob Watson's drum kit, since there were three keyboardists in the persons of Hoenigsberg, Lanie and myself³. For Tia DeNora (2000, p. 102), Cassidy's EVI might well be defined as a form of prosthetic technology:

Prosthetic technologies are materials that extend what the body can do – for example, steam shovels, stilts, microscopes or amplification systems enhance and transform the capacities of arms, legs, eyes and voices. Through the creation and use of such technologies actors (bodies) are enabled and empowered, their capacities are enhanced. With such technologies, actors can do things that cannot be done independently; they are capacitated in and through their ability to appropriate what such technologies afford.

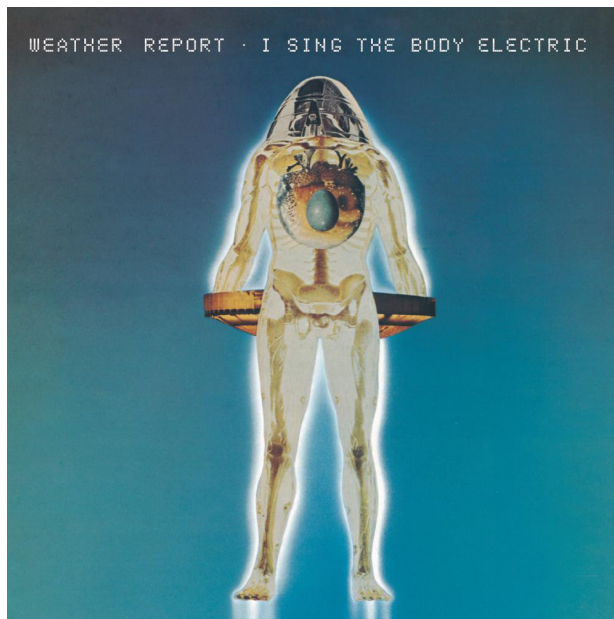
While DeNora's view of technology seems overwhelmingly positive (she uses terms like "enhance", "enable", and "empower"), it is worth noting that such specialised technologies (in our case, microphones, synthesizers, and amplifiers) depend on electricity for their functioning, and consequently much of the band's "empowerment" originated from the local electricity supplier. In the event of a power failure, the band would have been silent, apart from Watson's acoustic drums. In fact, the very existence of this band (and the whole phenomenon of popular music) grew out of twentieth-century technologies, since until the advent of modern amplification and synthesis techniques, none of the kinds of sonic possibilities offered by such technologies had been available.

THE BODY ELECTRIC: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Cassidy's choice of name for the group seems to resonate with various other instances of this term in literature and music – perhaps most immediately with Walt

Whitman's 1855 poem *I sing the body electric*⁴. A further resonance (and no doubt one that Cassidy would have been aware of) is with the 1972 Weather Report recording *I sing the body electric*. The original album cover, portraying a transparent post-human cyborg, seems to owe more to Ray Bradbury's 1969 science fiction collection of the same name than to Whitman's original poem.

Figure 1: Weather Report, *I sing the body electric* (Columbia 1972).



In choosing the name Body Electric, Cassidy seems not only to emphasise its intertextual character but also seems to make a statement of intent about the nature of the music, namely, that it depends on, and revels in, the new sonic possibilities offered by “post-acoustic” instruments based on twentieth-century synthesizers. In the course of researching this article, however, it became apparent that Cassidy's choice of name for the group had little or nothing to do with these tempting literary and musical connections⁵. In his own words, the name came directly from his experiences in meditation:

The Body Electric is a term that I had heard and used it to ‘poet-ify’ the group title. I was put up to the idea of using music for healing by my yoga instructor (guru). I told him, when he suggested it, that I knew nothing about healing. He said: ‘Oh, your job is not to heal but to watch’. This was a very interesting and powerful statement to me because it removed ego involvement. The ‘trick’ was to use Sanskrit chants internally to calm and abstract the mind and then to play intuitively. (Cassidy 2011)

PHENOMENOLOGY AND SEMIOTICS: THE BODY AND THE SIGN

In *Music as heard*, Thomas Clifton (1982) presents an account of the philosophical possibilities of the phenomenological project for musical understanding⁶. Clifton's description of "the theoretical act" of observing music implies in the first place an understanding subject "located in a definite place and time":

Where phenomenology can contribute most to reflective procedures in music theory is in the awareness that the properties of an object are not fixed 'in some metaphysical heaven', as Merleau-Ponty writes, but are experienced by a person located in a definite place and time. This means that the theoretical act will consist not only of observing the music, but also of observing the self observing the music. (ibid., p. 37)

It is the memory of this specific sense of place and time that informs my reading of the original concert performance, from my (inter)subjective vantage point as one of the performers. As performer, one's engagement with the musical materials as they unfold is realised in the first instance through bodily interactions with the instrument, causing it to sound and thereby bringing the music into existence.

With these thoughts in mind, I turn to examining the filmed version of the concert. I consider this performance in the light of Kevin Korsyn's (2003, p. 143) conception of the subject as constituted by media – and especially signs:

Nowadays the signifiers, images, and fantasies that compose the subject circulate through media, particularly as the post-industrial economy revolves more and more around the consumption of signs. In seeking to obey the motto of the Delphic Oracle – 'Know thyself!' – we must recognise that modern media have transformed both the means of knowledge and the self under examination.

For Sokolowski (2000, p. 3), current technology generates *appearances* "not only by words spoken or written by one person to another, but by microphones, telephones, movies, and television, as well as by computers and the Internet, and by propaganda and advertising". This transformation of the subject for Sokolowski is aided and abetted by some of the self-same technologies DeNora considers as liberating. The Internet might be understood as contributing to the creation of globally distributed temporary communities of fans participating in iconic virtual imagery (Korsyn's "signifiers, images, and fantasies" *par excellence*). It requires a major stretch of the imagination, in my view, to equate this virtual audience with a real one, or to compare a live performance with a recording. As Sokolowski (ibid., p. 29) states:

It is interesting to note that a recording of a piece of music is different from a live performance because the recording captures just one of the performances, whereas each live performance is different from all the others. [...] When a recording captures just one performance, it is as though a movie captured just

one aspect of a cube and only let me see that particular manifestation of the cube itself.

Perhaps the most immediate way of comparing the real and virtual instances of the same performance is in tabular form, as follows (see *Table 1*).

Table 1: "The Creation" (Live performance vs. YouTube version).

LIVE PERFORMANCE (APRIL 1993)	YOUTUBE VERSION
Once-off	Infinitely repeatable
Specific time and place	Everywhere and nowhere
Flesh and blood	Bits and bytes
Embodied	Disembodied
Performer's perspective	Director's perspective
Social space	Cyberspace
Improvised ("online")	Edited ("offline")
Presentation	Representation

While these apparently antagonistic categories might seem to speak for themselves, I would like to emphasise that what I describe as the social space of the original live performance is not that of a fixed set of relationships, but the space of a temporary community brought into being in a particular place and time by circumstances. It is not necessarily a unified social space, simply concluded from the fact that not everyone in the audience might have unequivocally liked the music, or agreed with Cassidy's healing intent. In Cassidy's (2011) own words: "Unfortunately music has become so ubiquitous that it is hard to escape and it rarely gets the same degree of attention from the listener that it did when it was only experienced in a live performance situation. Recording has been a mixed blessing".

Nonetheless, this was a fraught moment in South African political history, on the eve of the country's first-ever democratic elections, and there was a mixture of fear and excitement in the air. Depending on one's particular political outlook, the country was poised on the verge of greatness, or on a slippery slope to disaster.

Perhaps Cassidy's idea of a healing band was exactly appropriate at that particularly turbulent time in South African history.

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ENDNOTES

1. Various groups led by Merton Barrow (in 1970s Cape Town), Carlo Mombelli's Prisoners of Strange (contemporary, Johannesburg), and the Body Electric come to mind. The members of Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath, some of whom later were to embrace free improvisation, were forced into exile by the political circumstances of 1960s South Africa.
2. Sawyer (1997, p. 43) defines flow as "a mental state associated with moments of highly creative activity".
3. Despite my instrument of choice being bass guitar or double bass, I chose to play keyboards to challenge myself to avoid playing habitually ingrained patterns as I found I was doing during the initial rehearsal period.
4. From Huck Gutman's (1998) analysis of the poem: "Almost at the outset Whitman acknowledges that many have doubts about the body – doubts originating in the enduring Christian notion that the body is different from the soul, and is the seat of the soul's corruption".
5. As Cassidy (2011) describes it: "This title had nothing to do with Walt Whitman or the band Weather Report but developed out of meditation experience of the 'electrical body'. The entire universe is vibrating and what we call electricity is just one form of that. Any meditator can feel directly what a scientist points to. Proceeding from gross to subtle: if you sit quietly and observe your body you can feel many forms of vibration. Breathing is a vibration (rhythm); heartbeat can soon be felt to shake the torso. Tingling (a clear manifestation of the electrical body) then can be felt, usually in the face and hands first, then the whole body. Soon the demarcation of the body from the surroundings starts to evaporate and you can feel the environment. There are many other subtle forms of vibrations and sounds and lights that subsequently arise but this is enough to illustrate that we are immersed in a sea of vibration and through it we communicate".
6. I use the fairly informal term "musical understanding" all-inclusively, attempting thereby to encompass a variety of perspectives (performer, listener, composer, consumer) and

categories of engagement with music (cognition, perception, reflection, analysis, and so on).

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Township comets: The impact of South African jazz on the UK scene

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ABSTRACT

That South African jazz musicians have been heavily influenced by musicians from the United States is both understandable and well understood. Various scholars including Coplan (2007), Ansell (2004), Martin (1999), Ballantine (1993), and Erlman (1991), have traced the early history of this influence to visits by minstrel troupes and jubilee singers in the late nineteenth century. Ballantine (1993) informs us that in the mid twentieth century the influence continued to be important and, on occasion, it was made overt by groups with names such as the African Inkspots and the Manhattan Brothers doing superb imitations of the Inkspots and the Mills Brothers. Indeed artists continued to acknowledge their influences throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century; Chris McGregor's "Sweet As Honey" (MUSEA 1988) was dedicated to Thelonious Monk and featured a typically Monk-esque harmonic sequence, whilst Winston Mankunku Ngozi's admiration for John Coltrane and Wayne Shorter can be found in more than just the title of "Dedication (To Daddy Trane and Brother Shorter)". (WRC 1968; Sheer Sound 2003). But as more and more South African jazz artists sought refuge from the brutal politics at home they travelled and practiced their music overseas, notably in the United Kingdom (Abrahams, Africa, Bahula, Deppa, Dyani, Feza, Jolobe, Lipere, Matthews, McGregor, Mahlobo, Miller, Moholo-Moholo, Mothle, Mseleku, Pukwana, Ranku, Saul and Williams, amongst others). Drawing on personal interviews and recorded music, this paper presents preliminary findings from research that seeks to identify the various areas in which exiled South African musicians influenced UK musicians and their music.

KEYWORDS: jazz; United Kingdom; South Africa; diaspora; exile.

THE “HOW” AND “WHERE” OF MUSICAL INFLUENCE

Two fundamental questions of a project such as this are how and where one chooses to look for “influence”. Additionally there is the ever fascinating gap between what practitioners say they do and what they can be observed as doing (I’d like to emphasize the formulation “what musicians can be observed as doing” as opposed to “what musicians do” since I’d suggest that a very profound influence can manifest itself in ways that are difficult to pinpoint objectively).

Regarding “how” I’ve looked for influence, my observations are based on studying recordings (commercially available, broadcast, and private), conversations with musicians, and a rather unsystematic approach to attending live performances. However I’d like to note here a point well made by Louis Moholo-Moholo (2010): “Just because it’s not on record, doesn’t mean it didn’t happen”.

For the “where”, that is the places in which I’ve looked for this influence, my research has coalesced around eight rather fluid groupings:

1. Extra-musical (titles, lyrics, dedications, and artwork);
2. Personnel/collaborators;
3. Repertoire;
4. Musical (organisation, pastiche, instrumentation, techniques, groove/feel, harmony, melodic line, phrasing, sound);
5. Pluralism (free music, approach to the US tradition, inclusion of folk/world elements);
6. Performative elements;
7. Education;
8. “Hidden” Influence.

Despite ordering these elements numerically I don’t wish to imply a hierarchy of importance, nor categorical independence. As I understand it, these elements interact and inform each other freely, and are only ordered thus to facilitate a linear narrative.

THE EXTRA-MUSICAL

Considering the extra-musical can be an exercise in spotting philosophical alignment, rather than tangible musical influences. Steve Williamson’s *Rhyme time: That fuss was us!* (Verve 1991) is dedicated to Art Blakey and Chris McGregor jointly, both of whom had died the previous year. Although Williamson featured in one of the later Brotherhood of Breath line-ups, and despite citing the Brotherhood as a formative experience – especially with regard to time, feel, and groove (Williamson 2009) – the musical language of *Rhyme time* is most closely aligned to that of Steve Coleman’s M-Base collective.

Similarly John Stevens wrote a tribute to Dudu Pukwana – “Dudu’s gone” (Emanem 1992) – and Django Bates’ lyrics “Dudu Pukwana” (Bates 2011) lament the passing of several London based South African exiles.

British trombonist Annie Whitehead was a member of the Brotherhood at the same time as Williamson but also played in small groups with Pukwana, an influence she acknowledges in "To Dudu" (MSI 2004). However Duncan Heining (2008-09, p. 43) states that in Whitehead's music he hears a clear debt to the "spirit of the Blue Notes".

But perhaps the most intricate extra-musical example can be seen in the artwork for UK big band Loose Tubes' second and third albums (Loose Tubes Limited 1986; Editions EG 1988). In many ways the group of musicians who formed Loose Tubes with Django Bates represent the pool of UK musicians who were most obviously musically influenced by the South African exiles. Consequently, rather than implying that the influence was limited to album artwork, I would suggest that it is more appropriate to consider it as pervading many areas *including* the artwork.

The design for both albums is credited to Giant, and although there is nothing especially definite on the front cover of *Delightful Precipice* (Loose Tubes Limited 1986), the back of the LP features a British colonial map of the Union of South Africa with flames lapping up its right hand side, thereby inviting the listener to consider the message behind the first track on the album "Säd Afrika" (part of the manuscript for which also appears below the burning map). It is interesting also to note the particular spelling, and the play on a perceived stereotypical white South African accent, which was heavily satirised in the UK media at the time largely as a result of the efforts of Spitting Image Productions (1986).

PERSONNEL/COLLABORATORS

The inclusion of Thebe Lipere on Loose Tubes' third album (Editions EG 1988) was by no means a unique instance of SA-UK collaboration. In the early 1960s the musical *King Kong* and the Blue Notes' arrival had done much to establish the South African jazz community in London (McGregor 1995, p. 87). This was a tremendous fillip for a younger generation of British musicians who did not fit in to any of the three prevailing jazz orthodoxies which, at the time, comprised of two reactionary factions – the revivalists and traditionalists – and the bop modernists (McKay 2005).

One of the early British musicians to record with exiled South Africans was drummer Laurie Allen, who appeared on Gwigwi Mrwebi's 1967 recording *Kwela* (77 Records 1967) – later reissued under the title *Mbaqanga Songs* (Honest Jon's Records 2006). The same year also saw the first of Chris McGregor's European big bands – which eventually performed and recorded under the name the Brotherhood of Breath – and always featured a combination of nationalities. The backbone of the Brotherhood was a balance of South African and British players and their early experiments were facilitated by Ronnie Scott's club relocating to Frith Street and making the Gerard Street premises – which became known as The Old Place – available to younger musicians until the lease expired. But this environment of musical mixing should not be written off simply as opportunist pragmatics. McGregor told Jean-Pierre Cosse in 1972 that:

There were quite a lot of jam-sessions amongst all the young, less well-known musicians playing at the club. We all wanted to research what the others were into, and this created lines of connection between musicians of different groups. (Cited in McGregor 1995, p. 107)

Trumpeter and composer Kenny Wheeler (2011) confirmed the value of this situation:

London was a great place when [the South Africans] were around. [...] In those days musicians were moving around. One day you might be in a Mike Westbrook thing, or a Mike Gibbs thing, or a Brotherhood of Breath thing. There was a lot of changing going on. That was a good time really.

British musicians involved in these lines of connection included Malcolm Griffiths, Pat Higgs, Dave Holdsworth, Dave Holland, Alan Jackson, Mike Osbourne, Evan Parker, Alan Skidmore, and John Surman (McGregor 1995, p. 109), and in the late 1980s the next generation joined in, including Steve Williamson, Julian Argüelles, Dave DeFries, Annie Whitehead, Chris Biscoe and Fayaz Virji.

A number of other bands who contributed to and continued this legacy of transnational collaboration included District Six, Fast Colour, Centipede, Zila, Viva La Black, The Dedication Orchestra and the recently formed Township Comets where South Africans Pinise Saul and Adam Glasser play Dudu Pukwana repertoire with Chris Batchelor, Jason Yarde, Harry Brown, Gene Caldarazzo and Dudley Phillips.

MUSICAL

With regard to observable musical influence on British musicians I have identified nine areas of interest:

1. Musical organisation;
2. Tribute pastiche/re-composition;
3. Instrumentation;
4. Compositional techniques;
5. Groove/feel;
6. Harmony;
7. Melodic line;
8. Phrasing;
9. Sound.

For this paper I'll restrict my thoughts to the first three in this list.

MUSICAL ORGANISATION

As a seventeen-year-old musician listening to UK modernists Don Weller and Stan Tracey, trumpeter Chris Batchelor recalls being totally overwhelmed by the way the South African exiles approached the music (especially Dudu Pukwana and Mongezi Feza). His first exposure to their music was at an illegal club in London's Rotherhithe where Pukwana was beginning to experiment with an expanded line up for his band Zila. South African regulars Pinise Saul (voice), Ernest Mothle (bass), Churchill Jolobe (drums) and Dudu Pukwana (saxophone) were joined by another South African Peter Tholo Segona (trumpet), Barbadian trumpeter Harry Beckett and Englishman Dave DeFries, also on trumpet. Batchelor (2011) recalls that "people would blow at the same time, it wasn't precious, it wasn't like my solo, your solo... They'd just dive in".

If this sense was never really captured by the larger format British arrangements commissioned for Moholo-Moholo's *The Dedication Orchestra* (Ogun 1994; Ogun 1992), it was a way forward that inspired Keith Tippett's music – not just with regard to organising improvisations but also the way that separate compositions could be combined in performance. Writing in 2008 for the liner notes to Ogun's *Blue Notes* box set Tippett acknowledges the impact the South African's music had on him:

I first heard the *Blue Notes* at Ronnie Scott's Old Place... I heard Chris, Dudu, Mongezi, Ronnie (Beer), Johnny and Louis. Forty-odd years later, the memory of that incredible gig is still vibrant. The pieces, the improvisation, the way they swung, the freedom of it all was quite unlike anything I had heard before. (Tippett 2008)

TRIBUTE PASTICHE/RE-COMPOSITION

British jazz musicians have made a number of musical tributes to the various South African musics that the exiled jazz musicians drew upon for their own inspiration and thereby introduced to the UK jazz world. Django Bates' and Steve Argüelles' *Human Chain* album (Loose Tubes Limited 1986) is especially illuminating in this regard. The track "Jolobe" is, unsurprisingly, a tribute to drummer Churchill Jolobe and features a keyboard introduction and general demeanour that is *maskanda* through a Batesian lens. And from the same album it is difficult not to hear the vocal style and *malombo* drums of Philip Tabane's groups refracted in the "La La La".

Perhaps the most involved pastiche/tribute however is DeFries' "Open Letter To Dudu Pukwana" written for Loose Tubes. (Editions EG 1988) Here the well-known "MRA" by Dudu Pukwana (and/or Christopher Columbus Ngcukana)¹ is given a new twist. Amongst many musical references, the distinctive arpeggiated riff set up by the trombones in Chris McGregor's *Brotherhood* arrangement (Neon RCA 1971) is mutated into DeFries' trombone riff where the last 4/4 bar of the four bar pattern is extended to become a 6/4 bar.

INSTRUMENTATION

Before the Brotherhood of Breath hurled itself on to the London jazz scene, the conception of what a big band could be was rather limited to “old fashioned swing or hideous fusion” where the idea was “clean, accurate intonation and time” (Batchelor 2011). Django Bates’ notoriously eclectic record collection (partly informed by his father’s listening habits) featured Brotherhood recordings however and these were crucial in forming his understanding of how a big band could be (*Mixing it* 1999). We can observe this in the non-conventional big band line-up employed by Loose Tubes – McGregor had of course written and arranged for large ensemble line-ups that included bassoon, alto clarinet, flute, and violin on *Yes please* (In & Out 1981).

But there are other instrumentation usages that speak directly to South African popular music. Saxophonist/clarinetist Steve Buckley – a member of Loose Tubes and later collaborator with Chris Batchelor in the group Big Air – was heavily influenced by *kwela* pennywhistle style and this was worked in to a variety of contexts including the big band sound of Loose Tubes Limited (1986; Editions EG 1988), the electronica influenced improvisations of Big Air (Babel 2008), Django Bates’ theatre music for a production of *The third policeman* (Ah Um 1990) as well as Buckley’s own projects, notably the albums *Life as we know It* (Babel 1997-8) and *Bud moon* with Noble and Marshall (Ping Pong Productions 1996).

FINAL REMARKS

It is important to acknowledge that, as in South Africa, the US also heavily influenced the UK jazz scene. The contribution made to the UK jazz scene by musicians from other African countries – especially Nigeria, the Congo, and Senegal – is also noteworthy.

There are obvious problems with implying that the musical transactions I have discussed were one way, but possible reasons the impact of South African musicians was so great in the UK are a matter of numbers combined with length of stay. Other conditions, such as an openness to and interest in folk musics from around the world amongst younger UK jazz musicians, also provided fertile ground for the particular combination of musics practised by the South African exiles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

1. Both Pukwana and Ngcukana have laid claim to this composition and as such it is

extremely difficult to ascertain a definitive single authorship, if such a concept is even appropriate.

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Hearing loss: Theoretical absence and visual bullying

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ABSTRACT

The origins of Anglophone cultural theory in the mid-twentieth century were predominantly scopocentric, partly because of its epistemological history, and for the cognate reason that visual tropes are so deeply embedded in the English language. As this scopocentricity comprehensively colonised cultural research, studies of non-visual practices and texts were both marginalised and deformed. The discipline of film studies was dominated by attention to visual theoretical models, centred for example on “the gaze”. Studies of film sound have burgeoned in recent times, but often have been hobbled by inappropriately scopic theoretical models, or they have eschewed these models by withdrawing into more purely empirical approaches, such as genre studies or atomised “case studies”. While disclosing what E.P. Thompson called “the poverty of theory”, such studies have often found themselves in a conceptual no-man’s land. Without proposing a return to theoretical “master narratives” which compromise the integrity of the text, we argue that studies of film sound should build on the work of scholars like Philip Tagg to develop further theoretical modelling based on the specificity of sound and its deployment in film.

KEYWORDS: theory; film sound studies; case study.

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt popular music studies have achieved a great deal in thirty years, setting up numerous disciplines and sub-disciplines with rigorous intellectual tropes. It is from one of those disciplines, namely film sound studies, that this paper was birthed. However, it is not concerned with film sound *per se*, but rather with observations about the theoretical directions that film sound, and by implication, popular music studies, have followed. In reflecting on thirty years of academic enquiry in film sound studies, what becomes apparent is both the loss of theoretical foundations in some areas, and a reliance on visually constructed theory in others. The latter is not surprising given that the rise of theory was based on scopic models of knowledge, and could be considered a further tactic in distancing the intellectual from the intractable Other, developed because of the increasing auralisation of social practices and interactions, through which control over that distance was lost. Acoustic properties are characterised by leakages within and between material and intellectual spaces. The more powerful and pervasive those orders become, the more desperately is experience modelled scopically, and the urge to theorise the acoustic is, like the score, an attempt to deprive the acoustic of that constitutive essence that threatens discursive control. That is, the rise of theory is the latest manoeuvre in the war waged on the sonic by the scopic for control of the meanings of culture. This paper argues for a return to theoretical endeavour in popular music studies. But rather than depending once again on scopic frameworks, IASPM and popular music studies generally need to birth our own sonic theories that are wholly relevant to our disciplines.

LOSS OF THEORY

While film sound studies are now clearly established as an active international discipline, there is a need to take stock of previous approaches and examine the current sound of film music scholarship. That sound, this paper argues, is an immanently deconstructionist one. The majority of current scholarship analyses film sound via one of a few descriptors; nationality, genre or historical agendas to name a few. And while the scholarship has moved away from constantly defending the field in which it exists, the predominance of analytical material has resulted in a detached, non-referential body of research. To use a musical analogy, we have become treble-heavy, focusing only on melodic contours – those more easily construed – with no regard for the structural elements that lie underneath the melody and allow it to take shape. What is needed, we would argue, is a return to theoretical baselines, similar to those promulgated in the early years of the discipline, yet rather than importing theoretical paradigms from other disciplines and especially from scopocentric models, perhaps it is time to consider more broadly where the theoretical leitmotif of film sound studies is going to come from?

While this paper remains firmly a work-in-progress designed to stimulate conversation, debate and contemplation, it draws its origins from Mark Evans's involvement with the *Encyclopedia of film music and sound* (Evans forthcoming). This project,

a two-volume encyclopaedia, has given many of us involved in film sound studies pause to consider the shape, direction and focus of our now well-established discipline. What became apparent to the Advisory Editors was the difficulty we had in designing a taxonomy for volume one, the volume dealing with theoretical concerns central to the discipline. The other volume, however, essentially about the how and the who, was much easier to delineate. As a discipline, we are good (and getting better all the time) at talking about the how of the industrial process. We have even begun to consider genre and, through more recent scholarship, notions of regionality, nationality and race. Yet many of these terms remain bounded by visual tropes. Genres, for example, are visually delineated for the most part. Where are the sonic genres of film? Even the musical film, perhaps the strongest candidate for such categorisation, is discussed and dissected according to notions of spectacle; that is, visually. Within film sound studies we have struggled to build one, homogenised, linear progression of theory. We have rather, largely out of necessity, utilised a multifarious, fragmented, multi-discipline approach drawing from various theoretical realms. As we shall document later, in the theoretical battle between the sonic and the visual, the latter remains firmly dominant.

A conference, and conference theme, such as that provided here in South Africa, gives one the opportunity to think in broader historical strokes. What became apparent in doing so was that film music/sound studies actually began with theoretical concerns. So in very clear ways we have made moves away from these initial leanings. That may well be fine, but it is important to understand why, and what we have replaced them with.

What of early scholarship? Even the briefest consideration reveals that many of the earliest theorists in film music were mainly concerned with the impact of sound, and whether sound would in fact ruin the purity of the cinematic art form. Indeed the introduction of speech, sound synchronisation and the like, was continually more contentious than the nature of the music or sound itself. Here we are particularly thinking of the Russian theorists as well as Hungarian Balázs¹ and others. As we will discuss below, this fear and condemnation of sonicity theoretically led to the enforcement of scopocentric ideals, a hierarchy that still prevails today. Of course in the more purely sonic realm, there was Adorno and Eisler's treatise on film music, *Composing for the films* (1947). Despite its uncompromising and blunt assessment of film underscore, as Binns (2009, p. 731) points out, the volume "did not spur on a wave of responses or provoke more critically considered scholarship in the decades following its publication". This lack of engagement and critical discourse within the discipline is, sadly, a continuing characteristic.

Jumping forward, and post-synch sound theorists, mainly in the 1970s, finally began to acknowledge sound as equal with the image track. With that acknowledgement came the ensuing concentration on sound's influence over our cinematic experience. Christian Metz (1982) became particularly concerned with how we experience sound (a discussion still important today). For Metz, sound as socially constructed was a perceptual object, thus perception was theoretically important. Mary Ann Doane's work covered several theoretical regions, mainly the threat to

unification that came with sound, but also she was first to theorise the spatial relationships at work in cinema, and their gendered biases (see, for instance, Doane 1980). And her work took place before the current proliferation of individualised 5.1 (or 7.1, or 10.1) channel viewing environments. Yet today spatialisation theory remains so undeveloped it is hard to have a conversation about. Graeme Harper (2009, p. 6) notes that:

Listening, in the case of the visual media, also includes the ‘hearing’ of the visual – by which is meant that [sic] the positioning of sound in the temporal and spatial worlds of the image. The image then asks the audience, both viewer and listener, to place it in conjunction with the acoustic realm, with a more or lesser degree of mutual occupation. And this acoustic realm is not on a single plane or related in only one way to the listener.

We find it curious that theory around reception, particularly our physical reception to sonic images, so crucial to early film sound theorists, is so absent today, despite the fact that our reception of audio-visual texts is going through its most tumultuous upheaval since the introduction of synchronised sound.

There obviously have been other theoretical voices in the discipline, especially the likes of Michel Chion (1994) and Phillip Tagg. The latter’s work in musematic analysis usefully allows for the identification of musical signifiers, which in turn can lead to theorisations and observations based between different musicians, different texts, or even culturally similar phenomena (see Tagg 2009). And even through his keynote address at the IASPM 2011 conference (“Caught on the back foot: Musical structure, ethnicity and class”, subsequently revised and published in Tagg 2011), Tagg has reminded us that popular descriptors of music are required. Moreover, music remains a cross-domain phenomenon and thus we need to be able to refer to other structures (be they dance, space or whatever) in order to adequately analyse it. The ability to do so relies heavily on theoretical models that are robust enough, and *sonic* enough, to allow such interdisciplinarity.

RISE OF THE CASE STUDY

I [Evans] have previously documented what I see as the proliferation of “case study” material within film sound studies (Evans 2007). One need only look through the latest anthologies in the discipline for proof that this form, above all else, dominates the scholarly landscape. Perhaps there is nothing wrong with this; perhaps it is evidence of an established discipline. I must confess culpability myself, as the series editor for an eight volume series largely based on generic case study material. Yet the call is there for authors to contribute more than mere analytical detail, and to connect their work to a broader theoretical canvas. However, none chooses to do so. What marks out recent scholarship is absence – the absence of theoretical baselines that would allow the discipline greater interdisciplinary strength. It is curious that we so often implore students to ground themselves in relevant theoretical con-

cerns, yet constantly find ourselves directing them back to the 1970s and 1980s to find such grounding. The more we direct students to be theoretically grounded the more they “observe” it is difficult to be so.

Perhaps, though, the whole tenor of this paper is wrong and film sound studies have always been weighted towards the case study. In weighing this up we went back to Weis and Belton’s seminal 1985 collection: *Film sound: Theory and practice*. In this, still, essential anthology, Claudia Gorbman (1985) provided an annotated bibliography of film sound studies. If we dissect this bibliography we find the following statistics: of the 195 articles/books listed, 86 of them (that is, 44%) are classified as “Theory and Aesthetics”; 21% are “Analyses and Case Studies”; 19% “History Style and Technology”; and 16% “General Technology”. In other words, theoretical discussions constitute more than double any other category of entry. And in these descriptors, decided by Gorbman, she has placed those articles “whose emphasis on the technical or pragmatic outweigh their theoretical interest” (ibid., p. 428) within the non-theoretical delineation. Film sound studies have changed, the focus has shifted away from the theoretical.

Once again, taking a broader brush stroke might reveal some of the possible reasons for the proliferation of case-study material. Many of the tertiary institutions (both private and public) around the world devoted to film sound studies are predominantly practical. Students become skilled in the craft and expertise of film sound creation. While some contextualisation and theory are obviously useful, the bulk of their time is spent analysing examples and applying creative ideas. Detailed analytical material is thus at home in contemporary pedagogical environments. In a sense, well-written case studies become the perfect lesson plans. Students are happy, so publishers are happy and thus forces conspire to propagate more of the same. Of course this is inexorably linked to pressures within academia to publish, meet research targets, and generate all-important research money. Guaranteed publication of individual case study material becomes the easiest way to satisfy this employment requirement.

One should also acknowledge the role of technology in the (mass) consumption of the case study approach. The change from “paper-only” analysis, often conducted in real-time, to a technological analysis – involving stop, start, replay, rewind and ever more impressive tools for sonic isolation – is a considerable one. Furthermore, we might postulate that “paper-only” approaches lent themselves somewhat naturally to more theoretical musings. Even if the idea of academic with pen in hand, clean paper in front and cigar in mouth is a romantic one – it is also one that we might (re)discover does allow for a certain thoughtfulness in approach. Nonetheless, technology has already contributed enormously to the shift towards case study analysis. The move to greater interactive and multimedia-type publishing will only further heighten this. The ability to click on a soundbyte, manipulate its sonic properties, while simultaneously watching the vision that would accompany it may well supersede our desire to critically evaluate the structures underlying our discipline.

SCOPIC OVER SONIC, AND OTHER PROBLEMS WITH THEORY

We are not asserting “blindly” here that theory holds all the answers, or is without fault of its own. Indeed, many of the problems associated with theory have revolved around its colonising, consuming, dogmatic application. One need not recall too far to remember a time when the actuality of the text as a social production was deformed in the interests of a “theory”. The only point of interest to be found in a literary work was to confirm (rarely if ever to test) a theoretical presupposition. The subjects therefore tended to become an abstract homogenised mass. This is not something to aspire to again.

Furthermore, Bruce Johnson (2009) has noted that the obsession with theory is a suggestive intensification of a specularisation of knowledge that is built into the English language itself and, this paper suggests, a reaction to the “aural renaissance” that announced the modern democratisation of culture. This prompts the question as to just how useful “theory”, as currently understood and deployed, is in the study of a cultural field so pervaded by sonic experience. Theory arises from, and operates most persuasively, within a scopic field. Yet the wholesale importation of cultural theory from visual into sonic space has, for example, produced serious yet authoritative deformations of the character and meaning of popular cultural practices and artefacts like music and film.

Both culturally and physiologically, sound constitutes a distinctive phenomenology which is scarcely tractable to scopocentric models of analysis, tending to sabotage the various quasi-positivistic categorisations upon which theory rests. Sound in the contemporary world confounds distinctions which are deployed by power blocs to preserve their hegemony. It blurs boundaries between public and private, mind and body, objective and subjective, art and nature, aesthetics and sociology. Acoustic orders are characterised by leakages within and between material and intellectual spaces. Throughout the twentieth century these orders became more pervasive and powerful, while theory primarily modelled culture as visual. The urge to theorise popular culture is perhaps to miss one of its distinguishing features, as well as the constitutive essence of sound.

Rather than abandoning theory though, in light of these leakages and this general liminality, shouldn't we, particularly those in IASPM conferences, particularly those in film sound studies, or popular music studies, be seeking to theorise the sonic, not in reaction to the visual, but as independent cultural phenomena? In doing so we will activate richer discourses than even those afforded by the visual and the gaze. Sonicity has, and has long had, a resistance to scopocentric theorisation but that is not to say it has resistance to theorisation at all. In fact, it might be the opposite that rings true. Johnson (2009) notes that sounding and hearing constitute a distinctive phenomenology which are, finally, dangerously intractable to scopocentric models of analysis. Once released, however, sound passes beyond control. It floods *external* space, and *internally* the physiological relationship constructed is decisively different from visual processing. In particular sonority destabilises the distinction between cognition and biology, culture and nature.

CONSIDERING A FUTURE

Obviously the easier part of this paper is documenting the lack of sonically based theory in the discipline of film sound studies (and perhaps popular music studies more widely). What is harder, and remains still to be done, is to begin conceptualising this new theoretical terrain. Where, in fact, might new theoretical discussions come from? The answer to that question is no doubt multifarious, but we would suggest a couple of possible entry points. The first would be to recognise the importance of new technologies in analysing a technological medium. The very nature of these new technological tools might open up new analytical methods and theoretical underpinnings to go along with them. Alternatively it might be other (perhaps emerging) theoretical areas that film sound studies can draw from in building their own theoretical models. One such candidate would be phenomenology, which certainly works with the spatiality, perception and reception of film sound. The danger is, of course, that once again we merely jump on the newest or latest theoretical fashion, once again ignoring the possibility of developing that which works for film sound studies. Although to be fair, there is no doubt much within other theoretical paradigms that could assist us in our own quest.

Terry Eagleton [2003, p. 2] has claimed recently that the era of 'high theory' has come to a close and with it, the sense of critical freshness and abstraction that it engendered. What followed this period was one of contextualisation – one of absorption of those groundbreaking ideas that had preceded the current critical scene and an interpretation and application of them. (Binns 2009, p. 737)

What Alexander Binns is concerned with here in citing Eagleton, is the effect of this contextualisation period on the discipline of musicology. However, it is worth considering whether in film sound studies specifically, and popular music studies more generally, we have absorbed, contextualised and commented as much as we can within our current frameworks. We may well need a new bass line before we can begin layering in the rest of the sound.

ENDNOTES

1. Writing in the 1920s, Béla Balázs was one of the early film theorists to modify his opposition to the role of sound within motion pictures. Many of his observations about the integration of sound with the image track still have relevance today.

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Sharing hip-hop dance: Rethinking taste in cross-cultural exchanges of music

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ABSTRACT

Dance practitioners who specialize in various hip-hop and funk dance styles including breaking (or b-boying/b-girling) tour internationally to perform and teach. In this paper, I explore how dancers share their musical tastes in cross-cultural exchanges. I am interested in questions of authority that emerge in the exchanges of musical values as students learn the “right” music to dance to. Whether dance expresses personal tastes (the “love of music”) or taught relationships between dance styles and musical structures, disjunctures are bound to result. Questions of identity and belonging that emerged through ethnographic field notes address the significance of friendship and mediation in cross-cultural affinities in dance practices.

KEYWORDS: hip-hop dance; education; breaking.

INTRODUCTION

In my own experience learning how to break, from informal to increasingly formal teaching environments, musical tastes have pervaded that development. In the beginning of my practice, I would often practice alone in my home (what b-boys and b-girls call “the lab”) and there I could choose whatever music I preferred. When I practiced out with other dancers, often sneaking into spaces such as malls, or appropriating space in University atriums or city sidewalks, I rarely selected the

music. If I did, I made rather different choices than I would in my own practice at home. At events, DJs would select the music.

When I began to interview dancers from Toronto and New York City for an undergraduate thesis about breaking, and then a subsequent M.A. project, a perplexing issue around musical tastes planted itself at the centre of my ethnographic investigation. In interviews I conducted, a debate over authenticity and authority emerged. Some of the dancers from New York City began to articulate opinions that the dancers from Toronto weren't "real b-boys" because they danced to house music. In response to such claims, dancers from Toronto, who often danced to both hip-hop and house music in the local contexts of Toronto clubs in the 1990s, would respond by saying that they were fine with not calling themselves b-boys and were happy to refer to themselves as "dancers" as more broadly defined. The interviews I did around 2004-2007, revealing this tension, set me off to navigate the distinctions that could be drawn in a hip-hop dance practice between musical tastes and preferences and questions of authority in cross-cultural exchanges.

Rather than review the literature about musical tastes and identities in this limited space, I would like to propose thinking about dancers' musical tastes in cross-cultural exchanges. I suggest that these tastes, as expressed in interviews and in the embodied performances of dance, demonstrate that the often-quipped phrase dancers utter, "it's all about the music", is most interesting when framed with questions of musical mediation. That is to say, how musical tastes are mediated by various local frames of reference that are subsequently shared out of context with new people to form new friendships and collaborations.

FRIENDSHIP

The first frame of reference I would like to address is friendship. This is a consideration that is crucial to cross-cultural exchanges because dancers form groups (known often as "crews") across generations of dancers and vast geographies (Fogarty 2012). Pierre Bourdieu (1990) argues that friendships require uncertainty. The bonds and exchanges that create friendships and assert loyalty are coaxed along by the element of surprise. What we expect of others and expect others to do for us is not the foundation of friendship. Considerations of friendship also pervaded the early work of Greek philosophers including the work of Aristotle (2007). Aristotle argued that those that had the same values and affinities would have similar tastes with their friends and share common enemies. Here loyalty is bound to shared meanings and values, rather than familial or educational ties, and is notably marked by exclusions as well as bonds. What Bourdieu (*ibid.*) suggests, beyond the links between tastes and education formed through practice and over time ("habitus") is that friendships *require* surprise and uncertainty over time in unnoticed, ordinary and routine ways. Recent developments in the sociological consideration of tastes, such as Antoine Hennion's (2007) work comparing groups of rock climbers to people who share musical tastes, although not explicitly addressing friendship, treat tastes as an *activity* amongst a social group, as expressed by Greek philosophers.

In dance classes taking place at dance studios in Edinburgh and Glasgow, between 2007-2010, North American b-boys taught master class workshops in breaking to local dancers. In the classes, students would often get excited to hear new music and one of the questions that would often be asked is: "What is the name of this song?" One teacher responded bitterly by remarking to me afterwards that dancers should have their own taste in music, that they should pursue music outside of the dance class rather than parroting his preferences. Another teacher refused to share the names of some of the songs that he played in class. Students responded by using new technological devices on their phones to acquire the names of musical tracks that they enjoyed. As my research progressed, there were more examples of teachers who would offer up the names of tracks joyfully and also offer to share music with the students. Although the classroom, as formally structured, is built on the principles of money changing hands, these classes also began to involve the informal exchange of musical tastes. This musical exchange was a component not often considered to be a part of the dance class but a forum through which friendship and shared tastes could be established.

Regardless of whether the sharing of music resulted in further tensions or belonging in the cross-cultural exchanges, what became clear is that, for participants, *dance is a performance of musical tastes*. Issues of authenticity are often centred on performances of tastes, yet there is still the issue of musical mediation to contend with. The second area I address is the concept of "musicality".

MUSICALITY

Musicality is a value judgment often offered to articulate the abilities of dancers. To have "musicality" is to embody music through dance *as perceived by a spectator*. As Lydia Goehr (2008) has pointed out, musicality when used first as a noun in German became a value judgment meant to approve or disapprove of a literary or painterly artwork. It was closely related to the "lyrical" and the "aesthetic", two other terms emerging around the same time.

In one round of interviews I did with Scottish dancers in 2007, many of them explained that an American b-boy who had come over to give dance workshops wasn't a very good teacher. They explained that he spent too much time talking about the music and not enough time showing them moves. When I spoke to the American b-boy and witnessed his class myself, I was impressed by some of the advice he offered about how to predict and anticipate music in the dance circle. In his mind, musicality was an aspect that the dancers he had seen could work on and a quality that could indeed be taught. By my estimate, the b-boys that I spoke to at that time didn't value this quality so much as the acquisition of difficult movements. Here, conflicting value judgments were exemplified.

In a related example from a different area of my field research, when American dancers toured with dancers from South Korea for a hip-hop theatre festival, some of the American dancers expressed contempt to me that the South Korean performers weren't doing "the same dance". And posed the question to me, "how can you

rock the beat when there is no beat?" Without getting into the important questions this raises about the ontology of dance (and its separation from music in various traditions), I suggest that this disjuncture reveals how much of belonging in dance practice is organized around musical judgments.

MUSICAL COMPETENCES

In my own teaching, that began at the University of East London for the Dance: Urban Practice degree, musical competences began with an ability to recognize and distinguish fragments of recorded music. In 2010, Kevin "DJ Renegade" Gopie and myself decided that our students in the dance degree should be able to distinguish various breakbeats from each other. In some of our assessments, students would have to listen to various breakbeats (without the rest of the song to offer up clues) and name the track they were from, alongside the name of the artist and the album where they appeared. In the beginning, the students struggled and one student even commented that she wouldn't be able to do this. By the end of the term, they could name most of the breakbeats and even began to listen to more funk music than they had in the past during personal training time in the dance studio.

Often the music that we played for the students during this time reflected the origins of hip-hop dance and breaking culture as learned from dancers from New York City. I was fortunate as well to be teaching with one of the most well-known international DJs for hip-hop dance competitions, so the music also reflected what students would have the opportunity to hear when they attended current events in the city.

TASTE AFFINITIES

Throughout the research project, I often shared the outlook of the Toronto b-boys who rejected the label of "b-boy" if it meant a restriction of their musical tastes. In my own research, I questioned the label of "b-girl" as suitable for my pursuits, even as my tastes transformed. I began to love the moment of "going off" to the instrumental break of a record specifically and gave value to the cross-cultural meanings and affinities attached to this expression. These cultural meanings had grown through my exchanges and interactions with b-boys from New York City over a longer span of time. In recent years, I have reclaimed the term "b-girl", after an old school authority from New York City insisted on it. This insistence was explicitly linked to my knowledge of what music the dance is for. Again, questions of authority dominate the labelling processes. On returning to Canada, those that I dance with insist that my dance should be a reflection of my highly personalised musical tastes. Music, they suggest, should be the inspiration for my dancing and our friendship expresses not only shared taste, but also shared freedom to explore diverging tastes. The encouragement here involved the links between dance practice and musical inspiration as a central value that was shared.

The examples of disjunctures, as offered up in the previous sections, between musical tastes and musical acquisition in cross-cultural exchanges suggest that the shared practice of dance is often not enough. Dancers' performances of musical tastes carry significance when thinking through social belonging and authority.

In the academic contexts of thinking through hip-hop culture as a "global" and "localised" form, the disjunctures around musical tastes for dancers reveal how cross-cultural intersections of taste are experienced. My own experiences are less interesting as an autoethnographic methodological process, and more pertinent for what they reveal about the embodied struggle over discourse in the "localised" appropriations of hip-hop culture. The way that identity is challenged and transformed over time is informed by friendship and the mediation of cultural practices. Cross-cultural friendships offer up new considerations for questions of belonging and identity as centred around musical tastes. The questions I experienced through my own practice as a dancer, through my research, and through my teaching, resulted in subtle transformations of belonging. The conflicts created by competing musical tastes were answered in my own travels not through adherence to a particular discourse but rather a negotiation over time. Dance is not only "about the music" but also how musical meanings are shaped through friendships and teachings that are navigated through time, with surprises, and negotiated through sharing space. This suggests that there is much left to be examined about the relationship between music and dance for a proper exploration of musical tastes and identities in an increasingly "globalised" discourse about mediated youth cultures. The first step is acknowledging that dancers' musical tastes matter precisely because they change with practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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“Topomusica” in rap music: Role of geography in hip-hop music

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ABSTRACT

Territoriality and a sense of place are important features of American rap music, as the credibility of a rapper is based on where you are from or what ‘hood you represent. This paper builds upon music and place research by introducing the concept of “topomusica” or the importance and inclusion of geography or locality (place names) in music. The study analyses the diffusion of hip-hop from the South Bronx to other inner cities in the US, in which rap regions are distinguishable by rap styles and local slang usages. Many American rappers have categorised themselves geographically to represent the East Coast, West Coast, “Dirty South”, or Midwest. A brief study of selected rappers from around the world provides some evidence of the inclusion of geography in global rap music. The concept of “topomusica” may be applied to global hip-hop music in future research.

Keywords: rap; topomusica; geography; territoriality.

INTRODUCTION

There are strong connections between music, identity, and senses of place that have been analysed in cultural studies (Bennett 2000; Leonard and Strachan 2010; Connell and Gibson 2003). Thus, it would not be surprising to find a very strong connection between rap music and geography. Rap puts, to use Murray Forman’s (2002, p. xviii) words, “a pronounced emphasis on place and locality”, and credibility as a rapper is based on geography and identity; in other words, “who you are?” is answered by “where you are from?”. What city you are from is an important

spatial identity marker referenced in rap songs and fashion (for example, clothes and tattoos that support local sports teams, shirts with place names, etc.). Building upon music and place research, this study analyses the importance of geography in rap music.

TOPOMUSICA

This paper introduces the concept of “topomusica”: the importance and inclusion of geography or locality (place names) in music. Place name references are very common in rap lyrics (multi-geographic scale examples of topomusica in *Table 1*). Snoop Dogg represents the LBC (Long Beach City), Kanye West gives shout outs to Chi-Town or The Chi (Chicago), Ludacris out of the ATL or Hotlanta (Atlanta) raps about area codes, and Warren G references the street corner “21 and Lewis”, to name a few. Nelly put St. Louis on the rap map with *Country grammar* (UMVD Labels 2000), where he embodies place with: “Sing it loud (what?)/I’m from the Lou’ and I’m proud”. In fact, Nelly’s debut album cover depicts the rapper in front of the Gateway Arch. Legitimacy as a rapper is based on what ‘hood you represent, either at the neighbourhood, city, or regional geographic scales.

Table 1: Examples of topomusica in rap music at various geographic scales.

GEOGRAPHIC LEVEL	EXAMPLES	ARTIST
Country	My mom is German	Fler
Region	East Coast	Nas
City	Chi-Town (Chicago)	Lupe Fiasco
Area Code	770 (Atlanta)	Ludacris
Neighbourhood	Straight outta Compton (LA)	NWA
Housing Project	BedStuy (New York)	Jay Z
Street Corner	21 and Lewis (LA)	Warren G
Body	Detroit Tigers “D” logo tattoo	Eminem

AMERICAN RAP REGIONS

The diffusion of rap music in America went from the hearth in the East Coast, to the West Coast, then South (or "Dirty South") and Midwest. Rap music is extremely place-sensitive, for these rap regions are self-evident among American rappers: for example, at the beginning of "Hip hop is dead" (Def Jam 2006), Nas refers to "NYC, Dirty South, West Coast, Midwest, let's go!" Not only are there different rap regions in the United States, but there are also different local contexts and local dialect usages that distinguish places within each region.

The East Coast, the birthplace of rap, remains prominent in the rap world by constantly producing new rap artists. With New York City as its epicentre, Notorious B.I.G., Jay-Z, Nas, and Talib Kweli have made rappers in the East Coast known for creative lyricists. The next prominent rap region to develop was the West Coast, with Los Angeles and the Bay Area (Oakland and San Francisco) as the main rap centres. West Coast rap was known for the development of gangsta rap. Los Angeles rap groups, like N.W.A. and their place-referenced album *Straight outta Compton* (Priority Records 1988), violently described an urban environment filled with police brutality and gang hostilities. This subgenre of rap, Quinn (2005, p. 67) explains, "continually elaborated highly appealing and marketable expressions of authentic place-bound identity [and] at the same time, intimated the wider context of insecurities about place and the displacing features of post-Fordist capitalism that precisely drove such expressions". Some of the current themes of rap in the West Coast revolve around the development of the "Hyphy movement" in the Bay Area. The style name, which is distinguishable by its local slang, is short for hyperactive, which refers to getting drunk or using drugs to "get stupid" and "go dumb" (Jones 2006).

Rap in the "Dirty South", first known as the "Third Coast" in relation to the East and West counterparts, has blossomed in recent years. The rap styles of Atlanta include up-tempo beats, crunk, and snap music. Atlanta duo OutKast are known for their rapid rhymes and up-tempo drum and bass beats – for example, "Bombs over Baghdad" (LaFace/Arista 2000). Starting in Memphis and then popularized in Atlanta, crunk rap is a feel-good subgenre of rap tied to the strip clubs and the Southern underground rap industry (*British Broadcasting Corporation* 2005). Even though the etymology of "crunk" is unknown, the combination of "crazy" and "drunk" has been commonly used to describe this rap style about partying. A recent development heard in Atlanta-based music and dance is called snap rap. In this sub-genre, finger snaps instead of drum beats serve as percussion, and rap songs and associated dances in "Lean wit it, rock wit it" by Dem Franchize Boys (So So Def Records/Virgin 2006) and "Crank that" by Soulja Boy Tell'em (Interscope 2007) exemplify the movement.

Recently, the Midwestern cities of Detroit, Chicago, and St. Louis exploded on the rap scene. Chicago rapper Kanye West geographically states: "You know what the Midwest is? Young and restless" ("Jesus walks", Roc-A-Fella/Def Jam 2004). Detroit rapper Eminem, member of the group D-12 (the Dirty Dozen or Detroit 12), became famous for his criticisms of popular culture icons and for his alter-ego

Slim Shady. Adopting local slang, rappers from St. Louis are known for their long “rr” sounds, as songs by Nelly (“Hot in herre”, Universal 2002) and Chingy (“Right thurr”, Capitol/Disturbing the Peace 2003) demonstrate. The insertion of “r” sounds in words is commonplace in the Midland dialect region (Vaux 2003); instead of saying “I wash my clothes”, one would say “I warsh my clothes”. Nelly, member of the place-named rap group St. Lunatics, adopted this *Country grammar* (name of his 2000 debut album) to convey how people live in his locality to the rest of the rap world.

TERRITORIALITY IN GLOBAL RAP

The global diffusion of rap is significant, for as S. Craig Watkins (2005, p. 7) explains, “[w]hen virtually nothing else could, hip-hop created a voice and a vehicle for the young and the dispossessed, giving them both hope and inspiration”. As rap spread around the world, some rappers included a sense of place or geography in their music. A tangential study of selected rappers from France, UK/Sri Lanka, and New Zealand show the use of topomusica to place their rap music.

French rap connotes postcolonial connections, as many French rappers have ethnic heritage ties to Northern and Western African countries (Prevos 2001). Instead of describing life in inner city America, French ethnic minorities of Arab and African descent rap about their social marginalization of residing in the poverty-stricken housing projects in the suburbs, or *banlieues*, of Paris and Marseilles. As with gangsta rap on the West Coast, violence and anti-police themes are prevalent in some French rap, and were especially prominent with the riots that burned the Parisian suburb of Clichy-sous-Bois in October and November of 2005. In a song released just days before the riots, Senegalese-French rapper Disiz La Peste raps (Schofield 2005): “For France it matters nothing what I do/In it’s mind I will always be/Just a youth from the banlieue” (*Les histoires extraordinaires d’un jeune de banlieue*, Barclay 2005). In fact, there is a trend in recent French rap to incorporate sampled sounds from the riots (Werman 2006).

