

SEM {STUDENTNEWS}

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Letter from the SEM President

The Coextensive Moment of Music and Politics in Africa: A Pedagogical Perspective



As I write this brief reflection, I wind down the spring semester at Vanderbilt University where I co-teach a course with political scientist Keith Weghorst, titled “Rhythm of Change: African Music and African Politics,”

as part of our university’s initiative to support trans-institutional team teaching. As a theoretical concept, the confluence of music and politics may be commonplace to most ethnomusicologists. Yet, collaborating with a political scientist who “gets it” in the classroom was an opportunity I could not pass up. While each of us clearly brings a different set of discipline-specific tools and methodologies to the classroom every week, we nevertheless

continue to be surprised at how many case studies, musical repertoires, and pedagogical experiences we have in common (note that both of us conducted doctoral-level field research in Tanzania). I should say that when we first started teaching together, it was crystal clear to the students who the “political scientist” was versus the “ethnomusicologist.” We seemed to be speaking different languages—he had wonderfully complex graphs; I had slides with musical instruments. After several weeks, however, we established a pedagogical groove, and I began to notice fewer charts, diagrams, and organological images in our joint sessions.

Since Vanderbilt does not have an African studies program, the students came to the course with a variety of backgrounds and a meager assortment of courses from which they could draw preexisting

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information (it turned out that our individual courses in African Music and African Politics were direct feeder courses). So, in most cases, we started with basic information, assuming nothing of the political or musical backgrounds of individual case studies presented in class. We conceptualized the course into four substantive units culminating in a deep dive into local immigrant communities in Nashville, Tennessee, specifically the Somali community. I include a rough outline below (from which we frequently deviated) to give a sense of the flow of the semester and the intended learning outcomes. In the spirit of esprit de corps, the detailed course outline below maps out the conceptual trajectory we planned for the semester, allowing for several deviations, including a week-long visit with revolutionary artist Sams’K Lejah from Burkina Faso and culminating in a week-long residency with a multi-ethnic group of musicians from Mali.

By the end of the course, I heard students using the phrase, “coextensive moment of music and politics,” casually in their interviews as if thinking of the interdependence of music and politics in such a way had become second nature. The course outline below should not be understood as a strict syllabus but rather as a road map for the emergence of our ideological perspectives on the roles of music and politics in the study of contemporary and historic African cultures. In addition, I include the bibliography [[available at semsn.com](http://availableatsemsn.com)] for the course from which we drew our daily readings. I also invite you to visit rhythm-of-change.com, where we document the course experience. As this was the first for this course, I would of course welcome any reactions or insight, especially regarding course structure and readings. Feel free to contact me directly at gregory.barz@vanderbilt.edu. □

Gregory Barz, Vanderbilt University
President, Society for Ethnomusicology

Course Outline

Section 1: Background and Course Preliminaries

Section 1.1: *Why Music?* Why does music have a strong and powerful influence on humans? How does music affect us and shape our behavior? Our class begins by exploring how the stimulus of music elicits mental, physical, and emotional responses. We also study how music is used as a means of spreading information. Our first introductory goal of the course is to understand music as an agent of political change through the ways in which it is used and processed by humans.

Section 1.2: *Why Africa?* A second introductory goal of the course is deconstructing students’ preexisting knowledge about Africa and its politics and music. Oration as a means of communicating historical and political narratives is prominent in African history. Illiteracy has remained high in many African countries, and, as a consequence, music as a form of communication is still critical. This introductory goal establishes the importance of oral tradition in Africa as a means of spreading information, making it ideal for the study of politics and music. This section also interrogates preconceptions about Africa as a continent, its music, and its culture. We establish a critical approach toward images of Africa from the start. Whether its Rick Ross tweeting about landing in the “beautiful country of Africa,” Toto blessing the rains of the sub-Continent, or lessons of the Rwandan genocide told by Wyclef Jean, addressing stereotypes early on is critical. We will provide a brief history of the politics of sub-Saharan Africa, focusing in particular on the late-colonial period (1940–1950s/60s), the post-colonial period (1960–1990s), the resurgence of democratization (1990–later 1990s), and the twenty-first century.

Section 1.3: *Country Profiles.* Our review of political history will focus in particular on the cases that guide our substantive coursework. The country cases include: (1) Nigeria, (2) Tanzania, (3) Sierra Leone, (4) South Africa, (5) Sudan, (6) Rwanda, and (7) Somalia.

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Section 2: Music, Nationalism, and Pan-Africanism

Section 2.1: *Formation and Politicization of Identity.* We begin with the classical literature on identity formation from anthropology (Benedict Anderson [1983], etc.), followed by the rich political science literature on the cultural heterogeneity of African states that has made strong national identities so elusive. We then move to two successful attempts to establish strong national identity—Tanzania and South Africa—and the role of music in the process.

Section 2.2: *Tanzania: Umoja in a Divided Union.* For Tanzania, we explore the role of Julius Nyerere’s *Ujamaa* policy of African Socialism, which combined forced relocation, villagization, and economic collectivism with a profile of national symbols designed to build a Tanzanian identity that emphasized homogeneity. In Zanzibar, we will see how artists and music, like Bi Kudude’s performance of *taarab* song “Kijiti”, challenge the political power of traditional authority, and how *taarab* music has been deployed in Tanzania’s history to build national unity alongside subnational Zanzibari identity. We explore the successes and shortcomings of identity formation in modern Tanzania, where Zanzibar still seeks political autonomy.

Section 2.3: *South Africa: Coloring the Rainbow Nation.* We turn our attention to South Africa in the post-apartheid era. Faced with the difficult tasks of erasing years of institutionalized segregation and brutality, party leaders encountered the impossible task of creating unity. We study the efficacy of building the rainbow nation and an image of strength through difference.

Section 2.4: *Musical Pan-Africanism.* Africa and African unity is a theme in sub-Saharan African musics. We trace themes of Pan-Africanism in musics from the African continent. We also study Pan-Africanism in the West, with particular attention to its emergence in the United States during the cultural revolution of the Harlem Renaissance and into current popular hip-hop and rap. We draw attention to linkages of music and politics in the Caribbean and the living legacies of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the Uhuru Movement.

Section 3: Music, Democracy, and Dictatorship

We begin with readings on key political science concepts in order to scaffold an exploration of music and politics. We then move to understanding the role of music in those political events through case-driven studies.

Section 3.1: *Democratization and Elections.* Africa’s post-colonial history is largely defined by non-democratic rule, and the modal regime type in Africa is a variety of authoritarianism. We focus on: (1) military dictatorships in post-colonial Africa; (2) the rise of electoral authoritarianism in the post-Cold-War era; (3) single-party dominant systems; and (4) the structure of electoral campaigns in which opposition faces disadvantages.

Section 3.2: *Fela Kuti and the Kalakuta Republic.* We reflect on Fela Kuti’s Shrine in Lagos and Afrobeat anthems criticizing the Nigerian military (“[Zombie](#)”) and military dictator Olusegun Obasanjo (