Another important rapper is M.I.A. (“Missing In Acton”), a Tamil born in the UK who grew up in Sri Lanka, India, and UK. Her unique upbringing heavily influences her music. The advent of the Sri Lankan civil war inspired her father to join the revolutionary Tamil Tiger forces, and the rest of her family moved to the South London neighbourhood of Acton, as reflected in her rap name (Bordel 2005). M.I.A.’s album *Arular* (Interscope 2005), which is named after her father, includes rap songs with revolutionary themes:

Growin up, brewin up/Guerilla getting trained up/Look out, look out/From over the rooftop (“Fire, Fire”).

You wanna go?/You wanna win a war?/Like P.L.O. I don’t surrendo (“Sunshowers”).

M.I.A. controversially introduces rap as a voice of revolution, tying similar insurgencies throughout the world, or as she would say "from Congo to Colombo".

With social disparities between the indigenous population and the white New Zealanders, Maori rap pioneers Upper Hutt Posse brought socially conscious rap and represented Maori militancy in the 1980s, in ways similar to the American rap group Public Enemy (Mitchell 2001). Recently, rapper Che Fu used Maori chants at the beginning of a song about unity in "He kotahi (As one)" (Sony Music 2002): "Ka tu he kotahi, tu tata mai, kia mihi a tu ki te Ao Katumaia I te paerangi" ("Unified together, we will greet the risen sun, shoulder to shoulder heads up on the front line").

Instead of rap signifying black pride, Maori pride is expressed through the fusing of local traditions with a global medium form. As indicated by Che Fu's debut album, *2b S.Pacific* (1998), interpreted dually as "to be specific", and geographically as "to be South Pacific", there is a prideful sense of place found in representing Polynesia.

SUMMARY

Topomusica provides a useful lens to study any musical form that incorporates geography (rap, country music, and location of jazz recordings have strong senses of place). In the US, rappers from the East Coast, West Coast, "Dirty South", and Midwest use local slang and cultural traits to portray their locality. However, the inclusion of a sense of place or territoriality is not exclusive to American rap. References to geography were evident in the few examples of rap music from around the world above mentioned. Future in-depth research can expand upon the concept of topomusica in global rap music.

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The Afrikaans folk song brand

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ABSTRACT

The Afrikaans popular music industry is regarded as one of the most financially lucrative South African music industries. One of the sources for creating and recreating Afrikaans popular hit songs has been the Afrikaans folksong genre. Since 1930 this genre has frequently resurfaced as the basis of hit songs. This paper will highlight the role of the Afrikaans folk song genre in popular music during the past eighty years focusing specifically on the South African born musician Joseph Marais who built his brand around this genre.

KEYWORDS: Afrikaans folk song; hits; Josef Marais.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper the theories of Martin Kornberger (2010), who recognises the brand as media and the brand as signs, as well as those of Martin Lindstrom (2005), who explains how to build powerful brands through strong connection with the senses, have been used to identify the Afrikaans folk song brand.

Singers of Afrikaans folk songs active during the past eighty-one years¹ of South African music recordings were researched to find suitable examples that could be labelled as a brand. In order for the folk song to be labelled as a brand, a collection of songs sung either by one artist or a group of musicians had to be identified that could initiate a specific sense of place or identity. Some of these songs were then analysed using the theories of Kornberger and Lindstrom. Josef Marais' oeuvre was identified as currently the sole carrier of the brand.

To legitimately be called a folk song, a song "had to circulate among the folk" (Cohen 2002, p. 89) and thus be sung widely. They are the hit songs of yester-

year that have stood the test of time through selection, continuity and variation (McLachlan 1978, p. 37). Folk song melodies are frequently used to recreate songs, often resulting in new hit songs. As remarked by an Afrikaner businessman in a conversation with Helen Kivnick (1990, p. 326), folk songs served for mass singing and bonded groups together. In this paper, the definition used of the folk song genre is broadly categorised as songs whose composers were mostly unknown but were popular with and widely sung by Afrikaans-speaking people.

THE BRANDS PERSPECTIVE

Martin Kornberger (2010, p. 48) writes:

Brands are not one thing but many. The truth is a function of the perspective one chooses to take. [...] Instead of thinking of a brand as an object, we can also conceptualize it as the result of a set of practices.

Kornberger (2010, p. 30) acknowledges the difficulty in agreeing on one definition for the notion of “brand” and identifies the following four possible categories: “Brands as [a] management tool”; “Brands as [a] corporate catalyst”; “Brands as signs”; and “Brands as media”. The latter two categories are the most appropriate when considering a definition of the folk song brand. The concept of the brand as a sign represents brands as experience and lifestyle, thus taking on a social life and becoming markers of identity. The commodity transforms into a brand using advertising, packaging and design. Brands become mental constructs that evoke different meanings, and, as they influence the social and cultural fabric of our world, are powerful. Brands as media rely on the emotional connection between people and commodities, thereby adding values and meaning when linking society, organisations and individuals.

Lindstrom (2005) argues that the senses activate memory, which evokes an emotional response to a brand. A higher combination of senses triggered will increase the active number of sensory memories, thereby mobilising a stronger connection between the brand and the consumer. It is therefore beneficial for the brand if more historical ties and associations can be included, thereby strengthening it.

THE FOLK SONG BRAND OF JOSEF MARAIS AS A MEDIUM

The South African-born Joseph Pessach immigrated to the United States in 1939. When Josef Marais changed his name is uncertain. His successful folk song brand was built around “a unique style of singing, a fresh and stimulating body of material [...] and an engaging personality that registers convincingly” (Marais 1949a). Each of these characteristics focuses on the brand as the medium linking the individual with society.

Marais used his unique singing style together with his accomplished guitar expertise to create a new life for himself in America. Whether he had any formal training

as a singer or guitarist could not be ascertained, but Lawless (1960, p. 155) remarks: "Besides being an accomplished violinist, Marais is a fine classical guitarist, and his special arrangements for folksongs [sic] are themselves works of art". *Time* (1978) describes the "rhythmic calypso-style Afrikaner folk songs [...] as a sort of bushveld hillbilly" and (1953): "[A]ll of [his songs] come from memories of the songs he heard as a youngster in the Cape Colony".

The upsurge in public interest and the universal appeal of folk songs were two of the main reasons that steered Marais to recognise the commercial potential of the Afrikaans folk song genre. Sharing his culture with his newly adopted country's audience resulted in him building a career as a balladeer. In a letter addressed to Frits Stegmann, Marais (1949b) comments that he

had never given much serious thought to folk songs. You ask how the Afrikaans *liedjies* ['little songs'] have become so popular. I think the main reason is the upsurge in public interest in the United States especially, in folksongs [sic].

Cohen (2002) confirms the explosion of folk music, particularly in New York, after the Second World War.

In a newspaper report Josef Marais and his wife Miranda are reported as being "initiates to their particular brand" (*Unknown newspaper* 1947). At the heart of this brand was initially only the performance of translated Afrikaans folk songs for English audiences. Gradually, the repertoire expanded to include adaptations and translations of folk songs of Dutch, Flemish, German and French origin. Marais' translation of folk songs from Afrikaans into English is recognised by Stambler (1969, pp. 193-194) for its "folk music scholarship", while McNamara (1952, p. 335) describes Marais as "a pioneer in the translation into English of Afrikaans and other folk songs". Thus the brand extended to include a variety of cultures shared with the audience:

We believe that our arrangements should be in the spirit of the original, and yet bear the 'art' imprint: we consider our function to be that of the minstrel who tries to show the inherent value of a song as layman, and thus we further the cause of folk-singing, by encouraging the 'folk' to sing more songs, and fresh tunes. (Marais, cited in Lawless 1960, p. 155)

Marais' engaging personality fully utilised the media as a brand medium. He broadcasted nationally and internationally on radio from 1939 to 1943 with the shows *Music of Josef Marais* on the local New York City station WOR and *African trek* on NBC Blue Network. The latter was broadcasted to Africa on shortwave from 1941. The show included South African songs, African folklore and stories and was performed with his three-man group the Bushveld Band. "Sarie Marais" (*Time* 1941), the signature tune for his program, was ingeniously chosen to reinforce his own adopted surname. This trend continued in his concert career, in which he used it as the introductory song. The popularity of his brand is indicated in the song "Sarie

Marais" becoming directly associated with him – the "Famous Signature Song of Josef Marais Radio Program" – as noted in the Archive of the British Library (Kresa circa 1944).

For a brand to expand, it needs to gain popularity systematically. Marais shared his South African background with the audience in an easily understandable way that made him accessible and popular with not only the general public but also influential people such as the South African Union Consul, the President of the USA, Harry Truman (Stegmann 1957, p. 2) and contemporary artists. His significant popularity was indicated in the vast amount of fan mail he received. He therefore touched and connected with his audience (consumers) on different levels. *Time* (1941) reports:

The occasion being Marais's [sic] 100th broadcast. [...] Marais fans, invited to attend, came in such numbers that NBC had to put on the show in its new, copper-lined theater. The Consul of the Union of South Africa came and testified that the 'liedjies' ('little songs') of Josef Marais brought back to him the 'breath of the veld' ('vegetation').

Time (1953) further remarks:

For the past dozen years a South African balladeer named Josef Marais has been quietly building a reputation as a specialist in folk and children's songs [...]. His songs of the veld ('vegetation'), such as 'Sugarbush', 'Ay-round the corner' and the fast-rising 'Ma says, pa says', have been recorded by such big-league songbirds as Jo Stafford and Doris Day.

Contemporaries that gained success with Marais' translations of Afrikaans folk songs in both the United States and the United Kingdom were Cathy Taylor ("Johnny Ferrara" – "Vat jou goed en trek Ferreira"); Petula Clark ("Little Shoemaker", 1954, which combined the folk songs "Hier's ons weer" - "Here am I" and "Wanneer kom ons troudag Gertjie?" - "When will we be married?"); Doris Day and Frankie Laine ("Sugarbush", 1952 – "Suikerbossie"), Jo Stafford ("Ay-round the Corner", 1952 – "Vanaand gaan die volkies koring sny"), Doris Day and Johnnie Ray ("Ma says, pa says", 1953 – "Ma sê, pa sê") and the Hungarian-born South African immigrant Eve Boswell ("Sugarbush", 1952, and "Pickin' a chicken", 1955-1956 - ("Daar's 'n hoender").

According to the archive of the *Dispatch* (1952, p. 31):

The South African Afrikaans song 'Suikerbossie', sung in an English version entitled 'Sugarbush' by Eve Boswell, is a top hit tune in Britain today. People are whistling it in the streets. The BBC hardly lets a day go by without broadcasting [...] 'Sugarbush', presently number two favourite on the television show *Hit Parade*.

THE FOLK SONG BRAND OF JOSEF MARAIS AS A SIGN

Marais' brand further relates to Kornberger's (2010, p. 30) concept of the brand as a sign. In implementing typical South African language, Marais pitched his brand geographically. Kornberger (ibid., pp. 41-42) comments:

A brand is something that emerges from a commodity by adding associations. [...] A product has no identity; a brand does. It garners an identity through its name, its association with cultural meanings, [...] and other strategies designed to give it what can be called 'cultural relevance'.

Marais' titles (*The African trek*, *Songs from the veld*, *The Bushveld Band* and *Bosvelders*²) illustrate how cultural meaning was added to his folk song brand.

Growing up on an African farm and becoming an inhabitant of a city would have influenced his selection of language. The title of his radio series *The African trek* acknowledged the program as being from Africa and as having African content. The meaning of the Afrikaans word "trek" is "people that travel / move with their belongings" (Van Wyk 2003, p. 499). Marais could have derived the title from the *Great Trek*, which took place when the Afrikaners travelled by ox wagon from the coastal Cape Province into the interior of the country in 1838. The centenary celebrations of 1938 were fresh in the memory because it was one year prior to Marais starting his popular series on National Broadcasting Company Radio in New York. Furthermore, it could have the additional meaning that he (the African) migrated (trekked) to America.

The title of his first album was *Songs from the veld*. Here the word "veld" could indicate that the songs originated from the picnic songs that were originally sung outdoors when enjoying a picnic. Ten of the Afrikaans songs that Marais included in his repertoire were published as lyrics and melody by Boshoff and du Plessis in 1918 as "Pieknieklidjies" ("picnic songs"), and sixteen as lyrics in the chapter on *Die pieniekdans en pieknieklid* ("The picnic dance and the picnic song") of S.J. Du Toit (1924). Boshoff and du Plessis (1918, p. 18) explain that the South African picnic is specifically for guests from town and not for the farmer. He observed that the popularity of the picnic as entertainment in South Africa is a direct result of the pleasant climate and added: "Ons is self, als Afrikaners, kinders van die veld" ("we as Afrikaners are children of the outdoors").

THE FOLK SONG BRAND OF JOSEF MARAIS STIMULATING THE SENSES

Music, and especially vocal music such as folk songs one grew up with, has the ability to recall values, feelings and emotions stored in the memory created through sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. The cultural relevance identified in Kornberger's "brand as a sign" further highlights this strong association with and stimulation of the senses exposed by the folk song brand. According to Martin Lindstrom (2005, p. 10):

We store our values, feelings, and emotions in memory banks. Compare that memory to the standard video recorder which records on two separate tracks – one for image, one for sound. The human being has at least five tracks- image, sound, smell, taste and touch. These five tracks contain more data than one can imagine because they have direct bearing on our emotions and all that they entail. They can fast forward or backtrack at will, and stop just exactly on the right spot in a split second.

Experiencing a song in a specific environment can recreate the environment's smells, tastes and the sense of touch instantly, as well as bringing back memories of visual places and other aural memories. The folk song "O brandewyn laat my staan" ("Oh brandy leave me alone") could recall both positive and negative memories on different levels of sensory stimulation. The aural and visual senses are the two obvious senses that would be stimulated in the music listener. Music is primarily an aural medium but attending concerts or listening to the words of a song would also stimulate the visual sense. The following two quotations indicate Marais' success in stimulating both the smell and tactile senses in his listeners.

In 1941 the Consul of the Union of South Africa stated that the translated songs of Josef Marais evoked the "breath of the 'veld' to him" (*Time* 1941). Here the brand stimulated the smell sense of the listener by recalling the fresh smell of the African outdoor environment, which could have ranged from heather to cow's dung, depending on the listener's memory: "One homesick South African informed [Marais] that he changed to hunting boots and shorts for every Marais broadcast" (*Time* 1941). This quotation provides an example of how the folk songs played by Marais strongly activated this listener's tactile memory in creating such a longing emotion that he had to wear the clothes that reminded him of his home country. Hunting boots especially can further activate the smell sense of being back on African soil.

Different kinds of sensory stimulation enable the consumer to choose between similar products. The senses are embedded in our long-term memory and are part of our decision-making processes (Lindstrom 2005). Lawless (1960, p. 155) quotes Josef Marais: "Our greatest joy is to hear community singing of the songs we originated, or translated, or first planted as seeds in the hearts of the amateurs". Obviously, it would give Marais great pleasure and be financially beneficial when the audience used his products, because the more products that are consumed would mean more money in his pocket from concert performances and the sale of records, song sheets and books.

CONCLUSION

Since 1930 the Afrikaans folk song genre has frequently been used as the inspiration for hit songs in popular music. This paper has argued that the folk song genre can activate all five sensory memory banks: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. It has identified the oeuvre of translated Afrikaans folk songs of Josef Marais as the sole

carrier of the Afrikaans folk song brand, and has indicated how this brand could function both as a medium and as a sign.

ENDNOTES

1. The South African music recording industry was established in 1931, when Eric Gallo imported the necessary equipment. Artists therefore no longer travelled abroad to be recorded (Pretorius 1998, p. 60).
2. *The African Trek* was the title of Marais' NBC (National Broadcasting Company) radio series, that broadcasted weekly from 1939 to 1943 from New York. *Songs of the South African veld* was the title of Marais' first Afrikaans folk song album of 1941 (78 rpm record), which was published in 1942 as the song compilation *Songs from the veld* (Marais 1941 and 1942). Both *The Bushveld Band* and *Bosvelders* were titles Marais used for musical groups /bands which he established.

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“Let them go and listen for themselves”: The rise and rise of the citizen critic

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at issues of authority in the music blogosphere with particular focus on the main differences between the authority of traditional music critics and the authority of citizen critics. The relationship between music blogs and the music industry is also analysed with a consideration of how such a relationship might have an impact on a blog's authority. The paper will argue that, despite the general belief that music blogs operate under parameters of independence from the music industry, in fact, over the last few years, they have developed a solid reliance on the music industry to the point of compromising their authority. The paper is based on thirty-one semi-structured interviews conducted with Australian music bloggers between May 2009 and April 2010.

KEYWORDS: music criticism; blogging; web 2.0 environments; cultural intermediaries; music industry; citizen journalism.

THE AUTHORITY OF MUSIC BLOGS

Literature on how music critics negotiate their authority is an important entry point to examine how music blogs' authority is structured and how it is centred on different parameters than the authority of the music press. Arts and culture critics, just like traditional news reporters, utilise specific rituals to negotiate their authority (Klein 2005; Shuker 2007; Frith 1981). For example, Klein (2005, pp. 17-18) suggests that,

for music journalists, being a proficient writer, possessing depth of knowledge and unbiased music judgment are key to asserting their authority as critics. Critics who are able to negotiate their authority successfully in reporting arts and culture news are also the ones responsible for shaping public opinion about popular culture (Harries and Wahl-Jorgensen 2007; Klein 2005). The authority of popular music critics is also linked to the publication they are writing for, as the reader's perception of authority is frequently based on the symbolic prestige of the publication. *Rolling Stone* is probably an example of a publication with a level of prestige that has far exceeded its legitimacy, but which nonetheless allows the publication to maintain a certain level of authority. In this case, it is the publication that ascribes authority to the music criticism published in it (Klein 2005).

If popular music critics exercise their authority following the above parameters, on the other hand, there are clearly many interfering issues that might jeopardize a critic's integrity. The vague conception of critical authority of popular music critics, further complicated by the lack of formal training, is often challenged by actions of other groups of people that interact with the critic. Publicists, musicians, editors, publishers, and other critics all interact with the critic, and the critic's relationship with each one of these roles will shape his or her authority. For example, a music critic's authority is frequently attenuated by the critic's relationship with the music industry as it can manipulate coverage by controlling access and advertising expenditure. Music journalists and rock critics belong to an industry (the press) and to an organization (newspaper or magazine) whose primary concern is to sell. Their practices are tied to the politics of the publication, which obviously depends on the target-publics they are addressing. Frith (1981, p.173) sees the music papers and their writers as "almost completely dependent on the record business". The critic's position as employee in the media industry is crucial. The publication the critic works for depends upon advertising, a large portion of which comes from record labels (Fenster 2002, p. 84). This creates an uncomfortable environment for producing independent judgments of albums or artists. Furthermore, record labels can manipulate coverage by controlling access. In order to get on mailing lists, music critics need to establish good relationships with the label, which might lead a critic to avoid writing negative reviews. Such dynamics undermine a critic's integrity and authenticity, minimising his or her authority.

With the emergence of the web 2.0 and its promises of promoting participatory culture, democratization of access to information, and equality in the dissemination and reception of information (O'Neill 2005), the critics' authority faces serious challenges. In particular, the long-established power and authority of mainstream institutions, that have guided the professional music press for years, is challenged by an online environment where the-so-called "citizen journalists" have the capability to show where information comes from, provide background about their sources, expand on the depth and breadth of the information, and receive feedback from the audience. The boundless and interconnected nature of the Internet gives a unique opportunity to build credibility through a form of information transparency that was not possible earlier (Paul 2005). In the blogosphere, for example, personal

disclosure to readers about one's actions, motives and financial considerations all facilitate transparency. Perhaps because of the intimate nature of the blog format (Bowman and Willis 2003), bloggers tend to be more upfront about their biases; moreover, they have greater autonomy to speak from the heart than journalists, who are constrained by institutional norms of objectivity and distance from any given subject (Lasica 2004). Some have argued that new media forms foster trust among users thanks to their democratic access to publishing platforms and to their openness to feedback from the audience (Bowman and Willis 2003). Transparency becomes then a key point to achieve authority. The authority of bloggers, for example, is derived primarily by their perceived sincerity rather than observation of professional standards. Furthermore, as it has been previously discussed, mainstream media principles of fairness, accountability and objectivity are often undermined by the well-documented impact on mainstream editorial choices of factors such as corporate culture, advertisers' pressure or publicists' press releases.

Music blogs represent an exemplification of such trends. Emerging out of music fandom, music blogs were initially fans' personal diaries where they used to record their musical taste, talk about their favourite artists, upload their favourite songs, etc. Avid consumers of music, music bloggers started writing because their passion for music pushed them to communicate to other people. According to Eric Harvey (2005, p. 1), "music blogs can be seen as indicative of a new agency possessed by music fans, and the desire of many to make their presence known to other fans". Soon music blogs started to spread across fan communities and music scenes as a major communication platform for fans to interact with each other and share information (Baym 2007; Hodgkinson 2006). Bloggers are seen as ordinary people and, because of their transparency grounded in their personal tone of communication, they are often perceived as having greater credibility since most audiences find them more accessible than faceless institutions or elites of experts. The increased influence of music blogs eventually changed the politics of record labels and contributed to the acknowledgement of music blogs serving a crucial role of cultural intermediaries for the audience. In the light of independence from the market, they certainly contributed to the constitution of an alternative discourse to mainstream media (Wodtke 2008, p. 45).

MUSIC BLOGS AND THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Baym (2007 and 2009a) and Wodtke (2008) argue that music blogs have become influential across fan communities because their subcultural authenticity, and presumed integrity, conferred them indie credibility and trust among indie fans. Because of such an increasingly influential role of music blogs, in more recent years, the music industry – especially independent labels – began to realize their importance as intermediaries between artists and fan communities as well as their influence on other fans' taste. Yet, record labels started to seek music bloggers' collaboration for the promotion of their artists. Of crucial importance here is the idea that the readers of music blogs are a small but culturally important and influential

group of people (Jennings 2007). A substantial part of the music blogosphere embraced such collaborations by featuring certain artists on their blogs, starting proper collaborations with the music industry for artist promotion.

A crucial aspect of how promoters manage their relationship with music blogs is the offer of freebies such as CDs, merchandise, free tickets, invitations, etc. These are all things that might appeal to music bloggers, allowing them to increase their status as professionals in the local scene. According to the Australian blogger Daniel Boud (2009):

As soon as you are a music blog [sic] you start receiving free CDs, tickets to shows, people offer you merchandise to give away, they invite you to listening parties. The PR industry has realized how influential a music blog can be and they are now chasing music bloggers as back then the traditional press [sic]. I know a blog that is giving away CDs for free of an American band and I know that a representative of Sony gave them these CDs.

It can be argued that this type of influence-peddling is a sort of payola with no direct cash exchange, or *blogola*, as some bloggers call it. For some bloggers, the immediate payoff is an increase in their professional status. According to Jason from the blog *One Louder* (2006):

If you're breaking the news – supplied by PR releases –, going to all the hot shows – with free tickets –, offering exclusive contests – with prizes supplied by promoters –, then you are seen as an insider. The audience might also drastically increase.

The relationship between bloggers and the labels they promote directly or indirectly is one of mutual convenience. Promoters provide the freebies and exclusives while the blogs legitimize their music by providing street credibility. If the relationship between music blogs and the music industry is one of convenience, it also is one of struggle because both sides operate with very different values and develop different perspectives over the same subject. Therefore, conflicts might often arise. On one side, music bloggers' values are rooted in music fandom and indie culture, and they try to establish themselves in opposition to mainstream media through values of authenticity and autonomy (Wodtke 2008). Record companies, on the other side, want their acts to be promoted in music blogs, ignoring that music blogs theoretically should write about what is of interest to themselves or to their audience. Therefore, the incorporation of music blogs into the commercial system might destabilize a blog's original indie values and its ideals of integrity and autonomy. Of particular interest here is the struggle of the blogger between indie values of integrity and authenticity and values subdued to the commercial logic of the market. Some bloggers might then become more dependent on their sources and will develop professional relationships with promoters or record labels. Though mostly

informal, such relationships will allow the bloggers to gain access either to a new album release, a press conference or a gig.

So are music blogs an independent form of intermediation or not? The argument lies not in whether music blogs can operate outside of a relationship with the labels. It lies, instead, in the ability of the blog to manage that relationship in a proactive way, matching a good use of resources with their subcultural ideology. The independence of the blogger is, therefore, achieved in their capacity to understand the industry's logic and to act above and within the industry. That could be the reason why they often experience a struggle, in Bourdieu's (1993) terms, between the autonomous and the commercial pole of cultural production, which translates in an apparently contradictory behaviour of some blogs.

CONCLUSION

This paper has discussed the indisputable relevance of music blogs as cultural intermediaries. The fact that the same music industry, which allegedly prosecutes file sharers for copyright infringements, is also providing music blogs with music that might end up in the same file sharing communities is a further sign of the indisputable power of blogs. The paper has shown a transition from a type of blog concerned with promoting underground artists and reflecting the blogger's personal taste – following a typical fan impulse – to a type of music blogging more subservient to commercial logics. Such a dynamic occurs when the search for professional status translates into the search for relationships with the music industry. As Bourdieu (1996 and 1998) discusses, with the increasing displacement of the cultural pole by the commercial pole, it can be argued that such changes mark a shift from the idea of music blogging as rooted in fandom and subjectivity to the idea of a commercialization of music blogs. In the search for professional status, blogs' coverage tends to privilege what record labels want to promote, thus reducing, to a certain extent, the autonomy of bloggers.

Therefore, despite the general belief that music blogs could operate as more democratic cultural gatekeepers of the music industry and as independent filters between the music industry and its public, in fact, they act in a similar fashion to traditional gatekeepers such as journalists and radio DJs, allowing the industry to influence the content of their sites. Instead of approaching music blogs either in a positive way as autonomous cultural intermediaries, or in a cynical way as by-products of the music industry, a discerning examination should consider the degree of autonomy achieved by bloggers and read it against the constraints of operating within the music industry.

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“We listened to our mix-tapes of love songs, talking about boys”: Young Finns as a target group for cassette technology

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ABSTRACT

In the 1970s, compact cassettes (“C-cassettes”) were rapidly changing music listening practices. This paper studies the introduction and marketing of compact cassettes to Finns. C-cassettes answered important needs of music consumers: users remember them as essential devices in constructing and conveying one’s identity. An active role as mix-tape assembler and recommender of new music was welcomed by Finnish music listeners, especially young people. But were they ready to accept the roles and ways of using cassette technology suggested by advertisers? The material analyzed consists of magazine advertisements from the 1970s and users’ memories of C-cassettes.

KEYWORDS: mobile music; C-cassettes; music technology; advertising; music consumption.

The *Musiquitous* project (2009-2012)¹ studies ubiquitous music in Finland: its past, present, and future. In this paper, I present some preliminary results of the project. I look at the ways different actors in the popular music and music technology markets formulate their views on an innovation within music listening. The actors in this

case are Finnish advertisers and retailers of music listening appliances on one hand, and users of the appliances on the other.

The materials analysed consist of C-cassette advertisements in Finnish 1970s magazines and the responses written in connection with an investigation into memories and recollections concerning C-cassette use in Finland (*Kasettimuistot* 2010). There are some naturally occurring differences between the two types of materials. Advertisements are published marketing communication with an aim to sell as many appliances as possible. Memory data is more or less intimate personal reminiscing, written for a group of researchers who have called for memories on the topic and presented a list of questions to start from. Thus this paper does not aim to find out “the true nature of cassette use” but to probe into the themes perceptible in the analysed material and compare the ways of dealing with the relatively new technology. Finally, I also want to briefly weigh the meaning of C-cassettes for the listeners against the socio-economic background of 1970s Finland.

HOW TO MARKET C-CASSETTES IN FINLAND?

When the C-cassette made its breakthrough, it affected the whole way of consuming music and being an “audience”. Although the audio quality of early C-cassette technology was far from that of its competitors (vinyl records or reel-to-reel tapes), benefits from the users’ point of view were considerable. Foremost was freedom of choice – spatially enabled by mobility, and musically by recordability. The user interface was simple and standardized: the user could rely on the compatibility of his or her tape with any C-cassette player anywhere. The cassettes were also durable, inexpensive and easy to handle. Thus they were introduced to younger children more than any of the preceding listening technologies.

The bulletin of home electronics retail dealers advised salesmen in 1969 to find the right target groups instead of pitching C-cassette appliances to “anyone and everyone”:

It is useful for schoolchildren, since homework is guaranteed to become both enjoyable and easier [...] Narrow-film enthusiasts can effortlessly tape an authentic sound to play as a backdrop for their films [...] Businessmen will have an easier time when making reports etc. An idea springing to a motorist’s mind can easily be noted down already during the drive. (*Radiokauppias* 1969, p. 16)

In spite of the lower sound quality and the retailers’ suggestions for other preferred uses, the Finnish consumers mainly wanted C-cassettes for music recording and listening. In the late 1970s, the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) saw cassettes as “a challenge to centralized control” of music business (Garofalo 1999, p. 349). The Federation then conducted several studies on the use of cassette recorders and the extent of copying in thirteen countries. These studies revealed, among other things, that the main sources for home taping were vinyl

records and the radio. But there were clear differences in home taping practices between the studied countries. The British, for instance, mainly copied music from records and music cassettes, whereas Finns relied on radio music, the share of which was an amazing 83% (Gronow 1984, p. 7). Combined with the contemporary changes in radio programming in favour of popular music, and the spreading of musical tastes, the format provided excellent opportunities for the rise of home taping (Gronow and Saunio 1998, pp. 182-183).

After the distributors' initial confusion about target groups, the intended users were defined by marketing as adults (listening often in their cars or summer cottages) and, somewhat later, young people. The 1970s was the first decade during which Finnish young people could actually start building identities (even partly) by consuming.

"GRAB IT EVERY TIME YOU SET YOUR FOOT OUT THE DOOR"

Iconic pop performers have been a standard feature in music-related marketing. A pop star – or a character similar enough to associate the product with one – is often seen as an attention grabber in an advertising campaign. One example of this can be seen in the Philips portable player campaign from spring 1977. In the launching ad for retailers (*Figure 1*), a male figure bears a striking resemblance to John Lennon's famous "floppy hat" image from 1973 (*Figure 2*).

Figure 1: Detail from an advertisement for Philips portable cassette players in *Radiokauppias* 4/1977.



Figure 2: John Lennon and Yoko Ono in Central Park, New York 1973. Photo by Bob Gruen.



The character is the only human visual element in the full-page advertisement otherwise illustrated with numerous pictures of products in Philips' current cassette player selection. His position highest up on the page and next to the main advertising claim "The season of portable music is now" portrays him as the spokesperson for young people "looking for good portables to listen to". He is clearly older and looks more radical than the average Finnish young consumer. The associations most likely sought for – apart from the musical authority of Lennon, of course – are self-confidence and readiness to explore new things away from the security of home: thus, his choice is mobile music listening.

Mobility was naturally one of the main sales arguments for C-cassettes in advertising directed at both adult and young consumers. Between the 1970s and 2010s, advertising for mobile music devices displays at least one conspicuous visual difference. Whereas the setting in ads for iPod or mobile phone listening is predominantly urban, the early C-cassette ads with an emphasis on mobility were almost exclusively set in more or less natural outdoor environments: fields, forests, roads and parks. This is doubtless relevant for a deeper analysis of imagined and intended patterns of music technology use, for which there is not enough room in this discussion. I can only present a hypothesis that the 1970s advertisers did not see young people's use of urban space as appropriate for marketing mobile technology for one reason or another.

The 1975 advertisement for the Hitachi line of portable radio recorders (*Figure 3*) combines mobile music listening with a presumed young mobile lifestyle: "You're

on the go anyway, so take the music along. Grab the Hitachi every time you set your foot out the door". A young couple portrayed in the wide shot is running outside on a field, smiling at each other, heading for a picnic perhaps. Above the wide shot, a blow-up of the product serves naturally to present the design but also to emphasize the woman's engagement ring and the fact that the couple is not holding hands directly, but through music. The advertised appliance forms the physical connection between the two people.

Figure 3: A full-page advertisement for Hitachi portable cassette players in the Finnish youth magazine *Suosikki* 4/1975.



Social and romantic relations were just as tightly connected with music listening in the 1970s as they are now. Perhaps even tighter: often the young romance was described not only in the visuals but in words as well. Consider the copywriting in the 1973 ad "Masa and me" (Figure 4):

One day when hanging out with the gang he came to me and asked if I'd go out with him. I did, and now we've been solid for three months. We have so much fun together and like precisely the same things – such as same music.

The narrator (girl) describes her emotions and the new need to be alone with her boyfriend. She then continues to announce her contentment over not having to share the music/social situation with “the gang” anymore, since Masa has purchased a radio recorder.

Figure 4: One page of a full spread advertisement for Philips portable cassette players in the Finnish youth magazine *Suosikki* 1973/7.



Again in this ad, young romance chooses a natural environment away from home (and parental guidance). The advertisement also employs a classic topic of visual art: an intimate rendezvous of male and female in picturesque surroundings. This is underlined via the execution by watercolour painting. More direct sexual associations were often also worked into advertising by joint effect of copy and visuals.

Nature as an idyllic setting in C-cassette technology ads may also originate from the visual conventions of advertising. Showing people outside in natural environments conveys the associations of freedom, independence and relaxation more easily and swiftly than most interior settings would. Introducing technology in natural surroundings is recurrent in 1970s visual advertising; the products are given the “aura of ‘the natural’” (Williamson 1978, pp. 129-130). There is little resemblance

to the memories of young people's "own" spaces that came up in our memory data – the cassette users' recollections.

CASSETTES AS REMEMBERED BY USERS

In 2010, an enquiry on memories and recollections of cassette culture was conducted by the *Musiquitous* research project and the Finnish Literature Society². Social anthropologist Bryan Pfaffenberger (1992, p. 501) emphasises that technologic knowing is "silent", non-verbalized. This may be somewhat true for interviews of present technology users, but with memories, there seems to be no lack of words. Several respondents wrote long answers on exact practices they applied in making their own musical worlds via home-taping, borrowing, presenting, and modifying the technology to suit their needs.

PRODUCING A MUSICAL WORLD OF ONE'S OWN

The place most frequently remembered as the personal space for music listening was the respondent's own room. Often there was a higher-quality system for music listening in another room at home: "My dad's reel-to-reel recorder was in the living room. The SABA for C-cassettes then sat in my own room, connected to the radio" (*Kasettimuistot* 2010, male, Espoo, b. 1959).

In their own or their friends' rooms, the "cassette generation" explored the world of (most often popular) music. Taping networks for new or otherwise interesting vinyl records also brought access to interesting releases with a relatively low financial input. Respondents report mix-tape making and editing at quite an early age. With C-cassettes, music was no longer something to be only received. It was adaptable to situations as the listener wished.

I compiled cassettes with e.g. best guitar solos, and listened to these more than I did the full pieces. (*Kasettimuistot* 2010, male, Hyvinkää, b. 1976)

I taped my cassettes myself and could fill the whole A- or B-side with recordings of one piece only. (*Kasettimuistot* 2010, female, Salo, b. 1987)

Feelings of power and independence are frequently expressed, especially in relation to authoritative figures such as radio DJs, parents, or older siblings. Part of the control in music listening had shifted in favour of the "end user", with several consequences for the listening culture. These consequences will be one subject of our future analysis of the Finnish cassette culture.

Several respondents recall mix-tapes used in seduction and courting, for example taped musical or verbal declarations of love. Other kinds of cassette-related activities also served to ease the transition towards romantic and sexual relationships. "Me and my friend taped each other cassettes with different love songs which we then listened to, talking about boys" (*Kasettimuistot* 2010, female, Vaasa, b. 1969).

But the picture is far wider than just romantic relationships. Numerous respondents wrote about networking and different kinds of social “experimenting” with C-cassettes. A group of friends organized a singing party: “All of us had exactly identical ‘best of’ tapes in our walkmans (the maker had copied it for everybody) and simultaneously we pushed *play*, so that we could sing along together” (*Kasettimuistot* 2010, female, Kerava, b. 1979). Friends and their impact on the respondent’s musical worldview are recalled as extremely important in many ways. Making a good impression on someone and testing for musical compatibility was one strong incentive of making mix-tapes for new acquaintances.

Another main ingredient mentioned in building a musical world is the radio, especially its youth-oriented programming. The biggest common denominator for Finnish youth was the popular music programmes on public radio (commercial radio stations were only allowed in 1985). As Heikki Uimonen states in his paper for this conference, the Finns were especially eager in taping from radio programs. This was probably at least partly due to the economic circumstances of young Finnish people. Living standards had risen dramatically in Finland since the beginning of the century³, but compared to the youth in, for example, the other Nordic countries and especially the US, spending money was relatively scarce among the Finnish youth, particularly those living in the countryside. A Finnish study of teenagers’ disposable income (Lintonen et al. 2007) shows that the real value of the disposable money of young people over fourteen years had grown less than the general income level in Finland between 1977 and 2003.

WHY AND HOW CASSETTES ARE REMEMBERED

In conclusion, I want to make a short comparison between the “ad world” and the world remembered by our respondents. There are three main themes studied: the social aspects, the mobility of the technology and the aspects of power and control enabled by the C-cassette technology.

Social associations of cassette technology in advertising had several connections with the memories written for our enquiry. There was, however, clearly more emphasis on the heterosexual romance theme in the ads. This is not to say our respondents did not recognize the romantic role of C-cassettes – it was just not as high-profile a feature as in the advertisements. Partying and relaxation with friends was a recurring theme in both “worlds”. Music sharing and even music “edification” between friends is very prominent in the memory data but seldom encountered in advertisements. Among the things that users list using cassettes for socially, the common denominator seems to be that they are definitely *processes* instead of the finished achievements portrayed in ads. Cassettes are remembered for their use in making things happen – for example, finding out if a prospective romantic interest shares a taste in music or providing a background for intimate personal soul-searching, crying, etc.

On the mobility aspect of cassette technology, the ads understandably concentrate on the advantages of the products. These advantages were also acknowledged by many respondents in our data. The respondents also remembered technical

shortcomings, of which most often mentioned were tangled tapes and weak batteries. Taking music "anywhere" is a common argument in both advertising and the memories. The respondents also described intimate memories of mobile music listening linking a certain space to a sound (or a collection of music in a definitive order). This reveals the essentially different nature of the materials. Personal memories contain much more detailed stories about individual lives.

Respondents born in the 1970s and 1980s often wrote about cassette technology as an inseparable part of their youth. The cassettes were a part of the everyday world these respondents were born into. On the other hand, respondents born before the 1960s often wrote about compact cassettes as "just another format", which could be expected.

The economic development in Finnish society resulted in a new situation for young Finns in the 1970s. Seemingly endless possibilities of musical choice were becoming available to even those with more or less limited spending money at their disposal. C-cassettes made it possible for young people to position themselves as musical experts via networking and knowledge, and it was not only the ability to purchase new and "hot" music that was crucial in this process. From the point of view of this paper, the decade offered young Finnish people two brand new aspects: economic development took the youth towards full-fledged consumer power, and C-cassette technology allowed new control over music content. These two have to be among the main reasons the "cassette generation" has such vivid memories of the format and feels it had something crucial to do with their growing-up process.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank all the respondents of *Kasettimuistot* 2010 enquiry as well as her colleague Heikki Uimonen for his comments and cooperation and the referees for their valuable feedback on her paper.

ENDNOTES

1. In *Musiquitous* (2009-2012), we aim to find out how they have taken and are presently adopting mobile music technologies and practices as parts of their lives. We are interested in how these technologies and practices affect everyday life and how they in turn have been and are being modified by users - as well as how and why users let go, drop, pass by and forget mobile music technologies.
2. The questionnaire (answerable either via letter or the Internet) was open from April until September of 2010. The outcome (*Kasettimuistot* 2010) was excellent: 969 respondents answered via the Internet, with twenty-two sending letters. Slightly less than half (47.4 %) of the respondents were female, and their years of birth ranged from 1921 to 1992. The majority of the participants (65.3 %) were born in either the 1960s or the 1970s, which suggests (but does not prove) the existence of a "cassette generation".
3. See for example *Statistics Finland* 2007.

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Remembering Gencho Gaytandjiev (1935-2010): On the impact of popular music studies in Bulgarian schools

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ABSTRACT

Gencho Gaytandjiev, a pioneer in Bulgarian popular music studies, innovator in musical pedagogy, scholar, journalist, university teacher, and the author of numerous scholarly books and music text books, was among those revolutionary individuals who back in the 1970s began to challenge the conservative realm of traditional musicology that dominated Bulgarian music scholarship. This paper focuses on his pedagogical concept developed in the specific socio-cultural context within Bulgarian society and applied over the last four decades through multifaceted activities, including in the series of music text books designed for all grades of the Bulgarian general school. Aside from the fact that Gaytandjiev contributed a great deal to breaking the mainstream musicology in order to meet actual social demands, his pedagogical views stimulated the advanced humanitarian understanding that education, especially in the field of arts, must contribute to the development of thinking individuals able to appreciate various artistic values. By taking a closer look at the way such democratic, pluralistic and dialogical attitudes were introduced in the mass Bulgarian school, attention will be drawn also to the specific impact of popular music studies on Bulgarian society.

KEYWORDS: music; pedagogy; democracy; pluralism; Bulgarian school.

Figure 1: Genko Gaytandjiev (photo by Nikolay Koulev).



This paper is intended to be a tribute to influential IASPM member Gencho Gaytandjiev, a pioneer in popular music studies in Bulgaria who was among those revolutionary individuals who back in the 1970s began to challenge the conservative realm of traditional musicology which dominated Bulgarian music scholarship. It is no coincidence that his motives to develop knowledge about popular music were prompted by the growing demand in music education, which stimulated as well the foundation of IASPM. An innovator in the practice of musical pedagogy as well as the author of numerous books, including the first academic book on popular music in Bulgaria (Gaytandjiev 1990), Gencho Gaytandjiev was the leading figure in the creation of a series of music text books, designed for all grades of the Bulgarian general school.

The concept of these text books was developed and applied over the last few decades. Not surprisingly, they reflected, in a way, some of the issues discussed in popular music studies (Gaytandjiev 1997). Aside from the fact that Gaytandjiev helped a great deal in breaking the dominance of mainstream traditional musicology in order to meet actual socio-cultural demands, his pedagogical views stimulated advanced humanitarian understanding that education, especially in the field of arts, must serve and contribute to the development of *thinking* individuals able to appreciate various artistic and cultural values. This basic understanding, which clearly embraces pluralism and democratic attitudes, lies at the bottom of his inno-

vative pedagogical concept. Some of its key points, formulated by Gaytandjiev (et al. 2008, p. pp. 5-8) himself¹, read as follows:

MUSIC TEXTBOOKS FOR WHOM?

Our textbooks for any grade cover all mandatory points concerning the official educational requirements [...] Relying on our multilayered professional competence and solid professional experience, we keep using the right to offer our own original and up-to-date interpretation of the program requirements and our own methodical solutions – in regard to the most effective realization of those requirements.

Not for a moment do we forget three especially important things:

- a) The most important aspect in a music textbook is the very music in it;
- b) We create textbooks not for any “elite” children or for specialized classes but for the mass general school;
- c) Children and teenagers who will use our textbooks and listen to the music of our CDs will realize themselves as individuals not in the time of our past childhood but tomorrow, in the twenty first century.

EDUCATING THINKING INDIVIDUALS

The most important task of the teacher is to activate and develop constantly not any skills for reproducing facts and definitions, but rather thinking, free of prejudices and taboos; thinking whose best partners, especially in childhood, are the fantasy and imagination.

PLURALISM IN MUSIC – PLURALISM IN MODERN CIVIC SOCIETY

We try to open pupils’ ears for the whole variety of musics in the hope that musical pluralism may become a platform for pluralistic society

UNDERSTANDING KIDS – AVOIDING CHILDISHNESS

We keep considering the fact that today’s forms of music functioning depend on a variety of new factors in the development of cultural processes. Perhaps the most important among them refer to the capital changes in cultural communication – first of all, the expansion of the electronic media in contemporary social life. Modern school must keep attention to this factor, especially when it comes to disciplines which deal with art and culture. This is why, while selecting music material for our textbooks, we do not limit our choice within the field of so-called ‘children’s music’, used in the practice of traditional music pedagogy. This approach lies on serious enough arguments which, we hope, do not need additional explanation.

QUESTIONING AESTHETIC HIERARCHY AS A REFLECTION OF THE HIGH – LOW DEBATE

We gradually draw the pupils’ attention to three axioms of contemporary pluralistic cultural communication and their significant reflections in the field of education:

- a) The right of anybody, including those of the rising generation, to own a personal taste and personal preferences in music, arts and culture;
- b) While standing up for particular music preferences, anybody must be tolerant to the choice of others;
- c) Nobody, even the best expert, has the right to define what pupils should like or should not like.

PLEASURE (PLAYFULNESS AND ATTRACTIVENESS OF MUSIC AND OF THE LEARNING PROCESS)

Communicativeness, attractiveness and originality of our textbooks have particular value for us. This is why we try to realize these qualities in the broadest sense: from the visual design to the language and style used for presenting the lessons and even the formulations of the educational tasks. We believe that curiosity and discovery during childhood are the main motivation factors. If we fail to provoke curiosity and the children's interests, we fail to achieve any educational results.

THE ROLE OF HUMOUR AND IRONY

Jokes, irony and humour do not only make people laugh but point to understanding the metaphor, the second meaning in art and life. This is why we try to make children laugh. And hope that our colleagues share the understanding that such an approach is not 'harmful', 'unserious' or 'non-pedagogical'.

INTEGRAL APPROACH (DEVELOPING ARTISTIC POTENTIAL OF THE CHILDREN IN A COMPLEX MANNER)

We give particular attention to the integral approach in the process of tuition. This is why we create in the textbooks a large web of multi-aspect-links with the tuition in other disciplines and with the general educational mission of the teacher and the school.

LISTENING, DISCUSSION AND PERFORMING MUSIC IN THE CLASS ROOM

VISUAL DESIGN (AS A PLAYFUL TOOL IN MOBILIZING MEANING)

I would point out that even though meeting mandatory requirements, approved by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, Gaytandjiev takes the responsibility to offer an original and up-to-date interpretation of the program requirements. Of significant importance here is certainly the address. He points out (Gaytandjiev et al. 2008, p. 5) that "we create textbooks not for any 'élite' children but for the mass general school", and for children "who will realize themselves as individuals not in the time of our past childhood but tomorrow, in the twenty first century". Long before pluralism became a fashionable concept within the Bulgarian cultural context after the democratic changes in 1989, he was looking for adequate forms to open pupils' ears literally to the whole variety of musics. Also, he was looking for effective forms to stimulate the development of *thinking individuals*, able to develop not any

particular skills for the blank reproducing of historical facts or definitions, but free of prejudices and clichés, with independent attitudes towards different phenomena in music and culture. He understood children's nature but avoided childishness. He relied on the good traditions of mass musical education but definitely rejected the damaging shadow of conservatism. He was looking for the breadth of knowledge but at the same time insisted on reducing the detailed study of musical notation, unnecessary for the mass general school.

As a popular music scholar Gaytandjiev was particularly keen on giving "the right of anybody, including those of the young generation, to develop a personal taste and personal preferences in music, arts and culture". He was pleading for *playfulness and attractiveness* of the learning process, considering the changes of today's mentality and sensitivity. He was also arguing for the need of an *integral approach* which may develop the natural inner artistic potential of the children through references concerning connections between different arts. At the same time, he particularly appreciated the sense of humour implied in music and also in the way musical material must be presented – a quality which certainly requires particular inventiveness in terms of the verbal style of lesson delivery. As one of his PhD students stated,

Following Gencho in the last years of his life, I saw how bravely he defended his pedagogical mission: making musical pluralism a platform for pluralistic society. Not by chance, he particularly believed in the power of musical irony to promote pluralist thinking. Irony, he used to tell me, was the greatest enemy of totalitarianism. Totalitarianism dictated that each symbol had only one fixed meaning; irony undermined this imposition by highlighting the playfulness and multiple meanings of cultural symbols [...] This is why he appreciated so much the language of humour and irony at any musical and not only musical level. (Livni 2010, p. 221)

Behind these general points, Gaytandjiev never stopped undertaking polemics on a variety of educational questions. He asked: should music education today, in the twenty first century, keep following literally those traditional boundaries established under the European ethnocentric influence decades ago? Should the music knowledge of today's teenagers be limited to the conservative barriers of only those canons in music which have been historically established? Or should students be exposed to a knowledge of everything which is blooming today in the field of music? Should teenagers, whose everyday lives are exposed to a huge variety of music disseminated by a variety of media, and who browse tirelessly on the Internet, be familiar with questions of how music functions today? And after all, should we, the adult experts, impose our personal "yes" or "no" as the only truthful criteria for "good" and "bad" in music? Wouldn't such an imposition contradict the flags of pluralism and liberal attitudes in art which otherwise we eagerly embrace? Wouldn't such an educational policy freeze people's curiosity and desire to make aesthetic choices for themselves, emphasising, under the flag of a predominant cultural prestige, the

stereotyped, traditionally established aesthetic canons, elaborated in the dogmatic musical pedagogy?

To illustrate how these and other rhetorical questions are applied in practice, I would point to one of the music text books designed for the ninth grade in Bulgarian mass high school (Gaytandjiev et al. 2001). Its content is thematically organized under the theme Music / Culture / Society, which clearly shows educational priorities, elaborated according to the well advanced educational program, approved in 2000 by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education. By saying "well advanced", I mean its potential in terms of understanding music not just as a pleasant and purely emotional thing but also as a cultural thing, as an artistic form which may inform more on the richness and flexibility of music as a cultural activity, along with an awareness of those fundamental psychological changes and new paradigms prompted by the modern media age. Main chapters here include issues devoted to music and media, music industry, audiences, folk culture, popular music in the twentieth century, globalization and local differences, among others.

I am not going into detail about this educational set. I would only briefly point to the basic concept implied in the whole educational set which includes (as all other sets for different grades) a text book, a guide for the teachers, plus three CDs with music for performing and music for listening and discussion (more than one hundred pieces). Again, the concept here is based on the idea of pluralism seen not just as a hot cliché in the modern cultural vocabulary, but as a matter of creative attitude concerning cultural understandings at a more general level. Second, the book is based on the understanding of music as communication. In general, it shows *how cultures function, how they express themselves, how they travel, how they mix and grow*. It offers students a *complex understanding of the cultural, social, economic and political world they inhabit*. The large music panorama recommended for performing and discussing draws from the classical repertoire, popular musics, and a wide vista of folk musics from different parts of the world.

None of the "recommended for discussion" musical examples are studied out of their context. All examples are intended to be commented upon in the context of one or more of the sixteen educational units. Besides, both teachers and pupils are encouraged to offer additional material in interpreting the main educational topics. What is worthy to mention is that none of these examples are deliberately labelled as necessarily "good" or "bad" music. Instead, students are encouraged to discuss and argue their own likes and dislikes, and also to discover by themselves the wisdom of intercultural tolerance, the wisdom to understand those who share different tastes and different opinions. To make my point clear, I will quote a short paragraph from the book's introduction, which reads:

On the following pages you will hear about lots of different musics. Many kinds of musics. Ones that you may like and ones that you may not like. What matters here refers to the fact that all of them live (or have lived) around us. It means they function, they communicate something to somebody. Sometimes among

large groups of people. And this is a good enough reason for why we shouldn't be silent of them. (Gaytandjiev et al. 2001, p. 3)

One of the main challenges the authors refer to is the style of delivering such themes. How does one talk to teenagers about "difficult" questions and without simplifying issues like cultural globalization, music and media, music and industry, music and cultural identity, subcultures, or, say, hybridity in music? Indeed, the authors' approach puts emphasis on the students' positive motivation and on stimulating their desire for a live dialogue on both the basic educational themes and the recommended for discussion music examples. The two sides of this dialogue – teachers and students – are thought of as equally important participants in a conversation which is supposed to be mutually useful. Thus, stylistically, the presentation of the educational material relies on the tools of one *rather dialogical* and friendly form. I should point out as well that this style relies significantly on the *sense of humour* – of the authors, of the teachers, and, certainly first of all, of the pupils.

However, while the pedagogical style here was apparently well accepted and well understood by students, teachers sometime met difficulties in getting the educational point. More than once, during my meetings with music teachers, I've been asked: "Okay, Ms. Levy, everything is fine – but what, finally, are we supposed to impose on the pupils? What, after all, are the *real* values our pupils must learn and remember?"

This brings me to the fact that musical pedagogy, as a university discipline, is taught at present in many Bulgarian universities, even though it turns out to be far behind the program already in high schools. In most cases, music teachers, who graduated from universities, turn out to be not quite prepared to teach *music as culture*. Paradoxically enough, unlike their teachers, students seem to be much more open and prepared as well as much more *curious* to pose and discuss such "difficult" questions. Apparently, music pedagogy, as taught at university level, still re-produces some out-of-date concepts which – even though being useful in past cultural realities – do not quite care about the developments of modern culture.

One can ask: why is there this contradiction? Who has the guts to face the social demands of education in art and undertake adequate changes?

It is perhaps not by chance that a popular music colleague (Barber-Kersovan 2002), while looking at the 9th grade textbook, apparently had no problem in getting the textbook message. She said:

I love it, every page, though I cannot really understand the text. But I can probably understand the message via pictures: We live in a rich, fantastic and pluralistic world of different musical styles and traditions, all of them are available to us via media. Is that correct?... And if yes, what a difference to our music education which still thinks that its basic aim is, how to pin down the kids for three hours in order to force down their throats an opera they do not like! Very well done and very courageous!!!

Indeed, Gencho Gaytandjiev had the guts and the courage to break conservative pedagogical canons and clichés, and to introduce and stand up for new democratic concepts in a fascinating, appealing way. He understood that living in the modern world (or, if you prefer, in the “global village”), where nothing is far anymore, requires adequate educational strategies, including in the field of music and culture. He looked at the future as a humanist and knew how to educate through the power of music citizens who would realize well enough that the world is a small place and we should all live together in it, appreciating each other’s differences. His contribution to music education left meaningful traces. The question that remains open is whether his heritage finds broad-minded successors today.

ENDNOTES

1. Developed and applied over the last two decades, this pedagogical concept was only published in Gaytandjiev et al. 2008.

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The interplay of ethnic and other identities in Tsonga popular music

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ABSTRACT

Studies on black South African popular music have often invoked the idea of identity performance: certain music genres are associated with particular ethnic identities, for example *maskanda* with Zuluness¹. This work shows how various South African popular musics construct ethnic identities. Although ethnic identity continues to be performed in contemporary black South African popular music, there is also, I argue in this paper, a performance of and discourse on identities that exceed ethnicity. In this paper I focus on the relationships between ethnic identity and other identities that elide the national South African identity as manifested in the stories and music of two Tsonga musicians from different generations, General MD Shirinda and Jeff Maluleke. From several in-depth interviews with these musicians I analyse their use of language and modes of self-representation, in their music and in their discourse on their music during apartheid and post apartheid times. In so doing I show how the musicians' thinking about and practicing of identity moves between different levels of affiliation at different historical moments.

KEYWORDS: identity; genre; ethnicity; Tsonga; popular music.

GENERAL MD AND JEFF MALULEKE: AN INTRODUCTION

General MD Shirinda was born Khokhozeya Shirinda in 1936 in Mozambique but later moved to South Africa with his family². His career as an artist began with him being discovered and recorded by the South African Broadcasting Corporation, which embarked on a search to record traditional music to play on Radio Bantu³.

Shirinda recalled being first recorded in 1962, and in 1965, the year in which Radio Bantu Tsonga was established, he recorded some songs for the station. Following these experiences, Shirinda went on to pursue a career in music, and, in the words of former Munghana Lonene FM (the Tsonga radio station) manager, James Shikwambana (2009), Shirinda “dominated the airwaves”. Shirinda’s music has always been labelled Tsonga traditional music by music commentators and the media at large.

Jeff Maluleke, on the other hand, was born in 1977 in Mambhumbu, a village in Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga, but grew up in Daveyton, a township in Ekurhuleni, Gauteng. A self-taught guitarist, Maluleke found his place in the South African music industry by first collaborating with artists such as Dr. Victor and *kwaito* legend, Arthur Mafokate⁴. It was only in 1998 that Maluleke made his mark as a solo artist with the release of his album *Dzovo* (Maluleke 1998) in which the song “Byala bya xintu” (traditional beer) turned him into a popular name in South Africa. Since then, Maluleke has won numerous awards including three South African Music Awards and two Kora Awards. Maluleke is often described by the media and music commentators as a Tsonga musician; however he describes his music as world music. Though Shirinda and Maluleke participate in different music styles, there exists within their music, features that communicate, construct a Tsonga ethnic identity, one of which is language.

NEGOTIATING TSONGA-NESS THROUGH LANGUAGE

From the commencement of his music career, Shirinda used Xitsonga in his song lyrics. Shirinda’s sole use of the Tsonga language in his music is mainly due to his belief in keeping the language “pure”. This became apparent when he raised concern about young musicians today recording songs that “do not make sense”, proclaiming that if “you went and sang Zulu and it was not ‘well cooked’, the song would not work with the Zulus. Even Shangaan, you were supposed to sing it purely” (Shirinda 2010). Having spent two weekends with Shirinda and his family I observed that Shirinda is very rooted in his culture and heritage. He protested:

We need to preserve the Shangaan language. In the olden days when you spoke Shangaan and mixed it with English, you went for an interview and you mixed with English, they didn’t want that. If you ever spoke and mixed with English, while on air, it meant you are killing the Shangaan language. It will slowly die, bit by bit... So for me, I am determined that for as long as I live, that our language, I’m not saying the other languages are not right, they must be there, all eleven languages here in South Africa. (Shirinda 2010)

Though Shirinda’s love for his mother tongue is indisputable, the circumstances surrounding his emergence in the music industry cannot be left unexplored, as it is evident in the above statement that it was not only his preference but “they” (music commentators of the time) also did not want mixing of languages⁵. His music career began during one of South Africa’s darkest decades, the 1960s, which witnessed,

amongst other things, the attempted repression of cosmopolitan musical styles such as township jazz (Coplan 2008, p. 225). The repression of the cosmopolitan styles came with the promotion of ethnic language based styles such as the Tsonga traditional or Tsonga neo-traditional, as it was later labelled, which Shirinda participates in. Therefore, though Shirinda expressed pride in singing in Xitsonga, it is also important to consider that his career coincided with a period in South African history in which he had limited choice in terms of the language in which to sing⁶. Maluleke's use of Xitsonga on the other hand, is a different matter.

Though Xitsonga is dominant in Maluleke's music, he uses English often and occasionally makes use of Zulu, Sotho, Portuguese and Kiswahili. Maluleke also exploits mixing languages in his lyrics such as in the songs "Let's Save The World" and "Luleka M'nwanati" ("Advice M'nwanati") from his album *Kilimanjaro* (Maluleke 2001) in which he sings the verses in Xitsonga and the choruses in English and vice versa.

As a young artist who first placed his mark in the South African music industry during the post-apartheid era, it is not surprising that Maluleke sees no obligation in singing in Xitsonga regardless of the fact that he is Tsonga. When I asked him why he sings in other languages other than Xitsonga, his answer was: "Why don't you ask me why I sing in Tsonga?" (Maluleke 2009a). He made it clear that he sings in Tsonga because he chooses to. Though this stance may seem as though Maluleke is distancing himself from his ethnic language, the contrary is true. Maluleke released *Ximatsatsa* (Maluleke 2004), an album which he dedicated to the Tsonga people. He described it to me as "the coming back to my roots" saying he sang all the songs in Tsonga as a way of honouring his people.

The use of the term *ximatsatsa* for the album also draws attention to Tsonga-ness in the music. The word is a common affectionate word in the Xitsonga language, meaning "my love", "sweetheart", "darling", etc. The popularization of this term was further accentuated by Thomas Chauke, the best selling Tsonga traditional artist to date. Chauke (1982, 1983) uses the terms as a title to his album series; hence the word has almost become synonymous with Xitsonga. Maluleke therefore may have emerged at a time when he had the freedom to choose which language he wanted to sing in, his use of Xitsonga functions to underpin his ethnic identity in a similar way it does for Shirinda. The difference between the two is that Shirinda's ethnic pride in singing in Xitsonga was practiced during a period in which the objective, though not from him, was to separate his people from the rest, while for Maluleke it is to celebrate his identity along with other South African ethnic groups and the rest of the world. Language therefore, as one of the fundamental markers of ethnic identity, plays an important role in the construction of a Tsonga ethnic identity in Shirinda's and Maluleke's music; nevertheless, there are features within the language itself that further emphasize Tsonga-ness.

NEGOTIATING ETHNIC IDENTITY THROUGH REFERENCE TO TSONGA-NESS

In addition to the use of Xitsonga in their music, there appears in Shirinda's and Maluleke's music a name that has long appeared in Tsonga folklore including mu-

sic, "Mithavine", which appears several time in Shirinda's and Maluleke's music⁷. This name also appears in the music of most of the artists studied for my research. It is a common name amongst the Tsonga and its use in their music is a direct reference to Tsonga heritage. Maluleke also makes direct reference to his ethnic identity in "Luleka M'nwanati" with "M'nwanati" being his clan name. Also, Shirinda employs dress code to further enhance his Tsonga-ness in his performance. He emphasizes how he always performs in his "Shangaan" traditional dress (Shirinda 2010). In addition to wearing traditional Tsonga attires, Shirinda explained that when they perform, they dance the XiGaza dance, which is the Tsonga traditional dance in which the women swivel their skirts and the men execute their stamping dance routines⁸. While these elements construct a Tsonga ethnic identity in their music, Maluleke and Shirinda both view their music as participating or constructing more than an ethnic identity.

Shirinda's music has been labelled Tsonga music, Tsonga traditional or Tsonga neo-traditional, but these are labels which he highly contests arguing that when he records music, it is not only for the Tsonga people, but for everyone. He related how he "improved" his music by adding western instruments and drawing elements from *mbaqanga*, so that it could appeal to everyone⁹. Regardless of the fact that his music continues to be branded and marketed as Tsonga traditional, Shirinda maintains that his music is "African Music" (Shirinda 2010). He contested:

This music is music of Africa, it is not Shangaan because it's Shangaan when we sing, the language, but the rhythm that I play works throughout the world. That is why it was taken by Malcolm McLaren, and taken by Paul Simon, do you see where they are. They are outside [the country]. (ibid.)

Important to note from this quote is that Shirinda's positions his music as "African" rather than South African or Tsonga. For rural based musicians the nation was the ethnic identity rather than the country. Black South Africans were allocated "homelands" according to ethnic groups and Gazankulu was the one reserved for Tsonga speakers, hence Shirinda's use of the word *maGaza* ("Gaza's" or "people of Gaza") whenever he referred to Tsonga people. Shirinda's belief that his music transcends ethnic boundaries gave way to the idea that it could not only be Tsonga, but also "African".

Maluleke is also against the idea of music being ethnically labelled, arguing that it is "tribalism" (Maluleke 2009b). He lamented that "if you are Shangaan and you sing Shangaan, they will take you and lock you up and say you play Tsonga music and then which means your music must be played mainly in the Xitsonga radio station" (ibid.). While Shirinda's music can easily be identified as Tsonga when heard at first encounter due to its heavy reliance on Tsonga indigenous melodies, Maluleke's music on the other hand, without the Tsonga lyrics, cannot be easily identified as Tsonga. Maluleke explained that his music is world music because "I fuse different elements". He emphasized how he uses different instruments from all

over the world and different genres in his music. He said, "Anything that I listen and I love, I take a piece of it and then I make music" (Maluleke 2009a).

Though Maluleke is clear on what his music is or what it should be labelled, these fusions which he often speaks of have resulted in confusions amongst music commentators. Besides being constantly described as a Tsonga musician, to his annoyance, his music has been marked everything from *mbaqanga*, Afro-pop, contemporary, Afro-jazz, folk music, and to my surprise West African. This multiple labelling affirms that though Maluleke is Tsonga and often uses Xitsonga in his lyrics, thus constructing a Tsonga ethnic identity, his exploitation of various elements from other cultures, whether be it instruments or any other musical features, creates a platform for the performance of multiple identities. His use of Swahili, Portuguese, *kwasa kwasa*, and directly referring to Kinshasa in the song "Kabila" also builds a Pan-African aesthetic in his music.

Evident in these case studies is the impact of a specific moment in a country's history of music making and how musicians identify their music. Shirinda's and Maluleke's experiences also indicate the lack of authority over music labelling experienced by musicians. Both have expressed dissatisfaction with the labelling of their music by music commentators and the media at large, with Shirinda still being branded and marketed as a Tsonga traditional artist regardless of the fact the he prefers for his music to be labelled "African Music".

ENDNOTES

1. See Olsen 2000, Nhlapo 1998, and Collins 2006/7 for discussions on *maskanda*
2. His father was a traditional healer who enjoyed playing indigenous instruments. Young Shirinda was also trained as a traditional healer and he played indigenous instruments such as the *timbila* (Tsonga thumb piano, and Chopi xylophone) and the guitar.
3. See Hamm 1991 and Muller 2008 for discussion of Radio Bantu.
4. See Coplan 2005, Mhlambi 2004 and Allen 2004 for discussion of *kwaito*.
5. See Drewett and Clegg 2006 for discussion on popular music censorship in South Africa.
6. It is commonly known that Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu's "Woza Friday" ("Come Friday") was banned because it was seen as an "insult to the Zulu people" for polluting their language by mixing it with English (see Drewett and Clegg 2006).
7. Shirinda's music was made available to me by the SABC Media Libraries.
8. See Tracey c. 1950 for description of some Tsonga traditional dances.
9. *Mbaqanga* is a black urban South African popular style that emerged in the early 1950s, popularised by the groaner Mahlathini and the Mahotella Queens. See Meintjes 2003 for detailed discussion on *mbaqanga*.

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Travels of musical notes: Memories of Mozart and “Jay ho!”

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the composition “Itna na mujhse tu pyaar badhaa” and the networks of memory and flow that are related to it. Created by the Indian composer-musician Salil Chowdhury for the film *Chhaya* (1961), this song entered the Indian popular domain to become an iconic composition that in a self-conscious way popularised Western-classical notes. While the uses of clarinets, strings and flutes have a longer history in Indian films, Chowdhury’s music underscored its influences. In my understanding, the contemporary composition “Jay ho!” (from *Slumdog millionaire*, 2008), by the Academy Award winner musician-composer A.R. Rahman, rearranges Chowdhury’s song on a different musical plane, which is then followed up in the song (and music video) of the Pussycat Dolls. The thrust and the hook of the Pussycat Dolls number seems to be that it has reworked the idea of “Bollywood” music for global listeners. This paper tries to study such displacements, journeys and questions of authorship, as well as the role of technology in reception and the function of the musician within this contested terrain. The primary questions that come up concern the problems of memory and forgetting of certain musical notes, and the origins and passages of these notes. Moreover, the processes through which certain musical patterns enter popular culture to lose their identity and become a part of something that may be totally different are crucial here.

KEYWORDS: Indian film-music; musical compositions; memory; popular domains; reception.

THE NETWORK OF NOTES

The framework of this essay emerges out of a series of recorded interviews – of music composer Prabudha Banerjee (2010) and professor Amlan Dasgupta (2011), Jadavpur University, Kolkata - which have been juxtaposed with a series of texts and audio-visual clips to examine the ways in which musical notes travel across disparate zones of time and space to transform the very materiality of the musical object. The aim of this essay is to explore the processes of music-making in the context of Indian cinema and its varied modes of reception, which has become further complicated through media convergences (including the growing overlaps of music television cultures, downloading practices of disparate music, and changes in listening habits which include uses of portable music systems and media players), new media practices and digital tools. In a context where a pool of (mostly mutated and undefined) sound elements becomes available to us, a particular composition may not in popular parlance be associated with a single condition or any specific “original” text. Moreover, this variegated range of disparate sounds competes with the density of the everyday soundscape. It is within this network of fragmentary associations that I contest the question of “authorship”, especially in the context of popular (Indian) cinema and public cultures, in order to examine the manner in which, within specific historical conditions, the memory of certain tunes is reproduced, received, and re-circulated. The composition that encouraged such an enquiry is Mozart’s *Symphony No. 40 in G minor, KV. 550*, which was rearranged by the maverick Indian composer Salil Chowdhury for the film *Chhaya* (1961), as well as in later reformulations in films such as *Tridev* (1989) and in a more recent instance the famous number “Jay ho!” from *Slumdog millionaire* (2008).

In this attempt to study the modes of borrowing, transportation and transformations of Mozart’s composition, I consider four crucial moments in the history of Indian popular cinema and music cultures: firstly, the crucial moments of the 1940s, the cultural movements of the Indian People’s Theatre Association (IPTA, the Left cultural platform) during this period, and the post-Independence era, when the (inter) national-modern question was important; secondly, the 1960s, or the “golden era” of Indian (film) songs, when their popularity soared high through the marvellous singing of the playback singers and their mass dissemination through radio; thirdly, the cassette boom in the 1980s, the technological revolution and the availability of tapes as well as locally-made cheap cassette players, which ushered in the mass character of music consumption in India; finally, the post-globalisation era, instances of media convergence and the function of Bollywood, which reveal the density of the terrain.

It is within this network of meaning that Salil Chowdhury’s song “Itna na mujhse tu pyaar badhaa” (“Don’t love me as much”) from the film *Chhaya* becomes imperative. Based on Mozart’s *Symphony No. 40*, this song entered the Indian public domain to become an iconic composition that in a self-conscious way negotiated Western classical notes. My study (Mukherjee forthcoming) of the film journals of the 1930s and advertisements for records shows that the public in a colonised country were indeed familiar with popular Western music¹. In the context of colonisation, Western classical music was a recognisable mode, particularly for the English-educated in

Calcutta and Bombay². By the 1940s, songs were composed in jazz styles, as well as in waltzes, Latin American popular genres, etc. Music directors were experimenting with Western instruments, harmony and orchestration. Popular melodrama used such forms enthusiastically and often employed caricatures of such syncretic forms in a somewhat self-reflexive way. For instance, a film like *Grihalakshmi* (1945, Bengali), in an elaborate sequence, shows the various instruments that were used (including sitar, shehnai, piano, guitar, tabla, harmonium, etc.) as well as different musical forms, singing styles and modes of performance³. Furthermore, a social-reformist film like *Kunku* (1937, Marathi⁴) uses ambient sounds as an accompaniment to the songs. The film presents Nira (the protagonist) as a modern individual who seeks her individual rights, and enjoys singing along with an entire orchestra, played on the gramophone. Developed through a number of sequences, this culminates in her performing along with an English song being played on the gramophone. *Kunku* accentuates the complexities of cultural practices during the colonial period as well as the patterns by which filmmakers addressed and negotiated them. Indeed, as Biswarup Sen (2010, p. 92) writes, “[m]usicians from Calcutta were responsible for most of the innovations that would give Hindi film music its distinctive identity”. By the late 1940s and early 1950s, while the *film-geet* (film-song) became an independent spectacular “song and dance sequence” a recognisable pattern for Hindi film music was audible. It deployed an (a) *alaap* (prelude), followed by (b) *gaat and taan* (refrain-verse), along with instrumental interludes. Anna Morcom (2007) after Alison Arnold (1988) discusses the “eclectic” tendency of this pattern.

It is within this structure that one can analyse the national modern question, which was at the same time “international modern”⁵. Furthermore, Salil Chowdhury belonged to the political-cultural tradition of IPTA and Left cultural explorations. In addition, at the time when Chowdhury (who was trained in Indian classical music) recreated “Western” compositions, the use of clarinets, strings and flutes had long been accepted within the Indian musical milieu. Thus, Chowdhury’s music, in effect, seemed to underscore such influences. Additionally, this easily combined with the practices within Indian classical, which encouraged the use of quotations and allusions. At the turn of the twentieth century, such existing conditions were inter-linked with the emergent situation where new locations for musical transaction were formed with the entry of gramophone records⁶. Besides, film music was also making use of another popular tendency, that is, the band music (for instance the Maihar Band) created by distinguished musicians like Alauddin Khan and others (Mukherjee 2007). This meant a new pool of music would be available as modern urban entertainment. Clearly, a thorough research of Hindi film music illustrates the ways in which a popular form grew out of contemporary practices of mechanical reproduction and produced new domains for musical interfaces with audiences. As pointed out by Dasgupta (2011), Indian musicians had played for Queen Victoria’s coronation (in the mid-nineteenth century), and had accompanied the (in) famous Mata Hari with her performances (in the early twentieth century). During such musical exchanges with other artists, “sometimes only small fragments got transferred, and transformed”, and produced what Dasgupta refers to as “a scene

of new possibilities" (ibid.). Additionally, cinema offered an exceptional field since as a popular form, and growing from different performative cultures, it encouraged interactions between disparate musical tropes. In short, popular films appreciate experimentations, and draw upon distinct practices of music and performance, as well as visual cultures. Music thus operates within a domain that has multiple layers and underpinnings; moreover, its movements include journeys back and forth between various locations, which do not always imply direct quotations.

A film like *Barsaat* (1949) illustrates the ways in which the violin became the "sonic signifier" of romance and love in Indian contexts. For instance, in one of the crucial sequences, when the female protagonist's (Reshma) marriage is being fixed to someone other than the hero (Pran), she suffers in love. As she lies on the bed, the camera tracks in to get a closer shot, just as the strings (played by Pran from outside) sound more powerful than ever. In this scene, like the previous three occasions, upon hearing the tune Reshma rushes out. Cut to a shot of Pran playing a variation of the *Hungarian rhapsodies*, while the lights reflected back from the waters highlight the melodramatic moment. Reframed by a series of doorways, Reshma rushes in and embraces Pran fervently. A sharp cut to a closer shot is supported by music, which stops abruptly to emphasise (through its absence) the unique seductive quality of the composition. Truly, one of the most important aspects in this context is Kapoor's reworking of the *Hungarian rhapsodies* in this and in other films⁷. Kapoor takes a popular Western composition and re-creates it within a specific Indian context (as well, Pran describes it to Reshma and consequently to the audience) to underline the function of music in cinema (just as he reveals the real musician in the climax of the film).

MUSIC, MUTATIONS, MEMORIES

As demonstrated by Peter Manuel (1993), the 1980s were marked by changes within the music industry with the introduction of "cassettes" or tapes, which encouraged the mass dissemination of music in India. Manuel shows how the economic policies of the late 1970s led to the unprecedented growth of the cassette industry in India. With the arrival of cassettes, music became available in the local grocery shops, just as a film like *Dance dance* (1987) narrates the success of the T-series cassettes company and its proprietor Gulshan Kumar. The Indian consumer-electronics industry burgeoned during this time⁸. Manuel (1993, p. 62) quotes journalist Anil Chopra, who insists that "the real cassette boom has happened mostly since 1984 or '85, especially because tape coating has started in India in a huge way". Indeed, the cassette technology restructured the music scene in India. While in the early 1980s "two-in-ones" (recorder-cum-player) were a "craze", the album *Disco deewane* (1981, music by Biddu) ensured that what comprised the very idea of popular music in the sub-continent would now be taken under new conditions. While it may be argued that it was indeed R.D. Burman's music that presented the "radical new versions of pleasure, sexuality, and desire" of the 1970s (Sen 2010, p. 95), the music of *Disco dancer* (1982) by Bappi Lahiri emphasised the "vast network of inflows and outflows" (Sen 2010, p. 88) of Indian popular music.

In recent times, Ashish Rajadhyaksha (2002) describes the “*Bollywoodisation* of the Indian cinema” as the “corporatisation” of the film industry that plans to reintegrate finance, production, and distribution, along with the music industry. Moreover, in his recent book (Rajadhyaksha 2009, pp. 99-100) he has elaborated on the “cinema-effects” and suggests that

[w]ithin the universe of the cinema, what does an inclusive definition of the text actually include? Even on its own, as a production process, it is clear that the repudiation of authenticity in Bollywood – in the music of *Bollywood funk* or in the Jani-Khosla installation at Selfridges – coincides with a widespread social tendency towards evoking film mainly for purposes of re-presentation, re-definition [...] of reprocessing the cinema in order, eventually, to make it available for numerous and varied uses primarily outside movie theatre [sic].

As well, Prasad (2008, p. 49) suggests that “successful commodification of Indian cinema as Bollywood in the International market is based on the idea of an unchanging essence that distinguishes it from Hollywood”. Kaarsholm (2002), Kaur and Sinha (2005) as well as Rajadhyaksha (2009) describe the Indian Summer festival in London in 2002 as an important point at which Bollywood became acceptable globally, and became popular as a brand that is both “kitschy and cool”. The Indian Summer festival showcased a variety of Hindi popular films, along with Satyajit Ray’s films. It also launched music composer A.R. Rahman and Andrew Lloyd Webber’s musical *Bombay dreams*, and the Victoria and Albert Museum presented Hindi film posters in their exhibition titled *Cinema India: The art of Bollywood*. Moreover, it was the style in which *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) quoted a popular Hindi film song (“Chamma, chamma...”) that gave Bollywood global appeal which was beyond the “curry and sari”. In addition, the massive popularity of *Slumdog millionaire* (2008) underlined the processes through which Bollywood has become a big business, just as it demonstrated the ways in which a popular form may be appropriated by a more powerful canon.

In my understanding, the contemporary composition “Jay ho!” by the Academy Award winner musician-composer A.R. Rahman rearranges Chowdhury’s song on a different musical plane, which was then followed up by the song (and music-video) of the Pussycat Dolls. After Chowdhury had transported Mozart to Indian contexts, and when, in the 1980s, Kalyanji-Anandji borrowed from Chowdhury (as argued by Banerjee 2010), the new musical compositions were not negotiating classical Western sounds (or Mozart’s *Symphony No. 40*), but reworking an Indian classic like “Itna na mujhshe tu pyaar barah” for a wider audience. Clearly, it is hard to locate a path of influence explaining the intertextual connections between the disparate moments of musical communications. Thus, as we examine this specific instance of musical allusions, each composition does not directly reflect upon the other. “Sometimes there is a break”, insists Dasgupta (2011), as he describes how on certain occasions, “it’s not a series of cultural allusions, but a reference to the proximal source”. Therefore, even when Rahman transformed a classic for “Western” audiences, he

was indeed through a convoluted route “returning” an Indian version of Western classical music to contemporary audiences, for whom such mutations did not seem to evoke the said associations. The thrust and the hook of the Pussycat Dolls’ number appears to be that it has reworked a Bollywood “thing” for global listeners. As well, the music video demonstrates through its *mise en scène* and through the presence of Rahman that it may not be mainly about fresh musical compositions and new musical transactions. Instead, the music video seems to trade with certain tunes, notions and images regarding Bollywood (for instance, the uses of *namaste* and *bindi* in the video), or what Prasad (2008) describes as an “unchanging essence”. Indeed, it is a representation of the entire gamut of the visual trope of Bollywood.

In his book *The cinema effect*, Sean Cubitt (2004) describes his theory of film by discussing the image *vis-à-vis* three notions. He suggests that the cinema and the world have as their basis the same categories of “Being”. These categories are first “Being in-itself, or what Peirce calls *Firstness*”, secondly “Being in relation to something else, or *Secondness*”, and thirdly “Being in relation to something else *from the perspective of a third thing* – the *logical* relations of things in the universe, or *Thirdness*” (Dawkins 2005). Having elaborated on these principles, his purpose is to complete his study by “historicising”. Through a close-reading of “Itna na mujhshe tu pyaar barah” as well as “Jay ho!”, one examines this “interpretive” aspect of cinema, or the “thirdness” of displacements, travels and mutations, which are deeply connected to histories of reception and technologies, thereby disturbing the role of the author. The primary questions that come up within this framework are the problems of remembering and forgetting (of certain musical notes, and their origins and historical passages). In addition, the processes through which certain musical patterns enter the realm of the popular to lose their very fabric and become a part of something that may be totally different are significant. Therefore, returning to the problem of authorship, since the author (or Mozart) is indeed dead, the (ghost of the) music now belongs to the listeners, who can probably recognise Mozart’s composition in a plethora of sonic signifiers or in a composite structure that refers to many such notes and memories.

ENDNOTES

1. Published in journals like *Batayan* (Bengali), 1932; *Bioscope* (Bengali), 1930; *Cinema Sansar* (Hindi), 1932-33; *Chitra Lekha* (Bengali), 1930-31; *Dipali* (Bengali), 1931-1932; *Film Land*, 1931-32; *Film World*, 1934; *Kheyali* (Bengali), 1932; *Nach Ghar* (Bengali), 1926-27; and so on, housed in local libraries as well as at NFAI, Pune and BFI, London. In my forthcoming book (Mukherjee forthcoming) I have anthologised the important writings on films written in the early period between the 1920s and 1930s, and have situated the important yet somewhat unknown arguments on the advent of sound within the larger framework of the social history films.
2. Satyajit Ray’s *Charulata* (1964, Bengali) is a fine example of such transformations during the colonial period. Also see Chatterjee 2002.
3. Music composed by Himanshu Dutta. The film was also made in Hindi.
4. Also made in Hindi as *Duniya na mane* (1937), music by Kesavrao Bhole.

5. While the idea of Indian modernity in the colonial and post-colonial conditions has been debated at length by Chatterjee (2002), I would like to draw attention to Leftist political thought and cultural movements, which propagated the notion of “internationalism” in Indian contexts. The translation of the iconic composition “International” was a part of such projects. Chowdhury was instrumental in adapting and translating musical compositions (including the music dedicated to Black American civil rights movements) to the Indian socio-political scenario.
6. The mass acceptance of both gramophone records and film music in India became momentous in the 1950s post-colonial period with the intervention of radio, which played a crucial role in popularising film songs beyond cinematic boundaries. Gerry Farrell’s (1993) writing on gramophone records illustrates the function of urban middle classes and the ways in which musical activities became fashionable in big cities like Bombay and Calcutta via the availability of records.
7. Apparently reworked in *Mera naam Joker* (1970) and *Bobby* (1973) as well.
8. Manuel (1993, p. 62) writes that “[s]ales of recorded music – almost entirely cassettes by late 1980s – went from \$1.2 million in 1980 to \$12 million in 1986”. Indeed, the cassette technology successfully reorganised the music industry in India. Also see Rajadhyaksha (2007) for a critical reading of such industrial shifts.

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Sound in *Lost* and the disavowal of reality

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at the use of synchronised sound in the American television series *Lost* (2004-2010). Here the score bypasses the conventional distinction between diegetic and nondiegetic sound, thus affecting the viewer's capacity to make sense of the narrative. I will show how this reflects a current tendency in the media towards the spectacularisation of reality and the fictionalisation of information. The inclusion in the plot of issues such as torture, terrorism or racism, which at the time of the screening were at the centre of the public debate, makes this use of the medium especially problematic. The effect of the score in *Lost* is not just one of disorientation, as it also contributes to the conviction that there is no available perspective that would grant an understanding of the countless mysteries that characterise the series; accordingly, the possibility itself of a rational explanation of the fictional events is often avoided through illogical turns in the plot. Background sounds play a role in generating this divergence between (fictional) reality and perception: if the fictional world is mystified, any means to know, understand and control it through our senses is frustrated, so that the spectator has to relinquish to the inexplicability of events. I will read this loss of perspective in the light of the theory of alienation, explaining how music is used in order to obtain a derangement of perception.

KEYWORDS: *Lost*; senses; alienation; conspiracy theory; infotainment.

In this article I will discuss the use of music and sound in the ABC television series *Lost*, which between 2004 and 2010 entertained a vast international audience with the adventures of a group of castaways on a mysterious and seemingly unmapped island. In particular, I will argue that diegetic and nondiegetic sounds are blurred, generating confusion in the fictional events and thus breaking an implicit contract between the spectator and the producer; it is my aim to show how this blurred soundscape is typical of contemporary television, affecting our sensory capacity to interpret media messages and hence raising concerns about media literacy.

THE FICTIONALISATION OF REALITY

In recent years, in concomitance with the development of time-shifting and cross-platform technologies from videotape recorders to smartphones, we have witnessed significant changes in mediated communication. More precisely, information has become more and more commodified, so that its adherence to reality is not as important as its appeal for an audience of potential consumers. Accordingly, sensationalistic news, rather than being confined to tabloids, lives side by side with more accountable journalism, making it harder to distinguish between the two.

Thussu (2007, p. 2) notices how the growing commercialism of television is the result of at least three factors: the privatisation of global communication, the deregulation of broadcasting and the convergence between different media. Furthermore, globalisation has meant that this commercial model of broadcasting is now dominant across the world (*ibid.*). The rise of infotainment is a direct consequence of these changes:

As television news has been commercialized, the need to make it entertaining has become a crucial priority for broadcasters, as they are forced to borrow and adapt characteristics from entertainment genres and modes of conversation that privilege an informal communicative style, with its emphasis on personalities, style, storytelling skills and spectacles. (*ibid.*, p. 3)

Moreover, the public have been gradually co-opted as co-author and broadcaster in the production of media content (see, for example, Keen 2007). It is hard to say whether this can be understood as an advance in participation, though we may assume that any new potential agency of the *prosumer* (Toffler 1980) will be subject to subsequent and specific constraints.

Even if there is evidence that the emotional impact linked to the fictionalisation of information can be used intentionally to generate consensus, at this point it is not my aim to investigate if this process is also manipulated for some specific political purpose. Instead, I want to look at a use of media that characterises both infotainment and fiction and that apparently is changing our sensory approach to reality. Augé (1999, p. 6) calls it a “new regime of fiction”, where the conditions of circulation between individual and collective imagination and fiction have changed: “We all have the feeling that we are being colonised but we don’t exactly know who by”

(ibid.). Augé recalls the film *Invasion of the body snatchers* (1956), where aliens have invaded the earth, taking the identity of the humans that they killed so that the survivors cannot trust anyone any longer. This is to suggest the pervasiveness and contamination of this new regime, “to the point where we mistrust [social life], its reality, its meaning and the categories (identity, otherness) which shape and define it” (ibid., pp. 2-3).

In this context, conspiracy theories find a fertile ground, both for their inherent ambiguousness and the popular appeal of their narratives. Many films and television shows suggest the idea that “conspiracies shape many events, hide others, and generally dictate much of the course of modern life, often to the disadvantage of the average person” (Arnold 2008, p. 10).

Looking at a larger picture, the diffusion of such distorted interpretations of the world, together with the dissolution of lasting identities, indicate a lack of comprehension of the present and a need for self-explaining certainties. The sites where decisions about our lives are taken are seen as off limits, while reality has become more and more complex, eschewing our capacity to understand it, to the point of doubting the existence of reality itself. Especially in the event of collective traumas, the diffusion of conspiracy theories may become complicit in preventing citizens from mobilising, hence keeping the public away from the “red zone” of contemporary capitalist societies.

Also *Lost* incorporates conspiracy theories in its plot; however what interests me is that a sense of helplessness, of inexplicability of the events, and ultimate distrust of the possibility to recognise something that we can call “reality” – all typical features of such theories – pervades the entire series. In this sense, *Lost* participates in a wider media discourse that diffuses a climate of generalised uncertainty whose first casualty is political engagement: if the place where decisions are taken is out of reach, how can we even dream to change things?¹ As in the *Invasion of the body snatchers*, only a few chosen ones, who are aware of the conspiracy, will recognize the threat, but they are left to themselves.

In line with this reading, a common criticism about *Lost* is that it asks too many questions while providing too few answers. One of the series’ writers revealed:

There was absolutely no master plan on *Lost*. [...] They keep saying there’s meaning in everything, and I’m here to tell you no – a lot of things are just arbitrary. What I always tried to do was connect these random elements, to create the illusion that it was all adding up to something. (Cited in Askwith 2009, p. 164)

An open-ended narrative structure is typical of serial fiction, accompanying popular culture through technological advances in printing, radio and television. However, what the new interactive media promote is the direct involvement of the public in the production of the content, something that the producers of *Lost* encouraged from the start. Consequently, a significant if not predominant part of the audience was actively involved in Internet forums, speculating about the fictional events, sug-

gesting explanations for the mysteries and expressing doubts about certain narrative solutions, thus influencing the writers.

However, this leaves us with two, interrelated concerns. First, the lack of a master plan does not refer only to the narrative, but also to aspects of the show like its production features, most notably the score. Second, the feedback about the show participates in the same commercial context of the show itself, as the term *prosumer* indicates: to quote Drake and Haynes (2011, p. 79), “such sites are potentially more critical and reflexive of the viewing experience and yet connected by the act of consumption to the original television texts”; in other words, *prosumption* constitutes less a free expressive domain than a spontaneous – and for this reason even more valuable – contribution to market research; moreover the public becomes co-author of the show, but the outcome of this labour is not rewarded economically².

SENSES AND ESTRANGEMENT

Someone might object that *Lost* is only entertainment, so why bother about its degree of disavowal of reality? To which I would reply: what isn't entertainment nowadays? It is not simply that fictionalisation characterises information, which is partly explained by the fact that it has to respond to the market, but that the two – fiction and information – are more and more indistinguishable, especially in the process of mediation, and even more in relation to their effect on the formation of opinions. It must be noted that the spectacularisation of information clearly includes not only the content, but also production features like lighting, shots, editing, sound design, background music or layout design. Also for this reason, the short circuit between information and fiction can be understood at the level of sensing: this is where music and sound play a role in alienating sensory perception from reality.

Now I will briefly highlight some relevant features of the score, starting with a few notes about its process of production. Michael Giacchino, author of the music for *Lost*, started his successful career designing sound for the video game *Medal of honor* (1999), which already shows some of the typical features of his style, namely the attention to timbre and the frequent use of glissandos. His approach to scoring is fragmented and extemporaneous: he only had two or three days to complete the score for *Lost*, which is common in tight-budget television productions; on the other hand, he could count on a dedicated orchestra of Los Angeles studio musicians³. Giacchino chose to work on single scenes: since he did not want to be influenced by the whole story, he did not read the script in advance, “preferring to react as events unfold” (Ross 2010, p. 60). His use of the orchestra is peculiar in that his exploration of timbre, based on instrumental techniques rather than on editing or processing, frequently draws on the aesthetics of electroacoustic music.

The orchestral score is often mixed with sound effects, which in their turn include ambient sounds and more undetermined effects that don't always relate to visible objects. The point is that it is difficult to differentiate between these sounds, even more when considering that the orchestra can perform tonal or atonal music (where pitched tones are still recognisable), electroacoustic music (through close-miking

techniques), ambient sounds and other sound effects. If we add to this that the plot is already confused enough, and the visuals are often elusive, we shall understand how frustrating the experience of *Lost* can be for its audience, incapable of distinguishing between comment and ambient sound.

In an article for the *New Yorker*, Ross (2005, p. 2) recalls that “Eisenstein and other Soviet directors wrote a manifesto declaring that soundtracks should create ‘sharp discord’ with the visual dimension, in order to cultivate critical thinking on the part of the audience”. Then he argues that “Giacchino’s music for *Lost*, in its own non-Marxist way, plays this same game of estrangement” (ibid.). What I contend is that this estrangement doesn’t seem to be aimed at cultivating critical thinking, but is an end in itself. Due to the structure of the score, the spectator cannot achieve a perspective from which to evaluate the fictional events. What is seriously challenged is our capacity, as sentient beings, to relate to a message and understand it with the means at our disposal. At the same time *Lost*, dealing with political and ethical issues such as torture, gun control, racism, xenophobia, colonisation or euthanasia, touches themes that instead are very real and hence require a communicative context that supports critical thinking.

As Howes (2003, p. XI) writes, “sensation is not just a matter of physiological response and personal experience. It is the most fundamental domain of cultural expression, the medium through which all the values and practices of society are enacted”; in other words, every aspect of culture intersects the senses: if we cannot trust what we see, hear or touch, we are actually handing over our already limited command over mediated messages to better equipped and not necessarily well-intentioned entities. In this sense, alienation concerns the capacity itself to know the world; the senses are the *sine qua non* of knowledge, and alienation describes a condition in which an individual or group of individuals have become estranged from their world because the means to interpret events and messages and to produce knowledge have been impaired; this as a consequence will determine a condition of helplessness and powerlessness towards cultural objects or social relations, that are actually the product of one’s intellectual or practical work (Gallino 1969).

Summing up, *Lost* not only is confused in its narrative, but also generates a situation in which the process of signification is continuously slipping out of the spectator’s control so that themes like torture or racism are thrown into a backdrop that does not allow the spectator to reflect critically on them. In particular, the score for *Lost* breaks film conventions, generating a state of uncertainty about the fictional events. I have set this mode of communication in comparison on the one hand with the fictionalisation of information, and on the other – somehow in a specular way – with the inclusion of controversial themes in popular culture narratives.

More precisely, what I suggest is that *Lost* engages the audience in an experience that challenges their sensory faculties. The concept of alienation – seen as a culturally-informed psychological condition – can help to shed some light on this process of estrangement, both from culture and from ourselves as sensing subjects. As Tagg and Clarida (2003) suggest, in a context of inattentive listening mixed with musical illiteracy, every message, even – or possibly most of all – the most ambigu-

ous, is potentially manipulative. In other words, such use of sound negates a self-conscious and autonomous subject.

Lost suitably depicts an anti-utopian universe where everyone suspects everyone; a battle for the survival of the fittest engages the characters in a condition of extreme individualism⁴, while the only relief seems to come from nostalgic reminiscences of consumerism. The sensation of helplessness that permeates the series is conveyed also through the fusion of diegetic and nondiegetic sound into a blurred soundscape portraying a world where nothing can really change or be humanly understood. I have argued that this sensation, rather than simply being represented in the fiction, belongs to the act of perceiving itself. What is at stake, because of this sensory derangement, is the capacity of listening as a critical and mindful act, suggesting, among other things, that there cannot be a thorough understanding of media processes without consideration of the role of the senses.

ENDNOTES

1. Regarding this issue, there is empirical evidence that "the media are, overall, a factor of depoliticization, which naturally acts more strongly on the most depoliticized sections of the public, on women more than men, on the less educated more than the more educated, on the poor more than the rich" (Bourdieu 1998, p. 73).
2. If Marx identified the source of alienation in the sale of labour force to the capitalist (see, for example, Marx 1844), here I am apparently dealing with an act of cultural consumption. As a matter of fact, we should distinguish the *Lost* audience at least according to their degree of active involvement in the show. We may come to a suggestive conclusion: fans, writing comments and sending suggestions to the legitimate authors, are hence co-opted into the culture industry; in this way, they not only advertise the show, but play a part in producing the show. Yet, they don't get any substantial acknowledgement for this effort.
3. Overall, the composition of the orchestra is very peculiar and has largely remained unchanged throughout the whole series; in the sixth season it consisted of forty-one string players, four trombonists, one harpist, one pianist and two percussion players. This gamut of instrumental effects, together with the more common leitmotifs associated with the characters, produce a soundscape that soon becomes familiar to every fan of the show.
4. Aptly, Sartre (1960) considers alienation a consequence of the condition of scarcity that pushes man against man for their own subsistence.

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Repeated activity as ritual reality

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I argue that some recurrence of a steady flow of activity can be treated as a contemporary ritual. We can find such features in common life, as well as in the popular music sphere, on the stage, and within the audience. Such activities can reward bearers with a spiritual value or relief (such as the strengthening of faith and courage; driving away fear, stress and nervousness; calling success; celebration). In traditional ethnic environments, religious ceremonies and rites, the communication is focused on supernatural powers. Here, in a modern ritual, there is a willingness to attribute supernatural character to everyday, ordinary matters. This paper explores the functions of these common day rituals, and defines some typical examples.

KEYWORDS: ritual; rite; popular music; Czech music; techno mania; dance.

The relation between music and rituals offers an unlimited number of particular subjects. In the past, music in its most general understanding, such as sounds and rhythm, used to be a frequent part of rituals of various ethnic groups of the world. Music had and has a symbolic meaning in many religious systems; it is an inherent part of the liturgy and faith manifestation of various denominations.

We can find many examples of how music and ritual are interconnected, especially in Africa. However, I don't want to deal with matters of ethnic music, world music or folklore in my paper. I would like to focus my attention on popular music acts which are sometimes more similar to various situations of everyday life.

My question is - do musicians need rituals today? Can we find some features of rituals in contemporary popular music? Which particular phenomena can we mention in connection with popular music and rituals?

The Latin word *ritus* means some order or system of rules and some sacred ceremony or rite defined by particular order. There is also some connection to the Greek word *arimos* (number, numeration, order) and to the Sanscrit word *Rta* (truth, rule, code). In a more general sense the expression could mean also some habit, a custom, a common and formed way of some activity¹.

STEADY FLOW OF ACTIVITIES

For the purpose of my paper I would like to define the subject in the most liberal interpretation: as a repetition of a steady flow of activities, which rewards its bearers with a symbolic value of spiritual release or relief such as the strengthening of faith and courage; driving away fear, stress, and nervousness; calling success; celebration; etc. Ritual usually links the life of humans to some higher structures, to an order, which can be biological or spiritual (cultural). Here, more than a communication focused on supernatural powers, it is a willingness to attribute supernatural character to everyday, ordinary matters. We do the ritual even if we know well that we will not gain the supernatural power, but also such activity is important and can bring us some relief.

We can examine and explore functions of these common rituals, and we can recall some typical examples, focusing especially on pop music. Rituals have important functions regarding the organization of people, stabilization and preservation of values. They serve the fixation of norms of a particular society. Collective experience can help with the stabilization of feeling and sense of security inside society. They can sometimes also serve for the demonstration of respect or submission. In the extreme we can have joy and fun also from the action of ritual itself, from the making of a ritual without a concrete function. Just a mere repeated activity can lead to some emotive experiences.

GREETINGS AND CELEBRATIONS

It is not difficult to recall some simple act from everyday life which has markedly some features of ritual: some kind of greeting (shaking hands, lifting a hat, various military hand-saluting, uprising of pupils in the classroom when a teacher is coming in); birthday wishes; small rituals connected with eating, drinking wine or smoking joints; starting or ending activities of various social events; love and erotic actions; a special way of celebrating goals in football, ice hockey and other sports.

So we have rituals or at least features of former rituals around us every day and usually we don't feel that it is a ritual. People need rituals. They help them in communication and concentration.

RITUALS IN MUSIC

Rituals outside of religious music have similar functions and effects like those of common life. We can find them within small subcultures as well as in the sphere of the commercial mainstream of mass media.

Of course we can find the features of ritual also in older non-sacred music. As Štědroň (2010) argues, the origin of early opera had a relation to important rituals of the period of the last third of the sixteenth century. The most important ritual which contributed to the origin of opera in the North-Italian courts was the wedding and the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice which embodied the fragility of human relations and the relation between a wedding and a death.

More ritual features have evidently archaic and pagan origins. Many of them became later a part of Christian services. Playing a special repertoire at weddings or funerals is common to the present time in various forms all over the world.

CHRISTENING OF CDs

Some Christian rituals are adapted to commercial acts. It is difficult to evaluate the correctness of such processes, when features of sacred rituals are misused in pop culture for publicity, advertisement and promotion. A popular example in the Czech Republic is a ceremony of the christening of newly released CDs.

As Tesař (2010, p. 88) described, it's a little bit controversial. There is a clear parallel with the birth of a child, but the traditional "transitional" sacred ritual is changed to the act of advertising. We can admit that for some musicians and fans such ritual can retain the original sacred character. The christening of the CD becomes also the place of meeting, place of celebrating, place of prospect and faith; it is a moment of transition and change - musicians have finalized their creative working cycle and they are starting the new cycle connected with the promotion of the creative work.

A strange connection of spiritual and material elements culminates with the fact of recurrence: the group usually approach the christening of the same new CD several more times. The record company organizes the act of christening in every big city of the country. From the point of view of Christianity it is real "blasphemy" because the priest is replaced by some celebrity. It is clear that the "child" is not important, but the commercial effect towards the participants is important. So the Czech custom practice of the christening of a newly released CD during concerts or press conferences is a mixture of traditional ritual features with contemporary promotional mechanisms.

BETWEEN DEFLATION AND INFLATION

Pop culture is ritualized often when there is a lack of new and inspiring content. However, there are various situations in popular music practice with a healthy and beneficial use of some ritual features. The most strong and beneficial is usually during the rise and development of new styles or movements when it is strongly connected with new charge and content.

Many ritual features penetrated popular music from the sphere of Afro-American folklore. Original camp meetings or ring shouts had some features of contemporary big open air concerts and festivals, for instance. We also can recall such typical concert situations as communication between the singer and audience. For example, the auditory repeat fragments of melodies, the singer jumps among the audience, etc. If the interaction is spontaneous then the ritual operates well.

On the other hand, some action of recurrence can lead to extremely blank results without sense and real content. For instance, when some performance has not enough energy to provoke spontaneous reaction of an audience and performers provoke the audience only verbally and by the help of some gesture in order to initiate some rhythmical hand-clapping, then the situation results rather in an artificial manipulation with people.

TECHNO RITUALS

Various new forms of venerable rituals can intensify enforcement of new trends, styles and genres. For example, the Danish film document about the techno music scene *Technomania* (1996) supports this claim. Protagonists of the film compare the performing of electronic dance music through a rave party or techno party of the early 1990s to ancient tribal ceremonies, where the dancers feel the ecstasy, a DJ replaces a shaman, sound equipment is erected instead of a totem pole, and optical effects replace a glittering fire.

Danish music journalist Henrik List states in the film² that “techno-culture is a tribe gathered around the totem at sacred places”. Danish editress Claire Wielandt declares “you forget where you are and you just absorb the ancient power”. DJ Goa Gil compares: “Also oldest tribes of the planet met during a full moon, played drums and danced [...] They felt to be a part of the ENERGY [...] I always aim to achieve this habit”. Finally the guitarist of the group System 7 Steve Hillage argues: “Ancient dances were always part of rituals and this is only a new form which uses the latest technology”.

MODERN BLOODY RITUALS

Let's conclude the discourse with two examples from the Czech alternative musical scene. Both are slightly extreme. Both present the stage show with elements of a bloody ritual: scarring the singer's back with a knife as a climax of the concert (Michael Kyselka and the group Hookers), and hanging the person by skin on hooks (as witnessed one of the participants, Sultan).

1. SCARRING THE SINGER'S BACK WITH A KNIFE AS A CLIMAX OF THE CONCERT

As a first example there is a concert of the rock group Hookers with singer Michael Kyselka. His performance culminates with this action: before the end of the concert, an arranged person with a knife comes to the stage and makes the cross or the letter “X” on the singer's back. This show is not repeated every evening but it is repeated

on different occasions, so the scar is restoring forever. The singer acknowledges the inspiration by GG Allin, American punk rock singer (1956-1993), whose performances had been full of rough transgressional³ features. Kyselka is not so excessive but his concerts represent an example of intentional modern ritual.

The first time I saw this show was in 1993 in the American city of Atlanta, where the singer lived for a period of time. My experience has been described in this way:

The show of a local group the Hookers happened on 12 August 1993. Michael Kyselka, originally from Prague, established the group under the influence of GG Allin early in 1992. Czech Mike, how Michael is referred to in the Rock club Maskarade, where he had a job, was brought on the stage with a blindfold over made-up eyes. From time to time he takes a bottle of vodka from the pocket of his bathrobe. For part of the concert he sang blind. Partly spoken performance shifted to shouting while kneeling down and the band was carried forward with the singer. The hard-core tension increased. The culmination came with an appearance of boy - girl (a drag artist), who came on the stage with a big knife to renew the scar in the shape of an X on Michael's back. According to Michael's testimony this is a way to change the performance to a ritual and release a natural energy to intensify the show. The Hookers then played frantically and exhausted Michael had to be escorted home after the last extra song. (Opekar 1994; translation from Czech by the author)

Figure 1. Michael Kyselka and the Hookers, 2004. Archive of M. Kyselka.



The last time I saw the show was in 2008 in Prague where the singer is now based after his return from emigration in the second half of the 1990s. He renewed the band and continued with concert-rites⁴. He explained to me the action in this way:

The performance became a ritual which brings an injection of the natural energy and intensifies the show. The ritual in rock music brings a gradation and climax of the show. It is a catharsis, like a slitting of the envelope and releasing some message to the universe in the last crescendo of a chord. (Kyselka 2010; translation from Czech by the author)

2. HANGING THE PERSON BY SKIN ON HOOKS

The second example belongs to the sphere of so-called suspension – willing suspension on hooks by the skin. Let's admit there is no direct link between the act and music, however usually there is more or less a connection to industrial music or just to a monotonic electronic rhythm and melody. The hanging action could sometimes appear as an accompanying program of the festival of industrial music.

There are fixed rules of the action, as expressed by participant Ondřej, nickname Sultán (Kyselka 2010)⁵. He marked himself as a Victim and the executor as a Piercer. Thus we can identify some sadomasochist features within the action. Persons involved talk about themselves as modern primitives, about hackers of their own body and consciousness who try to overcome themselves with the help of fear and pain.

Sultan argued that the monotonic sound and industrial music helped to bring him to the point when he already doesn't feel the pain during the action⁶.

Figure 2. Suspension. Without date. Illustrative photo from www.cilichili.cz. Downloaded: 26.jul.2010.



CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we can argue that repeated activity as ritual reality occurs very often in our contemporary life, though in new forms and in various social contexts. The activity may have an extreme shape like the last two examples. It may also be (mis)used for promotional purposes and advertisement. Most often it is just a latent part of our lives. People are usually unaware of this ritual character of common happenings and everyday activities. Nevertheless they help them and bring them various forms of relaxation and relief. It could happen individually or collectively, in personal life, or at cultural or sub-cultural levels. Popular music is often a starter and a bearer of such rituals. Sometimes listening to music itself can be perceived as ritual as well. Frequently, ritual extends the everyday existence of man. It can aim towards the spiritual above us, as well as inward, to the soul of man. Music can express either of these ways.

ENDNOTES

1. See for instance Holubová 2007; there are also common dictionaries and small general encyclopedia like Holub and Lyr 1968, Klimeš 1981 or Filipec and Daneš 1978.
2. Transcription by the author. See also <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNAySNrzSQ>> A&feature=related>; part 3:6, mins. 5:30-7:08; accessed:08.10.2012.
3. See *Wikipedia*. n.d.a and n.d.b.
4. For an audiovisual illustration there are only short low-class extracts available on YouTube from 2004, for instance: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T0v2l6CrpwA>>; mins. 6:20-6:50; or <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpnBTuxJ4Xs>>; mins. around 0:30-2:30; accessed:08.10.2012.
5. There are some examples available on YouTube, for instance <<http://www.cilichili.cz/clanky/otevrite-se-svym-demonum--43.html>>; accessed:08.10.2012.
6. For more detail see Opekar 2010. Music and ritual were themes of the 7th international colloquy on traditional folk music, modern folk music, ethnic music and world music in Náměšť nad Oslavou, Czech Republic in July 2010. For the paper presented at the IASPM conference in Grahamstown 2011 I extended and modified several extracts of the Czech paper presented in Náměšť.

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Space, place, sound and sociability: Situating South African jazz appreciation societies

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ABSTRACT

Among the contrasting post-colonial music scenes to have emerged in South Africa during the transition from apartheid, voluntary associations of jazz lovers – known as *stokvels*, clubs or appreciation societies – remain a relatively under-documented aspect of township musical life. Yet on any given weekend, in a variety of locales ranging from working-class private homes to local taverns to larger community halls, groups of formally constituted jazz *aficionados* criss-cross urban and rural spaces to attend listening sessions, where globally circulating jazz recordings, and sometimes the performances of live musicians, are reinscribed with a range of local meanings through various performative practices. In this paper, which draws on my doctoral ethnographic research, I examine the particular ways in which jazz is “situated” in this milieu as sounds with their origins in places like New York, Chicago, Copenhagen or Tokyo are integrated within South African soundscapes. More broadly, this project considers the ways in which listening, no less than musical performance itself, is socially enacted, culturally and historically contingent, and implicated in the transformations occasioned by modernisation, musical commodification and transnational circulation.

KEYWORDS: jazz; listening; South Africa; localisation of global music commodities.

INTRODUCTION

On any given weekend around the beginning of South Africa's second decade of avowedly non-racial democracy (that is, 2005, when most of this field work was conducted), but to this day, alongside the listings of jazz gigs in nightclubs and concert venues in the major city centres, or festivals in parks or at resorts or convention centres, newspapers with a predominantly black readership would be peppered with announcements of another kind of musical gathering that continues to occupy a rather different place within the topography of jazz on the broader South African cultural landscape. Typically located in the segregated townships created for black residents under apartheid-era "Group Areas" legislation, far away from the official city centres, in private homes, taverns, community halls and other public spaces, they seldom, if ever, feature in discussions or representations of jazz within South African public culture, let alone general histories and profiles of jazz. Nonetheless, at the micro-level of musical reception and on the margins of the formal jazz industry, extensive networks of everyday aficionados have organized themselves into voluntary associations or jazz appreciation societies that, despite their often modest settings and resources, constitute a decidedly sociable and vibrant dimension of vernacular culture within South African musical life. Placing the music within these spaces offers useful perspectives on what, and especially how, jazz means in South Africa, and on how it is reimagined and resituated in inventive and sometimes surprising ways. Moreover, this perspective also renders visible the reconfiguration, within a neoliberal macroeconomic dispensation, of the post-apartheid South African public sphere. This paper foregrounds the situating, emplacing and reframing practices of participants in this scene as they reinscribe globally circulating jazz recordings, and sometimes the performances of live musicians, with a range of local meanings through various collective practices. These practices are individually realised but socially shared and enacted, becoming constitutive of, even as they reflect, distinctive modes of sociability.

RESOCIALISING JAZZ

Whether it entails dozens of friends and musical associates cramming into a four-roomed township home, or whether participants give themselves more room to move under the florescent lights of a boomy municipal hall, in the contexts with which I am concerned here, jazz provides a pretext and catalyst for heightened sociability. Music and dance play a key role in attaining this heightening, but much of the significance of these events lies in the sociomusical institution within which the music is deployed. Jazz sessions are officially hosted by either an individual or a society (or "club"), embedding the practice of collective listening in a vernacular social institution that makes sessions a realisation of various bonds, roles, obligations and opportunities accruing both to the host and the "supporters" in attendance, which reverberate with social and historical significance.

The jazz appreciation society is a socio-musical institution of considerable standing in many black working and middle class communities in South Africa, and has

apparently been so for several generations. These societies or clubs are typically organized as *stokvels* (pronounced “stock-fell”), communal savings schemes which sometimes double as burial societies. Members of jazz *stokvels* convene listening sessions where DJs play their jazz CD collections and occasionally host live musicians. For the participants, who can devote several nights out of each month or even each week to attending sessions, in which they invest a sizable, predetermined portion of their monthly income, jazz serves as a significant marker of identity and as a nexus of social relations. With whom one listens to jazz goes beyond informal leisure camaraderie and signals symbolic, social, and – to a degree – financial capital. Moreover, given the culture of mutually supporting one another’s sessions, jazz appreciation societies constitute a network of reception communities, varying in scale from a handful to hundreds of listeners, and spanning neighbourhoods, towns, and even large regions of the country.

Traceable, in their present form, back to the 1930s at least, and ultimately as far back as the rotating “stock fairs” organised by British settlers in the Eastern Cape in the early decades of the nineteenth century, *stokvels* emerged historically at one of the first contact points between indigenous African societies and the colonial economy. They have long been recognised as a collective response on the part of the masses of urban labour migrants to the rigours of life under racial capitalism, and *stokvels* remain a notable feature of vernacular culture in South Africa. In his classic study of black South African popular culture, David Coplan (2007, p. 123) offers a succinct explanation of how *stokvels* function:

Stokvels were and are credit rings in which each member contributes a set amount each week in anticipation of receiving the combined contributions of all the other members at regular intervals. Commonly, each member in her turn uses the lump sum she receives to finance a *stokvel* party, at which other members and guests pay admission and buy food and liquor and even musical entertainment. Profits go to the hostess of the week. (emphasis mine)

Offering a collective means of survival in the cash economy and held by many practitioners to embody traditional African values of communalism and cooperation, *stokvels* embody modes of sociability that bridge urban and rural, modern and traditional social roles and norms, and they lend themselves, over and above their economic rationale, to the enactment of social and cultural values, among which music features prominently (Porteous and Hazelhurst 2004; Lukhele 1990). What is striking, viewing *stokvel* culture in general, is that whereas music of various kinds can and has historically been enlisted to facilitate social interaction among members, the jazz *stokvel* has, nominally at least, acquired a specifically musical focus and rationale. Pamphlets, banners and verbal claims to the effect of “bringing jazz to the people”, advancing “the love of jazz” etc., are a common feature of the milieu I am describing, and reflects the specific socio-political valences of jazz across the twentieth century, as a music associated with some interracial collaboration and black cosmopolitanism and cultural assertion (Ansell 2004).

Broader macrosocial trends in post-apartheid South Africa impinge upon, as they variably reveal themselves within, this jazz milieu. Members span a relatively wide class spectrum within township settings, and represent a variety of South African ethnic backgrounds and linguistic groups. I have not come across participants from other African countries, despite the popularity of pan-African and pan-diasporic jazz in many places. Having lost, during the decades of forced removals, their historical association with *marabi* parties, female-oriented social organisation as well as the secular *stokvel* parades accompanied by brass bands documented in the first half of the twentieth century (Coplan 2007, p. 125), the jazz appreciation societies in which I conducted my research have tended to be male-dominated, while women do participate at several levels on a relatively equal footing, within a broadly patriarchal milieu. *Stokvel* participation tends to be marked generationally, with jazz being described as an adult preoccupation, or “music for the mature”, setting jazz *stokvels* off from youth culture (though given that the notion of “youth” generally extends into one’s mid-thirties in many South African contexts, this boundary tends to be blurred). And so a distinctive, vernacular jazz public is constituted in this scene based on the principle of free association, but bound by both formal and informal ties that transgress apartheid-era ethnic separatism and reveal a degree of cross-class solidarity, while more equivocally fostering gender equality and in principle being amenable to interracial participation, though in practice this seldom occurs.

CURATING JAZZ

A second set of practices by which jazz is resituated in the milieu I am sketching concerns the ways in which music recordings are collected, selected, sequentially arranged, personalised and publicly “played” in distinctly curatorial ways. Here DJs or “operators” function as musical specialists capable not only of acquiring a jazz collection but also of performatively demonstrating their knowledge of jazz in interactive *stokvel* settings. The music played at jazz appreciation sessions is decidedly cosmopolitan in scope and open to relatively wide variation between clubs and regional networks. By way of example, in the period on which I report here, the taste of clubs around Soweto, Alexandra, the East Rand and adjacent areas reflected a strong affinity for blues-influenced, swing-based instrumental repertoires from the hard bop era, with some pre-WWII material thrown in for good measure. By contrast, the taste of the clubs around Tshwane, extending into North-West, Mpumalanga and Limpopo provinces, was oriented towards progressive improvised repertoires coming out of Chicago, New York and Europe since the 1960s, and Mamelodi DJs and supporters continue to pride themselves on their avant-garde proclivities. Moreover, various protocols govern the public airing of jazz recordings in sessions, guiding what is played and how it is played, and when. Claims to active musicianship in this role are sometimes explicit, for example, in references among DJs to how well they have “played” on any given day, and hinge on their being musically responsive to, while actively shaping, the mood of a listening session. This rests

both upon prior knowledge of the jazz repertoire, oriented towards predominant tastes within a particular community of reception, and on in-the-moment, quasi-improvisational responses on the part of the DJ to the ebb and flow of the emotional energy of the event. Refracting transatlantic notions of jazz music through more local understandings, aesthetics, and genre distinctions, DJs perform acts expressive of individual connoisseurship that are nonetheless grounded in shared cultural affirmation, in the process blurring the conventional boundaries between art and life, creativity and consumption.

DANCING JAZZ

Finally, and perhaps most unexpectedly to readers familiar with the adage that jazz ceased to serve as a vehicle for vernacular dance with the end of the Swing Era, the music played at *stokvel* sessions provides a vehicle for a distinctive style of solo improvised dance. Whether presented in intimate domestic settings or other more public spaces, jazz appreciation sessions typically eschew jazz-oriented connoisseur talk and rather centre around a central open space in which participants, when moved to do so, by turns step forward and (by my interpretation) take spontaneous, autochoreographed “solos” that can be read as a kinetic figuration of listening to jazz. With an emphasis on “footwork” and asymmetrical, often abstract body alignments, periodic imitations of the playing of musical instruments or gestures derived from the domain of sport, which often alternate with stylised sartorial display, dancers articulate their own distinctive and personalised contrapuntal rhythms in relation to the music being played. This offers one of the profoundest ways in which jazz recordings are resituated within modern African musical aesthetics, in the process invoking deep indigenous roots. Listening to jazz at *stokvel* sessions thus foregrounds those dimensions of African cultural modernities that are metadiscursive and embodied; enacted rather than spoken.

CONCLUSION

I have here been able only to sketch a field of practice that is layered and textured in ways that call for close ethnographic inquiry. Taken together, the resituating practices that I have reviewed here reveal that jazz – itself a multi-sited set of musical practices if ever there was one – can acquire profound localised significance, and that listening to jazz, no less than performance of the music, is socially enacted, culturally and historically contingent, and implicated in the transformations occasioned by modernisation, musical commodification, transnational circulation, and a range of adaptive processes in various national and local contexts. The practices which I have discussed, taken together, could be read as a contrapuntal, self-consciously “African” cultural line to the cosmopolitanism inherent in commercially circulating jazz culture and recordings, weaving between, through and against dominant cosmopolitanisms and sounding distinctive modes of sociability laden with local significance.

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Local is *lekker*¹?

The perceptions of South African music among Durban adolescents

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ABSTRACT

Popular music in South Africa was a way to uphold the racial divisions of the apartheid regime. Genres of music were pitched at certain segments of the population and this, coupled with the fact that during apartheid local music was often discredited for political reasons, led to the notion that local South African products were inferior to those from the West. This paper considers the state of South African popular music and its popularity among teenagers in Durban² in 2004. The research reports on data collected from Grade 11 learners, and looks at their responses to, support of, access to and perceptions of local music. The results show that respondents support very little in the way of local music, with regard to listening to local music, purchasing local music and supporting local concerts.

KEYWORDS: South Africa; youth; local music; perceptions.

This paper considers the listening habits of Durban adolescents and their perceptions of local popular music. The study was borne out of my experience growing up in apartheid and post apartheid South Africa, where I became aware of the negative perceptions many individuals held towards local cultural products. This study aimed to engage with those who consume popular music and discover if the youth of Durban are listening to and supporting local products.

OVERVIEW OF THE MUSIC SCENE IN 2004

Before discussing the findings, it is important to contextualise the South African music scene in 2004, when this study was undertaken.

In 2001, a few years prior to this research, the South African music industry was the twenty-fifth largest in the world (GCIS 2002, p. 108). However, the industry was beset by many problems.

One of the main issues facing the local music scene was the alleged lack of marketing of South African cultural products (Anderson 1981; Chilvers and Jasiukowicz 1994). According to Chilvers and Jasiukowicz (*ibid.*, p. iv), "music in South Africa is lazy. Production and promotional ideas are lazy and, through the years, hardly any effort was made to promote local artists whereas overseas artists received priority".

The issue of cultural inferiority was another factor influencing the support of South African music. During the apartheid era local popular music was often discredited for political reasons and due to this an aura of negativity, which still exists today, hung over it (Kerr 2000).

The legacy of apartheid influenced the landscape of local popular music in other ways and during this time certain genres of music were pitched at certain segments of the population, and music came to be viewed as "white" music, "black" music, and so on. These distinctions still occur, compounded by radio stations that do little to introduce their audiences to music of other genres.

Due to the perceived limited support for South African popular music, the local music industry did little to promote or support local musicians. There was a lack of financial backing by the major recording companies and "limited finances available for investment in the development and promotion of South African artists" (*Department of Arts and Culture* 1998, p. 10). Thus, bands and musicians were forced to fund their own recording endeavours, which often resulted in substandard recordings, which were poorly distributed.

Finally, radio stations, TV stations and retail outlets, prime disseminators of local popular music, did little to promote local music (Du Plessis 2004; Kerr 2000).

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data was collected at five schools in Durban. The schools are all co-educational schools and represent a wide cross section of the schools available in Durban in terms of cost and the race groups that the school attracts (see *Table 1*).

Grade 11 pupils (approximately sixteen - seventeen years old) at each school responded to a self-administered questionnaire which utilised a variety of questioning methods, including open and closed questions and closed questions utilising a Likert scale with the responses "strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree" and "strongly disagree". A group of willing participants were carefully selected based on their responses to the questionnaire to participate in the focus group discussions at each school.

Table 1: Profile of schools surveyed .

SCHOOL	NUMBER OF LEARNERS	SCHOOL FEES PER ANNUM	RACIAL MIX
School A	844	R600	Black - 55% Indian - 39% Coloured - 6%
School B	916	R1080	Indian - 90% Black - 8% Coloured - 2%
School C	920	R8100	White - 63% Black - 35% Indian - 2%
School D	1094 (Grade 0 – 12)	R13 960 – R27 840	White - 95%
School E	779	R5300	White - 98%

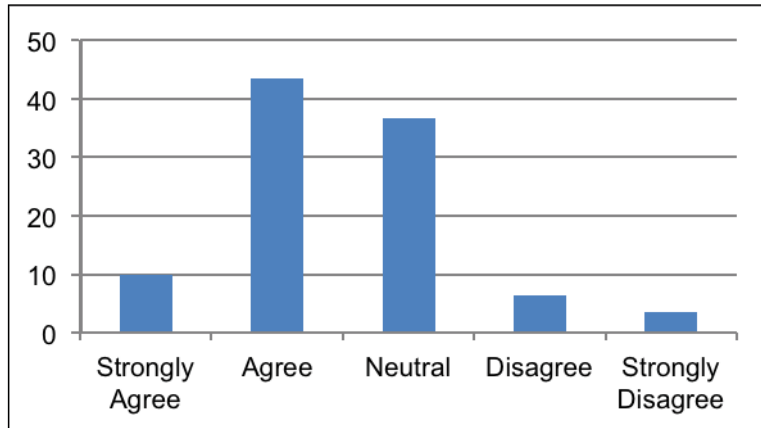
FINDINGS

The findings of this study have been separated into three broad categories and take into account the responses to both the questionnaire and the focus group interviews. The first category looks at the respondents' perceptions of local popular music and their support of local music; the second considers the position of South African music in comparison to international music; and the final category discusses the breakdown of the South African public into listening "segments" according to race.

PERCEPTIONS OF AND SUPPORT FOR LOCAL POPULAR MUSIC

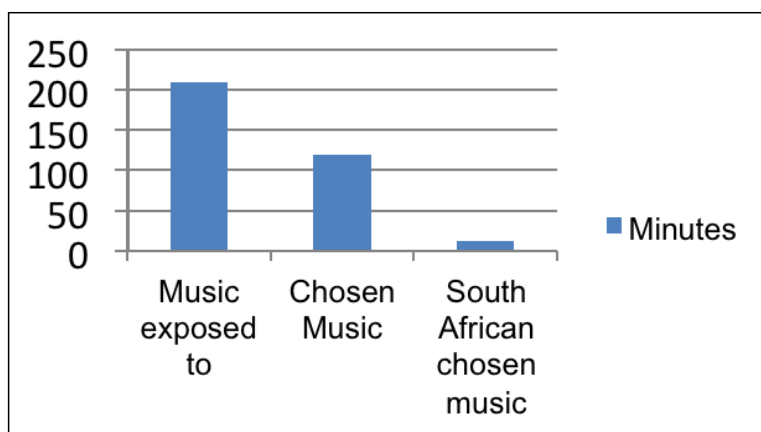
To gauge the perceptions the respondents have towards South African music, they were asked to respond to the statement: "I enjoy listening to South African popular music".

Table 2: "I enjoy listening to South African popular music".



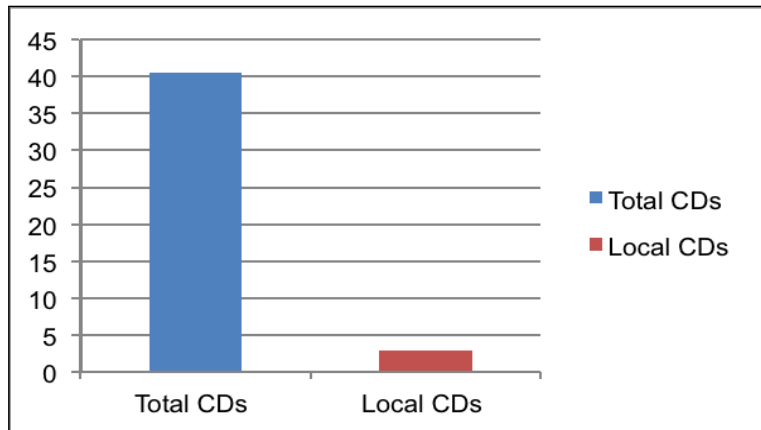
From the graph above it is clear that the majority of the 480 learners who responded to the questionnaire (53.5%) agree or strongly agree with this statement, while 36.6% are neutral, and only 9.9% disagree or strongly disagree. It is therefore logical to surmise that their enjoyment of local music would result in support for it. However, it was found that the respondents did not offer any tangible support for local music.

Table 3: Respondents' listening choices.



In terms of listening patterns, the respondents were exposed to an average of three and a half hours of music per day (210 minutes), listened to an average of two hours of chosen music (120 minutes) and an average of twelve minutes of local music per day. Furthermore, 19.4% of the respondents listened to no local music at all.

Table 4: Compact Disc ownership.



At the time of this study accessing music digitally was just starting to emerge in South Africa and CDs were still the primary means of listening to music. Similarly, despite professing an enjoyment for South African popular music, local CDs made up a very small part of their CD collections. The respondents owned an average of 40.4 CDs and of this, an average of 2.9 were local CDs. Furthermore, 44.2% of respondents owned no local CDs at all.

The respondents claimed they enjoyed South African music, but this did not result in the expected support for it, financially or otherwise. The respondents were questioned about this further in the focus group interviews and feelings of cultural inferiority regarding South African products were evident in some of their responses.

When questioned about local popular music, the first respondent from School B answered that it was “crap” (James, School B, 2004) almost as if it was a reflex action. He then followed that statement with “no, no, not all of it is crap” (James, School B, 2004) and then proceeded, after more consideration, to name a few local bands that he enjoyed. Later still in the interview he conceded: “There are a lot of good artists [...] I listen to South African music” (James, School B, 2004).

This response was a recurring one when discussing South African music. The initial response was to dismiss it in the same way that the respondent from School B did: “It’s crap”. However, later when the respondents thought about it, they were far less derogatory and in some cases went on to claim they did enjoy South African popular music.

The negativity regarding local music is interesting in light of the fact that respondents were asked in the questionnaire how they would recognise a band or a song as South African. The responses here fell into two broad categories: 32.4% would know by the “sound” or “feeling” of the song and would recognise it as South African, while 67.6% would only know a song was local if they were told. Thus, while many of the respondents displayed negative feelings towards local popular music, the majority of them would not know that a band or song was South African unless they were told. Since for most respondents there is nothing in the sound of the mu-

sic that makes it particularly "South African", their responses are informed by what they have heard from others and thus could be due to feeling of cultural inferiority.

LOCAL VS. INTERNATIONAL MUSIC

It is not possible to discuss local music, without some discussion of "the other": in this case, international music. The effects of globalisation and cultural imperialism on South African music cannot be ignored (Anderson 1981; Chilvers and Jasiukowicz 1994; Kerr 2000): as Jones and Jones (1999, p. 225) point out, "more and more people across the globe are receiving the same message from the same centres of communication power".

During the interviews it became clear that the respondents viewed South African music with a strange duality. On the one hand, they used international music as a yardstick with which to compare local music, but on the other hand they complained if local music sounded too "American".

Negus (1996, p. 174) argues that, in addition to dominating radio stations and sales charts, international music also becomes the "'dominant particular' against which other sounds are assessed and around which world production and consumption of music become organised". A classic example illustrating this was a comment made by Nomthandazo from School C: "And as for [local] R&B and all that, I think it is just too American. 'Cause if you listen to American R&B it actually talks to you [...] It really says something, but this R&B in South Africa it doesn't say anything" (Nomthandazo, School C, 2003).

Another of the contradictions that was evident in the interview was that bands were seen as inferior if they had not made it internationally, but if they had broken into the international market, they risked losing at least some of their fan base in South Africa, who felt that they had "sold out" and could no longer be considered local.

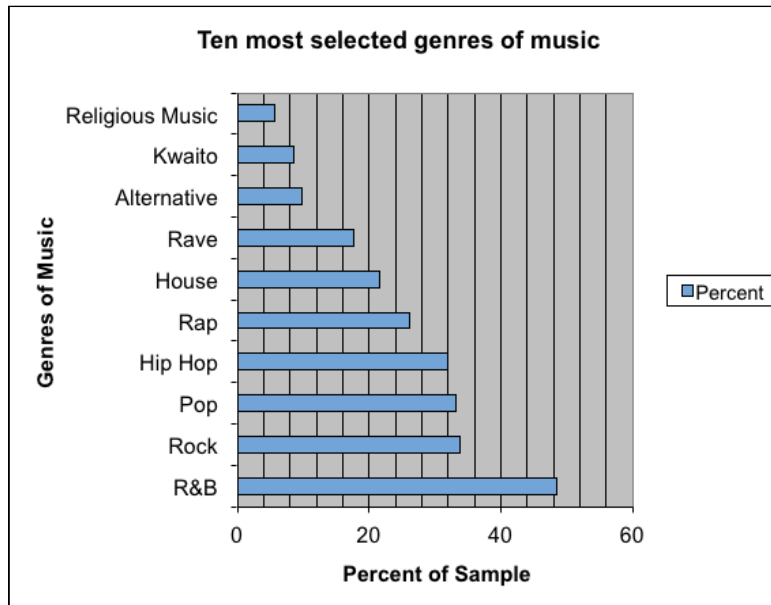
These findings indicate that South African artists tread a very difficult line. On the one hand the respondents measure local bands and musicians against international acts and want them to be as good as international acts, but on the other hand they want them to retain something distinctly "South African".

SEGMENTATION OF THE MARKET

One of the legacies of apartheid is the separation of music into genres that were pitched at certain segments of the market. This seems to be an international trend, Hebdige (1979), Negus (1996) and Frith (1978) all theorise about the way that the media contribute to social divisions by aiming their publications at a specific audience, while making no attempt to create a multicultural audience. Frith argues that this attempts to "freeze the audience into a series of market tastes" (Frith 1978, p. 208).

This segmentation of the market was clear in responses to the questionnaire. The respondents were asked which genres of music they listen to.

Table 5: Genres of music selected.



R&B was the overall favourite genre and was selected by 48.5% of the respondents as one of their favourite genres of music and rock music followed. However, when comparing the results by school, R&B was the favourite genre of the majority of respondents from school A, B and C and by far fewer respondents from school D and E. Conversely, the genre of rock was selected as a favourite genre by the majority of respondents from school D and E. However, far fewer of respondents from school B, school C and school A selected rock as one of their favourite genres.

Put simply, the respondents from school B and school A generally listened to different genres of music to the respondents from school D and school E, while respondents from School C displayed more of a variety of answers across the different genres. When considering these results in light of the racial demographics of the schools, the difference was noticeable. School C displayed a variety of responses as the racial demographic of the school was the most mixed. School E and school D were almost exclusively “white”, while school C and school A had no “white” learners.

This segmentation of the market was discussed in the interviews. In general, most of the respondents felt that different genres of music should be played on different radio stations for two reasons; firstly, listeners who enjoy a certain genre of music will know where to find it. The second reason was rooted in their dislike for other styles of music and in some cases respondents displayed a lack of tolerance for “the other”. Stewart from school E commented: “Well, if they want to hear *kwaito* then they must listen to another radio station, because other stations play it – so leave 5fm and let them play what they want to” (Stewart, School E, 2003).

However, there was also evidence of support and a tangible desire among some of the respondents to be introduced to other genres of music. As Stembiso from school C pointed out: "Radio should, I don't know, try and play at least one or two songs from different racial groups just to let the guys know, and to be aware that they are out there" (Stembiso, School C, 2003).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study discovered that although over half of the respondents view South African music in a positive light, this results in little support for local music. International music is the "'dominant particular' against which other sounds are assessed" (Negus 1996, p. 174), and feelings of cultural inferiority for local products still exist. Furthermore, there is a definite segmentation of the market into "race" groups, but there is a desire from the respondents to be exposed to music of other genres.

The implications of this study on the local music industry are substantial. Musicians require the support of the public in order to make a living, and without support for the local music industry, local products and culture will not thrive. As this research was undertaken in 2004, it offers many possibilities for current research. The influence of the emergence of digital music on the local music industry could be considered as well as the current perceptions towards local popular music.

Finally, it is important to note that this research is by no means the final word on the issue of perceptions of local music in Durban. Perceptions change, music changes, bands change, the media change and preferences change. As Christina Williams (2001, p. 225) says: "People move in and out of subcultures and in and out of fandom".

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

1. *Lekker* is an Afrikaans word meaning "tasty" or "enjoyable". The phrase "local is *lekker*" refers to a marketing slogan widely used to promote South African products.
2. Durban is the second largest city in South Africa and is located on the East coast.

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Jazz, space and power in apartheid South Africa: The army and the church

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on a dramatic trope of “actors”, “theatres”, and scripts, this paper theorises some ways in which the power relations that attend individuals’ experiences of performing and listening to jazz are inflected by the spaces and places in which those experiences transpire. Empirically, the paper focuses on the memories of interviewed jazz musicians and audience-members active on the jazz scenes of post-apartheid Durban and Johannesburg. It describes how some of these musicians’ and listeners’ participation in the military and church spaces of apartheid South Africa variously enabled, constrained, and ultimately politicized their musical activities.

KEYWORDS: jazz; space; power; apartheid South Africa.

This paper draws on the thinking of critical geographers Doreen Massey (1993) and David Harvey (1990) who denaturalise and politicise notions of space, and highlight the central role space plays in the negotiation and contestation of power relations. Extending their ideas to a discussion of jazz’s performance and reception in apartheid South Africa, it considers how the physical settings of some interviewed individuals’ musical experiences placed them in different networks of power relations.

My description of power’s operations involves a dramatic trope of “actors”, “theatres”, and “scripts”. As in social science discourse, “actors” refers to individuals, who enact power relations. “Theatres” – the focus of this paper – refers to the social

domains such as homes, schools, churches, etc., where power dynamics play out. Finally “scripts” are meta-narratives like apartheid or capitalism that underwrite power’s operations on macro-social and trans-historical levels. Respectively, these terms highlight the performative, spatial, and ideational dimensions of power relations.

Convened by casts of actors, “theatres” – whether countries, cities, or homes – are the physical sites of social action where power’s operations are framed, filtered and concretized. Theatres are mediatory arenas where meta- and micro-narratives interface, and they exist as politicised and politicising spaces on four levels.

First, theatres exercise power by granting access to some actors and refusing entry to others. Thus churches bring together priests and parishioners rather than pimps and prostitutes. Often characterised by pecking orders (executives, secretaries, and cleaners in corporate environments) theatres also frame power relations by emplacing the actors they host in variously equal or unequal relations to one another. These “intra-theatrical positionalities” then pre-script and presuppose certain behaviours, or kinds of performance, on the part of those occupying them.

Second, theatres partially predetermine actors’ status as speakers and addressees of power, and variously aggravate or alleviate practices of exclusion and stratification such as sexism or racism, by setting the terms within which different subject positions are rendered salient or irrelevant.

Third, different objects’ and attributes’ status as capital depends on the theatres within which they occur. Thus, while musical talent is a valuable attribute in a music school or on a concert stage, it is of little value in a boxing ring!

Finally, the actors convened within a specific theatre may be empowered and/or disempowered by the concurring and/or competing action of different meta-narratives, and, acting individually or collectively, successfully and/or not, may variously advance, accept, ignore, avoid, challenge, defy, or outright negate the controlling force of different scripts. In short, theatres are scripted and scripting arenas that *re-fract* the power effects of macro-social forces.

Focusing on Johannesburg bassist Carlo Mombelli’s experiences in the army, and other interviewees’ experiences in the church, I will now specify some ways in which music, space, and power intertwined in apartheid South Africa.

Mombelli’s memories of his experiences in the army in the late 1970s are illustrative of the ways music can function as a site of struggle and vehicle of resistance. Despite various attempts to avoid recruitment, the eighteen-year-old Mombelli, like most school- or university-leaving white men in apartheid South Africa, was conscripted into compulsory military service:

I tried all possibilities to try and get out of the army. I told them I was gay, I told them all sorts of shit. I landed up in the infantry, was put inside a tank. I didn’t want to be part of this. (Mombelli 2003)

Mombelli’s resistance took many forms; his response to the regular inspections of boots and uniforms is a case in point. He only ever wore one of the pairs of boots

and one of the two sets of uniforms that they were issued, reserving the other exclusively for inspections. He had varnished his boots, so that they always shone perfectly, and had sewn the uniform onto box cardboard so that all the creases were perfectly in place. Then on those evenings when his fellow conscripts were busy preparing themselves for the following morning's inspections, Mombelli

would get into the cupboard and close the door. I used to sit in there the whole night thinking, what am I doing here? I used to smoke and just smoke and just smoke. When I came out, pfff all this smoke would come out. Hey! And Mombelli arrived out of this cupboard; so they thought I was a nutcase.

Things got worse for me. The corporals were having this big party and they knew I was a musician. 'Could I organise a band?' I said, 'Yah, no problem but I need a few days to come up to Pretoria to get musicians'. So I came all the way up here – and I got [some musicians]. They smoke so much *zol*¹ you can't imagine and by the time they got down to Bloemfontein they were all high. Now, [the corporals] were expecting some popular stuff. Not us hey! We just jammed! I wasn't in anyone's good books then. I had to get out of there. I angled: I said there was something wrong with my testicles – I had to go to the hospital. On the way to the hospital, I sneaked out of the camp, went up to Pretoria and organised a transfer onto the entertainment unit. (ibid.)

Although Mombelli would no doubt have been relieved to be out of the infantry, he remained irrepressibly resistant during the four years he was required to serve in the entertainment unit and while there, he refused to play anything except original music:

The entertainment unit played at the general's wedding and shit like that. All I wanted to do was play original music while they wanted to hear "Tie a yellow banana round the tree" or whatever. They said I'm a pseudo-intellectual bass player. Nobody could play with me. They put me in the office, working at everyone's leave. That was fine. Because I wasn't playing anymore, I could do my outside gigs. (ibid.)

Mombelli additionally turned things round to his advantage by "using" the army to further his music education:

In the entertainment unit, whoever saw me coming ducked because I made a pain of myself; I always had a note pad or score paper and managed to corner every single horn player (they had a big band) and ask a few questions: 'Where is your favourite note? Where is your favourite range? What are your difficult notes?' When the big band was playing, I would pitch up with an arrangement I'd done in the office and I would always ask everyone to play it for me. Then, if it sounded shit, I would analyse it and ask them 'Tell me, why didn't that work?' (ibid.)

Mombelli's army experiences represent an unusually "black-and-white" situation of a starkly authoritarian theatre and an especially resistant actor who resolutely refused cooption. Ordinarily, however, and as various interviewees' recounting of their experiences in church will reveal, power dramas typically play out in more subtle shades of grey.

As the theatres vested with the primary responsibility and privilege of staging different versions of the "God-script", churches, temples, mosques, etc. can – working collectively – powerfully influence the nature of macro-social power dynamics; individually, they may likewise significantly affect the tenor of micro-social power relations in smaller theatres existing within their sphere of influence, such as schools and homes. This has been especially true of churches in South Africa, where Christianity has been central both to the processes of white domination as well as anti-apartheid resistance.

Not unexpectedly, several interviewees made reference to the church: as a *locus* of anti-apartheid politics; as a controlling (but largely empowering) force in their early lives. The post-Vatican II Catholic Church, for example, was fierce in its condemnation of apartheid, and in the early 1970s, during the "height" of apartheid, pianist Neil Gonsalves and his family were members of a racially mixed congregation:

The [Catholic] church [in Port Shepstone, one hundred km south of Durban] was fairly integrated: when I look at photographs [taken] in the church hall on my dad's birthday, it's not multiracial but bi-racial in that there are lots of Indian people and white people. (Gonsalves 2003)

More radically, drummer Lloyd Martin was part of an anti-apartheid Christian pop band in the mid-1980s to early 1990s:

We were banned by the government because we were going into the townships and we were contesting the theology of apartheid [as rationalized by] the NG Kerk². We said it's a load of crap. They tried to bribe us; they tapped our phones; they tried to take us out; a few of us were on the CCB³ hit list for extermination. It was bizarre because we never did anything; I've never been a card-carrying member of any political party. (Martin 2004)

The church has not only been a site of resistance to external, macro-social forces, but impacting "inwardly" on "subsidiary" theatres like the homes of its parishioners, has functioned as speaker of power on more micro-social levels. Neil Gonsalves, for example, attributes his becoming a keyboardist to his Catholic upbringing:

[My parents] decided to send [my brother and I for] organ lessons. I suppose they chose organ because we have that instrument at home and because we come from a Catholic family. They thought, 'Ah, well they can play in church as well'. (Gonsalves 2003)

Melvin Peters, who has been playing for Anglican services since he was twelve, experienced the church as an empowering space, central to his subsequent development as a jazz performer:

What was very influential was the whole connection with the church: I remember starting to play the organ when I was twelve years old. It was one of those which had two pedals which you had to pump. (It was like doing Jane Fonda!) [...] It really gave me a great deal of confidence just playing in front of people, so later on, that was never an issue. (Peters 2003)

For audience-member Michael Blake, the Methodist church was an empowering environment in a rather different way:

I used to be a church organist when I was at school. Instead of delivering newspapers or something, I played the organ which was more lucrative and less hard work [...] I had this very religious sort of enforced upbringing and I gave it up when I was about eighteen: I decided to give it up as one gives up smoking or something; it's just a habit. (Blake 2003)

As a power drama, Blake's experience of the church parallels Mombelli's stint in the entertainment unit of the army on two levels. First, although Blake and Mombelli experienced the church and army as inhospitable environments, they were required by more powerful forces (family and apartheid state) to inhabit these theatres because of their respective subject positions as "minor in a religious family" and "school-leaving white South African male". Second, both actors escaped cooption, and using music as a tool, surreptitiously empowered themselves by refusing to follow, and strategically revising, the game rules of these theatres. Blake's musical contribution to the church involved a cynical duality: "externally" his organ-playing would have been read by church and family as performances of religiosity, whereas "internally", he was accessing a useful source of pocket money. Refusing to play anything except original music, and labelled musically incompetent by the army, Mombelli similarly defused the disempowering energies around him; as such, he was able to use his time in the army to improve his skills as a composer and arranger and to play, outside its confines, the gigs that he wanted to do.

There are many more examples but for now I'll wrap up. Musicking individuals' experiences of power are not just a function of the subject positions they occupy, but are also complexly inflected by the physical spaces in which those experiences transpire. In this paper I hope to have shown that there is much to be gained from paying close theoretical attention to space as a category in social/musical analysis.

ENDNOTES

1. Marijuana.
2. The *Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk* (Dutch Reformed Church) was the “religious wing” of apartheid discourse.
3. The ominously named Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB) was a special police unit set up by the apartheid government to quash civil dissidence.

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Dubstep: Dub plate culture in the age of digital DJ-ing

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ABSTRACT

This paper inquires into the role of the dub plate within the creative practice of the dubstep DJ. Dub plates are important to dubstep for a range of historical and aesthetic reasons. As a concept, the dub plate connects dubstep genealogically and rhizomically to the cultural memory of 1970s Jamaican reggae sound system practices. As a one-off cut, a dub plate provides an aura of authenticity to the DJ-producer. In the dubstep music scene, however, dub plates seem to appear in a variety of media formats, from analogue lacquered aluminium (“acetate”) and vinyl to digital CDR. Finally, when inquiring into the current practices of digital dubstep DJs in the UK, the dub plate functions as a residual concept of a unique, authentic, event.

KEYWORDS: electronic dance music; dubstep; DJ techniques; dub plate; cultural memory.

INTRODUCTION

Dubstep is a transnational music genre that initially developed within the specific cultural space of London-based post-colonial musical crossroads. A type of electronic dance music (EDM) genre, it emerged from South London (UK) during the early twenty-first century. Since 2006, dubstep gained in significance by spreading in the UK from London to Bristol and other British cities; then, via the Internet and a network of independent record shops and dance clubs, further into Northern Eu-

rope (particularly the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Poland, Russia), Japan, Brazil and the US, morphing into a range of subgenres.

With this paper, I explore the connection between dub plates, as a concept, and dubstep in the context of analogue and digital DJ techniques. The materials are based on ethnographic research that has taken place between 2006 and 2011, in London Soho's specialist shops, including Black Market and Sounds of the Universe, and one of the main seminal London dubstep clubs, FWD at Plastic People. In addition, niche media are utilised that are part of dubstep fanculture, such as insider video documentaries, YouTube clips of DJ interviews, club nights and dance demonstrations; online London-based radio station Rinse FM; and online forum discussions, like *dubstepforum.com* (n.d.), that offer a transnational platform to the dubstep scene.

SONIC SPACE

As dubstep producers foreground texture over melody, which does not suit notational analysis, the music is described here in a similar manner as by its participants. Dominated by a modulating, sometimes wobbling, (sub-)bass, and thin in mid-high frequencies, many seminal dubstep tracks produce a submarine sensation. Although the average speed of the tracks is around 140 beats per minute (BPM), the structure of the bass lines enables the music also to be perceived as half that speed, acting like an echo in musical memory, as it reminds the listener of dub reggae. Such a double experience of timing in the structure of the bass lines can also be found in dubstep's two-step predecessors, UK garage and drum 'n' bass; these break-beat EDM genres emerged during the 1990s from post-colonial music scenes in the London-area (Hesmondhalgh and Melville 2001; Rietveld 2000) of which Christodoulou (2011, pp. 58-59) states that

bass functions as a sonic inscription of the urban uncanny in electronic dance music, especially in drum 'n' bass, [...] brought about by the uncontrollable speed of life for those who live and grow up in London, its place of origin. [...] The 'darkness' of low-frequency sound as described by its mainly working class participants develops out of its framing within a general fatalistic attitude to life in the 'urban jungle'.

Dubstep differs from drum 'n' bass in that it normally lacks the clutter of frantic drum programming. Especially earlier tracks, like Mala's "Blue Notez" (DMZ, 2006), emphasise a deep sense of decelerated time, while foregrounding its sonic space, which can be experienced as though existing in the inert eye of the information storm, of a spiralling accelerated culture of computer games, of the Internet, of the raging city. As such, many dubstep recordings offer an open auditory space that enables its electronic low-frequency textures to fully develop and reverberate, enveloping the audience with physical vibration, erratic rhythm and warped digital sound. For this reason, although dance events can peak to intense skanking two-

step jump ups at London club nights like DMZ and FWD, elsewhere participants can also be seen to move in a type of quick stop-start, alternated by slow-motion, body popping.

The typical sonic spectrum of dubstep produces and safeguards its underground cultural exclusivity. The sparse presence of mid-range frequencies gives space to MCs to add vocalised rhymes to the recordings during DJ sets at club events, which means that, like Jamaican versioning dubs or instrumental dance vinyl b-sides, the tracks are never fully complete. As an event-specific musical assemblage that depends on DJs, MCs and the crowd to let it come alive, dubstep shatters the dominant spectacle of mass mediated music.

The site-specific exclusivity of dubstep is further enhanced by the fact that loud sub bass and muting of low mid-range sound frequencies means that, although there is plenty of opportunity to engage with the sound through (Internet) radio, it is best experienced through a large club sound system it is made for. There, space can be given to its sonic dominance, in a similar way that Henriques (2003, p. 457) has observed in rhizomically related Jamaican dub sound systems, "The sound just hits you. You can't ignore it. You have to feel it". In this sense, dubstep belongs to a family of music genres that can be indicated as "Bass Culture", a term used by Bradley (2000) to describe reggae dub sound system music culture.

DUB PLATE

Of importance to the argument of this paper, evidence of the cultural memory of 1970s Jamaican reggae sound system practices can also be found in the concept of dub plates, with unique recordings of *riddims* (bass and rhythm tracks), or as Bradley (2000, p. 309) puts it, "the crushing bass 'n' drum remixes [that] keep us on our toes". Such instrumental tracks enable versioning that could be dubbed over as part of a reggae soundsystem performance and was, according to Reynolds (1998), a first example of "remixology". In the context of reggae "sounds" (soundsystems) in South-East London during the 1980s, Back (1988, p. 144) describes dub plates as

recorded rhythms [...] original acetates [,] and they are usually the only copies. (Dub is essentially an instrumental form of reggae.) They often have the bass and drums re-mixed with a more resonant, eerie emphasis, underlined by a snatch of vocals and other instruments sporadically dropped back into the mix. The records are made by the artists, specially for the sound.

In short, the dub plate is a unique analogue cut of a sound recording that is based in studio engineering practices and sound system competition.

As a one-off cut, each dub plate provides aura of authenticity to the DJ-producer. In this sense, dubstep DJ-producers hold on to the dub plate as a concept, sometimes literally, when a recording is cut into 12-inch lacquered aluminium ("acetate"), or on 10-inch and 12-inch vinyl (see Afrika et al. 2010, mins. 24.30-27.30; Madboy and Spermchaser 2006, mins. 25.00-26.00). Other media formats are also

used, such as small batches of 12" vinyl pressings, which arguably function as a residual medium from days of electro, house music and, before that, disco (Rietveld, 2007). Such low print runs can become favourites with rare record collectors. An example of dub plate romance can be found in the release of a limited edition 12" vinyl pack that offers pressings of some of dubstep's seminal dub plates from 2000-2004 (Tempa, 2006).

MIXED MEDIA

Digital media formats are increasingly popular with many DJs, due to their easy portability, low price and malleability. For the past decade, a common practice is to burn digital productions straight onto CDR as pre-releases and to cater for a specific dance night. Increasingly, DJs convert unique digital music productions to an uncompressed digital WAV file format that can be controlled with a software based Digital Vinyl System (DVS).

Analogue vinyl is still in rotation though, not only due to its visual resemblance to the prized dub plate, but it is also defended because of the importance of the almighty sub-bass. A low frequency is produced by a large sonic waveform that makes the distinction between analogue and digital apparent to the connoisseur because analogue sound waves have an infinite resolution and can therefore enable a smooth, "warm" texture (for example: Deapoh, cited in Afrika et al., 2010, min. 23.04).

In digital formats, a large sound wave may sound broken because digits are finite and incomplete, causing a dirty digital noise, which indicates absent rather than additional data. Yet, the digital distortion of the wave sound is currently embraced in dubstep productions, creating a sonic aesthetic that enhances the experience of what Reynolds (1998) calls *digital psychedelia*.

In 2011, at the time of writing, DJs that use only vinyl, work side-by-side to DJs who favour mixed media. See, for example, footage of the Boomnoise and Poke show on online radio station Sub FM, using 12" vinyl and a popular DVS, Serato: Scratch Live, (Afrika et al. 2010, mins. 44.00-47.00). There are also DJ-producers that take the potential of digital production/mix software, such as Ableton Live, into the club to produce unique sonic experiences for their crowds.

Regarding the dub plate, Bristol-based digital DJ-producer DK Sam-Atki2 states that "the performance is in hearing these exclusives [...] that is where the lap top comes in [...] it's a slightly different package from what the other dub step guys are doing" (Madboy and Spermchaser 2006, mins. 21.30-24.55). Using clips of existing records and uniquely produced music, the dub plate as a concept is hereby stretched, blurring the division between studio producer, DJ and music performance.

CONCLUSION

As a component of the rhizomic cultural memory embedded in two-step music genres, the dub plate remains a residual medium on the dubstep scene, both as an

actual “real-world” object, as well as a concept of a unique digital DJ event. As DJ and electronic production technologies are constantly changing, this is an area that requires further investigation and analysis.

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A blend of traditional and popular musical forms: The issue of nationalism and commercialism in Korea

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ABSTRACT

The development of hybrid styles by artists of traditional music began to bloom around the mid-1980s in Korea. The so-called fusion *gugak* [*kugak*] (“national music”) has pursued contemporaneity and popularity, escaping from the old and conservative images of Korean traditional music. The Korean government has supported the fusion *gugak* groups with an intention to spread Korean music to young generations and keep traditional music alive. While some are concerned that in fusion *gugak* the musical grammar and aesthetic order of traditional music are chosen superficially to suit Westernized public taste under the name of fusion, distorting and losing the essence of traditional musicality, there is also an opinion that fusion *gugak* has contributed to the popularization of *gugak* as we imagine a Korean popular culture of the future. However, there exists a continuous dilemma of the limited commerciality of fusion *gugak*, which is caused by the conflict between nationalism and commercialism. The case of MIJI, a Korean fusion group, reflects how the two “isms” interact with each other in Korea, where the government promotes a sense of competitiveness within cultural industries in a global society.

KEYWORDS: traditional; fusion; *gugak*; nationalism; commercialism; Korea.

FUSION GUGAK: BLENDING TRADITIONAL AND POPULAR MUSICAL FORMS

In Korea, the development of hybrid styles by artists of traditional music began to bloom around the mid-1980s in a social flow of globalization. According to the music critic Lee So-young (2003, pp. 193-194), fusion *gugak* is distinguished from other new compositions using instruments and techniques from traditional music, known as *changjak gugak* ("creative national music") by nature of (1) the popular, rather than academic, appeal of fusion and (2) the (re)uniting of composer and performer (normally separate in *changjak gugak*).

Fusion *gugak* is played mainly by young artists of traditional music who enjoy experimenting with the mixture between Korean traditional music and other music with different origins (mainly Western). Fusion *gugak* has a variety of musical styles. To identify the wide range of the fusion *gugak* genre, Sutton (2011), who has been conducting research since 2001 on fusion *gugak*, tried to classify fusion *gugak* according to the players' main musical practice or styles: arrangement of Western classical or widely known popular music, mixing of rock and *gugak*, combining *gugak* or *gugak* instruments with various styles of jazz, and avant-garde fusion.

One of the latest styles is fusion *gugak* that strongly pursues popularity and shares its musical style with popular music, or K-pop. In this style, composer and performer are mostly separate, which is different from the nature (2) of fusion *gugak* identified by Lee So-young, as quoted above. The groups representing this kind of fusion *gugak* play popular style music mainly on Korean traditional musical instruments. According to my interview with MIJI, one of those groups, they even want to become like *hallyu* ("Korean wave") star groups, which have been a part of the global pop market since the mid-1990s.

THE POPULARITY OF FUSION GUGAK AND THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT

Since Western music was first imported into Korea, it has come to occupy the centre of refined social circles and has been designated as "THE music", while indigenous music was relegated to the position of "*gugak*" ("national music"). Korean musical society came to be divided into traditional music, Western classical music and popular music. Korean people didn't have much chance to listen to their own music and they could not develop a taste for their traditional music. Today, young people enjoy popular music in various styles such as ballads, rock and hip-hop, to which they are often exposed through the mass media. This situation makes *gugak* unpopular among the general public.

Compared to traditional *gugak*, fusion *gugak* is relatively popular. Among around 200 fusion *gugak* groups, there is Sookmyung Gayagum [Gayageum] Orchestra whose main repertory is arrangements of Beatles' tunes and Western classical music for a new version of *gayageum* which has twenty-five strings, bigger than the traditional *gayageum* with twelve strings. Formed in 1999, the orchestra made headlines with its first joint performance with Korean hip-hop break-dancers b-boy Last For One. CDs by the orchestra have been the best seller in the category of *gugak* in recent years.

Geared toward promoting “a sense of competitiveness within cultural industries in a global society” (Yim 2000), the Korean government started to engage in promotion with lavish funding for fusion music festivals such as 21C Korean Music Project and the Miriade Wave Festival. As Sutton (2003, p. 228) points out, though the academic discourse on the arts tends to favour the forms of “traditional music” before Western music had an influence, it seems that the government now supports the fusion *gugak* groups no less than traditional musicians and groups in order to spread *gugak* to young generations and keep the traditional music alive. In 2008, as a part of a project named Creating Digital Contents of Korean Traditional Arts, the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism started to sponsor a fusion music group with eight female members called MIJI with the aim of popularizing *gugak* to the “masses”.

MIJI: A FUSION MUSIC GROUP WITH THE AIM TO APPEAL TO THE MASSES

MIJI was formed in 2008, first with seven female members playing a traditional *gayageum* with twelve strings and a modified *gayageum* with twenty-five strings, *piri* (oboe), *daegeum* (large transverse flute), *sogeum* (short transverse flute), and *haegeum* (two-stringed fiddle). In 2010, one vocal member, also female, was added. There is no member to play Korean traditional percussion, since players of Western percussion are invited to provide a strong rhythmic impact. In 2010 the first album *The challenge* (LOEN 2009) was released with ten tracks of pop-style instrumental music and two tracks of ballad-style songs.

One special thing about MIJI is that the group was managed by LOEN Entertainment, which is one of the largest record companies in Korea. LOEN Entertainment arranged for popular music composers such as Lee Ji-soo and Jo Young-soo to work with them. Lee is the music director for the drama *Winter sonata*, which became a great hit and cornerstone in the *hallyu* (“Korean wave”) in Asia, and for films including *Lady Vengeance*, *Old Boy* and *Silmido*. Jo has composed for SG Wannabe, Shinhwa, Lee Seung-chul and Lee Seunggi, who are also *hallyu* stars.

The eight-member all-female ensemble MIJI became known as the Girls’ Generation of traditional Korean music (*Kbs World* 2010). Girls’ Generation (Sonyeo Sidae in Korean, 少女時代 in Chinese, Shōjo Jidai in Japanese) is a K-pop female idol group, also referred to as SoShi or SNSD. Formed by SM Entertainment in 2007, the group began a foray into the Japanese music scene in late 2010 under Nayutawave Records as a part of Universal Music with the Japanese remakes of their 2009 Korean hits “Tell me your wish (genie)” and “Gee”.

MIJI started to go on music programs and talk shows as Girls’ Generation did. MIJI released the music video for their digital single in March 2011, “Unbelievable” (LOEN 2011), which features Kim Jin Ho, a member of SG Wannabe who is one of the *hallyu* stars. SG Wannabe is a Korean popular ballad trio that became very popular with its first song “Timeless” in 2004. MIJI was labelled with a headline “Korean equivalent to 12-Girls Band” in one of Korea’s major journals (Shin 2010). 12-Girls Band is a Chinese fusion group which was officially established in 2001

and cooperated with a Japanese company to debut their first album on July 24, 2003, which had already sold 1.8 million copies (*Chinaculture* 2009).

MIJI's first album *The challenge* (LOEN 2010) was categorized as *gayo* ("popular song"), not as *gugak*, and sold more than the CDs of Sookmyung Gayagum Orchestra for six months after its release on 14th of January 2010. However, in April 2011 the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism decided to stop sponsoring MIJI. Also, the management company, LOEN Entertainment, chose to drop them. According to researcher Park Jeong-gyeong, the Korean Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism evaluated the musical ability of MIJI members as not good enough for support. As for LOEN Entertainment, it claimed that MIJI was not profitable enough.

Figure 1. MIJI, one of the photos for press release (2009).



NATIONALISM AND COMMERCIALISM IN FUSION GUGAK IN THE GLOBAL MARKET

Asian countries each have their own traditional music that is quite different from the others. On the other hand, Asian pop culture such as C-pop of China, J-pop of Japan and K-pop of Korea has grown into a large industry and tends to become transnational, though its national identity is often questioned. In the case of Korea, culture and the culture industry were seen to earn money and boost the national image around the globe.

The fusion *gugak* groups sell more CDs than traditional music but very much less than popular music. According to Park Seung-won of LOEN, the sales of CDs of *gugak* represent 0.5% compared to those of popular music (that is, for every CD of *gugak* sold, there are 200 CDs of popular music sold). This is excluding other music such as Western classical music. Therefore, companies that pursue profit are hesitating to invest money in the fusion *gugak* groups.

For commercial reasons, the MIJI members were managed to present a sophisticated and sexy look like popular stars. However, most artists of traditional music are different from those in popular music in their way of thinking and approaching the market. They tend to be less aggressive and more conservative in their nature, which makes their success in popular music circles slow or difficult. Also, some critics such as Hahn Dong-yun (2010) complain that the MIJI members are not concerned about artistic achievement but seek popularity and follow commerciality only. Ironically, however, they are not commercial enough for the entertainment companies. That is why there remains this dilemma. It reflects not just a conflict between nationalism and commercialism but a course of interaction between the two, in Korea, where the course of popular music is influenced primarily by the market (Manuel 1987, p. 161) and where the government joins in the discourse, negotiating and compromising with market forces¹.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express her appreciation to LOEN Entertainment, particularly to the former project director of MIJI, Park Seung-won, for sharing his experience with her and allowing her to use a photo of MIJI.

ENDNOTES

1. There are some important factors to be discussed about the MIJI case such as public taste and *gugak* musicians. I intend to explore these issues in future research.

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Performing the archive: The ILAM *For Future Generations* exhibit, *Music Heritage Project SA* and *Red Location Music History Project*¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on recent projects of the International Library of African Music (ILAM) involving research, community outreach and dissemination/repatriation of archived recordings. The *ILAM-Red Location Music History Project* addresses the lack of research on Eastern Cape jazz of the Red Location in the Nelson Mandela Bay metropolitan area (Port Elizabeth). The project combines collection of oral history data with community outreach and education in its effort to do meaningful intervention in the community that passes on to younger generations the uniquely South African style of jazz that is their heritage. ILAM's *For Future Generations* museum exhibit displays Hugh Tracey's legacy for African music. The *ILAM Music Heritage Project SA* seeks to fulfil Tracey's vision for keeping the music he recorded alive in its communities of origin by developing music education textbooks that utilize Tracey's field recordings. Outcomes of the ILAM-Red Location oral history project that uniquely combine documentation with community outreach, education and empowerment initiatives are presented along with examples of ILAM's dissemination/repatriation efforts which are returning ILAM's field recordings through music education textbooks created for the mandated creative arts curriculum in South Africa and reaching countless school groups and the general public through its traveling exhibition, *For Future Generations*. This paper advocates for archives to become sites for heritage activism.

KEYWORDS: oral history; Eastern Cape jazz; repatriation; community outreach and education; digital divide.

INTRODUCTION

The International Library of African Music, famous for the pioneering work of its founder, Hugh Tracey (1903-77), whose research methods left a legacy of carefully documented field recordings, has catalogued, digitized and created on-line access (www.ilam.ru.ac.za) to the Hugh Tracey Collection of many thousands of recordings of African music from throughout east, central and southern Africa. A self-taught scholar motivated by his awareness of the need to preserve what he feared to be vanishing repertoires of indigenous African music, Hugh Tracey's audio-visual collections spanning from 1928 to the early 1970s provide a rich source of recordings of African music and related material for use by researchers and educators. Tracey's achievements – documentation, preservation, research, dissemination *via* audio-visual and print publications and outreach and education – remain to this day the mission of the International Library of African Music (ILAM), which he founded as an archive and research centre in 1954.

Figure 1. Hugh Tracey with his *Sound of Africa* (218 LPs) and *Music of Africa* (25 LPs) series produced from his field recordings (ILAM image).



This paper discusses issues that emerge in “performing” a research archive such as the International Library of African Music and advocates for archives to make heritage activism part of their mission. I urge that ethnomusicologists, musicologists, music researchers in general and archivists be creative in devising research projects that include community outreach and education aimed at continued performance of the music by future generations. Importantly, it is also necessary to recognize that there is a “digital divide”, and to try to bridge it by devising ways to make our collections of musical heritage accessible to the many who do not have access to the Internet.

A question that frequently arises in digitization projects is: who benefits? Answers often suggest universal benefit because the heritage materials will be preserved for posterity and easily accessible to all via the Internet. But, given the reality of low bandwidth and sparse Internet accessibility for many in the southern hemisphere, particularly in the rural areas where many of our archived field recordings were obtained, ways of getting the music back to the communities of its originators beyond the Internet need to be created. ILAM’s attempts in that direction, the *ILAM Music Heritage Project SA* and the *For Future Generations* exhibit, to be reported on in more detail in what follows, give Hugh Tracey’s archived recordings back to the youth and their communities through the schools and museums.

ISSUES IN “PERFORMING” A RESEARCH ARCHIVE

The perpetual issue faced by the International Library of African Music and most archives is that of sustainability – that is, how to source and maintain adequate funding to survive and thrive. There is an on-going need for funding for basic operations such as accession and preservation of collections through cataloguing and digitizing, dissemination via online access, dissemination through production of audio-visual and print publications, research projects and research publications. There is also a need for funds for outreach and education activities more generally – not to mention repatriation projects – since institutional support from national governments and/or universities that house archives is never enough. Writing project proposals to secure outside funding is necessary. Cataloguing and digitising the Hugh Tracey audio, film and photo collections was accomplished through fund raising from government, corporate and international sources including the National Research Foundation (NRF), the National Heritage Council, the Rand Merchant Bank Expressions Programme and the Mellon Foundation. Now that ILAM has, after five years of committed effort (2007-2011), reached the point of having catalogued, digitised and made the Hugh Tracey collections accessible via the Internet, the question remains: After digitising, what next? What are the ethical implications of providing Internet access for those privileged enough to have that access, while countless other descendants of the musicians Hugh Tracey recorded very likely do not have Internet access, and also very likely have little or no idea the recordings even exist?

Among the most urgent issues facing research archives is how to survive and thrive without compromising professional ethics in regard to archival practice. Professional ethics pertain to all areas of an archive's operations, from the basic functions of accessioning collections to the securing of funds – whether institutional, grants, or from sales – for on-going operations and for repatriation projects crucial to the functions of archives in the twenty-first century. Archives in the twenty-first century are more than ever in a position to not only digitally preserve and make their collections accessible, but also to break the digital divide and return copies of their audio-visual holdings to their communities of origin. Our current mandate at ILAM is to attempt to disseminate and “give back” Hugh Tracey's audio recordings through outreach and education projects that create materials designed to educate and inform about ILAM's legacy for African music, while exposing the general public, and youth in particular, to their heritage as contained in the indigenous music Tracey recorded, documented and preserved.

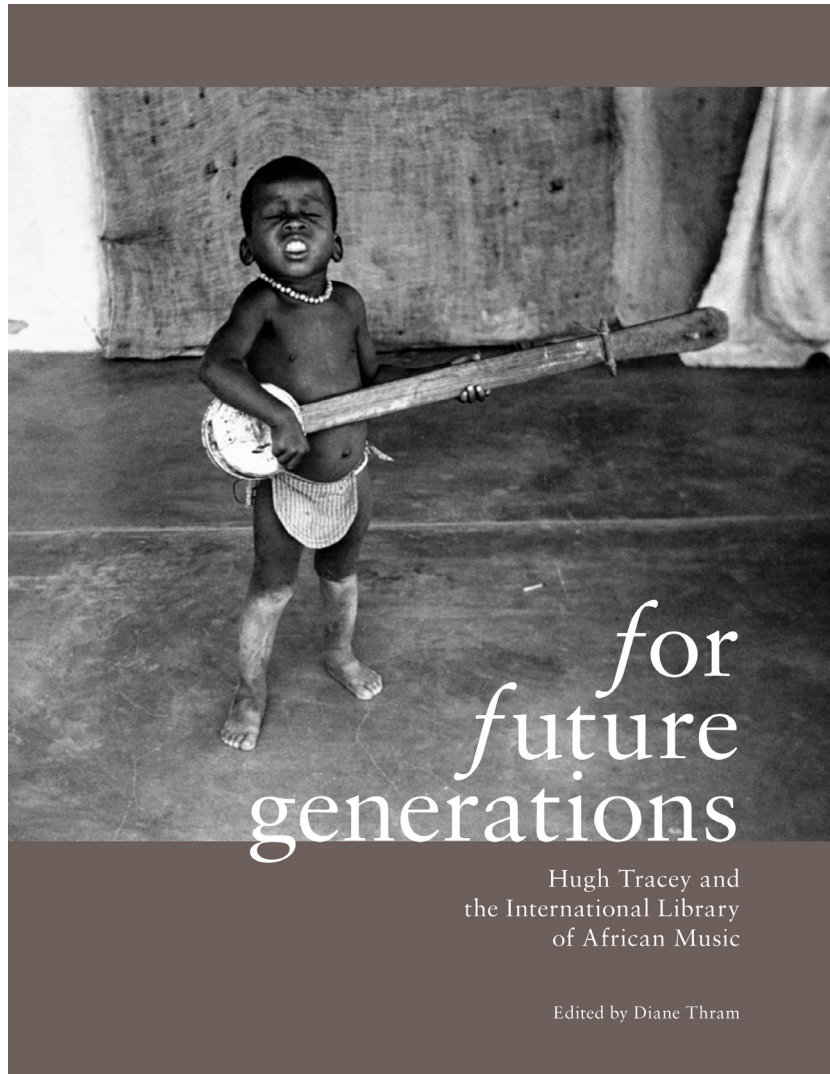
GUIDELINES FOR REPRODUCTION, SALE AND REPATRIATION OF DIGITAL HERITAGE

In an effort to establish standards for reproduction, sale and repatriation of digital heritage, ILAM partnered with the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor African Studies Center to host a Digital Heritage Workshop at ILAM in December 2008. Discussions at the workshop explored (1) sources of digitisation success and failure; (2) technology and mechanics of distribution; (3) funding, sales and sustainability; (4) access (open access versus fee-based models); and (5) intellectual property rights. Participants also spent considerable time grappling with the question of how to repatriate cultural heritage to communities of origin. The workshop agenda included presentations on content management models, a repatriation project carried out by the Alan Lomax Archive, copyright issues and technology options. Outcomes of the workshop included two sets of guidelines – one, *Guidelines for reproduction and sale of digital heritage*, the other *Guidelines for repatriation of digital heritage*².

ILAM'S TRAVELLING MUSEUM EXHIBIT *FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS*

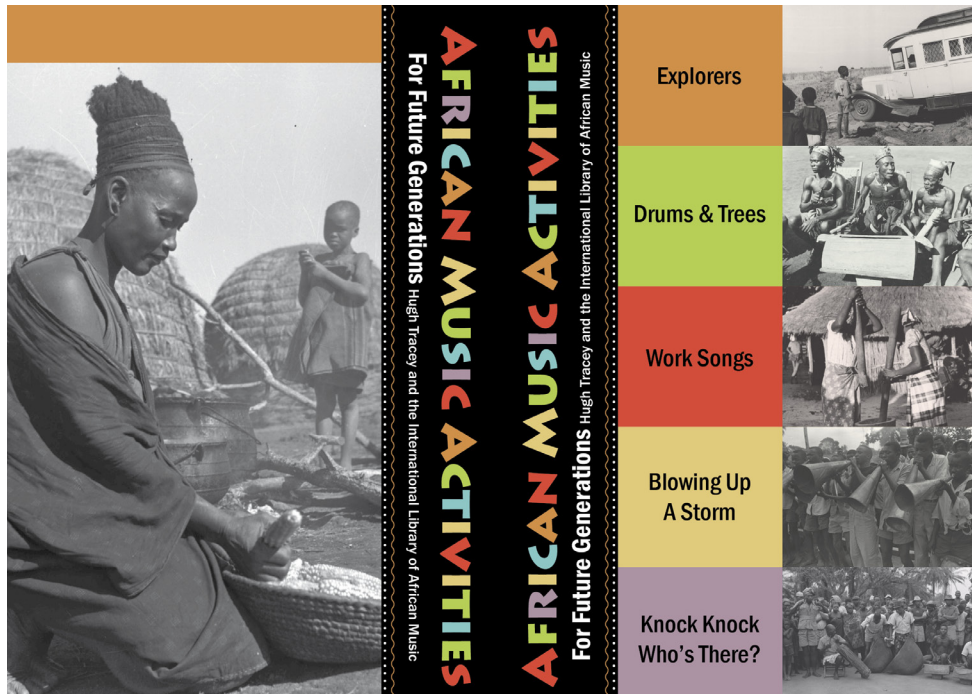
In 2010 ILAM developed a full-scale travelling museum exhibit, which included publishing an exhibit catalogue with a collection of informative articles, stunning images from Hugh Tracey's field excursions, and a full-length CD with field recordings of each of the twenty instruments featured in the exhibit. Titled *For Future Generations – Hugh Tracey and the International Library of African Music*, the exhibit is the outreach and education component of the Rand Merchant Bank Expressions Programme grant to ILAM that covered the cost of staff and equipment to complete the cataloguing and digitising of Hugh Tracey's original pancake reels recorded in the 1940s-1950s.

Figure 2a: Cover of the *For Future Generations* exhibit catalogue, 2010 (ILAM image).



Also published and provided to museums hosting the exhibit was a colourful *African music activities* educational packet (see *Figure 2b*) consisting of five lessons and a CD to accompany the exhibit, for use as a teaching resource by teachers and the school groups who visit the exhibit. Each of the five lessons has a unifying focus grounded in African music. For example the “Drums and trees” lesson focuses on rhythm, tonal contrast and environment. In this lesson, children consider the value of trees to the environment and their use in making instruments, and create and perform rhythms based on speech rhythms.

Figure 2b: Cover of *African music activities* booklet (Carver 2011; ILAM image).



The exhibit displays twenty musical instruments from the Tracey collection, an installation of connected wooden display boxes that showcases some of the instruments as well as Hugh Tracey's audio and print publications in the form of 78 rpm and LP records, books, ILAM's journal *African Music*, and various images from Hugh Tracey's field excursions. Numerous information panels include a time line of ILAM's history and a map of Tracey's field research locations. There is also an information panel and listening station devoted to Tracey's broadcasting career that gives exhibit goers a chance to hear him tell, in one of his radio shows, the story of how he recorded the Congolese guitarist Jean Bosco Mwenda and released his hit song "Masanga" (ILAM 1952) which, in Tracey's words, "went round the world" (Tracey 1970). Six audio stations offer a wide variety of field recordings to accompany the various information panels, such as a large wall display of exceptional images of people performing "songs for every occasion". Four video stations feature films of South African mine dancing, Chopi xylophone music, Andrew Tracey's films on Shona storytelling and his "System of the *mbira*", and an overview of ILAM's history and current activities. An exhibit highlight is Hugh Tracey's 1939 film from a recording excursion in Zululand projected on big screen.

ILAM MUSIC HERITAGE PROJECT SA

A desire to begin the repatriation of ILAM's field recordings and recognition of the need for teaching materials for African music, together with the hope to begin to fulfil Hugh Tracey's vision to repatriate his field recordings through his *African music codification and textbook project* (1969), which unfortunately never came to fruition, have motivated the current *ILAM Music Heritage Project SA*. This project was conceived as a method of repatriating the music recorded by Hugh Tracey to communities throughout South Africa. It is hoped that eventually the concept can be extended throughout sub-Saharan Africa to all the various geographical regions where he recorded.

Funded by the South African National Arts Council, the project is authoring and publishing two music education textbooks. The first, titled *Music for the creative arts* and written to comply with the mandates of the South African Department of Education's Creative Arts Curriculum, is aimed at grades 7-9 and students between twelve and fourteen years of age. The second, entitled *Understanding african music*, designed for high school music majors aged fifteen-eighteen, will appeal more broadly to the general public because of the nature of its content. The texts are illustrated with images from ILAM's photo collections and the lessons feature selections from Hugh and Andrew Tracey's field recordings. Audio files and video clips to accompany the lessons are provided on a multimedia disc that accompanies each book. Both textbooks are authored by school music teachers with exposure to and training in African music, ethnomusicology and music education.

ILAM-RED LOCATION MUSIC HISTORY PROJECT

The *ILAM-Red Location Music History Project* is a research and community outreach project on jazz performance in the Red Location/New Brighton, greater Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Area. The project, funded by the National Heritage Council, features research (oral history interviews, archival and library research into jazz recordings of the 1950s-1970s era) and community outreach. It is being conducted in cooperation with the Red Location Museum and veteran musicians from the area. The project's research goal is to conduct oral history interviews with surviving musicians and anti-apartheid activists who were involved in performance of jazz in aid of the "struggle" as well as purely for entertainment and creative expression during this era, before any more of this music heritage, unique to the region, is lost due to the passing of people possessing the knowledge.

Secondary goals are to collect memorabilia from the era for use in preparing an exhibit. A jazz listening area and archive at the Red Location Museum will be open to the public. All data from the project will be archived at ILAM and at the Museum. Production of a documentary film from video shot during interviews and performance workshops to be shown as part of the museum exhibit is also planned. The project's outreach goal was to educate young musicians from the community in jazz performance from the era through sponsorship of Saturday morning "workshop-rehearsals" led by veteran musicians from the community. The outreach culminated

with the Jazz Heritage Concert staged for the community on 27 March 2010 featuring the youth playing with the veteran musicians. The concert showcased three generations of local jazz artists playing music historically connected to the Red Location and Eastern Cape jazz. It was filmed by ILAM technicians and produced into a documentary DVD that is now available to the performers at cost from ILAM as a way for them to generate income through sales to their fans.

Figure 3: Veteran bass player, “Big T” Ntsele, teaching a student at a workshop /rehearsal.



CONCLUSION

The most crucial question for us to answer as we seek to repatriate field recordings is: What works? Certainly active engagement by archives in research projects that include outreach and education, as well as repatriation to communities through the schools, seems to be a viable way to begin this process. Teacher workshops will be essential to make sure that the books are utilised to their full potential and that engagement with the materials is actually accomplished and sustained. There is no doubt that archives are ideally situated to serve as sites for heritage activism. As Hugh Tracey understood, working through schools offers a way to reach out to future generations.

The potential for archives possessing valuable collections of cultural heritage in the form of field recordings to form a bridge from their historical recordings to present realities – and thereby provide creative inspiration for researchers, educators, and composers of contemporary African music – is great. There is no doubt that

Hugh Tracey's vision remains a vision we must strive to achieve today, as the ethics of professional responsibility for those maintaining collections of field recordings must include outreach and education activities that find ways to make the music accessible globally. But also and most importantly, we must also find ways to return the music to its communities of origin so that contact with and assimilation of their African heritage is assured for the future generations whose forefathers and mothers created the music found on our field recordings.

ENDNOTES

1. Portions of this paper were presented at the 5th Symposium on Ethnomusicology at the University of Dar es Salaam, 22 July 2011 and the 2nd International Symposium on Ethnomusicology in Uganda, 21 October 2011.
2. The *Guidelines* are available for download from the ILAM website or by contacting ilamsales@ru.ac.za.

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My first compact cassette: Home taping and music consumption in 1970s Finland

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ABSTRACT

The launching of compact cassettes is closely related to issues of democratization of music production and creativity in developing countries and in the post-communist Eastern Europe. On the one hand, this included increased freedom of musical expression and the emergence of new popular music, but on the other, large-scale piracy. In Western Europe and Finland, cassettes have been neglected in research, although music consuming and listening were transformed there as well by the mobility and easy usability of the new medium. This paper seeks to describe the individual and social changes in music consumption in 1970s Finland influenced by the use of the compact cassette and how the cassette served as a trailblazer to contemporary ubiquitous music culture. Special attention will be paid to home taping and possible differences from other countries in Western Europe. The questions will be answered mainly by research literature and the results of an Internet questionnaire started in April 2010 on cassette culture and music technology.

KEYWORDS: compact cassette; cassette culture; music consumption; radio music; ubiquitous music; home taping; mobility.

INTRODUCTION

The cassette tape was introduced in 1963 by Philips. Through its portability and recordability it became a major format in producing, duplicating and disseminating

local music, thus decentralising not only production but also consumption of music (Garofalo 1999, pp. 340–341). Simon Frith argues that technological changes transform the power relations between the corporate control of popular music and the artist. Regarding the compact cassette, the choices of the consumers were transformed as well: home taping gave fans a new means of control over sound. They could compile music from LPs and radio shows and carry it around with them (Frith 1986, pp. 272–274).

This paper is part of the Academy of Finland *Musiquitous* (2009–2012) research project investigating past, present and future mobile and ubiquitous music in Finland. *Musiquitous* proposes that by creating a multi-disciplinary approach by combining history of technology, human-computer interaction research, and future forecasting through prototyping it will achieve a fresh perspective on how people have enjoyed, and do and will enjoy, music.

The time span for *Musiquitous* extends from the 1920s to contemporary ways of listening to, consuming and disseminating music. This article deals with compact cassettes, with special emphasis on how they made music mobile and changed the listening culture in Finland, starting in the 1970s. The contemporary and perhaps somewhat marginal uses of cassettes are excluded from this text, although they will be scrutinised later in the ongoing research.

It should be noted, however, that this is a work very much in progress. The preliminary results presented in this paper will be updated and investigated in more detail in spring 2012, when the comprehensive analysis of the research material is scheduled to take place.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DATA

The paper seeks to answer the following questions: (1) what was the Finnish cassette culture (including home taping) like in comparison with the cassette culture of other countries; and (2): what were the individual and social changes in music consumption caused by the cassette and home taping?

The question of Finnish cassette culture compared to other countries will be discussed with reference to existing research reports and literature. In order to collect information on the individual and social uses of cassettes, *Musiquitous* distributed an Internet questionnaire over a period of six months ending on 30 September 2010 (Musiququestionnaire 2010). In order not to restrict the questionnaire to Internet users, the project utilized the informant network of *Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura* (The Finnish Literature Society 2012) as well. The fundamental purpose was to find out what the cassette culture was - and actually still is - and if it had any effect on the listening habits of the music consumers. The themes of the Internet questionnaire dealt with the individual and social changes in music consumption, home taping, various uses of compact cassettes and mix-tapes.

Musiquitous received 958 responses from different age groups, thus providing hundreds of pages of text to be analysed. The preliminary results show that as innovative as the cassette was in paving the way to contemporary listening culture, the

ubiquitous use of the medium was at least to some extent built on already existing ways of acquiring, consuming and listening to music.

FINNISH CASSETTE CULTURE AND HOME TAPING

The launch of the compact cassette occurred at the same time as when European publicly funded radios started to include more popular music in their programmes (Gronow and Saunio 1990, pp. 467-469). The radio music content reform was executed partly because of the demand by the radio listening public, and partly because of legal and illegal stations operating in Luxembourg and close to the British, Danish, and Swedish coastlines (Kemppainen 2010, p. 16).

The music consumers very much welcomed the inexpensive and easy-to-operate new medium, although it must be noted that cassettes were first scorned by some listeners due to their inferior sound quality compared to the phonograph record.

In Finland, cassette players became widespread very fast, even in the remote villages. In the 1970s one out of ten Finns owned a cassette player; seven years later three out of four were able to play cassettes at home. The figure was higher than in the industrialised countries on average, which was two out of three. The main sources for home taping were phonograms and radio. In England, music was copied from records and music cassettes, whereas the Finns recorded music mostly from radio (Gronow 1984, pp. 3,7).

The sales of phonograms were slowly increasing but it was actually cassettes that widened the market for recorded music in Finland. Pekka Gronow (1990, p. 468) argues that the boom of recorded music can be explained by the low price of cassettes and cassette players compared to more expensive vinyl and record players.

The affordable price of blank tapes must have been alluring, especially for young consumers and rock music fans. The publicly funded Finnish Broadcasting Company aired rock music for only seven hours per week in the mid-1970s, and if you wanted to listen to your favourite music, you needed to find practical ways to solve this problem of scarcity of music by yourself.

The change in music consumption would not have been possible without a network for disseminating cassettes and cassette players. Interestingly enough, the rapid growth of record sales of the 1970s in Finland owed a lot to compact cassettes. Although cassettes were first sold in specialist shops, the sales of domestic audio equipment were followed by the demand for records and cassettes. This caused department stores and radio shops to include records, music cassettes and blank tapes in their offering. In 1970, the number of retail outlets was 200, but towards the end of the decade, the number was tenfold. The share of these so-called rack sales was only 3% in 1970 but increased to 38% in 1975 and remained around 35% for the next ten years. Specialist shops sold 50% of the records and cassettes, leaving the remaining 15% share for the post order companies (Muikku 1989, pp. 28-29).

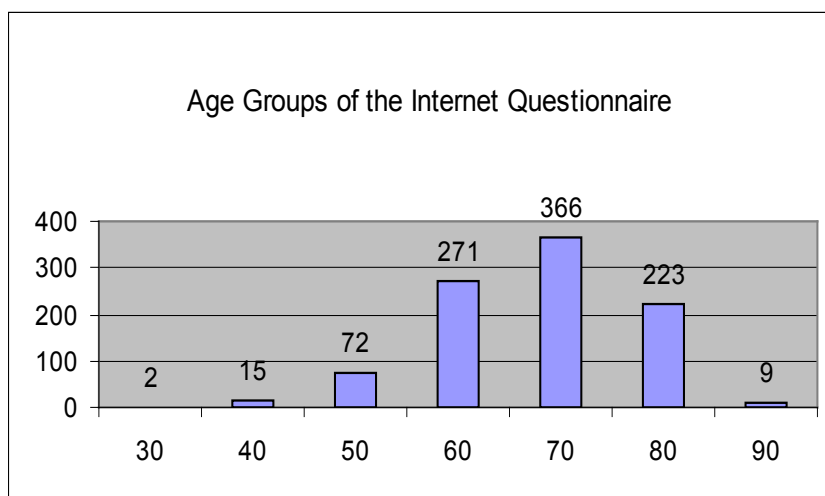
Nordic branches of the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry commissioned a survey in January 1980. At that time, taping from radio had slightly declined, but even so, radio was still the most important source of music for 68 %

of respondents. Finnish home recordists outnumbered their neighbours in Sweden, Norway and Denmark with figures of 48, 47 and 55% respectively (Teosto 1980).

CHANGES IN INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL MUSIC CONSUMPTION

To some extent, the *Musiquitous* questionnaire verifies the facts stated above.

Figure 1: Age groups of the Internet questionnaire.



The respondents of the questionnaire (n=958) were born between 1930 and 1990 with males (53%) and females (47%) almost equally represented. Practically all recorded their own tapes (99%), most of them from the radio (92%) and records (78%). The library collections were utilised by 47%; cassette share, television and CDs were used by 42% of the respondents. 94% of the respondents used cassettes outside the home. The most popular equipment was the Walkman or other portable cassette player with headphones (56%) followed by a car stereo (40%) and radio recorder (33%).

The Internet questionnaire sheds more light on innovative uses leading to new listening cultures. Although the research material will be analysed more thoroughly in the near future, already there are clearly visible themes such as an increase of listening, privacy, mobility, and freedom of choice of music.

The *quantitative* and *qualitative* increase of music listening caused by the cassettes was clearly pointed out: "Huge increase in listening!" and "Doors opened to new musics" (*Musiququestionnaire* 2010). The quantitative increase of available music was enabled by mix-tapes, which were compiled of radio music, library collections and so-called recording rings (a group of youngsters bought one LP at a time and made cassette copies for others). Qualitatively the cassette users became familiar with different artists, songs and independent music labels. The re-articulation of time, place and privacy were pointed out in many answers, such as listening to music in your

own room, which was mentioned frequently; also how the Walkman saved the family car trip. This is closely related to issues of independence and freedom to choose the desired music for a mix-tape ("You weren't tied to radio music anymore").

Mobility ("I listened to music everywhere") was identified in answers, too. Cars, radio cassette players and especially Walkmans made music - if not ubiquitous - at least detached from one place for good. In addition, "You didn't need much money to find new music", which was enabled by inexpensive blank tapes. Another feature increasing music consumption was that music could be replaced or songs arranged in any desired order ("You just erased the songs you didn't like"). The durability of the medium played an important role as well: when you were "not allowed to touch your father's record player" you could learn to listen to music at an early age with somewhat more heavy-duty equipment.

Evidently, on the one hand background listening and more focused listening to music increased because "for the first time you could hear your favourite song over and over again". On the other hand, the record aesthetics in terms of song sequence were respected, not only because the LP and its song sequence were appreciated as a complete work of art but also because of more practical reasons: poor quality of the batteries did not allow rewinding or forwarding.

The change of music consumption was underlined in one response stating that the use of cassettes did not change anything because "I was born to it". There already was a younger generation, which took compact cassettes for granted and had learned to use them almost as a toddler. Sony Corporation took notice of the durability of the medium and launched their product *My First Sony* in the mid-1980s targeted at children.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Finnish cassette culture/home taping differs from that of other European countries such as Sweden and England, in that there was definitely more home taping from the radio. The library collections were heavily utilized as well, however, more information is needed to explore this point in more detail.

The cassettes were not only leading consumers to new ways of listening to music but were also extending the already established uses of music. Home taping made music consumption actually more diverse not only *within* the new format or in terms of individual listening but also *in relation to* other forms of consuming music such as going to concerts, buying and sharing records and recording mix-tapes. This, of course, is no news in the age of Facebook, YouTube and music downloading, but was nevertheless clearly stated by our informants.

The compact cassette and related home taping was a democratic, easy-to-use, and affordable medium, thus advancing and trailblazing the contemporary ubiquitous music culture. However, to make music, and especially home-taped music, mobile in the 1970s you actually needed several existing networks such as a VHF network for the radio, and a music library network for the records and music cassettes, not to mention a shop, retailer or mail order network to get the blank tapes. Evidently,

the changes in music consumption were manifest not only by the new medium but also in relation to prevailing economic, cultural, technological and infrastructural factors.

The next stage on the *Musiquitous* research project is to pay more systematic and detailed attention to research material. The analysis will be followed by collating the results with secondary research data such as statistical information dealing with equipment sales, and the effect of blank tape cassette remuneration (the so-called "cassette fee"), including how these remunerations contributed to the domestic music industry.

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Southern currents: Some thoughts on Latin American popular music studies

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ABSTRACT

Latin American scholars of the 1980s generation have been strongly criticised for their supposed uncritical adoption of models from European and North American musicology. Thirty years after the start of IASPM, and after a little more than ten years of Latin-American IASPM, it might be fruitful to examine this assumption and offer a reassessment. This is even more appropriate considering the fact that the “founding fathers” of Latin American IASPM received their doctorates in the late 1980s and early 1990s in North America and Europe, which means that they were aware of the establishment of popular music studies, and of the classic texts of the field, especially those in ethnomusicology, musicology, history and anthropology, with some touches of literary criticism and sociology. However, after receiving their degrees, Latin American music scholars rolled up their sleeves in order to plan and initiate graduate courses and, more importantly, establish research groups in order to construct a field for popular music studies within the academy. The results of this endeavour form the essential focus of this paper.

KEYWORDS: musicology; theoretical approaches; Latin American popular music studies.

Popular Music in Latin America is studied from various perspectives, notably music, social history, communication (media studies), and literature. Academic programmes

in Popular Music studies are not common in Latin America, and researchers investigate their subject using disciplinary theoretical and methodological perspectives. The IASPM Latin America branch has members from all the disciplines mentioned above, although music (musicology and ethnomusicology) predominates.

LATIN AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC STUDIES AS SEEN FROM THE ANGLOPHONE WORLD

The opening phrase of my abstract for the IASPM 16th conference was inspired by repeated observations made by the late Gerard Béhague (1937-2005), a position still maintained by the 2012 edition of the *Grove music dictionary*, in the article by Béhague entitled "Latin America" (in "Musicology/national traditions"):

An important issue for Latin American ethnomusicologists has been the study of origins within the tri-ethnic make-up of Latin American music (Iberian, Amerindian, [and] African). Generalizations have frequently resulted from the search for 'pure' retention of a given musical trait believed to be attributable to a specific cultural root. This diffusionist, evolutionist and neo-colonialist attitude is reflected in the influential theories of Carlos Vega, who raised the characteristics of regional songsters (*cancioneros*) to the level of universal criteria. [...] The social uses and functions of music, for example, are hardly mentioned in most studies of folk and popular music. Until the late 20th century, Latin American researchers in the field tended to *believe that they possessed unique understanding of the music and culture of their country, without questioning the objectivity of their observations*. However, most Latin American folklorists and ethnomusicologists come from the dominant social groups, which in general exhibit a high degree of eurocentrism. *Rather than blindly following the lessons of European or American ethnomusicology, Latin American scholars must attempt to formulate theoretical objectives based on their own conceptualization of research problems and purposes in specific countries*. (Béhague 2012, emphasis mine)

Interestingly enough, in his review of *Brazilian musics, Brazilian identities*, a key contemporary work on Brazilian "ethnomusicology" written mostly by Brazilian scholars (with the exception of a piece by Shuhei Hosokawa, established Japanese IASPM scholar, on singing competitions within the Japanese-Brazilian community), UK scholar David Treece (a specialist in Brazilian literature, who has written also on Brazilian popular music, as well as the culture and politics of race and Afro-Brazilian identity), expressed the opposite viewpoint:

The ethnomusicologists [...] are still largely operating within discrete disciplinary confines, speaking more often to their own community of peers and engaging little with the literature beyond their own familiar frontiers. [The] accounts [...] are presented [...] as representative of a type of research committed to reflecting the 'multiplicity of identities that are musically constructed

within the national territory'. [However], there is at times the impression in *Brazilian musics, Brazilian identities* of a certain introspection, a defensiveness, even, towards the more internationalist perspective of the research community beyond its own ethnomusicological ranks [...]. This is understandable given the argument raised in the introduction [of the book] about the need for marginalized critical narratives to challenge the hegemony of the centre, but it is surely unhealthy in the long-term. (Treece 2003, emphasis mine)

Can these two viewpoints be reconciled or are they completely oppositional? For both critics (one US-based, one UK), Latin American ethnomusicologists either follow foreign models, or are too enclosed within their own disciplinary peer group. Each of these critics asks for an impossibility: how can Latin American scholarship contribute to the advancement of knowledge about Latin American musicology if scholars must find their own specific "theoretical objectives" (whatever that may mean), rather than engage in dialogue with their disciplinary peers? On the other hand, is it realistic to ask for an interdisciplinary approach from a body of scholars who are still marginalized within their own disciplines? Even if the work of Latin American musical scholars had greater impact on the mainstream academy, or even considering just the mainstream academy one might ask: how interdisciplinary and by implication unbiased themselves are Anglophone literary critics, sociologists, anthropologists, historians or musicologists?

THE STUDY OF POPULAR MUSIC IN LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America the term "popular" music refers to notions of "people's" music as well as "well liked" music. In musicology the first generation to study popular music understood the term as related to oral transmission, and rural origin. What is usually known (although there is still no consensus) as popular music in the twentieth-first century has been interpreted as "*popularesche*" (Mário de Andrade), or "*meso music*" (Carlos Vega). That is, not popular, coming from "the people"; rather light music for entertainment purposes. The founding fathers of Latin American ethnomusicology (Vega has been quite influential not only in Argentina, but also Uruguay, Venezuela and Chile; Andrade is better known in Brazil) were looking in fact for origins, as Béhague (2012) mentions in his *Grove dictionary* entry. Along with Béhague, scholars of the 1980s generation also rebelled against what was considered "evolutionism". What many of us forgot (including Béhague I would argue) was to make a contextualised critique of our positions. Being only a few years older than Adorno (1903-1969), neither Andrade (1893-1945) nor Vega (1898-1966) could have discussed the uses and functions of music, as these concepts were formulated only in the late 1950s and early 1960s (Merriam's *Anthropology of music*, in which these concepts appear, was first published in 1964). However, different from their Frankfurtian counterpart who has been sufficiently criticized, and whose contribution to popular music studies is acknowledged, Vega and Andrade are just dismissed as "eurocentric". In fact, what we see here is a difficulty in transcending

the new Anglophone musicology canon that at the time was replacing the earlier Germanic academic *status quo*.

When a door is closed a window opens, says an old Brazilian saying. Although the Anglophone academy might not have been able to follow closely the development of Latin American musical scholarship due to linguistic and other chosen gate-keeping tactics, the intellectual production of scholarship focusing on music has been growing at a steady rate. Since the 1980s, and particularly since the 1990s, Latin American research in music in general, and in popular music in particular, has been blooming in quantity, and also in quality. More exchange could be very productive.

In most individual countries Popular Music is an object of study, and not an autonomous field. For instance, in Brazil, according to CAPES - the Ministry of Education agency for post-graduate studies, between 1987 and 2010, there were 614 thesis and dissertations with "popular music" as a key word. Among the doctoral dissertations (133) the following fields are significantly represented: literature/linguistics (23%); history (21%); media studies (16%); music and social sciences/sociology/anthropology (14% each).

A few of those who have graduated more recently (from 2005 onwards) are writing chapters for a Routledge edited volume entitled *Made in Brazil*, which will serve as an example of the spectrum of topics and methodologies being developed: chapters will cover the contemporary Brazilian music market, new media, and Brazilian diasporas. Some pieces involve traditional analytical study, while others embrace the latest trends in Internet ethnography, combining fieldwork with theory. Finally, alongside new arguments concerning music that has been written about for many decades (samba, *choro*, fado, bossa nova, MPB), there are chapters on genres that have not yet received any extensive treatment in English (*tecnobrega*, *manguebeat*, Brazilian drum & bass, and metal scenes).

IASPM LATIN AMERICAN BRANCH

In tandem IASPM-AL is constructing a new basis for systematic research, either by returning to the original sources of already canonised histories, or by embracing the latest trends in contemporary theory and methods. Since first founded in 1997 in Santiago de Chile, the IASPM Latin American branch has attracted a broad range of articles on topics ranging from "roots music" to various national genres (such as samba and cumbia), as well as varieties of pop and rock, including "progressive" practices (Ulhôa 1998). Recurring issues have concerned questions of popular music and identity, either in relation to nationality or region; popular music and teaching; popular music and composition; issues of interdisciplinarity; and the relationship with technical media, in particular phonography.

It has been problematic having two official languages (Portuguese and Spanish), coupled with traditional disagreement even among scholars from the same country or institution (no different to other academic settings, centres or peripheries...). In Santiago de Chile we could not arrive at a consensus about the foundation of the

Latin American branch (which was thereby postponed for two years to the second conference held in Mexico City) or whether we had enough of a critical mass to start an international organisation. Some who were vehemently opposed to starting the branch, preferred instead to join ethnomusicology-only associations (although a good number attend both IASPM and ethnomusicological events); others disengaged themselves from the branch after some attempts. In fact, in agreement with Béhague's (2012) viewpoint, IASPM conferences are heterogeneous, with papers uneven in standard. Lack of depth is made up for by enthusiasm to hear different work from different viewpoints - in contrast to IASPM international meetings, where often some sessions particularly by established names can be very full while others by younger scholars can be almost empty.

I would suggest that the difference of atmosphere between the Latin American branch and the IASPM international conferences has to do with several factors. The main one is the establishment of a certain hegemony of the social sciences perspective to the detriment of "musicological" methodologies. One might also mention the avoidance of topics outside the time frame of the second half of the twentieth century (see Hamm 2004), or outside the rock canon repertoire. It might be that IASPM-AL will follow the same path, but at the moment it is thriving. And, it is beginning a *modus operandi* that might offer a solution that could be followed by IASPM International. This concerns the creation of study groups, a practice already adopted by large associations, like the International Musicology Society and its North American equivalents.

To this end, for the next biennial IASPM-AL conference to be held in Cordoba, Argentina sixty-four independent papers were accepted and 136 other ones grouped in eight symposia as follows: (1) originals, covers, recycling, pastiche/multi-style and authenticity; (2) interdisciplinary studies of rock and metal in Latin America; (3) popular music and Latin American bicentennials; (4) popular music and transmission technology; (5) jazz in Latin America; (6) Latin American popular music histories: theoretical and practical trends; (7) music and regional identities: transformations, contrasts and challenges to Latin American national identities; (8) popular music, body and sexuality.

Criticism is a constant procedure in academic circles, and that is part of the process. Although I would argue both Béhague (2012) and Treece (2003) made somewhat unfair comment in relation to Latin American music scholarship, in actual fact they are not far from what Latin American scholars themselves are indeed looking for while consolidating the field of popular music studies. Academic rigour and openness to the work of international academic circles will be the two conditions for Latin American popular music studies to have an impact outside the region.

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An introduction to the concept of the “national-popular” through the songs of Chico Buarque and Caetano Veloso

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I present the initial results of my doctoral research, the purpose of which is to analyse representations of nationhood as expressed in the songs of two renowned Brazilian composers, Chico Buarque and Caetano Veloso. I begin by exploring the concept of the “national-popular” (characterised as a cultural project of the Brazilian left) in Brazilian Popular Music (MPB) in order to understand the different ideological and aesthetic projects of these composers. I take as a working hypothesis the argument that the representation of national projects in their songs – and in the field of MPB more generally – began to decline from the late 1970s, and this decline gained pace in the 1980s, and particularly in the 1990s, with the impact of globalisation on Brazilian culture. In this sense, it is possible to argue that by the 1990s the songs of Buarque and Veloso, as representative of the national projects of the left, had entered a crisis.

KEYWORDS: Brazilian popular music; MPB; national-popular; globalisation.

Chico Buarque and Caetano Veloso are emblematic figures in the Brazilian music scene. They gained fame during the “Age of Festivals” in the 1960s, which provided the context in which artistic output, although marked by the military dictatorship,

was nevertheless characterised by a great cultural effervescence, in parallel with a process of consolidation in the Brazilian cultural industry. I intend to examine how representations of the nation in these composers' songs were rearticulated after the establishment of the Institutional Act No. 5, a period distinguished by the harsh restrictions of the military dictatorship. I take as a working hypothesis the thesis that representations of national projects in their songs began to decline from the late 1970s onwards. This decline gained pace in the 1980s, and was especially marked in the 1990s, as Brazilian culture began to feel the impact of globalisation. Thus it could be argued that the songs of these composers, as representative of such national projects, reached a crisis point in the 1990s. However, I recognise that this was indicative of a deeper, more widespread crisis – that of the whole ideological-aesthetic project of MPB. This was in turn linked to the crisis in the cultural project of nationhood – that is, in the national-popular project as formulated by the Brazilian left. I therefore turn to a discussion of the concept of the national-popular in MPB in order to analyse the different ideological, aesthetic projects of Buarque and Veloso.

It is necessary to locate the national-popular within the field of MPB, as this was the central concept underlying the genre. To accomplish this, I have turned to the theory of culture advanced by Raymond Williams (1992). Williams argues that a successful cultural sociology should be linked to a historical sociology, and must not resort to universal explanatory models when analysing the relationship between culture and society. Williams's theoretical contribution holds validity for this research to the extent that, far from adopting a naive or uncritical view of culture, he understands it as a forum of power, interests and conflicts – or rather, of political struggles. This comprehension of the aesthetic as an area of political struggle is pivotal to my thesis because I consider the various impasses in which MPB became locked to be of a political nature. Analysing the aesthetic work of Buarque and Veloso from Williams's cultural-materialist perspective – according to which, cultural forms are not independent of their material production – enables an understanding of its political nature. Thus the formulation of my research subject is based on the proposition that Buarque and Veloso, although both concerned with the national question, proposed divergent aesthetic and ideological ways of conceiving Brazil. They were involved in the heated debates of the 1960s around the building of a musical genre that would find acceptance in the mass media while offering aesthetic quality.

When undertaking a literature review on the constitution of the field of Brazilian popular music in the 1960s and its transformation in the following decades, it became apparent that there was a decline in national projects as the field became "institutionalised" (Napolitano 2001). What struck me, however, about the academic writing on the topic was that, although analyses such as Napolitano's have allowed great advances in thinking about MPB, they do not address the specificity of such national projects. For instance, by taking into account Napolitano's (*ibid.*) work, which accurately observes that the national project that permeated MPB was national-popular in nature, I was able to determine that it began to decline in relevance in the songs of Buarque and Veloso; however, his analysis is general and

neither defines the specific nature of the national-popular projects within MPB nor identifies the heterogeneous character of the artists' individual *oeuvres*. Therefore, although I have incorporated his analysis as a reference point in my work, I have focused on Buarque and Veloso in order to perceive the differences in the representations of the national project within the contentious field of MPB.

Hence, the need for a historical reconstruction of the concept of the national-popular which, as I noticed in my literature review, lacks a definition in the Brazilian context despite being a widely used concept. During the course of my research, I intend to seek the origin of this general concept in order to render it specific to my analysis of Buarque's and Veloso's songs. It will then be possible to understand the specificities of the national projects in the work of both composers, and to verify the degree to which these projects, as represented in their songs, were rearticulated from the late 1970s through to the 1990s, when they appear to have entered a crisis. However, while the academic literature has allowed me to perceive that the aesthetic project that drove MPB was that of the national-popular, I have found some difficulty with its periodization. One of the reasons for this is related to its precise usage, and to the question of when exactly it becomes possible to speak of a political culture shaped by this concept.

These challenges are evident in the fact that research into the subject variously places the birth of a conception of the national-popular in the 1930s, in the 1950s, and in the 1960s. These differences – due perhaps to a lack of precision in the use of the term – reveal how necessary it is, when analysing the national-popular, to discover its specificity to Brazil, and to establish at which point in time we can begin to speak of the concept. It is necessary, however, to first establish certain criteria for working with this concept, beginning with an attempt to seek the particularity of the national-popular in both Buarque and Veloso through empirical research into their songs. Only then will I be able to verify the decline of representations of national projects in their music – if, indeed, there was a decline. Related to this, however, is the danger of trying to classify two composers who are in principle unclassifiable, and whose work is a dialogue with both the tradition of Brazilian popular music and international art music. As the erudition of these composers is obvious, it is not possible to reduce their work to univocal projects. Instead, I will seek to take into account the dilemmas and contradictions inherent in its production, employing both the theoretical support of Williams (1992) and comparative empirical research. In this way, it will be possible to problematise the subject and evaluate the hypotheses developed so far.

It was from this perspective that, at the stage of bibliographical research, I sought clues about the discussion of the nation, nationalism, and especially the concept of the national-popular in Brazil. I was able to determine that this concept is not synonymous with nationalism, populism, or even socialist-realism, even though the boundaries of the national-popular project as proposed here were often blurred in various ways, depending on the agent, institution or cultural event through which it was expressed. I prefer to think of this concept, therefore, as a cultural manifestation.

Once the initial historical research was completed, by focusing on the impact of this cultural manifestation on the songs of Buarque and Veloso, some partial results could be outlined. Their works convey some fundamental insights derived from their experience of exile in the 1960s. As already demonstrated, however, in the late 1960s they expressed different national projects. Silva (2004, p. 10) argues, both “respond differently to the same problems. [...] One could say that they are two visions of Brazil”.

Until the 1970s, Buarque remained partially faithful to the national-popular, although not in the terms expressed by the cultural policy of the *Centros Populares de Cultura* or CPCs (Popular Culture Centres). Amid the tensions that marked MPB, he remained detached from the different musical genres or movements. He neither engaged with leftist political parties nor was he considered a representative of the protest song genre. Although his composition “Pedro Pedreiro” (“Peter Mason”, 1965) could be considered a protest song, instead of singing of the promise of better days to come, he criticises the idea of a redemptive hope in the future. According to Bezerra (2002), this song is representative of the “utopian variant” in the composer’s work, which became more intense from the 1970s. In that context, Buarque – even if grudgingly – “has become a symbol of resistance to dictatorship” (Ridenti 2000, p. 229). His album *Sinal fechado* (“Red light”, 1974) is emblematic of the implications censorship held for his career. Although he did produce critical songs, representative of the national-popular ideology, in the same period he also released lyrical songs such as “Tatuagem” (“Tattoo”), “Olhos nos olhos” (“Eye in the eyes”) and “Fantasia” (“Fantasy”), and his album *Opera do malandro* (1979) expressed in a parodic manner his criticism of the national-popular. Silva (2004, p. 79) argues that this album resumes “the theme of national-popular ideology [...] [b]ut in an ironic and parodic key, treating it rather as a problem that was unsolved rather than as a way out that could be seen”.

On the other hand, although Veloso’s output was also a legacy of the national-popular, he explicitly broke with it and expressed instead a “tropicalist” national project, recognising the crisis of national-popular culture and seeking to re-think Brazil through the perspective of an international popular culture. The song “Tropicália” (1968) is illustrative of his national-tropicalist project. Throughout the 1970s, Veloso continued to be the guiding exemplar of the Tropicália movement. One need only recall the experimentalism of his album *Araçá azul* (1972) and the attempted revival of Tropicália with the show *Doces Bárbaros* (“Sweet barbarians”) in 1976. However, during this period, we can also see a touch of eroticism in some of his songs, as with the album *Bicho* (1977) and songs like “Tigresa”, “O leãozinho” and “Odara”.

I suggest, therefore, that both Buarque and Veloso were guided by the national-popular, understood as the manifestation of a cultural project of the Brazilian left. However, representations of the national-popular in the cultural output of the left were not homogeneous; Buarque and Veloso assimilated the perspective of a turn towards the people, but each in his own way, and both differed from the perspective of the Popular Culture Centres and so-called protest songs. Buarque employed the

samba tradition in his songs, whereas Veloso rescued a tradition regarded by the social memory of the 1960s as "bad taste". Both based their music on the bossa nova, but Veloso assimilated aspects of bossa nova from João Gilberto, while Buarque was more akin to Tom Jobim. In addition, neither composer was concerned with using their songs to address the general population in a didactic fashion; although interested in the potential of music to bring a new awareness to the people, they did not privilege the content of the song over the form.

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Experiencing electronic dance floors

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I illustrate a possible course of analysis of drug-fuelled, genre-related particularities within electronic dance music (EDM), focusing on the embodied experiences of techno dance floors. My intention is to outline some of the starting points of my PhD research exploring Melbourne techno and psytrance scenes, and addressing an experiential dimension interlocked with socio-aesthetic sensibilities intimately related to the inherent structures of the genres. The term “techno” will refer restrictively to its “harder” sub-genres loosely defined along an acid-Detroit-hard-industrial techno axis, which, according to my preliminary observations, attracts a relatively homogenous crowd in Melbourne.

KEYWORDS: electronic dance music; aesthetic experience; techno; ritual; simulation.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As discussed by Ward (1997), the inherent meaning of dance events resides in the embodied experience of dancing. In the case of electronic dance music (EDM), this experiential dimension is closely related to drug consumption, a crucial link in the drug-music-dancers-visuals ensemble providing the ritual context of electronic dance floors (Gore 1997). These rituals often seem devoid of referential messages or detached from textual explanations, as indicated by the music’s lack of lyrics and the scarcity of ideological references. Another characteristic of the genre is its obsession with the raw material of mediated sound and the application of technological effects. The latter is also manifest in drug consumption, the ritual experience being broadcasted through the drug-fuelled medium of the dance floor. These elements seem to carry McLuhan’s (1964) thesis “the medium is the message” to

its extreme by the eradication of the content-message from the formula, and point towards Baudrillardian simulated territories.

As a starting point, I will briefly reiterate the theory of simulation. Baudrillard (1993, pp. 50-75) distinguishes three orders of simulacra, exemplified through three historical periods. The counterfeit is born in the Renaissance, when the circulation of the signs of distinction is no longer restricted by a strict symbolic or “natural” order. The second-order simulacrum appears in the industrial era, where the serial reproduction of identical objects and signs is no longer tied to the natural but to the market law of value. Finally, the third order emerges when technique as a medium becomes the principle of a new generation of meaning, and simulation carries out the production of the real according to the generative core of the model or the “code”, operating through trajectories such as mass media, binary code and genetic engineering. Ultimately, the universal reduplication of the real triggers the collapse of reality into “hyperrealism”, a realm of pure simulation beyond representation. This brings forth the aesthetic hallucination of reality and the subliminal fascination with special effects.

Similar to science fiction, Baudrillard’s work can be considered hyperbolic and futuristic on the grounds that while “utilizing the vantage point of a future intensification to present social trends”, it neglects other, more traditional aspects of present social frameworks (Kellner 1989, p. 203). From this perspective, his work from the 1970s and 1980s can be regarded more as visionary theory than conventional social science. Considering that these past visions are crystallised in strongly mediated segments of today’s society such as cybercultural phenomena, and the inherent concern of EDM resides in manipulating the medium of cutting edge technologies, many of Baudrillard’s then-futuristic concepts can be usefully applied in the discussion of EDM-related phenomena evolving from the 1980s to the present. Setting out from the theory of simulation, my PhD project investigates the experiential dimension of electronic dance floors, taking into account (sub-)genre peculiarities and processes of technological misappropriation¹.

THE RITUAL CONTEXT OF MUSIC AND DRUG

Seen through a Baudrillardian lens, EDM production has been governed by simulation from its earliest years, when artists started to “misuse” drum machines and synthesisers, which were originally designed to substitute for “real” instruments as counterfeit or representation, to produce simulacra as copies without originals. Moreover, the inexhaustible manufacturing of repetitive sound patterns in EDM, traceable to the working mechanisms of the drum machine, are reminiscent of a possible modality of simulation evoked by Baudrillard (1993, pp. 72-73): the serial form of models generated in infinite chains, which carries out the murder of the original through its infinite diffraction into itself – as in Warhol’s pop art. Much of the characteristic “machinic” sound of EDM is derived from sound patterns returning into themselves and usually aligned to a repetitive flow of bass, which dimin-

ishes temporal referentiality. This structural particularity produces a second modality of simulation in the music.

These mechanisms were already apparent in the early years of EDM in its first manifestations such as house and techno. House music had originally been popular among a hedonistic, gay black community of early 1980s Chicago, and later gained increasing popularity in the UK especially with the advent of acid house, a sub-genre developed by the accidental misuse of the Roland TB 303 synthesiser setting on its way the acid sound (Brewster and Broughton 2000, pp. 292 et seq.). Techno, an EDM genre originally related to Chicago house, was invented by the more intellectually oriented middle class black youth of the late 1980s Detroit, relying on influences such as Kraftwerk, funk, European synth-pop, and the post-industrial cityscape of decaying Detroit (ibid., pp. 320 et seq.). In the early 1990s the second wave of Detroit techno artists pushed the music closer to the form as we know it today. Inspired by electro, UK synthpop, industrial and Euro [sic] Body Music, a harsh sound was in development, partly as counter-reaction against the mainstream entertainment industry (Reynolds 1999, pp. 219-220).

After the second wave techno lost popularity among the black inhabitants of Detroit, and due to influences of global EDM culture and geographic/cultural shifts it apparently ceased to be “black” music, with Berlin becoming one of its main global hubs. However, certain Detroit DJs did not even regard techno as a black phenomenon in the first place (May 2006, pp. 345-349). A similar detachment from black realities is discussed in *More brilliant than the sun: Adventures in sonic fiction*, a book by Kodwo Eshun (1998) on the musical manifestations of black science fiction sensibilities. Eshun situates Detroit techno within the context of Afrofuturism, which, in contrast with, for example, the street reality of mainstream hip-hop, is engaged with the unreality-principle of a sonic science developing the “alien discontinuum” of machine music. With techno, according to Eshun (1998, p. 107), “the machine goes mental”, it “turns the soul into sound-fx” and burns out colour. Eshun notes that there was a general confusion about the skin colour of the first Detroit techno producers.

In this way EDM has been signalling from its earliest forms the emancipation of the medium. It not only started to use the drum machine and the turntable – and, later on, the computer – as a musical instrument, employed according to the principle of simulation, but in its present form it also disintegrates the aura of (urban) reality with the sparks and flashes of a nocturnal clubbing environment morphed into hyperreality by means of an additional mediating agent: the drug. Drug consumption at electronic dance parties differs from the ritualised drug use in traditional societies where, as Bloch (1992, pp. 3-4) clarifies, the explanation - or content - of the experience is connected to the terms of an external, symbolic realm of representation building up the transcendental frameworks of society. At parties the modified context of consumption dissolves this content-referent and triggers the engagement with the medium of drug technologies itself. In the following sections I argue that party drug use can be understood as a particular form of consumption which is both

generated and condemned by contemporary society, and evades the category of the transcendental.

Reflecting on the saturation of the world of consumption, Baudrillard (2002, pp. 97-99) discusses drug use as “both apogee and parody of the same consumption”. Rather than being linked to disadvantaged socio-economic conditions, recreational drug use derives from an over-capacity for organisation and rationalisation, or an over-protection of the social body. In the case of societies strongly affected by simulation, this overregulation is carried out not by the political absolutism of a repressive regime but by the invisible penetration of a Baudrillardian “code” which determines the semiotic hierarchy of signs. Drug use takes the aesthetic hallucination of a simulated reality to its extreme, ultimately providing an intensified self-image of consumer society, something which the very same society strives to conceal (van Ree 2002). This results in legislative criminalisation and mass media stigmatisation, which, however, renders the drug even more desirable for the drug/music consumer because it reiterates the consumer ethos of standing apart from the crowd. Hence the Baudrillardian code simulates the potential of leaving the system behind by means of a social metalanguage (the perceived independence of the music scene is cherished by the criminalisation and stigmatisation of a normative function), reduplicating its critique and twisting back to its very own (amplified) categories (individualities constructed through hedonistic consumption).

Furthermore, as a communal reflex of misbehaviour or as a publicly condemned but nevertheless increasingly institutionalised, built-in anomaly, drug use protects society from the dangers of universal normalisation (Baudrillard 2002, pp. 97-100). When society is becoming too transparent, drugs work, in their ambiguity and haziness, as both disease and medicine. Where does this ambiguity derive from? First, the detachment from everyday practices enhances the potential of drugs as third-level simulacra. Colourful pills and powders are detached from the greyness of their everyday environment, and potentially reconfigure the context of surrounding reality according to their internal (molecular) codes. In fact, the drug acts as a particularly powerful medium of the cybernetic age. Baudrillard (2002, p. 179) defines the computer not as external object but as “true prosthesis” standing in intersensory relation with the user who becomes an ectoplasm of the screen. This is reminiscent of Brian O’blivion’s statement from Cronenberg’s (1983) movie *Videodrome*: “The television screen is the retina of the mind’s eye, therefore the television screen is part of the physical structure of the brain”. However, the offline physical space wedged between the screen and the human body points at the hyperbolic nature of these statements. In the case of drug consumption this physical distance is eliminated, the mechanism is intensified and can be taken quite literally, because unlike the screen phosphors or pixels, the molecular formula of the drug penetrates the structure of the body in its empirical verifiability. The object is internalised physically by the subject, and the consensual code of contemporary Western society prescribes the possible effect mechanisms in terms of a molecular process of interaction with serotonin transporters within the body.

However, contrary to most contemporary simulation processes which are masked under the alibi of objectivity, the powerful drug effect tears up this cover as it disturbs and overwrites the sign systems of the everyday. This was suggested by the interviewees of my MA research on the Czech psytrance scene, who claimed that the psychedelic drug effect produced the illusion of a “deeper” reality only in the first phase of their “career” of drug consumption. After more prolonged use, the attentive user may realise the artificiality of the process, which, however, at this point turns the objective reality of his everyday world into simulacrum (Vitos 2010). Of course, the subjective interpretation of this effect may vary. In a recent research on UK clubbing (Rief 2009), some respondents regarded drug-influenced encounters in clubs as “not real” or of illusory character, while others connected these to “genuine” or “real” feelings; some clubbers gave account of enabling/transformational experiences, others of victimisation by disabling effects such as loss of control (*ibid.*, pp. 110 et seq.). The responses commonly expressed reactions to a blurring between the boundaries of reality and illusion, and the disturbance of perceived categories of authenticity and reality.

EXPERIENCING TECHNO

The remainder of this paper focuses on the “harder” techno sub-genres that are addressed by my PhD research and attract a relatively homogenous crowd in Melbourne. Accordingly, I will use the term “techno” restrictively to its sub-genres loosely defined along an acid-Detroit-hard-industrial techno axis.

In his musicological analysis, Butler (2006) identifies techno tracks as excessively loop-based, linear and static in design, with their basic shape often lying unformed, and awaiting sculpting by the DJ by means of mixing and effects technologies. Perhaps the most popular drug of global techno dance floors is MDMA, widely known as ecstasy for its intensive and euphoric sensory effects. Yet the music-governed ecstasy of the techno dance floor becomes restricted and controlled, not dominated by dramatically articulated formal features or obvious climactic builds characteristic of some other EDM (sub-)genres such as trance or progressive house. Rather, it follows a modular flow of percussion-based, interlinked textures which may gradually progress toward high levels of intensity and complexity, but are always directed by the rumbling ground level of minimalist rhythmic interactions. Through its excessive structural minimalism and focus on percussive elements, the music opens the doors to a Warholian Factory where metrical processes are produced and programmed, comprising of simulated sound patterns arranged into continuous loops of interlinked textures.

It is on the level of these sonic interactions that techno aims to traverse beyond the boundaries of third order simulation by colliding seismic (sound-)waves toward an inward explosion. Cracking the shell of the simulated objectivity building up contemporary urban spaces, the medium spectacularly unfolds from its own reflections, revealing the generative processes of a governing Baudrillardian code. For the drug-fuelled partygoer, this may happen through gradual aural assaults or the ste-

reophonic interlocking of minimalist textures of sound and visuals, where each pixelated layer simulates a divergent plane of space/time. In a broader socio-cultural context, if present everyday reality indeed tends to collapse into the hyperreal, the creative combination of powerful modules of simulation such as music and drug technologies may open up the multi-sensory perception of an environment developing the complexities of Baudrillardian simulacra.

Such expansion takes place on the testing grounds of techno parties, where the partygoer is overwhelmed by the effects of a medium which in this case is explicitly the (only) message. The dance floor, similar to the technological and psychedelic fantasy of Coppola's (1979) *Apocalypse now* in Baudrillard's (1994, p. 59) interpretation, becomes an "extension of war through other means". This happens in a form of a sonic warfare inherent in simulation technologies: a subliminal martial art governed by the flux of special effects and rhythmic energies, mirrored in the regulated choreography of the dancers. This is a collision with no opponents or targets on post-Apocalyptic landscapes defined by a rigorous soundtrack, a dramatization of the man-machine interaction through careful programming of the body according to technological codes.

Such sensibilities can be traced back to Detroit techno, the first manifestation of the genre, produced predominantly by black DJs. Pope (2011) shows how its development was organically embedded in the bleak, post-industrial cityscapes of a Detroit affected by recession, with one of the primary venues in the early 1990s being the Packard auto plant, once proud manufacturer of luxury vehicles. While punk rails against the end of history through its "no future" ethos, Detroit techno blips, bleeps and grooves, or moves further by initially accepting the end and exploring dystopias similarly to black science fiction portraying worlds after the occurrence of the disaster (Pope 2011).

The engagement with a "forever war" in second wave Detroit techno is most apparent in the military aesthetics employed by the collective Underground Resistance (UR), considered by one of its founders an "electronic continuation" of war (Sicko 2010, p. 105). This leads back the discussion to the analogy with *Apocalypse now*. Baudrillard (1994, pp. 59-60) argues that the film transplants totalitarian governmental power into mediated mechanisms, with both war and film acting as testing grounds of cutting edge technology and special effects. Coppola's (1979) work releases a cinematic power that overshadows military complexes and culminates with the victory of America, as the medium overtakes reality and the film becomes the extension of war. In the early 1990s UR is engaged in a similar process of military expansion, yet instead of radiating the omnipresence of governmental power, it is connected, in the words of Eshun (1998, p. 10), to "the secret life of machines which opens up the [...] coevolution of machines and humans in late 20th C Black Atlantic Futurism". In other words, instead of acting as an extension of the consensual semiotic code regulating "objective" reality, it shows that the real is unreal as it "builds Sonic Fictions from the electronics of everyday life" (ibid., p. 63) or migrates severely regulated machinic processes to simulate abduction by a post-human, alien agency inherent in Afrofuturist machine music.

The revolving techno record turns the listener, in the words of Eshun (1998, p. 79) “into its own obedient satellite” – and on the dance floor, enhanced by drug technology, it contributes to the simulation of a post-human universe inherent in agents of mediation such as the music and the drug, giving rise to the aesthetic experience. Within the music played at techno parties the “alien” sentiment prevails: those I have interviewed within the Melbourne scene emphasised the need for something uncomfortable, for a play with strange sounds and rhythmic structures generating feelings of confusion. Accordingly, Butler investigates the evolution of multilayered textures in techno where musical texture is always intertwined with rhythmic and metrical processes. Within a rigorous, seemingly restrictive context of pure-duple meter, complex dissonances are created, for example, by repeating non-congruent loops over long spans of time, ultimately generating metrical dissonance emancipated from any need to resolve (Butler 2006, pp. 166 et seq.).

Within a soundscape dominated by machinic effects, this draws the focus away from the productive mechanisms of industrial processes, and opens up a psychedelic space disrupting understanding through peculiar arrangements of repetitive structures. In my interviews it was stated that unlike psychedelic genres such as psytrance which build up narratives leading the recipient, techno lacks such storylines or journeys and simply creates spaces of the unknown: the collision lacks the target. This confusion arises from surprising events in the flow of music, allowing the mind to wander and try to fill the gaps, or hear things that are non-existent in the tracks.

Hennion (2003, p. 90) argues that taste is an accomplishment conditioned by the contexts of pleasure: “[A] strange activity, the conditions of which are continuously discussed” – and therefore developed. The club provides a particularly dense space for a “collective redistribution of creation” (ibid., p. 91) involving the active influence of mediatory agents through which such actors as the public or the generative code of technology are manifest. As a web of interconnected satellites revolving around the turntable, re-experiencing contemporary ramifications of an aesthetics that was broadcast from Detroit to Berlin in the nineties, techno partygoers thus partake in the ongoing evolution of human-machine interactions.

ENDNOTES

1. My ongoing PhD project “Experiencing electronic dance floors: A comparative approach” is aimed to carry out the comparative analysis of two Melbourne scenes based around two distinct EDM genres: techno and psytrance. The research is conducted under the supervision of Shane Homan and Stuart Grant, at Monash University, Melbourne.

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Piracy or preservation? The underground dissemination of bootleg recordings on the World Wide Web

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ABSTRACT

Online file sharing has drastically changed the way in which bootleg music recordings are disseminated around the globe. These changes have provided increased opportunities for private collectors to accumulate very large collections of recordings, many of which have important historical significance. This paper sheds light on the underground dissemination of bootleg recordings by examining how digital music is being shared and by mapping the geographic distribution of online file sharers. In doing so, this paper situates online bootleg file sharing communities in light of the increasing challenges and opportunities for musicians, music collectors, and historic preservationists in the twenty-first century.

KEYWORDS: digital music; bootlegs; piracy; preservation; file sharing; World Wide Web.

UNDERGROUND DIGITAL MUSIC DISSEMINATION ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

Bootleg recordings have played a significant role in music culture since the middle of the twentieth century. Though not official releases, bootleg recordings provide important historical documents in music history. This paper examines the impact

that the World Wide Web (WWW) has had on the dissemination of bootleg recordings.

Various definitions have been used through the years in attempts to differentiate the availability of "official" and "unofficial" music recordings. For the purposes of this paper the term "bootleg" refers to unofficial recordings (primarily live concert recordings, but also outtakes, radio and television appearances, etc.) that are not otherwise officially available in copyrighted form. This is in contrast to recordings that have been called "pirated" recordings which have been defined as officially released copyrighted material distributed without permission of record company or other copyright holder (Reinhart 1981; Schultheiss 1981; Shemel and Krasilovsky 1977). While sometimes sold through official outlets such as Amazon.com, both bootleg and pirate recordings are primarily disseminated through unofficial or "underground" networks.

The very first bootleg recordings have been attributed to Lionel Mapleson, the so-called "father of bootlegging", who recorded performances at the New York Metropolitan Opera between 1901 and 1903 (Reinhardt 1981). Through the years, changes in recording technology have provided increased opportunities for fans to record and disseminate bootlegs by providing better quality, more portability, and faster duplication. As bootlegs are by their very nature collector's items (Heylin 2003), these advances in technology have provided ever-increasing opportunities for the preservation of historically significant recordings as well as the accumulation of very large discographies by private collectors.

Bootleg recording in the US reached a peak with the San Francisco band the Grateful Dead. Going so far as to provide a special taping section for fans at their concerts, the Grateful Dead integrated bootleg recording and dissemination via cassette tapes into their culture like no band had done before (and perhaps since). Since that time, numerous bands have followed this model. However, the advent of digital music recordings and dissemination via file sharing on the WWW has drastically changed the way in which bootlegs are disseminated. Although perhaps the historical significance of Grateful Dead bootleg recording has not been matched, certainly the quantity and speed of bootleg dissemination on the WWW has far surpassed anything done during the touring days of the Grateful Dead.

Today there are three primary ways in which bootlegs are disseminated on the WWW (Ward 2011a). First, there are file hosting sites such as Rapidshare and Megaupload (prior to the recent shut down of the latter by the US government) that allow end users to upload music to a third party server for download by others. Second, there are direct connect Peer to Peer (P2P) file sharing software programs such as Soulseek and eMule that allow users to share files by directly connecting to other users computers. Third, there are decentralized P2P file sharing software programs such as uTorrent and Vuze that allow multiple users to connect their computers together in order to download pieces (or bits) of digital files from various users. These pieces are ultimately accumulated into a complete set of digital files. It has been estimated that P2P technology accounts for anywhere from 43-70% of all traffic on the Internet (Schulze 2009). While all of the data being shared on P2P

networks is not music, these numbers do give some idea of the incredible amount of change that digital technology and the WWW has meant for bootleg dissemination. Perhaps the most significant aspects of this is that when combined with advances in recording technology today practically anyone can record and disseminate a bootleg recording, and that with an internet connection, free software, adequate digital storage, and a few clicks of a mouse, anyone can accumulate a rather large bootleg collection.

(RE)DEFINING “DISCOGRAPHY”

In addition to changing the manner and speed in which bootleg recordings are disseminated, the WWW has led to other changes as well. One of the most interesting is the (re)definition of the term “discography” as it is related to the practice of collecting music recordings (Ward 2011a). The traditional definition of discography can be found in Merriam Webster’s online dictionary (2012) as “(1) a descriptive list of recordings by category, composer, performer(s), or date of release or (2) the history of recorded music”. This idea of “discography as documentation” dates back at least to jazz record collectors in the 1940s (Morgenstern 2004). However, file sharing on the WWW has led to a new definition for the term “discography”. While this new definition hasn’t been incorporated into “official” dictionaries yet, actual usage of the term with regard to file sharing to mean “the complete collection of recorded music of a specific artist” is reflected in the definition found on the Urban Dictionary (2012) website. I suggest that this change from “discography as documentation” to “discography as a collection” was brought about by the practices of file sharers on the WWW.

MAPPING ONLINE FILE SHARERS

In order to further investigate the dissemination of bootleg recordings on the WWW geolocation and geographic information systems (GIS) software was employed to examine and map the geographic distribution of online file sharers. Geolocation technology allows a website visitor’s geographic location to be identified, thus allowing geographic patterns of online activity to be mapped using GIS technology. While locational identification can be done using various methods, Internet Protocol (IP) addresses are the most common (Muir and Oorschot 2009) and were used in this study. In addition, for this study IP addresses were used to determine location only to the country scale, providing anonymity to website visitors while allowing locations to be mapped with over 97% accuracy according to published statistics (Svantesson 2004, p. 111). It is important to note that geolocation technology can be circumvented by other technologies such as anonymisers and proxy servers and thus the true accuracy of geolocation technology is in all likelihood less than the published rates (Svantesson 2007).

During the course of this study the Rolling Stones’ unreleased live album from 1972-1973 was shared by someone on a decentralized P2P website. It was ulti-

mately banned within thirty-three hours due to the recording coming from a King Biscuit Flower Hour broadcast, a venue from which the sharing of recordings is not allowed and a ban which this particular file sharing site honors. However, during the time the torrent file was being shared it was download 1834 times. From these a total of 789 country locations were obtained and mapped using GIS technology (*Figure 1*). This map and the corresponding data reveal both the tremendous speed at which the WWW allows music to be disseminated around the globe, as well as a general pattern of downloading by country. In this case, it is clear that North America has the largest number of downloaders, followed by countries in Europe. Conversely, very little downloading activity was recorded for countries in South America or Africa.

In addition, another set of IP address data was collected from a series of file sharing websites. In this case data were not for a particular torrent file but for all visitors to the websites. More than 400,000 visitors were recorded from 180 different countries (*Figure 2*). Once again the top downloading countries come from North America (United States and Canada) and Europe (United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, France, Spain, and Italy). These data also reveal that Brazil, Japan, Argentina, and Australia are countries with significant music downloading activity.

Figure 1: Number of visitors by country, Rolling Stones' unreleased live album.

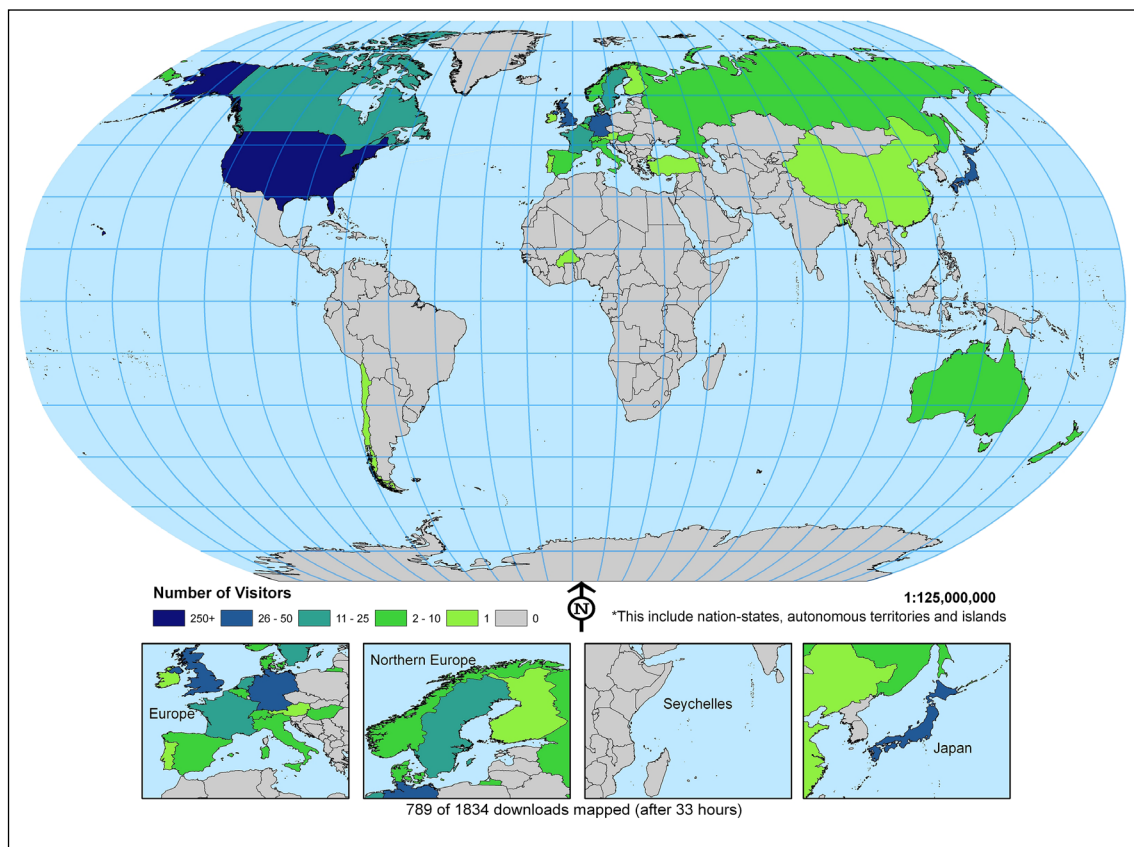
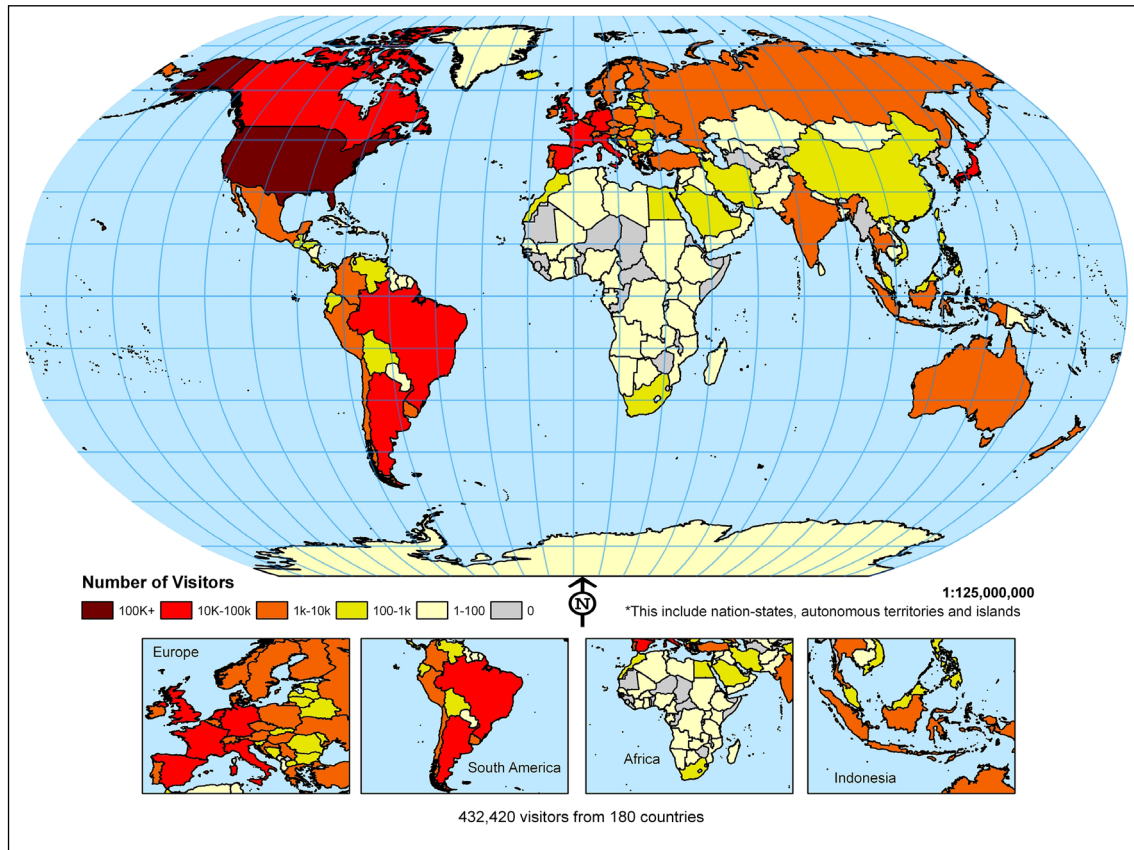


Figure 2: Number of visitors by country, all music.



CONCLUSION

In recent years the World Wide Web has played an ever-increasing role in the global dissemination of digital music recordings, presenting both challenges and opportunities for musicians, as well as music collectors and historic preservationists. While much of the music being shared on the WWW consists of official releases, an increasing amount of music shared on the WWW consists of bootleg recordings.

Online file sharing has drastically changed the way in which bootleg recordings are shared, as well as the rate at which they are disseminated. These changes have in turn provided increasing opportunities for private collectors to accumulate very large collections of digital bootleg recordings, many of which have important historical significance. As an example, using the WWW a music fan can now accumulate a collection of more than one hundred Miles Davis bootlegs from his pre-1976 career alone. From the European tours with John Coltrane to the numerous bootleg recordings with musicians who Miles played with but were never featured on official releases, these recordings provide opportunities to hear historically significant music performances. Also, as most Miles Davis live albums from the 1970s were released in heavily edited form, bootlegs allow fans to hear the music from this time period before studio editing took place. It should be noted however that bootlegs

are also agents of mediation, in terms of recording quality, editing of the original recording, etc. In addition, as discussed above, the Grateful Dead were one of the first bands to openly allow fans to record and disseminate their concert performances. Today over 8000 different recordings of over 2000 Grateful Dead concerts are available for fans to listen to on the WWW, providing fans with access to one of the most comprehensive live performance archives in the history of music and allowing fans an opportunity to re-live concert experiences (Ward 2011b). Many musicians have taken advantage of the opportunity to promote and disseminate their music by allowing fans to tape and trade their concerts. This is evidenced by the more than 4700 "taper friendly" bands that are currently available on the Internet Archive's Live Music Archive (Internet Archive 2012).

When examined closely other numbers related to bootleg dissemination are quite staggering. For example, on 13 February 2012 one popular bootleg sharing site had over 95,000 active users, almost 50,000 torrent files of concerts available (over 32,000 of which were being actively disseminated at the time), and 148 new torrent files had been added in the last twenty-four hours. In addition, the data collected during this study show visitors from at least 180 countries are actively engaged in downloading.

Taken as a whole, it is quite obvious the WWW has radically changed the manner and speed with which bootleg recordings are disseminated. Along with this increased access, dissemination of these recordings via the WWW has essentially removed profit-making opportunities from the realm of bootlegs. When combined with technology allowing practically anyone to produce a recording that can be disseminated for free from their home computer, it is easy to see how much the WWW has changed how bootlegs are produced and shared. There is now an incredible collection of bootleg recordings that are accessible to anyone with an Internet connection, providing great opportunities for the preservation of historical music recordings.

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Blackness transmuted and sinified by way of rap music and hip-hop in the new China

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ABSTRACT

I argue that rap music and hip-hop in contemporary China is evidence of the opening up of China's real and symbolic borders, and that the adoption of hip-hop represents the elision and transmutability of its racial origins. This situation, where Chinese rappers and hip-hoppers explore the limitless potential of a Western and largely black genre, prevails in an environment intersecting with the desire to conform through self-censorship with the rigorous demands of the new Chinese nationalism. There is an ambivalence however as the Internet and access to technology enable rappers and their bloggers to freely engage in discussion around aesthetics and Chinese statism. The rapid growth of hip-hop (and reggae) in China moreover alludes to the increasing consumption of Western cultural forms regardless of racial associations and is a gesture which seems to deny the long history of black disavowal in China. On the other hand, the difference between the global hip-hop nation and the nationalism of the new China, which is negotiated on its own terms and in the face of ongoing authoritarianism, is the basis for a provocative argument, which complicates the dialogue of ethnic difference and cultural similitude. Based on fieldwork and virtual research undertaken among hip-hoppers and rappers in Shanghai and Beijing, this paper describes how the utterances and the rap music style and lyrical themes of crews such as Yin Ts'ang 010, and Dragon Tongue Squad, among others, articulate the processes identified above.

KEYWORDS: rap; hip-hop; China; nationalism; blackness; yellowness.

Hip-hop initially advanced as a cultural movement integral to the black experience in the USA (Rose 1994), and one where globally connected performance practices began to emerge and dominate its articulation (Condry 2006 and Durand 2003)¹. These days, hip-hop studies emanating from disparate parts of the world emphasise the attraction young people have towards the values and performance aspects of hip-hop so that their participation is not only informed by their social statuses but also by the possibility of excelling as performers and agents (Mitchell 1996 and Watkins 2004). In each location where it has taken root, ongoing studies of the movement have opened up new ways of exploring its multiple meanings and values, and although hip-hop appears fairly consistent in many locations by way of its performative aspects, there are distinct differences which render each presentation of the movement unique to its location. In this context, hip-hop in China ostensibly reflects the volatility and sameness of hip-hop everywhere else, but on the other hand, hip-hop in China is uniquely Chinese. The latter is manifested particularly through language, in a process where the language, following Potter (1995) and Alim (et al. 2009), is rendered spectacular and expressively performative. The other manifestation of the uniqueness of Chinese rap is the recurring utterance of their yellowness in terms of pigmentation and ethnicity². Hip-hoppers consider their perceived yellowness as an affirmation of ethnic pride, and this identification is evoked as a gesture which helps them recover from the damage caused by the brutal campaigns of European and Japanese military forces in previous centuries, and the embarrassing failure of state policies in previous decades. Their yellowness is moreover a means of inverting the negative stereotypes of Chinese people in much of the West (Huang 2010). One can argue that the presence of hip-hop is a sign of the opening up of China's borders, and that the characteristics of Chinese hip-hop suggest either China's entry into the Western reality of excessive consumption, or a local reality where the movement appeals because of its possibility for opposing what many insiders and Westerners consider an authoritarian state.

In attempting to understand hip-hop in China these elements may have some value, but given the length of this paper I focus on the background of hip-hop in China and will present more details in a future publication. For now, I shall argue that rap music and hip-hop in China are evidence of the opening up of China's real and symbolic borders, and that the adoption of hip-hop represents the elision and transmutability of its racial origins. This situation, where Chinese rappers and hip-hoppers explore the limitless potential of a Western and originally black music genre, prevails in an environment indicating the rigorous demands of a renewed Chinese nationalism. After a long period of economic deprivation which continued until the 1980s, and the mobilization since the 1990s of a renewed Chineseness based on pride in yellowness and consumption, this form of nationalism celebrates China's advance on many fronts. This paper focuses on the articulation of an originally black music culture in the context of China's revised nationalism and the yellowness of hip-hop practitioners.

HIP-HOP, BLACKNESS AND CHINA

My initial experience of hip-hop, as a movement originating among black and disenfranchised youths in the West, had me question its appeal among Chinese youths. In China, there is a long and ongoing history of racial prejudice and my thought was that participation in the movement could signal an identification with the pleasures and political value of hip-hop. I had approached the research from a Western perspective, and given the experiences of the majority of Chinese youths, who feel left out of the dramatic changes taking place in Chinese culture and the economy, I presumed that Chinese hip-hoppers somehow identified with the black experience in the West. Their experience at this junction has to be viewed in the context of a people who had long been isolated from the West, and who had in previous centuries also experienced the effects of Western colonialism and severe oppression. In other words, if they were to identify with the anti-hegemonic struggle of black youths in the West, then it would be fitting that Chinese youths adopt some aspects of hip-hop in their everyday lives. On the other hand, the reality is that the growth of hip-hop in China is an indication of the increasing consumption of Western cultural forms regardless of racial associations, and in the case of hip-hop, the consumption of hip-hop forms seems to deny the long history of black disavowal in China. On closer study, however, I realized that the consumption of Western cultural forms challenges the possibility of transnational political solidarity, and that hip-hop is a sign of a Chinese modernity which unwittingly strengthens the global imaginary of hip-hop. The tension between the “universal hip-hop nation” and the nationalism of the new China thus presents itself as a provocative argument, which further complicates the dialogue of ethnic difference and cultural similitude.

HIP-HOP IN CONTEXT

Among urbanized Chinese youths there is little patience with the state and the two seem to communicate past each other (Johnston 2010). Its jingoistic spirit notwithstanding, rap music is therefore potentially oppositional because popular culture in China has long been associated with an ideology in which the political interests of the Communist Party were emphasized. During the Maoist period (1949-1976), for instance, music in China was mostly limited to propaganda songs, but following Mao's death in 1976, popular music became a driving force in the popular culture of China. After the austerity of the Cultural Revolution, the popular music scene in the 1980s was dominated by love songs, which were officially approved, and rock and heavy-metal bands which operated in the margins³. Moreover, a music club culture emerged where Western musics such as punk and rock were enjoyed. These musics continue to flourish because young people use clubs as a venue where they have fun with like-minded peers. Here there is another tension as for close to thirty years now, attempts to dictate the limits of popular culture are still made by the government, but its success is limited because the Internet has taken over as the primary forum through which music and news are shared and discussed with ever increasing enthusiasm (Tai 2006). Popular culture now is that which transpires

through virtual networks, and underground music scenes, in addition to the formalized apparatuses of the state. A consequence of these developments is that while a “new” popular culture met some initial resistance in the 1980s and 1990s, it has completely replaced the “old” popular culture to become the dominant culture. This dominant culture is nearly on par with the capital driven entertainment industries of the West.

As far as music is concerned, hip-hop in China does not only represent change in the musical and cultural industries of society; it also follows on musical traditions unique to China. Hip-hop in China did not emerge in a vacuum but is believed to have antecedents in both traditional oral, poetic forms, and popular music from the West. Among these is *Xibeifeng* (Northwest song), as in the music of Cui Jian. This is the first indigenous, Western rock-influenced popular music style to emerge on the mainland since the beginning of the reform era in the 1980s. Another tradition is crosstalk, a verbal duel defined by its updated scripts and liberal use of contemporary slang. Another genre emerging in the 1980s is the prison song, a style initiated by Chi Zhiqiang, a famous actor who upon his release from jail set folk melodies from northeast China to lyrics that described his experience as an ex-convict. The important feature of these songs was the articulation of nonmainstream sentiments and worldviews. Another style of music is punk, which is regarded as a phase for cool, angry young people, who are disenchanted with the education system. These youths enjoy punk on the basis of its unconventionality, while at the same time it also appeals to youths who are able to afford the expenses of punk attire and punk paraphernalia (Baranovitch 2003, pp. 18-30).

A BRIEF HISTORY OF RAP IN CHINA

Rap in China is believed to have made its debut after 1985 when the British group Wham had a concert in Beijing. Wham performed a rap song called “Wham rap! (Enjoy what you do?)” (1982), and a cassette of their recordings was widely copied and distributed in China. Dai Bing, in the 1980s, is considered the father of Chinese rap. He had been rapping since 1986 when he acquired R&B tunes from an African American friend. His career in rap music started in 1990, when he released his first English-language single, “Rap man”. Another rapper named Dou Wei made his debut in 1992. He was the lead singer for a popular hard-rock band called Black Leopard. On “It doesn’t matter” he reflects on the purposelessness that many young people felt (Kristof 1992).

True to the nature of the Chinese government’s goal to control every aspect of popular culture and social life, and following the growing appeal of Korean rap among Chinese youths, the state endeavoured to create a hip-hop entertainment industry in China. Hip-hop became the product of scientific planning, as agents of the state contributed to staging performances, and participants underwent tests rather than auditions. In 2000, state-run China Radio International collaborated with a South Korean music company to create a Chinese band that could exploit the success of Korean hip-hop in China. As found in most other aspects of the

entertainment industry in China, these performers were encouraged to copy. Other rap groups such as T.N.T., Tinkerbelle and Annie performed songs that were a tribute to Beijing's bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games (Rosenthal 2001). Thus rap's first appearance in China affirmed rather than challenged the state's authority.

The emergence of hip-hop in China, however, cannot only be attributed to state intervention. Rather, in keeping with my argument, newly arrived foreign sojourners from the American West, who realized the enormous potential for business in China, were instrumental in introducing hip-hop to an entertainment industry where the state did not have a presence. These sojourners took it upon themselves to introduce the fundamental values, skills, and performance techniques of hip-hop to a sector in society removed from the gaze of the state and its agents. Many of these foreigners organised themselves into crews and since the early 2000s the dominant hip-hop crew has been Yin Ts'ang (meaning "hidden"). This crew was established in Beijing in late 2000 and at the time the crew consisted of locals and foreigners. Yin Ts'ang dominated Beijing's nightclub scene offering freestyle sessions, and they introduced break-dancing and turntabling lessons. In early 2001 they started writing songs but due to a lack of formal training in production techniques and a lack of qualified producers in Beijing the team had to learn how to create their own beats. In late 2003, Scream Records released their first CD called *Yin Ts'ang - For the people*, featuring the hit single "Welcome to Beijing" (Scream 2003). "Welcome to Beijing" was on the Top 20 charts for sixteen weeks. The song, an insider's look at Beijing's sights and sounds, has a catchy tune and combined Western and Chinese instruments. The song had a major impact on the underground music scene. It found its way into karaoke bars, the Internet and the playlist of a radio station in Beijing. Yin Ts'ang became the first official rap group to perform in Mandarin and English.

Yin Ts'ang faced numerous challenges, among which the question of self-censorship is reflective of the invasiveness of state policies. One of Yin Ts'ang's members, Andreas Huang - aka Young Kin - says (Huang 2010) "Welcome to Beijing" had to be simple for it to receive radio play and media attention. Huang says that he saw the simplicity of the song as a stepping-stone towards success and approval. To avoid censorship problems they abandoned the idea of writing an album critical of the state. Most rap music in China of the early 2000s did not have a political agenda in any case because most rap fans did not understand the context of hip-hop culture and they could only emulate the posturing, style and attitude of popular hip-hop artists in the West. It was also difficult for Yin Ts'ang to be among the first hip-hoppers producing rap music because there was virtually no other rap in Mandarin which could be used as a template. The budget for the production of the album was restrictive and the crew did not want their album banned even before they had made an impression. No doubt, the release of the CD established Yin Ts'ang as leaders of the hip-hop movement in China.

By 2007, the hip-hop movement in China was considered enormous. And, as in other parts of the world, certain aspects of hip-hop culture have now made their way onto Chinese billboards and popular culture in general, as well as into Chinese theme songs and television advertising. Rap music is freely available on the Inter-

net through social networks and CDs are distributed for free or sold at nightclubs. There are regular breakdancing and emceeing competitions held in key provinces, and these culminate in national competitions held annually in either Shanghai or Beijing.

STYLE IS LANGUAGE

As far as style is concerned, one of the key areas of interest is in the potential of the language to articulate creativity and innovation not only musically but also linguistically. One of the challenges faced by Chinese hip-hoppers is the language with its five tones. These tones will lead to confusion if used incorrectly and they are also a challenge to smooth rhythmic flows. The challenge is to have correct sound and tone rhyme. Yin Ts'ang member, Jeremy (Johnston 2010), says: "When we first started, people said, you can't rap in Chinese, Chinese does not work for rap". Jeremy has compiled what he considers a hip-hop dictionary, where he describes how the tones can be altered to produce various effects and in the process these words do not have to conform to the demands of conventional Mandarin. Using the words in this manner also prevents outsiders, including state officials, from understanding exactly what hip-hoppers are singing about.

CONCLUSION

Andreas Huang (2010) says Chinese rappers do not understand the allegorical meanings of ebonics in Western rap music. Moreover, many rappers do not identify with blackness. Rather, it is the sheer pleasure of breakdancing and emceeing which appeals to Chinese youths. One aspect they do have in common with the West is that they perform on the margins of a mainstream that threatens to dilute the impact of a music culture hip-hoppers identify as the "underground". Competitions and performances are held on street corners at night, at derelict auditoria and nightclubs, offering Chinese youths the opportunity to explore their selfhoods through orality and their spectacular bodily involvement with one another. These performance spaces offer them release from the perceived authoritarianism of the state, and the social and economic challenges of a new China.

Moreover, the emergence of hip-hop in China strengthens the argument against essentialising blackness, or any other racial colour for that matter, and this subcultural movement and its performance render blackness an imaginary trope which no longer holds the significance it commanded in previous decades. In China, there appears to be conformity with the social conditions experienced by many marginalized youths around the world, regardless of colour, and its presence therefore calls to attention the free floating significance of blackness as a standard requirement for participation in hip-hop. Rap music in China calls into question the notion of rap music as a diasporic genre, and the music suggests the expiration of ethnic fixity. The radical nature of a genre initially associated with blackness has opened

up a space for the articulation of diverse musical and corporeal realities on distant shores.

ENDNOTES

1. This research was undertaken in 2010 and funded by the "University strategic research theme: China-West studies research grant", at the University of Hong Kong. Data was obtained through interviews with hip-hoppers in Hong Kong, Beijing and Shanghai, observations of performances, and a review of appropriate literature in scholarly and online resources such as websites and blogs. I take this opportunity to thank the University of Hong Kong and the hip-hoppers.
2. I am aware that the issue of racial colour is potentially offensive but the notion of "yellowness" is subscribed to in many Chinese rap songs and in the utterances of informants. "Yellowness" has also been established for regular usage in scholarly literature, of which Andrew F. Jones' (1992) book is an early example.
3. A case in point is the rock musician, Cui Jian, whose music is believed to have inspired the Tiananmen protests in 1990.

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Intercultural reception as manifested in popular music

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ABSTRACT

This paper views popular music as a very important and inseparable part of intercultural reception. Based on empirical material gathered for a project on the subject of the mechanisms of intercultural reception of Slavic cultures in Austria, the text offers a systematisation of the dynamics of the reception of “otherness”. Popular music constitutes and verifies those complex intercultural processes as a substantial part of them, rather than as a separate working mechanism.

KEYWORDS: intercultural reception; the other; socio-cultural processes; interaction.

This paper’s starting point is the conviction that cultures need to be explored through their interaction with other societies and cultures, and this should be done interdisciplinary, because one single discipline is clearly unable to cover the various aspects of this interaction. Since intercultural reception is dynamic and multidimensional, the transformations it involves and the mechanisms that condition those changes could be examined using the methodological and theoretical experience of various fields, including popular music studies. In other words, this is an attempt at including observations on popular music and potential conclusions into the wide interdisciplinary web of intercultural studies.

Since 2010 I have been working on a post-doc project “Transformations of intercultural memory [Slavic and Austrian cultures: Mechanisms of intercultural reception]”. With the terms “cultural / intercultural memory” being so vast, as a working tool I offer the short definition of Astrid Erll (2008, p. 2), which presents

cultural memory as “the interplay of present and past in socio-cultural contexts”. Moreover, the term *intercultural* memory suggests also interaction between various socio-cultural contexts, in this case Austrian and certain Slavic cultures. Austria’s unique historical, geographical and cultural position makes her especially fruitful for examination of the Western (and yet immediately close) reception of the Slavic cultures, of the socialist and post-socialist cultural models, and of the influence of that reception on the Central and Eastern European cultures and societies. The cultural interaction is examined through the fields of history and material cultural legacy, tourism, academia, popular culture and arts, media, generational gaps, youth culture, groups and practices, frames of reference, sources of prejudices, stereotypes, and the dynamics of the reception of “otherness”.

In this paper I use a few aspects of present-time cultural interaction between Austrian and certain Slavic cultures as a starting point, and try to trace some possible directions towards the conceptualisation of intercultural reception’s mechanisms.

I have tried to systematise the dynamics of the reception of “otherness” in five basic types, forming a scale from the most exclusive attitude to the most integrating degree of reception. Those five types are of course just a heuristic construction, they are not separate entities and their frontiers are virtually nonexistent. I need them only for the purpose of drawing a theoretical framework, which brings some order into the vast empirical material I have been observing. This framework can be verified from the point of view of popular music, which is here seen as a substantial part of the intercultural processes, rather than as a separate working mechanism.

TYPE 1: THE OTHER AS AN EXTERNAL OUTSIDER **MODUS OF EXCLUSION / THREAT. CLOSEDNESS**

This initial point of the scale is the level of prejudices, cultural stereotypes, and internal resistance towards other cultures. One could even say that this is the “normal” (normal in the sense of “usual”) attitude of every culture confronted with foreign “intruders” – namely, the attitude of self-defence, reticence, and closedness (*Geschlossenheit*).

Viewed from the angle of history, certain Slavic countries have recently presented themselves as a multifaceted “danger” to the so-called West, especially after the fall of Communism in 1989. The situation is quite intense for Austria in particular, due to her geographical and historical position, and her relative legislative openness to immigration and naturalization. As opposed to the traditional minorities, considered a proud remainder of the former Habsburg Empire, the immigration in the last twenty years has formed new minorities, the reception of which starts from the conscious or subconscious feeling of threat, and develops further in various degrees of tolerance, nevertheless always leaving the sense of fear and resistance. At present, Austria has one of the highest rates of foreigners in the EU: 10,5% (Vasileva 2011), predominantly with the following origin:

Citizens from the former Yugoslavia, predominantly Serbs, accounted for approximately 50 percent of the foreign workers in Austria. Turks were the second largest group, making up approximately 20 percent of the foreign work force, followed by Germans at 5 percent. Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, and Romanians made up between 3.5 and 4.0 percent each. (*Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress n.d.*)

Details about the foreign population and numbers of the *Gastarbeiters* are available online (*Statistik Austria* 2011). Here I would like to point out that on this first level of reception they are predominantly perceived not only as an economic threat, but also as cultural intruders. The main obstacle for the foreign workers is of course language, and furthermore religion (in the case of Turks), customs, and various cultural practices. Already judged before they even make their start in Austria, immigrants have only one way towards integration – the path of gradual assimilation and Austrianization, which happens normally with the second Austrian-born and German-speaking generation.

And of course one should consider the huge role of the media. The reception of other cultures is hardly ever direct, it is always mediated, and digging into the media representations of Slavic cultures, especially Balkan ones, one could find a huge source of prejudice-forming, and imposed unconscious intercultural images.

Verifying this type of reception through popular music here is easy. Prejudices and stereotypes are often demonstrated or even promoted in popular songs. Music easily escapes the censorship of political correctness, especially with its nonverbal elements (although text, melody, voice, etc. are taken here as non-separate elements).

A good example of this type of reception is a piece by the Bulgarian ethno jazz band Wladigeroff Brothers & Band, which is a witty reply to an Austrian nationalistic slogan from 2008, by the leader of the far-right xenophobic Freedom Party FPÖ Heinz-Christian Strache – *Wien darf nicht Istanbul werden* (“Vienna must not become Istanbul”). Wladigeroff Brothers developed their clever multilayered instrumental piece under the name “Istanbul mustn’t become Vienna” (Extraplatte 2008). This was a very elegant and witty way to tell a story on the subject of not accepting the other.

TYPE 2: THE OTHER AS AN INTERNAL OUTSIDER

MODUS OF INTERNAL SEPARATION / INNER CULTURAL ISOLATION

This is the level of the modus of internal separation, or inner cultural isolation. Again, the most powerful tool here is language.

The empirical observations on some relatively closed youth groups (for example Bulgarian youth groups in Vienna) show that their practices often remain unchanged in the foreign social environment, which makes them practically invisible for the hosting culture. Very good musical and lyrical descriptions of the inner cultural iso-

lation of closed groups can be found in Riblja Čorba song "Gastarbajterska pesma" (WIT 1996; lyrics at Riblja Čorba n.d.).

Then we have the role of the cultural institutes, which is a little ambiguous. On the one hand, they have the primary goal to promote the respective national culture in Austria. On the other hand, many of the cultural events they organise contribute to cultural separation, both preserving the cultural uniqueness, and at the same time confining it to same-culture audiences.

And while cultural institutes are the "official" intercultural tool, one could also observe many other events of various organisational origin that also separate Slavic cultures. Through language and traditions, events in many forms of popular culture and arts (music of course being crucial) isolate themselves from the Austrian culture, thus depriving the host culture of the chance for any type of reception or interaction. For example, in Vienna there are various student parties that clearly establish intercultural boundaries, starting from the title of the event ("Bulgarian night", "Serbian student party", etc.), through the rules for access, to the nature of the event itself. On one such event, for instance, celebrating the Bulgarian Student's Day on 7th December 2010, one could observe hundreds of Bulgarian students isolating themselves by recreating their culture in a beautiful Viennese castle, the most crowded hall of which was the one with pop-folk music and dancing on and around the chairs and tables.

A little bit more open is the situation with restaurants, shops and other commercial units, which are also designed to satisfy the needs of culturally self-isolated guest cultures, but manage to attract some relative interest on behalf of some Austrians as well. In restaurants, the food, as well as the music and the interior, function as markers creating a space to resemble the homeland. Those markers, however, can sometimes attract Austrian visitors as well. According to one of the owners of the Bulgarian restaurant Pleven in Vienna, Bulgarians bring their Austrian friends, who like the food and sometimes even dance to traditional Bulgarian folklore music (BNT 2011).

METALEVELS

The next two types could be called *metalevels*, inasmuch as they consist of and constitute the "reception of the reception", that is intentional intercultural efforts. Here we will find the whole academic layer, and I must highlight the fact that Austria's academic interest in Central and Eastern Europe is extremely rich and multidimensional, and certainly more intense than the one of other Western European countries (comparable maybe only to Germany, in which post-communist studies of course have additional motives).

TYPE 3 : THE OTHER AS AN OBJECT OF INTEREST

MODUS OF THE UNKNOWN / INTEREST. OPENNESS

This type represents the attraction to other cultures, and the genuine or necessary interest in some of its aspects. I have had the chance to observe the activities of a

great number of academic institutions engaged with Central and Eastern Europe (or Slavic cultures in particular), which I will not list now. I have attended many relevant conferences, lectures and seminars, and have tried (emphasising tried) to follow some of the periodicals and studies on the subject. My general impression is that Eastern Europe is still treated as *terra incognita*, which provokes great academic interest and attraction. Many international academic events put a lot of effort into rationalizing Central and Eastern Europe, and what is also interesting – guest academics are usually accepted with unreserved trust, just because they come from those not so well-known countries, and are supposed to bring stable credibility, not just their own point of view.

Another area driven by the interest in the unknown is of course tourism. Tourist representations of Slavic cultures are designed to “sell” Slavic cultures in Austria, and therefore emphasise the marketable sides of foreign cultures. Tourist advertisements, films, guidebooks, etc. are extremely interesting to examine, although one should take into consideration that most of the guidebooks are German and not particularly Austrian. The unknown that is still to be discovered remains a highlight in the image-making of Eastern and Southeastern countries. For example, the German guidebooks about Bulgaria might differ in form and content, but they always more or less draw on this aspect (Ilin 2001, p. 159).

Music is of course an essential part of tourism. Curiosity for the unknown foreign musical cultures, especially folklore, is a major driving force of interest in the other. It is also the driving force of everything that could be included in the type of intercultural reception which has produced in the last few decades a vast variety of intercultural music mixtures in the age of “increasing hybridisation” (Bennett et al. 2006, p. 3). Austrians are well-known for their long-lasting taste and background in classical music, but they also show vivid interest in various music mixtures and do not keep their distance from “world music” projects. One Bulgarian who has been working in Vienna since 2001 is the talented accordionist Martin Lubenov, whose band presents a unique mixture of Balkan Roma music with elements of jazz, swing, tango, salsa, etc. (Connecting Cultures 2005).

TYPE 4: THE OTHER AS A WELCOME GUEST

MODUS OF HOSPITALITY / CULTURE CIRCULATION. OPENNESS

This fourth type is actually quite close to the previous one, only this time the direction of the interest is not from the inside outwards, but rather from the outside inwards.

Austria offers extremely rich academic exchange programmes, ranging from student to professor levels. Rough numbers from the OeAD (Österreichischer Austauschdienst) show that Austria hosts about 530 scholars per month, plus sixty APPEAR guests, and 450 through the CEEPUS program. In other words, for the year 2010 only for incoming scholarships Austria has paid about ten million euro. Nearly all Slavic countries are object of vivid academic interest for Austria. Furthermore,

there are the Aktionen programmes, especially for partner projects with Slovakia, Czech Republic and Hungary.

One fact worth mentioning is that although most of the programmes are bilateral, the interest from Slavic countries towards study or research stay in Austria is way higher than the opposite. The amount of incoming students and scholars shows Austria as an excellent host and wise unifier. And this orientation is way beyond the strategy of brain drain, which other developed countries practice widely.

At a young scientists conference on Central and South Eastern Europe at the end of October 2010, a welcome address was presented on behalf of the Austrian Federal Minister for Science and Research, Dr. Beatrix Karl, which described the Austrian scientific and educational exchange policy as aimed at "brain circulation, rather than brain drain". I find this orientation reasonable and convincing, straightly directed to intercultural dialogue and hospitable reception, and in this sense really admirable.

The other type of hospitable openness could be observed in the face of non-separated cultural events. Various aspects of popular culture and arts (again with popular music being crucial) get incorporated in the richness of Austrian cultural life and become part of it, unlike the aforementioned isolated foreign cultural events.

TYPE 5: THE OTHER AS AN INSIDER

MODUS OF INTEGRATION / INTERCULTURAL INTERNALISATION. INCORPORATION

This is of course the most idealistic level, since it can never be fully achieved (in general by cultures, not particularly by Austria). Still, the Austrian reception of Slavic cultures sometimes happens to be in various ways a reception of the other as non-other.

For immigrants, this can usually happen with the second or third generation, or with those people who have successfully *Austrianised* themselves, blunting as much as possible the initial cultural differences (although one could argue that even in those cases certain shades of prejudiced reception will always remain).

Other examples include internalised cultural aspects, such as linguistic or cuisine features. In the case of Austria, historically there are many such aspects in which Slavic cultures have influenced Austrian culture.

And of course popular culture and arts offer some great examples of proper intercultural projects that are not artificially designed to promote interculturalism, but which integrate cultures in an almost natural way. For example, in recent years there has been a boom of bands not only mixing different music, but whose band members have different roots as well (Austrian + Balkan/Roma/Slavic, etc). It is hard to tell to what extent those musicians feel like insiders, but some of them have had long-lasting success that speaks for a considerable amount of intercultural internalisation. One of the most successful bands of this type is Wiener Tschuschenkapelle with a history of more than twenty years and twelve albums. As stated on their website, their programme mixes

traditional folk and songs of the Balkan region, Mediterranean serenades, Turkish-oriental tunes, Greek Rembetiko, Bosnian Sevdalinka, travelling as far as Russia, taking aboard one or the other Old Viennese song along the way (after all, the name is Wiener Tschuschenkapelle), experimenting with gypsy jazz, and even venturing into the classical realm. (We have even had the honour of playing with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra at the Vienna State Opera). (Wiener Tschuschenkapelle n.d.)

This type of intercultural integration is also often working very successfully on a regional level, especially through the channel of common or similar language. A good example of this is the TV show "Česko Slovenská Superstar" ("Czech and Slovak Superstar"), which has been a joint version of the Czech and Slovak "Pop Idol" versions since 2009. The role of language in regional integration is crucial. There are, of course, various regional cultural processes going on beyond the level of language, and that includes music too, but with Slavic languages and German being so different, one could hardly expect such common musical joy, as the one of Austria, Switzerland and Germany, expressed in the song "Servus, gruezi und hallo" (Rubin Records 2003) by Maria & Margot Hellwig.

As stated at the beginning of the paper, this is just a provisional heuristic scale of reception types, and it is not designed to be exhaustive or final. It is also a very condensed presentation of a much bigger project, many aspects of which could not be mentioned here. One of the possible conclusions when working with dynamic intercultural processes, though, is that popular music cannot be treated as a separate object, for quite often it does not work separately, but as a part of broader intercultural mechanisms.

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Becoming Audible!

Asylum seekers, participatory action research and cultural encounters¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper draws on the participatory action research project *Becoming Audible!*, which was carried out between 2002 and 2004 by musicology students at the University of Turku, Finland, their teachers, and the asylum seekers of the Finnish Red Cross reception centre in Turku, Finland. The project activated asylum seekers to develop new musical and dance skills and maintain their functionality during the asylum process. In this paper, the focus is on racial, ethnic and cultural differences in the production of knowledge within *Becoming Audible!*.

KEYWORDS: music of asylum seekers; participatory action research; music ethnography.

INTRODUCTION

The ordinary assumption of music being a universal language, which transcends boundaries and bonds people, has been questioned by music researchers, both musicologists and ethnomusicologists, over and over again. However, music seems to have a capacity for functioning as a resource for connecting people in a transna-

tional setting in a way which is specific for music in comparison with language or other means of communication. This capacity might be of value in the context of action research in a transnational setting.

This paper draws on the participatory action research project *Becoming Audible!*, which was carried out between 2002 and 2004 by musicology students at the University of Turku, Finland, their teachers Helmi Järviluoma, Taru Leppänen and Jouni Piekkari, and the asylum seekers of the Finnish Red Cross reception centre in Turku.

In the autumn of 2002, when we started the project, the Turku reception centre hosted 190 asylum seekers from twenty-five different countries. The core of our project consisted of asylum seekers from Ruanda, Nigeria (Biafra), the Balkans, Cuba, Pakistan and Congo. The *Becoming Audible!* project grew out of a sub-project of a larger Finnish project, *Becoming Visible!*, which aimed at enhancing the dialogues between asylum seekers and local residents. The goal of *Becoming Visible!* was to create opportunities for asylum seekers to study and work while in Finland. The European Social Fund's EQUAL programme funded this project's attempt to develop new co-operation models between educational institutions and reception centres. The project activated asylum seekers to develop new skills and maintain their functionality during the asylum process.

Becoming Audible! shared the same aims as *Becoming Visible!* Additionally, we tried to create networks, which hopefully would be useful for immigrants when seeking working opportunities or hobbies in Finland, but also if they are not given the status of a refugee or residence permit and thus a permission to stay in Finland. In the course of the project, the musical and dance skills of the asylum seekers have been developed: the time spent at the refugee centre could be very long – four years in one case, and one year was a very common case.

Since *Becoming Audible!* was a meeting point of several cultures, colonialist and imperialist power relations were constantly present, when knowledge within the project was produced. Several of these power relations are, to a certain degree, already negotiated in our culture: the researcher and the informant, citizen and asylum seeker, woman and man, adult and child, and "first world" and "third world". This setting was extremely challenging because of the plethora of simultaneous differences. Instead of wiping these differences out and acting as if they did not exist, we considered it essential to critically examine and deconstruct the differences involved in the project. In this paper, the focus is on racial, ethnic and cultural differences in the production of knowledge within *Becoming Audible!*.

Becoming Audible! carried out a lot of activities, including fortnightly meetings and rehearsals in the centre, recordings, playing in an orchestra and dance activities, performances and workshops. We also encouraged asylum seekers to act as teachers for outsiders. During the project the members of the group shared and expressed their musical worldviews, and shared linguistic and musical knowledge and abilities. In 2003 we recorded a demo-CD, which was called *Becoming Audible!*. Moreover, musicology students and teachers ran a seminar, where books and articles were presented and discussed.

STRANGE ENCOUNTERS

As researchers and teachers, it would have been easy to present ourselves as advocates for tolerance, defending against, for example, racist prejudices. Simultaneously our subjectivity is unavoidably constructed within Eurocentric and ethnocentric discourses produced by universities and the discipline of musicology among other Western institutions.

Within the humanities, there are usually separate areas allocated for the study of “indigenous knowledge systems” (Harding 1998) and ethnosciences, which, within music research, are usually represented by ethnomusicology. As one of the writers of this article is an ethnomusicologist, the other a musicologist, we have empirically noticed that the above-mentioned division of disciplines serves for an institutionalised construction of othering within academic spheres. The terms “musicology” and “ethnomusicology” refer to a certain kind of understanding of epistemology. Musicology, which has traditionally examined Western, white classical music, does not, as implied by its naming, study any specific ethnic group’s music. On the other hand, ethnomusicology, where Western classical music is only one possible research subject among other music cultures, connotes and reminds of ethnic specificity of music cultures (Leppänen 2000). Inasmuch that ethnomusicology has been conceived, partially inaccurately, as addressing non-European music cultures rather than Western classical music, the naming of these disciplines has had substantive implications. The names of the disciplines have defined the white mainstream culture as non-ethnic and the remaining music cultures as othered.

During the project, we have often pondered, in the spirit of bell hooks (1994, p. 48), why so many enlightened people seem to think that it is somehow naïve to believe that our lives should be vibrant examples of our politics. To note that theorisation is always practical and that practice always embodies theories appears not to be a sufficient solution to this problem. In addition to this, we have asked, what does it mean to live the politics of doing research besides the conventional ways of doing research – thinking, reading and analysing the data for writing, in a transnational setting.

Being conscious of the unpleasant fact that our own ways of action are constructed in colonialist and imperialistic discourses is implied in participatory action research. In this kind of research, methodological choices include inevitably more of getting lost and tottering than the conventional ways of doing research.

One of the ideals in participatory action research is to strive after the epistemological equality in knowledge production. This provides the researcher with an opportunity of getting lost in methodologically fruitful ways. Getting lost is important in finding and taking new routes. What if epistemological equality turns out to be a mere daydream? What are then the possibilities of striving for a change by doing participatory action research within the transnational framework? The Brazilian pioneer of participatory action research, Paulo Freire, has been concerned in his texts with the relationship between the researcher and the informants. A researcher, who analyses the activities of their informants and briefs them on the grounds of his or

her analyses, treats the informants as objects. For Freire, reflection calls for action and action entails reflection.

Activism of Western women in transnational settings, where women of the “third world” are involved, has been widely discussed and also, mostly justly, questioned within feminist theorization and ethnographic research. The power relationship in these situations is fundamentally asymmetric. So how is this power relationship between white, Western researchers and asylum seekers negotiated?

In her book *Strange encounters*, Sara Ahmed (2000) situates stranger fetishism, which is often committed by those who embrace multiculturalism, nearly at the same place as the fear of a stranger. Ahmed conceptualises the terms “other” and “otherness”, which are essential for postcolonial theorisation, in fresh and fruitful ways. Ahmed’s thinking opens up a useful means for the evaluation of the encounters between strangers and non-strangers and their historical contexts within *Becoming Audible!* Ahmed shifts her focus away from the concept of the other to discuss the more flexible concept of the stranger. Certain bodies are defined as strangers, which is an essential way of constructing communities. The stranger does not reside outside of the self. In addition to this, the stranger is not the other of the self. Instead, it is an essential constituent of the self.

Becoming Visible! was funded by the European Union, which is, in addition to the Schengen Agreement, substantially restricting the possibilities of the people of the “third world” to take up residence in Europe. No doubt *Becoming Visible!* and *Becoming Audible!* have opened up new scope for action for the asylum seekers. In spite of this, it is important to think about the above-mentioned paradox: is it possible to reconcile the interests of Finland’s integration into the European Union and its restrictive politics and the interests of the asylum seekers?

The refugee politics of Europe and Finland as its member had very substantial and concrete consequences in *Becoming Audible!*. During the autumn term of 2003 we worked mostly with refugees from the Balkans – Albanians, Bosnians, etc. – and lost all Bosnian accordionists and singers within a few weeks, when they got a negative decision of their status as refugees from the Finnish government. In the spring term of 2004 our project consisted of asylum seekers from Africa and Cuba. During the spring two of the members of our orchestra were deported: a rap singer from Congo and a young lady from Algeria, our singer and dancer.

NEGOTIATING KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION IN THE AFRICA WORKSHOP

When Jouni, who was the only member in our group with experience in participatory research, watched the group’s rather clumsy attempts to learn the salsa steps, which Raysa from Cuba was teaching us, an idea came to his mind. He suggested that he could give us a workshop in African music. He had studied African music for more than fifteen years and had stayed and done fieldwork in Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. The aim of the workshop, according to Jouni, would be two-fold: firstly, to help us Finnish participants of the group to grasp the “rhythms” of African and Cuban music; and secondly, to give an impression to the asylum seekers about how to

teach clumsy Finns foreign music and dance steps. Furthermore, a group of students from Helmi's World Music course in the department of musicology attended the workshop as well as an Iranian women journalist, who was an asylum seeker, and workers from the reception centre. There were also children endlessly interested in everything that was happening in the centre or taking part in the workshop.

After Helmi had told Taru about the idea of the workshop, Taru wrote in her field diary:

When I for the first time heard about the Africa workshop from Helmi, she told me that Jouni had said that 'we need a workshop on African music'. Helmi explained, that when Jouni had seen us performing with *Becoming Visible* orchestra, he had noticed that we had difficulties with African rhythms etc. Of course, I knew he was in a sense right. However, I couldn't help feeling somehow offended by Jouni's suggestion. I thought: Who are the 'we' who are in need of an African music workshop? Why do we need it? I heard immediately and loudly a voice of my postcolonial and feminist conscience when I tried to adjust to Jouni's suggestion. Why should I take part in an African music workshop taught by a white male ethnomusicologist while we had several Africans participating [in the] *Becoming Visible* project? (Leppänen 2003)

Two weeks before the workshop, Helmi, the asylum seekers and the students had a meeting with the music group at the reception centre. They were planning the activities for the forthcoming spring. Helmi brought up the question of Jouni giving us a workshop on African music. Stanley, an asylum seeker from Biafra, Nigeria, asked: "Who?". He was quite amazed. Helmi said more about Jouni. "He can't teach us African music", Stanley said very clearly, almost annoyed. His eyes showed astonishment.

Helmi was laughing; she touched Stanley's shoulder and said: "Good, Stanley, you are right!". Helmi explained for the group that Jouni had been studying African music for quite a while. After this, Stanley agreed: "Perhaps he can know about some areas of African music". Helmi suggested that Stanley and some other Africans of our project would participate in teaching the workshop. Everybody was happy about the solution. Later Helmi (Järviluoma 2004) wrote in her field diary: "Empowerment – Yes! The reaction of Stanley made me proud about the fact that he has not been beaten down yet. That's how I felt".

The possibilities of representing "Others" have been widely discussed within postcolonial studies. Postcolonial theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) asked: "How can the investigator avoid the inevitable risk of presenting herself as an authoritative representative of subaltern consciousness?". According to Spivak, "the intellectual's solution is not to abstain from representation". Some clues towards the ways in which this can be done fruitfully are offered by Paulo Freire, and also by bell hooks (1994, p. 53), who considers Freire to be a crucial example "of how a privileged critical thinker approaches sharing knowledge and resources with those who are in need" (ibid.). Freire (cited in bell hooks 1994, p. 54) states:

Authentic help means that all who are involved help each other mutually, growing together in the common effort to understand the reality they seek to transform. Only through such practice – in which those who help and those who are being helped help each other simultaneously – can the act of helping become free from the distortion in which the helper dominates the helped.

In the course of *Becoming Audible!*, when we got to know the participants of the project and got involved in their fates, we often experienced significant need to help the asylum seekers in the difficult phase of their lives. The idea of helping inevitably involves power relationships. Consequently, this became a challenge for us in the Africa workshop. Thus, we tried to solve this asymmetrical power relationship inscribed in helping with the means suggested above by Freire.

THE EVALUATION OF THE AFRICA WORKSHOP

The Africa workshop was carefully planned by the teachers: Stanley and Elizabeth from Kongo, Helmi and Jouni. Then, after the workshop we interviewed two of the asylum seekers, Celine and Stanley, who told us that they were genuinely happy about the occasion. Stanley, who, at first, had been very critical, said that he felt that all the teachers had “equal playing ground”. Even if the time for the workshop was limited, all the teachers were able to “showcase their musical capabilities”.

Both Stanley and Celine seemed to be very impressed about the fact that Jouni had gone to so much trouble for learning things about African music. Also, they found Jouni’s practical and dialogical teaching style impressive, especially his way to teach the Tanzanian dance “Ngoma ya selo”.

In the interview, Stanley made an interesting observation: he said that if he was to go back to Nigeria, and meet a group of Finns there, he would be very proud that he could show what he has learned about Finnish culture, music and dance, and the Finns would be happy.

While evaluating the workshop in the interview, Helmi raised the rather delicate question of Stanley’s first reaction. We used a lot of laughs and other methods of softening our talk.

Stanley: Yeah, it was good. [...]

Helmi: Your FIRST [...] reaction when talked about Africa workshop was that Jouni

Stanley: Okei

Helmi: Jouni that Jouni how can he (laughs) (teach) us

Stanley: Okei, okey that was why I commented that day [...] I was thinking he was going to [...] talk about African music without really getting anything, you know, the first impression that I had you know [...] ‘what does he know about African music’. But I didn’t know that he had done a lot of homework. So that was why I was so amazed that. That was why I commented him so much, be-

cause he has learnt a lot, even those dancing steps he was displaying, so I was impressed, really

Helmi: Hm, yeah (P) So your experience about the workshop was positive

Stanley: yeah (very) exactly

Helmi: and I think for us it was very good that you said what you said because then we came to think that exactly, he can't do it alone, because we have other experts,

Stanley: erm

Helmi: like Stanley, Elizabeth

Taru: and in fact we had already thought about it

Helmi: erm

Taru: that it was somehow a strange thing to do that a Finnish person would teach African music to=²

Stanley: =and

Taru: African people

Helmi: (laughs)

Stanley: and of course we would put our hands and be looking like (Stanley puts his hands on his chest; everybody is laughing)

Stanley and Celine, the persons we interviewed, had been active dancers in their countries. Stanley had been an occasional member of the dance group of his local clan in Biafra and Celine had been dancing as a member of an amateur Rwandan folklore group, which was put together after the Rwandan genocide.

In the interview, both Stanley and Celine told us that, because of the workshop, they had realised that they could start to learn both music and dance more seriously. During the interview, Celine developed the idea that perhaps she could start to teach the other members of the group Rwandan dances. She said that we could create more difficult choreographies in the group. In the next practices after the interview, Celine started to teach us quite complicated choreographies.

The workshop, which at first seemed like a forthcoming total catastrophe, ended up as a good experience for everybody. It became one step on the road to giving the asylum seekers more and more responsibility in the learning processes. The asylum seekers taught us their music all spring. In the workshop they had to do the same for a broader audience. In fact, during the next study year the asylum seekers organized a dancing course for a broader audience. This is one of the basic ideas of the participatory approach: making the facilitator or animator useless, not needed in the end.

When different cultures and discourses were encountering each other in the Africa workshop, the knowledge was produced in co-operation with all the people involved. Our group produced knowledge together, even if within certain institutional and discursive conditions. Max Elden and Morten Levin (1991, p. 133) have used the term "cogenerative dialogue" when referring to this kind of knowledge production in participatory action research. Cogenerative dialogue becomes an arena, where different kinds of frames of reference are enriching all the stages of the research process by constructing new frames of reference and theories. Method-

ology can be seen as an arena or a playground of instructive setbacks based on the politics of knowing and being known (Lather 2001, p. 204).

QUESTIONING INSTITUTIONALISED OTHERING

I'm sitting all alone at a trailhead in the woods of Pansio. I'm waiting for 80 day nursery children, who are attending a 'toleration tour' organised by a social pedagogy student. At the first control point in the woods the children get their names written in Russian, at the second point they have a taste of food from Kosovo, at the third point they play Irish games, at the fourth they were supposed to get acquainted with sounds from foreign cultures. But how come things occurred like this? Not a single asylum seeker is anywhere around introducing their musics to the kids. Facilitation was only done by halves, preparation was done by halves, and even now I could be writing that article to a scholarly journal. (Järviluoma 2004)

One of the central questions of cultural studies still remains to be solved today: how to bridge the gulf between the theoretical and empirical in new ways? Is it possible to negotiate power relations between the researcher and the researched and their knowledge anew by means of participatory music ethnography? Our tentative answer is yes, although provided that the participants regard the participatory method and their own conventions critically, innovatively and with reflection.

In the project *Becoming Audible!* we have coupled participatory research and critical ethnography. For us, it has been necessary to act and problematise our action simultaneously. We have had to accept being assertive and chaotic at the same time. If being assertive has been forgotten, it has led to inchoateness, as can be seen in the situation described above: the (co)-researcher got lost in the forest all alone with her drum.

In our work it has also been indispensable to reflect upon the politics of research reporting. Feminist ethnographer Patti Lather speaks on behalf of texts that both reach toward a generally accessible public horizon and yet deny the "comfort zone" that maps easily onto our usual ways of making sense. Political writing is a form of cultural intervention against mimetic ways of representation (Lather 2001, p. 213; see also Järviluoma, Moisala and Vilkkio 2003, pp. 107-117). When participatory action research is concerned, not only texts but also the action should be considered as an end product of the study.

Easy categories of us and them, where "us" is the concerned and voyeuristic and "them" are the objects of our pity, fear, and fascination, should be avoided. Likewise, the striving for murderous sameness or factitious communities is not worth much. "The danger is to steal knowledge from others, particularly those who have little else and use it for the interests of power" (Lather 2001, pp. 214, 221).

Interestingly enough, the asylum seekers seem to have become empowered in the "wrong" fields of art, when we think about music research. Even if we, so far, have clearly concentrated on music and dance, almost half of the asylum seekers partici-

pating in the group have expressed their desire to write either their autobiographies or their experiences in Finland in the form of a book, and they have asked for help from us. Writing the stories of their lives might offer an opportunity that Sara Ahmed has called for, namely the bringing of historical context as part of the definition of the stranger. When we commit ourselves to the participatory approach we have to, also, accept the digressions and crossing of borders by the asylum seekers, sometimes toward directions that challenge our own academic positioning.

This does not mean that we would not have the right to write. When writing we do not have to reach for anything more extraordinary than a good enough ethnography, sufficient facilitation and unstable knowledge; something to think alongside with, rather than a brilliantly mastered thesis. By “good enough” (Lather 2001) we mean practices rupturing, at least a bit, the hegemonic power relations. At the same time, “good enough” research deconstructs the dichotomy between the steely perfection and failure of science. Between these options, and outside them, the possibilities of doing research are plentiful.

ENDNOTES

1. This paper was initially presented at the IASPM 11th Biennial Conference *Practising Popular Music* (Montreal, 3-7 July 2003).
2. “=” means that the next turn follows immediately, almost overlapping.

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Clandestine recordings: The use of the cassette in the music of the political resistance during the dictatorship (Chile, 1973-1989)¹

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ABSTRACT

A number of studies have examined the intense cultural activity of the political resistance during the Chilean dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1989), which included, as one of its most significant aspects, the creation and circulation of music among political dissidents. In this context, the cassette, as a phonographic device, acquired a special usage, becoming a fundamental instrument for the transfer and distribution of censored and clandestine music. Cassettes allowed auditors, for the first time, to choose and record their preferred songs at home, and to tape forbidden material. This made possible not only the circulation of political music, but also the establishment of a financial source for the clandestinised political organizations through the sale of pirated cassettes. This paper will examine three qualities inherent to the cassette that propelled it to this central role: the unfettered public access to blank cassettes, the malleability of the tape, and its surface opacity, in other words, its ability to hide subversive messages without revealing any exterior signs. Multiple genres of music took shelter in the copied cassette: censored examples of the Nueva Canción Chilena ("New Chilean Song"), recordings carried out in exile with the support of the international community, and other productions conceived in Chile by and for those operating in secrecy.

KEYWORDS: cassette; dictatorship; resistance; clandestinity; secrecy; Chile.

INTRODUCTION

Musical censorship is a practice that has been carried out repeatedly by authoritarian regimes, and the case of the dictatorship in Chile under General Augusto Pinochet is no exception. A number of studies have revealed the persecution of musicians linked to the government of Salvador Allende leading to exile, prison or death for some of these musicians. Not only people, but also musical productions were the object of persecution. It is known that a large quantity of phonographic materials was destroyed by the military, both through the appropriation of the national record factory as well as through the confiscation of materials considered to be “subversive.” The practice of military raids and confiscations in an environment of pervasive terror allows us to understand here why the censorship imposed on creators and interpreters, as well as listeners, was accompanied by self-censorship on the part of the population. In the same manner, listeners developed particular ways of listening and distributing musical material.

Within the networks of political opposition, the cassette, as a phonographic device, played a decisive role in the production and distribution of censored and clandestine music. It is believed that three characteristics of the cassette allowed it to be “the protagonist” in this history of musical resistance. First, the cassette’s low cost, which allowed for access *en masse*. Second, the tape’s malleability, in other words, the cassette introduced the practice in which listeners made their own recordings at home. And finally, the small size of the cassette and its ability to hide the tape’s “recording status”, were two characteristics that converted the cassette into an exceptional tool for hiding clandestine sounds. This study examines how this musical device helped to preserve certain censored musical repertoires, but also how this allowed for the creation and dissemination of new sounds of resistance, especially those produced from and for clandestinity.

CENSORED MUSIC

Amongst the different mechanisms of repression carried out against the musical field, the establishment of a curfew should be highlighted as it led to the restriction of nocturnal public activity, and consequently, the closing of the job positions of many popular musicians, the creation of black lists in different work spaces and places of dissemination like universities and mass media, and certain cultural policies that played a large role in the destruction of the cultural movement linked to Unidad Popular (“Popular Unity”). One of these actions was the “famous” banning of “Andean” musical instruments, along with the intimidation of certain well-known folk artists, in a meeting led by the Colonel Pedro Ewing at the end of 1973. Another common practice was the distribution of flyers from the governmental cultural organizations, addressed to record labels, prohibiting the publication of musical material from artists like Violeta Parra, Quilapayún and Víctor Jara, amongst others. In this context, the alternative broadcasting stations like Radio Chilena – which operated under the protection of the Office of Vicaría de la Solidaridad of the Archbishop of Santiago – played an important role in keeping the restricted repertoires

“on the air”. The “pirated” cassettes also facilitated the duplication of rare albums that survived the confiscations and the destruction brought about by the listeners themselves when they realized the danger they faced by owning objects identified with the left.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACCESS

As studies carried out by the Centro de Indagación y Expresión Cultural y Artística (“Centre for research and cultural and artistic expression”, or CENECA), demonstrated early on, the transformation of Chile’s economic system carried out by the military government involved fostering imports, which was accompanied by the accelerated introduction of new audio technologies. As such, tape players quickly replaced record players, since, despite the increasing poverty of the population, the possibilities of buying through credit were also encouraged by the dictatorship. In the same manner, record labels replaced vinyl records with cassettes. But this replacement did not happen at the same speed when it came to radio broadcasting, which led to the reduction of Chilean music played on air, since the new productions were edited on cassette while the radios continued to use record players. Nonetheless, a few radio stations, like the aforementioned Radio Chilena, continued to play local music recorded before the *coup d’état*. But in general, the acquisition of cassettes and tape players on the part of listeners coincided with an absence of Chilean music in the mass media.

It’s important to point out that this absence of local music is also related to political censorship, since a large number of popular musicians had been part of the cultural movement that was interrupted by the dictatorship. In this sense, the mass popularization of blank cassettes reveals two situations:

First, the introduction of new technology in Chile coincided with that which has been described in other countries (like the People’s Republic of China and England), since the mass access to blank cassettes had provoked, according to sociologist Anny Rivera, a negative influence on record sales (Rivera 1984, p. 15). Knowing that low cost is a predominant factor for their mass popularization, the impossibility of obtaining certain desired music in a legal way intensified the importance of having access to the cassette to preserve censored repertoires, at times when the crisis of the local music industry, the closure of job positions for musicians and the political persecution of artists generated a vicious cycle.

Second, the distancing of “leftist” music from the official sphere conditioned the development of alternative networks where diverse cultural expressions of resistance were disseminated. Politically committed organizations, intimate meeting spaces and networks of “trustworthy” people formed a favourable environment for “hand to hand” circulation of clandestine materials.

In summary, the absence of local music on the radio, the increasing poverty of consumers, the censorship of certain repertoires and the intensification of political activity of resistance fostered home-taping, resulting in the moving of musical creation and reception to private, domestic or clandestine life. Within the logic of

pirating and distribution of prohibited music existed the idea of collecting songs “to sing along with them” (Fuenzalida 1987, p. 82), indicating an intimate performance established between the listener and the recording in a clandestine space.

It should be noted that the promotion of these repertoires was also developed in meeting spaces such as the *peña* and solidarity actions. As such, this practice is not only individual, but community-based as well. In fact, these places served as a space to exchange materials in a multifaceted manner. On one hand, there was the circulation of cassettes between listeners, according to the logic of tape trading, with the goal of sharing music that was hard to access. On the other hand, there was the presentation and dissemination of musical creations that were censored, in a way that could recuperate a workspace and source of income. Finally, also with regard to financing, there was the sale of “pirated” recordings in order to collect money to help organizations committed to political resistance. All of these dimensions gave pirating a “benevolent” aura, as even artists offered their recordings to be pirated so as to collaborate with common objectives.

The cassette therefore allowed not only for the circulation of music with a “political message”, but also provided a financial income for clandestine political organizations through the sale of “pirated” copies. This opening was possible thanks to the unique qualities of this device.

MALLEABILITY

As previously mentioned, for the first time listeners were recording music in their own homes. As it became more and more mass-produced, this apparatus, which lent itself to home-usage, encouraged cassette reproduction outside the commercial sphere promoting autonomous propagation. For the first time people who were not “specialists” could record sounds, music and at any time. In this way, the line between author and audience blurred.

Undoubtedly, one virtue of the cassette is its prominent malleability, thanks to which the user could record multiple sound types. The cassette stimulated personal compilation, which began to make it feasible for people to exclusively select the elements of interest to the listener.

It’s interesting to note that, with the concept of recording a compilation of songs, the notion of reproduction or copy appears to be inapplicable, since here the act of re-recording cannot be anything but distinct and creative. In this act, the original-reproduction dichotomy would also lose its meaning if it is understood that every sample, every cassette recorded at home or outside of the industry, could be considered both unique and variable. A tape can be recorded time and again, generating layers of sound. In effect, each cassette copied at home constitutes a *phonographic work*² due to its singularity, with its cuts and interventions, and the way it operates superseding its documentary function, being that the recorded sounds are experienced as the performance takes place. In other words, it is a work that is not meant to be an original, since it is quite necessarily articulated within a circulation that accepts its vulnerability as a modifiable “sound product”.

OPACITY

Finally, the quality that inclined the cassette towards clandestinity is identified as its “opaque” nature. The notion of “opacity” was chosen to be able to understand the aspects of this phonographic device, which, as opposed to records, helped with storage and circulation, not only of music, but also of other types of clandestine sounds. Here, tapes are the main point of reference because, as this medium does not reveal the traces of the recording at first sight, it implies that a new listener has to attentively explore the entire tape to “know what it contains”. While this characteristic may appear insignificant, it becomes less so when the purpose is to hide sound information, making it even more useful when the material is re-recordable, as previously explained.

The cassette’s opacity therefore comes from the possibility of not having to title or be left with a final recording. This device allows for successive interventions without “marking” its surface. As such, the tape’s constant availability to be recorded on resides in its capacity to remain blank, or at the very least hide its “recording status”. Even though it is possible to protect the recording by breaking the tabs on the top of the plastic casing that holds the tape, it can potentially be covered again, with tape for example, in which case it would continue to be opaque. In addition, since the cassette is small and light, so much so that it can be discreetly tucked away and transported, it easily avoids discovery. This put it in an advantageous position as compared to the vinyl record, the size of which prevents it from being hidden.

RECORDINGS

So now, what type of music was found in these cassettes? There was the Nueva Canción Chilena (“New Chilean Song”), prohibited since the *coup d’état*; Canto Nuevo, one of the most important alternative music scenes during the dictatorship; and the Nueva Trova Cubana, just to name the canonical repertoires of the political opposition. Earlier studies have described quite clearly how Silvio Rodríguez’s recordings survived (Morris 1986, p. 129; Rivera and Torres 1981, pp. 15-16), for example, or the large number of “emblematic” recordings of the Chilean left among young listeners of the 1980s, such as Violeta Parra and Víctor Jara (Rivera 1984, p. 19).

However, other nearly unexplored sound repertoires are those that are far from the “artistic” sphere, adhering solely to truly militant actions. These were recordings coming from those in exile and from international solidarity as well as to productions imagined and carried out within Chile from and for clandestinity. Their purpose was for them to be used as weapons of resistance, openly proclaiming the slogans of the opposition and exacerbating their propagandistic, unifying and financial function for the political cause.

Such is the case, for example, of the production of material by the Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria (“Revolutionary Left Movement”, or MIR), whose clandestine publications included “the production of cassettes with special programs from Radio Liberación, containing recorded testimonies of the Chilean people’s

struggle. The cassettes are copied by the hundreds and have a wide reception by the masses" (*El Rebelde en la clandestinidad* 1983, p. 5). This quote suggests an optimistic expectation of the network where cassettes circulated. The quote continues, "El Rebelde is part of an abundant agitation and political dissemination circulating within the clandestine labyrinth of the mass movement" (ibid.). With similar goals, in 1985 the communist newspaper *El Siglo* launched *El Partido a Violeta* (Unknown 1985b), a cassette paying homage to Violeta Parra, whose cover announced "The songs that your people sing" (*Boletín de Prensa* 1985, p. 2).

Musical albums produced within militant activity included *El camotazo* (Various authors 1986a), edited by the *Juventud Comunista* ("Young Communist League") in 1986, which included the participation of various distinguished musicians, such as Mario Rojas and Transporte Urbano; *FPMR Canto popular* (Unknown circa 1985), the political cassette of the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez, about which there is not much information; and *Vamos Chile* (Various authors 1986b), produced through an alliance among the cultural sectors of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, under the direction of Gabriela Pizarro, accompanied by renowned folk artists (see Jordan and Rojas 2007). One of the folk groups that participated in that cassette, Sendero, also recorded another clandestine production – title unknown, which told the story of agrarian reform in Chile.

The recording *Canto por la vida. ¿Dónde están?* by the Conjunto Folklórico de la Agrupación de Familiares de Detenidos Desaparecidos (1978; "Families of disappeared detainees folk group") holds a special place. Although the group enjoyed a favourable public image due to international support, it carried out its recording clandestinely in 1978. This production included "La cueca sola", an emotive song and dance which expressed the struggle of women searching for their loved ones.

Nano Acevedo (2007), composer and vocalist, indicated that during the first years of the dictatorship, the Communist Party recorded at least two cassettes containing protest songs, by various artists, with the aim of contributing to the resistance. However, he claims to not remember the name of the cassette in which he, Ana María Miranda, Jorge Venegas and seven other musicians recorded in the studio of the record label Círculo Cuadrado.

[Around 1979] a clandestine cassette came out, well, you couldn't buy it in any store, but there were many cassettes in a lot of places, and I would give them out to people [...] And they were really good songs! They were protest songs that called for rebellion, political work, opposition to the dictatorship. [...] They didn't have a name, we called them *Canciones de la resistencia*, they didn't have a title. (ibid.)

The singer Catalina Rojas (2006) affirms having recorded a cassette *live* for the Communist Party (PC), without specifying a date or name. Héctor Pavez Pizarro (2007) also remembers having participated in another recording of the PC – as well as *Vamos Chile* – singing a "cueca", yet he cannot remember the title of the cassette. Also Mark Mattern (1997) referenced a recording called *El paro viene... Pinochet*

se va!!!, which, according to the author, was recorded and put into clandestine circulation. There, “the musicians remained anonymous, enabling direct calls for the national strike and explicit denunciations of Pinochet” (ibid.).

It is also relevant to note that part of the material published by the record label Alerce like *La fuerza de un pueblo. Documental sonoro 1973-1989* (Alerce 2000) circulated informally, especially the radio fragments that were transmitted on September 11th 1973 during the *coup d'état* (Davagnino 2007). The publication of a pair of cassettes with recordings of the *coup*, called *Chile entre el dolor y la esperanza* (“Chile between sorrow and hope”, Unknown 1985a), were particularly important and were made possible thanks to the materials provided by the magazine *Análisis*, which published a report in 1985 on the sound recordings of the *coup d'état*, including their full transcription. These recordings were released by Alerce, whereas the article was written by the reporters Fernando Paulsen and María Olivia Monckeberg (Insunza 2009, p. 22).

What all these recordings had in common was that they were destined for clandestine circulation, as many of them had been completely created from clandestinity itself. Clearly, on cassettes of musical albums a large portion of the information about the musicians was intentionally left out. As such, the name of the artist loses its relevance, being that sometimes it was even “better not to know”³.

Undoubtedly, this study sheds light on the production of tapes whose echoes clearly incited uprising, relegating concealment to their dissemination while keeping frank proclamations adhering radically to the resistance for the recording. Directly related to political organizations or other institutions, these recordings had specific goals: ideological acclamation, dissemination of specific information, fund raising and strengthening of opposition networks. Productions such as *Vamos Chile, Pueblo, conciencia y fusil*, and *El camotazo*, are examples of this. In such productions, the music’s functional quality appears to be intensified, to the detriment of aesthetic concerns, in order to place civil disobedience front and centre. There are even explicit allusions to militia activity, through song calling for different modes of resistance, for example via arms, strikes, demonstrations, and grassroots organizing. That was the objective of these creations – to point out the fundamentals of rebellion, remind people of the reasons behind it and cast judgment on the ruthlessness of the regime. In sum, it aided in the formation of a universe of sound for the opposition, helping to strengthen the resistance.

SUMMARY

During the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, the music of resistance found cassette tapes to be a genuine base of support for dissidence since they provided for the first time the possibility of independent and secret recording – outside of the industry – allowing for personal control over homemade recordings. Via tape recorders, a large number of people managed to access diverse music, including music that was banned, as well as the commercialized products sold at high prices in the market. Non-commercial home-taping thus became massively popularized, fostered by the

listeners' eagerness to obtain the recorded material. The cassette offered a viable mode to select the content of the recording at will, providing the potential to re-record and re-record infinite "layers" of sound and facilitating the concealment of the rebellious sounds. The device's malleability fully coincided with the requirements of clandestinity, as it enabled its traces to be *erasable*, with the capacity to also be fragmented, mixed or definitively erased. By way of the cassette, censored music and other sounds, imagined especially for clandestinity, were housed in every copy. The cassette epitomized the *clandestine* experience.

ENDNOTES

1. This paper was initially presented at IASPM 15th Biennial Conference *Popular Music Worlds, Popular Music Histories* (Liverpool, 13-17 July 2009).
2. Furthering Brown's (2000, p. 365) idea that "[o]ne might say that a work of phonography is the recording itself".
3. For similar cases in Brazil and Uruguay, see Marcadet 2005 and Masliah 1987, respectively.

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Due to the clandestine nature of most of the recordings, nearly none of the authors have been identified.

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“Playlist value” in three local commercial radio stations¹

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ABSTRACT

Based on fieldwork in Trento, Italy, this paper investigates the process of playlisting in three commercial radio stations, illustrating the implicit and explicit norms that define this process. I call special attention to DJs and their activity of mediation between music makers and their audience – an activity that includes the choice and the manipulation of musical material for precise communicative goals. It is my aim to show how the definition of what is appropriate for the playlist, which I define as “playlist value”, is subject to different kinds of constraints. Among these, on the one hand we find more pressing structural restrictions from advertisers, music labels and functional features of the radio; on the other hand, we find less urgent, and yet just as effective cultural constraints, that push DJs to adjust their playlists to those of national networks.

KEYWORDS: radio; broadcast; playlist; DJ; network; influence.

In this paper I examine the process of music selection in three local radio stations operating in Trento, the capital of Trentino, an autonomous province situated in the North of Italy². The similarity between the playlists of these local radio stations and those of national networks seems to imply a similar structure and consistent patterns of influence at the different geographical levels. However, local and national broadcasts are subject to dissimilar and, sometimes, unrelated constraints. As we will see, local stations enjoy a certain degree of autonomy in the musical choice, and yet they tend to conform to national networks. In the following, I will analyse

the norms that inform the preparation of the playlist in these radio stations, and the local and wider factors that shape those norms.

PLAYLIST VALUE

Music selectors need to be able to judge promptly the affinity of available records with the style and identity of their radio station. Semiotically speaking, the categories that they use suggest which levels and types of coding (Stefani 1987) are relevant in the selection process. Drawing on the concept of “newsworthiness” (Galtung and Ruge 1965), I will define “playlist value” as a specific network of norms and instructions, more or less structured, more or less conscious, that determines the relevance of songs to a specific radio station³. This concept implies the existence of conventions and values, implicit or explicit, that guide the behaviour of those in charge of the music selection, namely the artistic director, DJs, the producer, the editors, the advertisers and, to a certain degree, the audience (see, for example: Killmeier 2001; Ahlqvist 2001; Wall 2000; Rothenbuhler and McCourt 1992; Barnard 1989; Rothenbuhler 1985).

Radio stations are subject to external influences, especially from major labels and advertisers, and yet, ultimately, the content of their programs is articulated in the environment of the station. The local features and the particular dynamics that characterise these three radio stations bear witness to the existence of a context in which the meaning of musical objects is constructed, communicated and interpreted daily by the members of staff, according to their beliefs about the expectations of the audience and their understanding of their professional role.

In my research, I have focused my attention on DJs due to their decisive role in this process of negotiation. Accordingly, I will first describe the tasks of DJs in the three radio stations under study, stressing their role in relation to the construction of the playlist. Thereafter I will examine the norms that define playlist value, showing how DJs, while being subject to different forms of constraints, potentially maintain a certain degree of agency. Finally, I will show how cultural influences operate to restrict this agency, coherently with, and yet independently from, wider economic factors.

For analysis sake, I will distinguish between musical and extra-musical norms on the one hand, and norms that are endogenous to the radio station or exogenous to it on the other, by means of reconstructing the mechanisms (Elster 1989) that constrain the choices taken by social actors within the case under study.

THE ROLE OF RADIO DJs

There are several elements that suggest that radio DJs represent a privileged subject of analysis for popular music studies. Even when they are not directly involved in the music selection, they still play a central role in the organisation of a radio station, and most of all they are in a crucial position of mediation between music makers and their audience. Furthermore, they manipulate songs and place them

in a new sonic framework, thus renegotiating musical meanings. In all the radio stations investigated, DJs participate in the compilation of the playlist and in some cases they also play the CDs, this being the reason why I have focused my attention on their practice.

Mixing responds not only to specific aesthetic criteria, but also to given practical aims. In order to meet the schedule, DJs often need to cut or fade a song; accordingly, they follow certain conventions that allow them to achieve their communication goal while maintaining in part the original song structure and producing an uninterrupted mix: if they talk over a song intro, they cut before the vocal part starts; if a song does not have an intro or outro, they use its hook or break as a cue, or they play pre-recorded jingles or bumper music to smooth the transition between songs or between music and speech.

However, DJs seem to be less concerned with the music they play than with what they have to say. They pay extraordinary attention not only to diction and voice modulation, but also to their style of voice-over on musical backgrounds⁴. For this reason, they have a preference for those songs that sustain the rhythm of their speech; more precisely, they favour songs with a structure that is regular and immediately intelligible, with straight and even time signatures, simple metres, regular structures with a brief introduction and a coda.

DJs recognize two styles of presentation: a "new school" style, which follows the speech delivery typical of contemporary radio networks, and an "old school" style, which professes more respect for the artistic value of a song and hence will try not to interfere with its actual structure. In the second instance, the voice-over is done preferably on background music that is played between songs.

The voice-over consists of a (more or less) creative intervention on pre-existing musical material, connoting a song or a set of songs with new meanings and values. The best DJs show exceptional skills that enable them to adapt music to their immanent expressive needs: songs, being set in a certain stream of communication that will partially renegotiate their previous symbolic content, are thus used to articulate specific messages.

It is worth noting that, even when the media content or its form are non-local, the actual process of renegotiation of meanings always takes place at a local level, on the basis of shared cultural conventions and codes. Broadly speaking, DJs and their audience share also a musical code: in particular, both parts should operate at the same level of competence (see Stefani 1987 and 1982) in order to engage in an effective communication while avoiding misunderstandings. This is the reason why DJs generally talk about gossip or, less frequently, about the lyrics or the music video of a song, rather than, say, its arrangement or chord changes. However, also the non-verbal and non-visual features of a song can be matter of discussion, although the use of technical verbal language as a metalanguage for musical meaning or structure is rare. In this sense, a song may be "tagged" through an association with specific behaviours or situations that seem appropriate to its style, for instance: "Turn up the volume, dance with Daft Punk!". More noticeably, DJs occasionally draw a comparison between different musical objects, a strategy that allows also

the “non-musos” (see Tagg 2001) to discuss about music with expertise. All these communicative strategies help provide music with new meanings or substantiate its established ones, in relation to set social practices, events and values.

MUSIC SELECTION: DEFINING PLAYLIST VALUE

In brief, we can distinguish three phases of the selection process, which progressively restrict the range of records appropriate for broadcast:

1. Supply, which mostly depends upon exogenous forces (distribution, record labels, promotion, other media, etc.); local radios have very limited control of these agencies;
2. Gatekeeping, which is generally entrusted to the artistic director and to senior DJs;
3. Selection of songs for the playlist from the records that have passed through the previous filters.

I will now analyse in more detail the dynamics that govern gatekeeping and music selection, which define music value from an endogenous point of view.

In Italy, as in other countries, FM radio is one of the main vehicles for record promotion (Prato 2010; D’Amato 2009; Ala et al. 1985). Music labels can monitor the music broadcast by the main public and commercial stations through a system called Music Control. Trentino is a small and peripheral region that is largely covered by mountains, making it impractical and unprofitable to implement such a system in its territory; as a consequence, it is not possible to monitor the song airplay of radio stations in this area. However, both advertisers and labels rely on audience ratings that place the different radio stations in a convenient hierarchy. Radio Dolomiti is the most popular local radio in Trentino and therefore it is supplied by several record labels with CDs without charge but in return for a tacit agreement that they will be aired. This would suggest that the other stations, which are not subordinate to a similar agreement, will enjoy a greater freedom in terms of music choice, yet we will see soon that it is not necessarily the case.

It might sound obvious, but only available records can be played. The artistic director and, sometimes, senior DJs take the role of gatekeepers with respect to new music releases: they have the power to decide whether to allow a record in the DJ booth or dump it in the vaults. Beyond music charts, gatekeepers rely on any other accessible source, such as fans’ requests and their colleagues’ advice; consequently, they tend to overestimate the representativeness of these sources. At any rate, the learning of the norms that define playlist value occurs through a process of socialisation in the radio environment that includes the acquisition of an explicit set of conventions and, most of all, the internalisation of implicit theories and values.

The language of a song is a very important criterion for determining playlist value. In Italy, differently than in other countries (Dubber 2007; Prévos 2001; Cloonan 1999; Dauncey and Hare 1999; Pickering and Shuker 1993), there is no local mu-

sic quota imposed by law; at any rate, the audience expects that Italian songs are included in the programs, so that all the local stations that I have observed dedicate approximately half of their playlist to songs with Italian lyrics, rather than to music specifically produced in Italy. This norm is common also in national networks, hence promoting a sector of the Italian music industry.

Music selectors pay significant attention to song lyrics: just as DJs try to divert the listeners' minds from their worries by means of an easy and light entertainment, the songs' content should be politically neutral and uninvolved in social issues. This choice is understandable from a strategic point of view, as a commercial radio station will want to target the widest audience possible. This goal is pursued also through a partial suspending of reality, and in particular of its unpleasant and controversial aspects.

The pursuit of an effect of "Disneyization" of reality (Bryman 2004) concerns not only the lyrics but also other features of a song. In this sense, music broadcast performs some of the functions of Muzak (Lanza 2004; Kassabian 2002). Since radio broadcast is aimed at keeping us company "through breakfast, work and travel without stimulating either too much attention or any thought of turning it off" (Berland 1990, p. 179), music selectors believe that a song that is suitable for the playlist should not upset or disturb the listener in any way. This is the main reason why they favour songs with a clean and polished sound, a regular structure, a constant dynamic range and a straight and even time signature. There is a further similarity between radio broadcast and Muzak, as both organise temporally the repertoire in a way that will affect the sensation of the flowing of time: respectively, the alternation of music and commercials or newscasts and the alternation of music and silence obtain the effect of fragmenting time, hence making repetitive jobs less boring (Tagg 1983).

Time plays a fundamental role in defining playlist value also in relation to the duration of songs. Singles are purposely edited in conformity with radio standards that demand a duration between three and three and a half minutes, a short introduction and a regular structure with a certain amount of repetition within the given time. DJs further contribute to this process of editing by means of cutting out redundant parts, mixing and voicing-over less interesting song parts. Moreover, time limits meet the necessity of playing a given number of records within a given time.

Sticking to a standard song length operates as one of the primary norms in broadcasting and provides a certain degree of regularity. In its turn, this predictability allows for both the unobtrusiveness of the broadcast and its brand identity, thanks to the recurrent use of jingles and other elements that remind the listener of the radio station they are tuned in to⁵.

In Italy radio formats are not as developed as in the UK and US (see, for example, Ahlqvist and Fisher 2000; Negus 1993; Berland 1990) and we rarely find stations with an exclusive musical orientation; as a consequence, all networks and many local stations tend to program the same songs, while genres different than mainstream pop hardly get any airtime during the day. However, this does not mean that day-

time programs are undifferentiated, but rather that they are differentiated according to an intuitive and simplified prediction of the target audience.

The reason for this simplification is that a local radio station generally cannot afford to conduct a survey of its audience. Consequently, DJs use any available information from which to draw inferences about the audience. These inferences are not only important for the attribution of playlist value, but also for the delivery of the voice-over: since DJs cannot see their audience, they form a mental image that they address in order to provide their speech delivery with spontaneity, by figuring to be speaking, from time to time, with domestic workers, students, convicts, a relative or a friend, and so on.

In any case, the main criterion for the differentiation of the audience is age group and not music genre. This distinction revolves first of all around students' life: in the morning, when schools are open, DJs favour Italian oldies for an adult audience; in the afternoon, when most schools are closed, they mainly play current hits. Other niche genres, like reggae, funk or house music, are confined within specific programs, generally at night.

Each station includes special formats with audience requests. Requests offer a strong feedback to the definition of playlist value, informing DJs about the expectation of part of their audience. This information, however, is often self-referential as there is no reason to assert that the active component of the audience is representative of the audience as a whole. Also for this reason, the local feature of a station is not constructed necessarily through the participation of its audience, at least not as far as the playlist is concerned. Quite the opposite, such formats are believed to interrupt the regular flow of the broadcast and are placed in separate sections of the program.

GLOBAL FEATURES OF LOCAL RADIO STATIONS

Similarly to how proximity and novelty define the newsworthiness of events (see, for example, Clayman and Reisner 1998; Berkowitz and Beach 1993), radio broadcasting responds to criteria that increase the playlist value of songs that are related – either in time or in space – to the world of the radio station⁶. In other words, we would expect that local stations compete with national networks also through a customisation of the musical program.

However, in this respect the three local radio stations do not differ significantly from national networks and they tend to compete on the same ground, that is by assimilation of standards in terms of presentation style and musical content, rather than through differentiation. Accordingly, they very rarely give airplay to local acts like rock bands, mountain choirs or brass bands, which nonetheless abound. As a matter of fact, the strictly local content is mainly limited to news and advertisements⁷.

Likewise, we would suppose that those radio stations that have fewer pressures from record labels will enjoy more freedom as far as music selection is concerned. We have seen that Radio Dolomiti has an agreement with record labels: because of

this, the station does not purchase a great deal of records, preferring to rely on what they get from their suppliers, which is mostly mainstream pop.

What may seem surprising is that also the other two stations in my sample, RTT and Radio Studio 7, tend to imitate the playlists of national networks, which they check regularly on the Internet and in specialised magazines. Similarly, they mimic the delivery style of the announcers of national networks. In general, DJs always keep an eye on national and international music charts, which are the best way to keep up to date with the most recent trends in popular music.

DJs of course are aware of this influence, and they look out for it: they rationalise it by arguing that this is what the audience expects from them. In this sense, Radio Studio 7, belonging to a radio distribution chain that includes about two hundred stations, broadcasts only some of its programs from Trento. Local broadcast, however, includes music programming, and there is no evident reason why both Radio Studio 7 and RTT should play by and large the same songs as national commercial networks.

Summing up, in all the three stations there is a tendency to localise news and advertising, and externalise musical choice. I have tried to show that there is no apparent external agency pushing them to do so, nor any clear evidence that this is what the audience really wants. In a certain sense, music selectors decide to be conditioned by the recording industry, thus giving up their "window" of opportunity for a "fence" of cultural constraints (Klein 2002) that seemingly is self-imposed. The point is that cultural constraints can be as substantial as economic, technological or political constraints. At any rate, even though in this case there is no noticeable association between local structure and wider cultural influences, we can assume that an association does exist at a larger level, where music labels exert control on the music programming of national networks, hence indirectly influencing local stations, and, feasibly, public service (see Wall 2000).

This example suggests not only that cultural processes bear a certain degree of autonomy, but also that they are in constant negotiation with wider socio-economic factors to the point that, for no obvious reason, they may even support those economic forces that normally would have no direct control on them. As we have seen, local radio stations possess a degree of autonomy, where they can potentially decline alternative ideas and cultural forms, namely through music programming. However, this generally does not happen, as where economic and technological constraints do not operate, global modes of production may find a way to impose themselves through cultural constraints.

ENDNOTES

1. This paper, originally entitled "What is *radiophonic* in a local radio station?", was first presented in 2003 at the IASPM biennial international conference in Montreal. Since then, radio broadcasting has undergone a profound transformation involving, among other things, the digitalisation of music libraries, the automation of playlists and the growth of Internet radio. Notwithstanding the time lag, this paper may still be of some interest since

it focuses on a time in which these changes were just about to happen, with some radio stations embracing these changes and others reluctant to discard familiar methods and technologies. In this article I have left intact the original thesis, while revising the text and the bibliography.

2. This paper reports on the findings of a six-month ethnography and semi-structured interviews at three radio stations, namely Radio Dolomiti, RTT and Radio Studio 7.
3. About the concept of "newsworthiness", Galtung and Ruge (1965) list a number of conditions that, if present, increase the chance of an event being registered as news. The comparison between news-making and playlist construction could be further emphasised through the concept of "distortion", which describes the accentuation of those aspects of a news item that make it newsworthy (ibid., p. 71). Accordingly, DJs adapt songs to the flow of broadcasting through mixing, editing and voice-over techniques.
4. About the delivery style of radio announcers, see Tolson 2006; van Leeuwen 1992.
5. Gabriele Biancardi is not only the most famous DJ at Radio Dolomiti, but also owns arguably the most popular voice in Trentino. This fame has allowed him to extend his professional activities beyond his job at the radio; as a matter of fact he is often invited as announcer at concerts, volleyball matches and other shows. At the same time, since his voice has become part of the brand of Radio Dolomiti, in all these occasions he is also promoting the station.
6. This happens for example when an artist performs in Trentino or releases a new record.
7. In support of this, market research indicates that news programs are more important than the playlist in establishing loyalty to a radio station (conversation with Gabriele Biancardi, who is also the artistic director of Radio Dolomiti).

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The Matadors: A difficult approach to songwriting for a Czech rock group of the 1960s¹

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ABSTRACT

In this paper I explore the origination of new songs of the Czech rock group The Matadors. The band derived its style from the British beat and rhythm & blues in the middle of the 1960s and matured the style for their own songwriting. I evaluate and compare official and unofficial historical sources and analyse the character of music and lyrics created by The Matadors.

KEYWORDS: Czech; music; lyrics; rock; rhythm & blues; 1960s.

The Matadors were a Czech rock group from the second half of the 1960s. Their music is an example of an adaptation of the white British rhythm & blues style². In order to research the social and musical context it was necessary to explore official sources such as studio recordings and published articles as well as unofficial historical sources such as various private holdings of musicians, their collaborators and fans. Unofficial sources were very important, especially in connection with the fact that we are speaking about a country with a totalitarian regime with very limited possibilities of free creation. The rock group released only one official LP and several singles. In addition, those official studio recordings were to a great extent limited by censorship, and by the low levels of experience and unwillingness of the studio technical staff. At the time, people employed in recording studios recorded only classical music or commercial pop music and they didn't understand

the specificity of the rock sound and electric instruments. Therefore the discovery of some unofficial recordings from the stage was very important to complete the whole image of the group, and to explore its history and approach to the formation of new songs. Preserved amateurish films, various manuscripts, postal correspondence and similar documents were also examined³.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE GROUP⁴

The Matadors arose in 1965 from the group Fontana (1964), which had roots in former rock'n'roll groups Komety (1959) and PRA-BE (1960, which meant Prague - Berlin because students from East Germany were among the members). The Matadors maintained a connection to East Germany thanks to manager (and former drummer) Wilfried Jelinek, who is a German born in Czechoslovakia. Among other things, he negotiated good technical equipment from a German trade fair. The band rehearsed for a long time without concerts in the Czech lands. The band performed only in East Germany in the beginning. It was a surprise for Czech fans when the group introduced a mature performance on the Czech stage in April 1966. The group had absorbed influences from the top British rock bands of the era: The Kinks, The Searchers, The Who, The Yardbirds, Pretty Things, The Spencer Davis Group and Them⁵.

I would like to point out that there were no records available with Western rock, jazz or pop music, and no TV or radio programs with such music in communist Czechoslovakia. Because the Czech audience had no chance to hear real original British rock, The Matadors started to prepare programs called *Beatová maturita* (meaning secondary school leaving examination, or in German *Das Abitur*). They would devote a particular concert to only one chosen Western group. During one concert they played only The Kinks, another day Pretty Things, etc. During the show they also presented reviews from the foreign press to the audience, especially from German sources. So their performances sometimes became something like an educational concert. Such a service for the public was very valuable.

The most important members of The Matadors were Jan "Farmer" Obermayer on the keyboards (saxophone eventually), Radim Hladík on lead guitar, Otto Bezloja on bass and Tony Black (real name Antonín Schwarz) on drums. The lead singer from 1967 to 1968 was Viktor Sodoma, who replaced singers and rhythm guitarists Vladimír Mišík and Karel Kahovec, who had been in the group from 1965 to the end of 1966.

The Matadors released two SP records (1966 and 1968), two EP records (1966 and 1967), and one LP (Supraphon 1968). Another two tracks appeared on an album compilation *Night Club '67* (1967). Later on, some raw but very important recordings from the stage were discovered: sixteen songs or fragments from 20 June 1966 and a fragment of one song from 6 October 1968. Stage recordings better characterized the nature and meaning of the band for the audience and for the development of Czech rock music in the 1960s.

Figure 1. The poster to *Beatová maturita* (1967). Archive of Popmuseum, Prague.

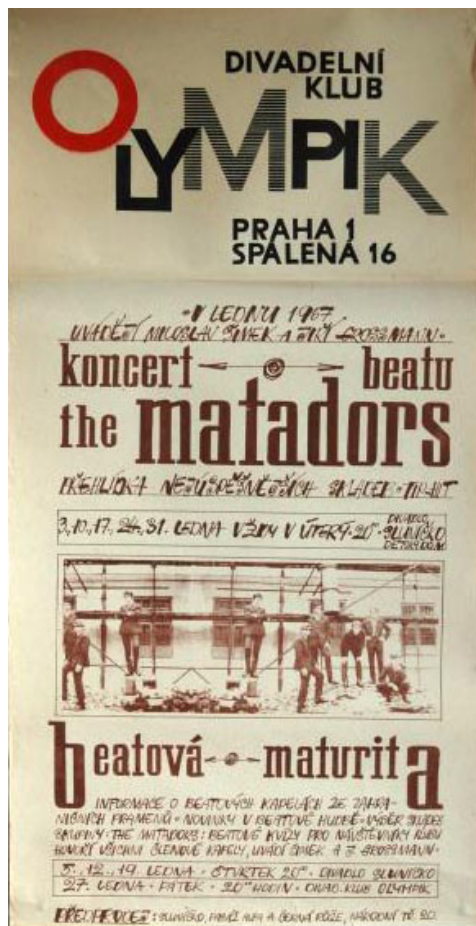
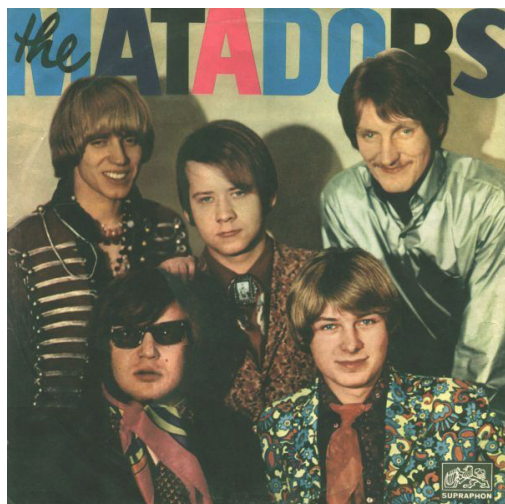


Figure 2. The LP cover (Supraphon 1968); from left: Sodoma, Obermayer, Hladík, Bezloja, Black (photo by Martin Hoffmeister).



The band succeeded in performing in the West: they played twice in Belgium and three months in three Swiss night clubs. The story of the band ends in the autumn of 1968. Part of the group became officially engaged with the musical *Hair* in Munich. Those musicians later stayed in the West as emigrants. The rest of the musicians remained at home and formed new groups such as Blue Effect⁶.

NEW SONGS BY THE MATADORS

How did the group reach the creation of their own music and lyrics? The band adopted the rhythm & blues style through the cover versions they copied. Members of the group exchanged a tape recorder with their favourite recordings and learned their parts individually. Then they rehearsed together. The distinction from the situation in the West, typical for all communist countries, consisted of the unavailability of sources, and that was the starting point for their own repertoire, which resulted from need: because of the unclear and technically very bad copies of recordings on tapes, they had to put the finishing touches on foreign songs very often. Good quality recordings were not available. Musicians often worked with fragments of recordings they recorded from the broadcasts of foreign radio stations such as AFN Munich, Radio Free Europe or Radio Luxembourg, which usually didn't play whole songs but only parts of them.

It was usual for beat groups from the non-English sphere to sing in English. The Matadors too considered English to be the proper language for rock music. On the other hand, we have to admit that the average level of knowledge of English was very poor in Czechoslovakia and in similar countries at that time. Sometimes the transcription of lyrics resembled something like a phone book. The English texts of Czech singers often didn't make much sense. Despite this, groups including The Matadors wanted to write new songs of their own in English.

Compositions arose from fragments thanks to momentary ideas, for instance, a longer guitar solo or a compilation of more lesser-known fragments of melodies, which are extremely difficult to identify today. An English textbook for children helped them in completing their first lyrics. Musicians found several short nursery rhymes, singsongs for children, and adapted them for rock and roll. The first of the songs that took its name from an English nursery rhyme was "Sing a song of sixpence". Such a creative completion of foreign material led to the process of composing whole new songs. As examples we can choose three songs from various periods and by various authors⁷.

"OLD MOTHER HUBBARD"

One of the first original songs by The Matadors was called "Old mother Hubbard". The music was written by singer Vladimír Mišík. The song had an extremely simple form. No refrain, no twelve-bar blues scheme, just a two-piece form, with a shorter second piece that nonetheless had a very long coda, offering enough time for improvisations.

There is a big melodic bass guitar part and similarly a very moving guitar part⁸ in the musical arrangement. The drums also play at extra quick time. The discreet organ connects the sound in between and the harmonica serves just as decoration.

Jan Farmer (Jan Obermayer) took quite a funny approach to creating, or adapting, the lyrics. The musician found a very old story about Mrs. Hubbard, again in an English textbook for children. Nobody from the group knew how old the rhymes were or what their origin was.

The rhyme was first published in 1805 as “The comic adventures of old mother Hubbard and her dog” (*Wikipedia* n.d.a). Sarah Catherine Martin (1768–1826) had written it on the basis of older sources. The topic probably came from the 16th century, from the era of Henry VIII. Some explanations refer to analogies with his divorce process.

After choosing the story, the adaptor of the lyrics had no idea of the historical connections. He just omitted some parts of the text and chose certain lines, which he then adapted to the electric blues rock character of the music. The Czech adaptor had to exclude the oldest parts of the poem in particular, because of the different rhythmical timing of the music. So the result, which combines different parts of the poem, had no real sense of sequences or relationship between them. But for Czech listeners and audiences of the second half of the 1960s, it was interesting. Electric blues rock and nonsensical, absurd images of some old lady and her dog fit together quite well in the end.

“OLD MOTHER HUBBARD” (“STARÁ MATKA HUBBARDOVÁ”)⁹

Music: Vladimír Mišík. Lyrics: Jan Farmer

Four three two one....

She went to the baker's to buy him some bread
When she came back, the poor dog was dead
She went to the joiner's to buy him a coffin
When she came back, the dog was a-laughing

She went to the out-house to get him some beer
When she came back, the dog sat in a chair
She got every other, the dog didn't mind
Tonight he slept, but later he just lied.

The dog lied, the dog lied, the dog lied...

THE CASE OF THE HATRED AND THE HATTER

The new songs by the keyboard player Jan “Farmer” Obermayer were more complicated in terms of harmony compared to those of Mišík. Songs include modulations and double voices which originated in his training and practice as a chorister.

Obermayer sang the second voice in all the other songs. Many of his own songs are written in a minor key with a modulation to parallel major keys.

Lyrics of the next song I analyse were in a Czech version as well as an English version: Czech lyrics "Zlatý důl" (which means "gold mine") and the English version "Hate everything except of hatter".

The song begins with pessimistic descending bass notes, which return again later, and then the sequence of chords A minor / C major / D minor / F major which brings contrast. Jan Obermayer loved to use heavy vibrato on his organ. It was a kind of fascination with the possibilities of the new instruments of that time, and was also a part of the Czech interpretation of blues and soul expression. The vocal expression of the singer Viktor Sodoma was also full of vibrato (see *Example 1*).

Again, the title of the song expresses the musicians' hopelessness with English. The English title of the EP record was *Hate everything except of hatter* - the use of the word "hatter" was really unwanted nonsense. Then they published a new recording of the song on the LP as "Hate everything except of hattered". It sounded a little bit better but it was still grammatically wrong. The authors probably wanted to make a paraphrase of Bob Dylan's quote "Don't hate nothing at all, except hatred" from the song "It's alright, ma (I'm only bleeding)", so the right version of the title should be: "Hate nothing except for hatred". Ultimately, Czech fans didn't care about the correctness of the English and just enjoyed the feeling and atmosphere of the song.

"GET DOWN FROM THE TREE"

The third compositional model of The Matadors in the late 1960s involved the guitarist Radim Hladík and the new singer as of 1967, Viktor Sodoma, who created songs together. The guitarist usually started the guitar riff and the singer completed the singing melody, which is rhythmically structured according to the riff. Tension and gradation is achieved by the blues character of the harmony, and through repetitions with crescendos and an acceleration of the movement.

The formal structure is built rather intuitively, without heeding familiar models. The consistency is achieved by the repetition of various interludes derived from the initial riffs. In the same way, the song was finalised with improvisations from all the members of the group.

The lyrics were developed with the assistance of Helena Becková, who was a friend of the group who knew better English. They involve a play with simple rhymes ("tree – three", "guy – by", "heart – apart", "me – see", "wild – child") as a series of challenges to lost love in order to retrieve it. The main phrase, which is the title of the song, sounds sharply rhythmical on the basis of the guitar riffs and melodic frame (see *Example 2*).

CONCLUSION

The group was active for a very short time. Czechoslovak audiences could only enjoy the group from 1966 to 1968. They started with the standard rock beat and

developed a rhythm & blues repertoire derived from their favourite British groups. They imitated and copied British rhythm & blues music without knowing the original black American blues. Gradually they reached a kind of style of their own, with their own new songs written in English. Their creation was rather intuitive than thoroughly contemplated.

Despite the many limitations and difficulties of independent culture in a communist country, The Matadors became real stars and legends of the late 1960s in Czechoslovakia. Among them there were other rhythm & blues groups like Framus Five, Komey, Flamengo, and later on Blue Effect, but The Matadors were the leading group of the time. Bass player Otto Bezloja, who unfortunately died in 2001 in Munich, was a leader with great vision. He also defined the look of the group. That image did not only consist of long hair and jeans and other features familiar to the hippie movement, there were also new phenomena for the late 1960s, like dressing in old military (hussar's) uniforms, women's clothing, the bisexual look and other obscure features.

The group didn't have a chance to enjoy excellent studio work. In addition, they had no idea how, for instance, the Small Faces worked in the studio. They copied their recordings and tried to recreate the same sound on stage. The original songs of The Matadors can be characterized as a result of a combination of the British rhythm & blues style with features of other rock and pop music, including some domestic influences like popular songs of the time.

Example 1. The published score of the song "Hate everything except of hatter" / "Zlatý důl"
(The Matadors 1968a).

zlatý důl

HATE EVERYTHING EXCEPT OF HATTER

HUDBA Jan Obermajer SLOVA Milan Šulc

Lead Guitar
Organ (Rhythm Guitar)
Bass Guitar

Guitar Booster

Vocal

1. Girl you are a wonder-foul na-ture's work with angels pace

and de-wil's soul with no brains.

Guitar Booster

Vocal

You're dull babe and dri-ving he had You're

bo-reing he and I'll be glad girl, to hear you say you'll go

13

far-a-way You're de-ten tal-king bout nothing

E E⁷ Ami C

I can't stand you crazy lau-ghing girls, you're sel-fish you're slingh you're

Dmi F G F

ba-ad Girl you are a wonder-foul

E E⁷ Ami G

na-ture's work with an-gels pace and de-vil's soul with no brains.

Ami G Ami E

Solo Guitar ad lib.

E⁷ Ami C Dmi

Example 2. The published score of the song "Get down from the tree" / "Slez dolů ze stromu" (The Matadors 1968a).

slez dolů se stromu

GET DOWN FROM THE TREE

HUDBA A SLOVA Radim Hladík a Viktor Sodoma

Solo Guitar

Lead Guitar

Rhythm Guitar

Bass Guitar

Bici

Solo Vocal
Refr. Get down from the tree

a-at once, on two three

1. I'm an un-hap-py guy
2. I love you till the end
3. So do one thing for me

I'm helpless as time goes by
I would like to kiss your hand
please get down from the tree

I have a bro-ken
So please come back to
you are get-ting too

heart me wild
I'm af-fraid that we may draw a-part.
I'm cry-ing as you can see.
you are not a child.

Guitar Booster

7

Solo Vocal
Refr: Get

Recitativ
Get down

from the tree get down yeah, yeah.

Solo Guitar

Solo Vocal
Refr: Get

Coda

Guitar Booster

down

D.S. al Coda

ENDNOTES

1. This paper was initially presented at IASPM 15th Biennial Conference *Popular Music Worlds, Popular Music Histories* (Liverpool, 13-17 July 2009).
2. See the monograph about the group The Matadors, Opekar 2007. The book also includes a CD with previously unreleased recordings from the stage from June 1966, and several other archive sounds and also image material.
3. For a list of sources see Opekar 2007, pp. 148-167. See also the interview with V. Mišík in Bezr 1999, pp. 9-24; and memorial books: Marek 2004, pp. 76-77; Císař and Obermayer 2010, pp. 47-48 and 77-103; Sýkora 1985, pp. 205-221.
4. Besides the monograph in Czech (Opekar 2007) there are some web pages in English like *Wikipedia* n.d.b, *Eastrock* n.d., information on Jan Obermayer's official web page (Obermayer n.d.); there is also a German page (*Ostbeat* n.d.).
5. Among the songs covered in 1965-66 were: "Where have all the good times gone", "It's too late", "Milk cow blues" (The Kinks); "My generation", "I can't explain" (The Who); "I'm a man, I'm not talking" (The Yardbirds); "Don't bring me down", "Mama keep your big mouth shut" (The Pretty Things); "Keep on running" (The Spencer Davis Group). This style has been completed by pieces like "Good bye my love" or "Farmer John" by the Searchers and similar softer groups.
6. The Blue Effect was a rock group established in 1968 by the guitarist Radim Hladík. The group is still active in 2012 and has produced a sideshow "Matadors Memory" since 2005. The tribute project "Matadors Memory" comprises of former members of the Matadors such as Viktor Sodoma and Jan Obermayer.
7. All analyzed songs are available on the CDs: Bonton Music 1995, Supraphon 2010 and recently Munster Records 2011. There are also extracts available on YouTube: "Old mother Hubbard" (<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NAnVmF23F4c>>; accessed 30.jan.12); "Hate everything except of hatter" / "Zlatý důl" (<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5IQyq39Gpk>>; accessed: 30.jan.12); "Get down from the tree" (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3phQ_JeqG5w>; accessed:30.jan.12).
8. The bass player Otto Bezloja was a leading personality of the group and the guitarist Radim Hladík is among the most appreciated guitarists of Czechoslovak rock music.
9. The transcription by Aleš Opekar according to the sound recording. See also Opekar 2007, pp. 154-155.

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Talking timba: On the politics of black popular music in and around Cuba¹

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the case of Cuban *timba*, the most distinctive popular style to emerge from Cuba during the 1990s, which presented itself as emphatically escapist, but became intensely political in the way it reflected the changes of Cuba during the *período especial* (the economic crisis that followed the disintegration of USSR), eventually falling victim to Cuban censorship. The paper analyses Cuban discourses regarding popular music and Afro-Cuban music, and discusses if and how timba could be considered as a type a “political music”. It highlights how the politics of timba were mostly articulated by signs embodied in its sounds and dance style, but did not conform to Western ideas of “world music”. In the late 1990s, in fact, on the international arena “Cuban music” came to be identified with the reassuring message of Buena Vista Social Club. The paper then examines the role of timba in today’s Cuba.

KEYWORDS: timba; Afro-Cuban music; black identity; Cuba.

INTRODUCTION

When compared to the position of music in capitalist societies, music in Cuba seems to live in a different, isolated world. Cuban popular music, however, is not immune from the trends and tensions that criss-cross the globe, nor, despite the romantic imageries circulating on the international arena, is untouched by the political and social challenges that Cuba has been facing during the last two decades.

At the close of the 1990s I did extensive research on timba, a style of Afro-Cuban urban dance music emerged at the beginning of the decade. In this article I would like to examine some issues that have troubled me after the end of my research and during the writing of my book on timba (Perna 2005). These relate to difficulties involved in discussing Cuban music both in and out of Cuba and connected to its international representation. Those difficulties, I believe, are ultimately related to conflicting ways of reading the meaning and the politics of contemporary Cuban popular music.

After contextualizing timba, I will look at the discourse on Cuban popular music and dance music in Cuba. I will then examine different ways of reading the meaning of timba in relation to its specific organisation of sound, take a look at its international representation, and, finally, consider the relevance of timba today. Although I will not give an analytical description of the style, I will provide some general information on timba and make reference to specific songs, which can give a taste of its sound to those who are not familiar with it. One of the first samples I would like to present is “Tema Introducción” from the album *El charanguero mayor* by La Charanga Habanera (Karlyor 2000), who are today the most popular and spectacular timba band.

TIMBA AS THE SOUND OF THE *PERÍODO ESPECIAL*

The emergence and popularity of timba in Cuba coincided almost exactly with the advent and peak of the *período especial*. “Special period in time of peace” was the euphemistic name given by Fidel Castro to the abysmal economic crisis that hit the island at the collapse of the Soviet Union. In 1991, Cubans witnessed a quick decline of their living standards, and started to experience food shortages, long power blackouts, lack of transportation, and all sorts of hardships (more or less, still in place today). Desperate for hard currency, the Cuban government decided to re-convert its economy to tourism. Opening to investment from the West, new hotels and nightclubs were hastily built in Havana and Varadero, the island’s most famous beach. Europeans and North Americans started to flock to Havana, bringing with them much-needed dollars.

The 1990s tourists’ *dolce vita* rocked to the sound of a new type of music, alternatively called *música bailable* (“dance music”), *salsa cubana*, or, more specifically, timba. Its creation was largely credited to Afro-Cuban composer José Luís Cortés, the leader of NG La Banda. In the early 1990s, he put together a sort of avant-garde dance music, which combined dance forms and mass appeal with jazz aesthetics and an extremely high performance standard (many of NG’s members, in fact, came from jazz-fusion supergroup Irakere). His songs carried references to Afro-Cuban musical forms, and employed black slang to tell stories about everyday life in the *barrios* (black neighbourhoods). At a time of dramatic transformations – with the beginning of *período especial* and the drastic downsizing of socialist welfare state – NG’s music seemed able to convey instances of hope and social change.

As a musical style, timba markedly contrasted with the sounds previously exported by socialist Cuba. Before the 1990s, Cuban music abroad had been mainly represented by politically-engaged singer-songwriters of the *nueva trova* like Silvio Rodríguez and Pablo Milanés, by music-and-dance shows such as Tropicana-style extravaganzas or the performances of the Conjunto Folclórico Nacional, and by few selected bands playing jazz and popular music, such as Irakere and Los Van Van. Around the mid-1990s, timba had been adopted by virtually all the most important bands. It received a preferential treatment by state-controlled contracting agencies, dominated Cuban radio stations, and could be heard in every tourist club. Cuban dance bands made extensive tours abroad, signed contracts with international record companies, and earned substantial amounts of dollars.

As it gained followers among foreign visitors, timba became also increasingly contentious. One of the reasons for this was the daring content of some songs, which commented on marginal characters, racism and sex tourism, and were often seen as veiled – or not-so-veiled – criticisms to the Cuban government. Around 1996, state-controlled press started to attack *música bailable* – that is timba – stigmatizing its relationship with the tourist industry, and particularly with the informal economy flourishing around tourist nightspots and the so-called “dollarization” of Cuban society. To the eyes of the Cuban authorities, those (state-run) places acted as magnets for illegal activities such as black marketeering and prostitution, and provided a focal point for a youth subculture alien to the revolution. Instead of aspiring to a life of work, self-sacrifice, and solidarity, impoverished Cuban youngsters appeared mesmerized by visions of pleasure, fashionable clothing, and material plenty, and crammed dollar-only tourist clubs seeking to “make friend” with foreigners. In the view of institutional commentators, timba and its musicians seemed to incite the youth to embrace capitalistic values: down with dialectic materialism, and long life to consumer culture!

The hide-and-seek game between *timberos* and the Cuban establishment came abruptly to a halt in 1997. In August that year, the authorities banned La Charanga Habanera from broadcasting, performing, and travelling abroad for six months. That action coincided with a police crackdown on prostitution, the closure of several dance clubs, a wave of tighter controls on the informal economy, and a more general restriction of civil liberties. Such authoritarian drift was probably at the root of the split of various timba bands, and, between 2001 and 2003, of the defection to the US of two of the most popular singers, Manolín aka *el Médico de la Salsa* (“the doctor of salsa”) and Carlos Manuel Pruneda.

1997, however, marked also the launch of *Buena Vista Social Club*, a foreign-produced album and film that would eventually become a global hit, and almost completely re-define the international image of Cuban music. At the beginning of the new millennium, and thanks to *Buena Vista Social Club*, on the global arena Cuba became the island of elderly musicians and retro sounds. That happened in the context of a tightening of US commercial embargo on Cuba, which – in practice if not in theory – penalized far more Cuban commercial music than supposedly traditional styles.

All those factors made a deep impact on timba, and, according to some people, pronounced its death (I will come later to this). In the following sections, I would like to examine how, at home and abroad, the meaning of timba came to be read in two radically diverging ways. At home, the press and the cultural establishment read and criticized timba in the narrowest political sense, that is, by looking at its lyrics and searching for “anti-Cuban” (that is, anti-government) content. Out of Cuba, the same music was instead perceived as quintessential dance music, namely, as a type of overtly entertaining, commercial music that tended to escape given notions of political meaningfulness.

CUBAN DISCOURSES ON CUBAN MUSIC

I will now look briefly at some difficulties related to the positioning of popular music in Cuba, by examining the role of dance music, its relation to Afro-Cuban culture, and its perceived meaning (or lack of it).

After 1959, in Cuba the institutional perception of popular music remained unclear, and even ambiguous. Despite its obvious prominence in people’s tastes, during the early decades of the revolution, popular music was perceived by the Cuban political and cultural establishment largely as an entertainment for the masses, with no ideological content and use (with the exception of *nueva trova*). So, while the Cuban state invested a considerable amount of resources on music education and material facilities for cultural production, providing musicians with work, a salary, and a retirement pension, for decades popular music remained out of the curricula of the new high-level music schools, was subject to little academic investigation, and was mentioned only cursorily in official documents.

Another problem lies in the fact that a considerable part of Cuban popular music (and certainly of Cuban music as it is known in the West) is made for dancing and is essentially Afro-Cuban music. This has not always been acknowledged by Cuban musicologists. A quick examination of post-1959 Cuban literature, for example, shows how the use of the qualifier “Afro-Cuban” was essentially limited to expressions bearing visible, explicit African traces: “Afro-Cuban music” included the ritual music of black religions such as *santería*, *palo monte* and *abakuá*, but not expressions with patently black matrixes and audiences such as *rumba* and *música bailable*. Such a curious angle – at least, from a non-Cuban perspective – arguably relates to policies that, after the revolution, sought to promote the construction of a new society and a unified Cuban culture, but that, in doing so, downplayed the contribution of the culture of black Cubans to contemporary popular culture. Such a backward-looking image of Afro-Cuban culture, therefore, exposed it to the risk of folklorization, and sometimes even justified its repression (Vélez 2000).

The problem with the definition of the role of black popular music in Cuban society, in a way, has become all the more pressing during the *período especial*, for at least two related reasons. Firstly, because the economic crisis has coincided with a powerful re-emergence of Afro-Cuban culture, visible not just in music, but also in religion, dance, visual arts, literature, and cinema. And secondly, because the

crisis has generated new social inequalities that have particularly affected the black sector of the population (De la Fuente 2001). The combination of those factors has made the issue of the discussion on the role of blacks and their culture in Cuba at the same time urgent and extremely sensitive.

Aside from the pitfalls of cultural institutions and Cuban musicology, another difficulty is represented by the fact that in Cuba both musicians and ordinary people are generally reluctant to enter discussions on issues that might appear in any way as “political”. Since this qualifier applies to issues related to official ideology, the government, and the Communist Party, most popular musicians indeed carefully avoid discussions on anything that might be labelled as such. Rather, they would often claim that all they are doing is simply offering a form of entertainment to their audiences. Such explanation is apparently confirmed by a Western scholar, who in 1990 wrote that “much of the music that Cubans listen and dance to today has no connection at all with the revolutionary message”. He continued:

It is evident that the revolutionary leaders are very far from turning popular music to maximum advantage as a medium for transmitting the revolutionary message. Consequently, this highly important realm of Cuban popular culture still remains, for most part, immune to the monolithic politicisation process. (Medin 1990)

This, certainly, holds true if we look at the overall lyrical content and use of Cuban popular music. And yet, the very fact that *música bailable* has largely escaped the politicisation process and avoided getting enmeshed in official propaganda, might be read in an exquisitely political fashion. For example, as a testimony of the importance and power of *música bailable* in Cuba, and of the ability of dance bands to retain control of their music and activity, by carving themselves a niche where they have been able to remain relatively immune from institutional interference. This has enabled their music to stay clear of official ideology and close to the street, thus endorsing a vision of popular culture “from below”, in contrast with the past-oriented representations of Afro-Cuban culture offered by academics and folkloric ensembles. From this point of view, clearly, even the unashamedly hedonistic image of Cuban dance music may be read as a challenge to the perceived pretentiousness of the official political language.

POLITICAL VS. POPULAR? THE ELUSIVE MEANINGS OF TIMBA

A question that underlies any discussion on Cuban popular music – and indeed, on Cuban cultural identity – is: which music is popular in Cuba? Here the meaning of “popular” appears both important and contentious. Cubans listen to a great deal of music, both national and foreign, and there is no doubt that styles as diverse as *son*, *nueva trova*, rock, rap, and *reggaeton* (or *reguetón*) today all represent legitimate brands of Cuban music. However, one also needs to question how much those styles are, literally, popular. In the absence of statistics, both empirical evidence

and the general opinion suggest that *música bailable*, and timba as a subcategory of it, occupy a central place in the musical consumption of Cubans, and especially black Cubans.

If *música bailable* is so important, what is then its significance? Is it meaningful, or, as musicians themselves often seem to suggest, it is just a type of escapist music? *Música bailable* has frequently been portrayed as a kind of “tropical music” that embodies Cubans’ exuberant, sensual, and festive nature. Already a major element in the representation of Cuban music of the past, such an image has been copiously exploited during the 1990s by state agencies that promoted Cuban music abroad, with an obvious eye to the marketing of tourism. Cuban travel brochures and CD sleeves, in fact, abound of images of palms, beaches, African drums, and female hips.

On the other hand, both the advocates (for example, Acosta 1997) and the detractors of timba (for example, Tabares 1996) have read it as a socially relevant – and therefore loosely political – musical form, albeit to substantiate opposite views. Whether *timberos* actually intended to make political statements through their songs, is open to speculation. But *música bailable*, and particularly timba, have often taken upon their shoulders the role of Caribbean popular song as a form of social chronicle. And since “some of the strongest claims for the political importance of popular music have been made by its greatest enemies” (Street 2001), one might reasonably argue that the fact that timba has been vehemently attacked by the Cuban press and censored by institutional entities made it into an eminently political expression.

However, what strikes me is that most of the arguments made in Cuba, both in favour and against timba, were focused on songs’ lyrics (Casanelas Cué 1999). This recalls the argument usually employed in the West to celebrate the virtues of “political music”, that is its textual politics. According to the Centre for Political Song established at the Caledonian University in Glasgow, for example, a “political song” is a song

containing a political thread. The genre includes, for example, protest songs, campaign songs, songs providing a social commentary or supporting a historical narrative, songs of the Labour movement, traditional patriotic songs and political parodies. (*Centre for Political Song* n.d.)

Could timba be read as a form of political song according to those modalities? I very much doubt it. Even though timba songs surely had a social resonance in Cuba, they were highly unlikely to be seen as conveying explicit political messages or expressing some form of protest. And even when they did appear to articulate some sort of social commentary, at a closer analysis they revealed lyrics that showed a great deal of ambiguity.

Neither did the public image and attitude projected by timba bands and artists, who showed nothing of the intellectual or militant approach of engaged singer-songwriters or of the rebellious stance of protest rockers, appear “political” – in the

sense generally held in the West. Rather, their image looked closer to that of Latin American dance music outfits such as salsa bands, with slick music-and-dance shows, fronted by sexy male singers attracting a predominantly female adoring crowd. That was hardly the type of image, attitude and audience considered typical of political song. My argument here is that an explanation of the politics of timba standing solely on its verbal message did not tell the whole truth, and probably missed the point.

TIMBA'S POLITICS OF SOUNDS

I will now discuss how, I believe, timba managed to be political in another, deeper sense. The point I want to make here is that the main political dimension of timba was to be found not in its lyrical content, but in the way it articulated Cuban black popular culture by means of a variety of signs.

This is not to say that lyrical content was irrelevant. Songs, indeed, sometimes did comment on controversial issues or Afro-Cuban culture and life in the *barrio*. But they also hinted at the life of black Cubans through the usage of language and slang, for example by employing words taken from Afro-Cuban languages, or borrowed from black youth's street slang terms (for example, *temba*, *fula*, *Yuma*, *bisne*, *waniki*, *chen*, respectively, "middle-aged man", "dollar", "US", "business", "money", "exchange"). The fact that those words often derive from American English, tells a great deal about the cultural landscape of timba subculture.

Then there was what might be called an indexical use of music. Since everybody in Cuba knows that blacks are the most dedicated followers of dance music, *música bailable* has become itself an indicator of black popular culture, and of its power. And the fact that timba bands and audiences are overwhelmingly black, in turn, confirms the "blackness" of the music.

More specifically, the reference to Afro-Cuban culture was encoded into timba's music and sound. Instrumentation, for example, included prominently drums and Afro-Cuban percussions. Then you had songs' musical form, which derived from the bi-partite structure found in *son* and rumba, with a first melodic, narrative part, followed by a second, call-and-response section. The first part was sung by a solo singer and resembled a song or ballad, while the second one contained alternations of *coros* (choral refrains) and *guías* (semi-improvised responses by a singer). Needless to say, this second section was, and is, the most lively and catchy part of songs, the most awaited for by dancers, and the one that usually contains the sauciest expressions.

Timba showed also a particularly "black" way of building its musical texture and accompaniment, different from the average rock or pop song. As in salsa, the accompaniment in timba was produced through the overlaying of a series of percussive, harmonic and melodic ostinatos, which followed a construction principle found in West African music. The intertwining of syncopated arpeggios, displaced accents, melodic fragments, and rhythmic ostinatos, produced timba's typically shifting and driving texture.

Timba songs, then, conveyed references to black culture via the quotation of Afro-Cuban melodies and rhythms. For example, of religious chants pertaining to the domain of *santería*, the most important African-derived religion in Cuba, or of rhythms related to specific *santería* deities. You'll find one example of a devotional chant placed at the beginning of "Y que tu quieres que te den?", by Adalberto Álvarez y su Son, from their eponymous album (Artcolor 1993). In the early 1990s that song, which was stylistically midway between *son* and *timba*, launched a fad of dance songs that made explicit references to Afro-Cuban religions.

Other times, songs made reference to black secular forms such as rumba, a voice-and-percussion, music and dance typical of lower-class *barrios*, that holds a paramount musical and symbolic role in black Cuban popular culture. Those references could be found in many songs by NG La Banda. In "El Trágico" ("the tragic guy"), from the album *Cabaret estelar*, aka *Échale Limón* (Caribe 1995), J. L. Cortés and NG La Banda open the introduction with a rumba, then superimposing the beginning of Grieg's *Piano concerto in A minor, op. 16*, producing a sort of tragicomic effect.

In NG La Banda's "Los sitios entero", from the album *No se puede tapar el sol* (Egrem 1990), a literal quotation of rumba makes up the entire central section of the song. Such contrasting part is placed between the first and third "electric" sections of the song, where one can appreciate the virtuoso playing of NG's horn section. Very often, however, dance songs refer to rumba quasi-subliminally, through the simple use of the rumba *clave*, a little ostinato played by woodsticks throughout the song. Rumba was also an important root of timba's dancing style. Although I do not have here space to expand on the subject, it is relevant to note how such ubiquitous presence of rumba in timba has led Cuban commentators such as Helio Orovio to dub this style as the "resurrection of rumba" in a modern context.

As I said, during the 1990s dance music has played in Cuba an important role in the process of re-emergence of lower-class black cultural expression, an aspect of Cuban culture that was supposed to have been swept away by the progressive social reforms and cultural developments of the revolution. Take, for example, African-derived religions. Often strongly resisted by the government during the 1960s and 1970s, they powerfully re-emerged during the 1990s to become enormously popular, to the point of featuring prominently in several successful dance songs. Rather than making a mystery of their affiliation to *santería*, in the 1990s popular musicians exhibited and celebrated their bonds with Afro-Cuban religion through their songs and their visual style.

Contrary to the ideology of naiveté and primitivism that underlies tropical representations of Caribbean music, however, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the association of timba with black cultural expression is not by any means "natural". Whatever their claims might be, *timberos* have constructed their music through an extremely conscious aesthetical and ideological *bricolage* of musical/cultural elements of Cuban, Caribbean, and US origin. Timba musicians have used those elements to build up their audience, and sometimes to challenge the authorities while trying not to incur censorship. In such a context, music became important not only for what it said, but also for what it was seen to represent to both local and foreign

audiences, that is, a symbol of black pride and a testimony of the resilience of Afro-Cuban popular culture.

DISCOURSES ON CUBAN MUSIC ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

While often undervalued (or positively disliked) by the cultural establishment in Cuba, *música bailable* has also been frequently misrepresented abroad, where different pictures of Cuban popular music have often been conflated into an image of otherness, exoticism, and disengagement.

One common representation is that of Caribbean music as tropical music that I have mentioned earlier, which has contributed to dump Cuban *música bailable* into the same bin with salsa, *merengue*, and *bachata*. Although such labelling may appeal to people who are into Latin dancing and, more in general, to many Latin Americans, it puts timba into a cultural zone seen by many listeners (notably, rock and world music fans) as cheap and tacky. Such misunderstanding, which presupposes a binary view that thinks it impossible for music to conjugate entertainment and social meaningfulness, has frequently emerged from articles that extol the virtues of timba:

What is Timba? Let's quote. 'Timba is the real, vibrant contemporary music of Cuba. Energetic and uplifting, timba embraces jazz, reggae, pop, funk, rap, samba, son as well as salsa, but it is more percussive than salsa, with a stronger bassline, building up to a [...] climax – and is very danceable!' It's uplifting all right. [...] It's just – fun, more than anything. (Ohmart 2001)

The other image of Cuban music that has gained momentum since 1999 has been the one generated by the album and the film *Buena Vista Social Club*. That is an image of difference and distance articulated on many levels – physical, cultural, and temporal – which took the form of a picture of a city of architectural grandeur and decay, of cigar-smoking octogenarians, of old-fashioned melodies and sounds. The rise of *Buena Vista Social Club* has thus redirected the attention of global audiences towards narratives of authenticity, promoting a brand of essentialised “traditional music” that was nothing but a form of *tourist art*, that is, a type of art produced by locals on the basis of the aesthetic expectations of the international market.

CONCLUSION

Is timba dead, then? After its heyday in the mid-1990s, timba has seen the global success of *Buena Vista Social Club*, the rise of Cuban rap, and then the explosion of *reguetón*. This has led some observers to assert that timba was dead and buried. According to one Cuban article, for example, “as a commercial product, timba was a chimera: as a music and a form of dancing, it represented one of the most hallucinating moments of the 20th century” (García Meralla 2004).

By suggesting that timba was an episode related to the particular context of Cuba in the 1990s – that is, to the lowest point of the economic crisis of *período especial* – Cuban critics arguably wished to shelf timba as an ephemeral phenomenon, evading its difficult cultural and political questions. In a similar fashion, a foreign commentator wrote:

By the end of the decade, [...] the timba scene was in steep decline: labels bankrupt – bands censured, clubs closed and some of the music's stars in exile. In 1999, the National Folkloric Ensemble of Cuba included the *tembleque* in its repertoire – its performance invariably causing respectable theater audiences to break into laughter. The tremor of timba was now carefully choreographed by a professional troupe, and the social history of Afro-Cuban performance repeated itself in this trajectory from marginal *chabacanería* ('crassness') to folkloric spectacle. (Hernández-Reguant 2004)

Undeniably, during the 2000s, timba has lost much of its novelty value, first in favour of nostalgic *soneros*, then of socially-engaged *raperos*, and finally of *reguetóneros*. In my view, however, it is not dead at all. As we start to historicize it, rather, we must look at it as one part of much older and wider threads. Firstly, we would need to examine timba as part the thread of Cuban *música bailable*, which, from the mid-19th century *habanera* on, has drawn on black popular culture, entertained Cubans of all classes and colours, and attracted the wrath of philistines. From this point of view, even carefree *reguetón*, which in the last few years has met a phenomenal success with black Cuban teenagers, appears to stem from the same type of Afro-Caribbean culture and presents many parallels with both rumba and timba. For example, in the use of black slang, of reiterative refrains, of a provoking dance style, and of its ability to solicit moral condemnation by the establishment².

And secondly, timba has been a testimony of, and an actor in, the process of reassertion of Afro-Cuban popular culture that has emerged with the *período especial*, and has helped to draw black popular expression from the margins towards the centre of the Cuban cultural scene. Such process, which shows parallels with similar phenomena visible elsewhere in Latin America, has fed a growing consciousness about the cultural and political feats and dilemmas faced by black people in Cuba.

This complex picture of timba, obviously, is in striking contrast with both the escapist image of Caribbean dance music, and the simplistic, unproblematic representations of traditions constructed by *Buena Vista*. This latter case, I think, has been particularly worrying, because of the persuasive force of its discourses of authenticity, which claimed to defend musical diversity from the assaults of global popular culture – while in fact showing the conservative implications of the narratives of difference that inform world music and surround the boom of ethnic travel, fashion, and food.

In a way, the difficulties and contradictions of Cuban popular music in the West have been unwillingly summed up by Ry Cooder, the man who masterminded the success of *Buena Vista Social Club*:

Salsa is boring but there are kids out there doing something good. It's never going to be this classic stuff we love but that has been disappearing all over the world. These old guys are going to disappear in a New York minute and we can't sit around moping about it. The sun is setting on these people. (Williamson 1999)

In the face of such anachronistic longing for near-extinct sounds (which helped to sell 8 million copies of the CD) and of the present popularity of *reguetón* in Cuba, I argue that up to this day *música bailable* and timba remain on the island the main recreational music of black adults. If you pay a visit on Saturday nights to La Tropical, the open-air arena that represents the academy of black music and dance in Havana, you're not likely to see young rockers, elderly *soneros*, or fashionable rappers. In places like those, and at open-air concerts, *música bailable* continues to reign supreme.

For this reason, I would like to end my paper on a musical note, with one more song by La Charanga Habanera. In 2001, they recorded in their album *Chan Chan... Charanga!* a soulful dance version of "Chan Chan" – thus providing a pointed musical response to Cooder's sentimentalism and a powerful testimony to timba's adventurous spirit.

ENDNOTES

1. This paper was first presented at IASPM 13th Biennial Conference *Making music, making meaning*, Rome, 24-30 July 2005.
2. Interestingly, after targeting timba in the late 1990s, polemics on the social appropriateness of the lyrics of popular music in Cuba have hit *reguetón* (Castro Medel 2005).

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(Dis)placing musical memory: Trailing the *acid* in electronic dance music¹

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ABSTRACT

The *acid*, a museme, is the unstable element in acid house. It is arguably both the spiritual and hedonistic apex of psychedelic music, enabling a shift in perception. In electronic dance music, the journey of the *acid* museme seems to have developed from Phuture's "Acid tracks" during the mid-1980s in Chicago club the Muzic Box. The new sound of acid house, as well as acid's implicit reference to the psychedelic drug LSD, inspired a moral panic in the UK during the late 1980s. By the early 1990s, acid house further influenced the development of trance music in Germany and elsewhere. Yet, a similar musical figure can be recognised in earlier electronic acid rock experiments of Tangerine Dream. The discussion first maps out the development of this museme by placing key-moments geographically. However, this paper concludes that musical memory seems to operate *rhizomically*, in a *detrterritorialised*² (displaced) manner.

KEYWORDS: memory; rhizome; acid; trance; electronic dance music.

INTRODUCTION

This paper traces a broken genealogy of the *acid*, a ubiquitous unstable and irregular synthesised sound sequence that can be heard in electronic dance music subgenres, such as acid house and trance. The *acid* museme, a basic musical figure or sign, appeared in Chicago during the mid-1980s as a central component of the acid house music genre, which was subsequently adopted in various forms of electronic dance music (EDM), in particular trance, especially the Goa trance

subgenre, which gained global popularity as psytrance from the mid-1990s onwards. Here, I wish to focus on the *rhyzomatic* and *detrterritorialised*² manner in which musical memory operates, with reference to acid moments in acid house, acid rock, trance and psytrance “Acid tracks”, represented by, respectively, Phuture (Trax 1987); “Phaedra” by Tangerine Dream (Virgin Records 1974); “Acperience 1” by Hardfloor (Harthouse 1992); and “LSD” by Hallucinogen (Dragonfly Records 1995).

ACID HOUSE

In electronic dance music, *acid* refers to the modulating unstable sequence and synthesized sound generated by a modulating bass synth-sequencer, the Roland TB 303 Bassline. The unstable tonality and shifting textures of its squelchy sounds of the *acid* sequence create a sense of *jouissance*, comparable to Barthes’ description of hearing the “grain of the voice” (Barthes 1993). In the case of the grain of voice, the listener connects subconsciously of the body that generates the sound. However, in the case of acid house, the sound of the synth-sequencer, the machine, is foregrounded; the *acid* sound seems to suggest a displaced, dislocated, yet simultaneously *glocalised* experience of electronic technologies³.

Phuture’s “Acid tracks” (Trax 1987) developed during the mid-1980s, after starting life (as many innovations do) as a type of accident. When Spanky (Earl Smith Jr., one of the members of Phuture) bought a Roland TB303 Bass Line machine, it was without pre-programmed sequences – as a result, when it was switched on for the first time, it generated random sequences, playing “something crazy”, as he explained to me in 1992,

I had run across it and I called him [DJ Pierre] on the phone to come and listen to it, and he got to it and he started turning the knobs changing my frequency [settings of the EQ] of it, and that’s what it started from. [...] But the funny thing when the batteries ran out the same exact *acid* was coming back in. (Smith Jr. 1992)

DJ Pierre (Pierre Jones, co-member of Phuture), added to this, “Not ‘Acid tracks’ though. That has to be recreated every time. [...] It would be the same notes of being the same order – it’d be there but it just might be going to a different beat in some parts” (Jones 1992).

“Acid tracks” became meaningful once house music drum programming, keyboards and voice were added, ready for DJ Ron Hardy’s club night at the Muzic Box in Chicago, of which Pierre remembers, “Parties – oh! Forty-eight-hour marathon parties at Ron Hardy’s [...] a whole weekend straight, non-stop” (Jones 1992). A demo of the track was presented on cassette tape; needed to be played several times to convince the mainly African-American and Latino crowd, who were used to a mix of jacktracks (raw Chicago house) and electronic post-punk pop from Europe. Once used to the sound, it quickly became a local dance floor hit and a few years

later, in 1987, it was finally released, by the Chicago record label Trax Records, as “Acid tracks”.

ACID ROCK

Larry Sherman, owner-manager of Trax Records, claims to have bestowed this track the name “Acid tracks”, telling me in 1992 in the dusty office of his equally dusty vinyl pressing plant that it reminded him of acid rock, which mainly emerged from Germany during the 1970s. “Acid” connotes a psychedelic fragmentation of perception and dislocation of meaning due to a deconstructing effect on thought patterns that may also be induced and enhanced by psychedelic, or hallucinogenic, drugs, like LSD, Lysergic Acid Diethylamide, which is colloquially referred to as “acid” in the American-English speaking world. In the context of the creation of “Acid tracks” the term “acid” indicates this as a concept: a psychedelic subjectivity is produced, which is embraced in acid house, trance, as well as acid rock. The instability of sound texture, tonality and musical structure of the *acid* museme seems to produce a gap (or door) in perception; as such, the *acid* has a psychedelic subjectivity embedded within its very structure.

In this case, musical memory works rhizomatically. A similar musical figure can indeed be heard in electronic acid rock experiments of German band Tangerine Dream, in particular the title track of the album *Phaedra* (Virgin 1974), a novelty record that in the UK reached mass audiences beyond the new age scene with a peak chart position of 15 (*ChartStats* 2012). In the middle section, an unstable oscillator (sound generator) of a Moog synthesiser drifts, resulting in psychedelic electronic arpeggios that, in hindsight, are reminiscent of the modulated sequences of Phuture’s “Acid tracks”; listen, for example, to a section between mins. 9-9.30. Although independently created, at least a decade apart in different parts of the world, both recordings seem to articulate a bewildered feeling of the machine being out of control. Band member Edgar Froese recalls that:

Technically, everything went wrong – the tape machine broke down, there were repeated mixing console failures, and the speakers were damaged, because of the unusually low frequencies of the bass notes. [...] ‘Phaedra’ was done in one go. Chris had pressed the button to start the bubbling bass note, but it wasn’t right, so after a while the bass drops out. Then he started tuning the bass note while he was running it, and all the time, the engineer was recording. So what you hear today was in fact a rehearsal! (Prendergast 1994)

Tangerine Dream’s later album *Force majeure* (Virgin 1979), features a tighter sequence on the second half of the track “Thru metaphoric rocks”; according to band member Chris Franke,

It was a new phase, more structured. The music was more heroic, a little bit like art-rock again. We got some more keyboards, and our big Moog modular

was more stabilised inside -- new oscillators came in, and new envelopes.
(Prendergast 1995)

After a guitar rock introduction, a propelling sequence of arpeggiated *sixteenth* notes are combined with synthesised drone washes and dream-like sound effects for over ten minutes at 138 BPM.

HARD HOUSE

In the UK, the very term *acid* caused the start of a well-documented moral panic, due to the after-hours illegality of many of the dance events and the association of its name with psychedelic drugs. It may be argued that this media-amplified panic provided free advertising, popularising after-hours dance parties and with it, “acid” became a rallying cry for young people, eventually stimulating the popularity of rave culture (Thornton 1995; Rietveld 1993; Redhead 1990). During the 1990s *rave* became a global electronic dance music phenomenon (St. John 2009; Reynolds 1998), mostly accompanied by a version of electronic trance music.

When acid house gained popularity in the UK, British outfit KLF created one of the earliest examples of the trance genre with “What time is love (Pure trance 1)” (KLF Communications 1988), adding a four-to-the-floor techno beat to an arpeggiated sequence that sounds almost identical to the arpeggios in Tangerine Dream’s “Thru Metaphoric Rocks”. KLF’s dramatic trance experiment seemed to have been an isolated British moment, somehow too self-conscious, too ironically poppy, too post-punk situationist. Instead, the development of trance music, via hard house, may be attributed to a combination of Chicago acid house and a genealogy of the rave party format, rather than the cosmic krautrock of Tangerine Dream.

Hardfloor’s “Acperience 1” on their 1992 *Hardtrance acperience EP* (Harthouse 1992) is a mould-breaking example of how “trance revived the acid house sound of 1987-8” (Reynolds 1998, p. 184). This German instrumental track moves away from the minimalism of Phuture’s “Acid tracks” by multi-tracking and looping the modulating squelching acid sequences of the Roland TR-303 to produce ornate sonic shapes, exaggerating its psychedelic sensibilities into a tightly arranged infinite mirage – a virtual *acid* baroque. Breakdowns of the bass and drum patterns (the actual cutting out of these instruments, creating a break in the rhythm section) allow whooshing electronic textures of sequenced arpeggios to freely develop and dominate the sonic space that is opened up; listen, for example, between mins. 5.00-6.00 into the track. At the end of each breakdown, the kick drum is re-introduced by a rolling snare riff, running in sixteenths, that produce a sense of excited anticipation, like the announcement of an amazing circus trick. In this manner, this track offers a blueprint for the structure of trance, eventually providing psytrance with its sense of psychedelic drama.

PSYCHEDELIC TRANCE

In the development of trance, one cannot point to a single, unbroken, line of descendance from acid house, yet the memory of acid house lingers on. As a dropout countercultural destination for young people, first from West Europe and America during the 1970s, the beaches of Indian province Goa became a focal point for an international party crowd. By the late 1980s, industrial post-punk and electronic dance music became part of the DJ's soundtrack. Instrumental recordings were favoured, taking dancers on a subliminal electronic trip. While the monsoon moves across India, inspired musicians tweaked the sound back in their home countries, ready for the next dry winter season in Goa.

Where Goa trance indicates a specific locality, a sense of origin (not of production but as an inspirational crossroads), the term psytrance is preferred to address the global dispersion of this electronic dance music genre, in countries like Israel, Japan, Brazil, Australia or Finland. On the threshold between the formats of Goa trance and psytrance is the track "LSD" which can be heard on the album *Twisted* (Dragonfly Records 1995), by Hallucinogen, a.k.a. English electronic musician Simon Posford. Layers of modulated sequenced *sixteenths* do not represent but, rather, induce a twisted state of mind. In particular the break between mins. 2.00-2.30 brings together acid house wobbliness with the persistent accuracy of jittery digital programming and spoken voice samples that refer to psychedelic experiments. Here, the *acid* sound seems to have shifted in meaning, heralding a new relationship with technology, no longer one of mad machines but also of uncontrollable information overload⁴.

CONCLUSION

The popularity of versions of the *acid* museme in a range of loosely related music genres seems to indicate global parallels in subjective shifts within the relationships between (hu)manity and machine. The discussion has shown how such patchy musical associations and links act as both broken and flowing lines that give shape to the formation of musical genres and are paradoxically also their undoing, as they unwind and make new alliances, new connections in new localities and new contexts. Such a *rhizomatic* multiplicity of network connections demonstrates the displacement and dislocation of musical memory, which thereby behaves in a *de-territorialised* and nomadic manner within the communication networks of global cultures.

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ENDNOTES

1. This paper was initially presented at IASPM 15th Biennial Conference *Popular Music worlds, popular music histories*, Liverpool, 13-17 July 2009.
2. Terminology adapted from Deleuze and Guattari 2004.
3. The terminology is adapted from Robertson 1995; a more detailed argument in this direction can be found in Rietveld 2010 and 2004.
4. This discussion is further expanded in Rietveld 2010.

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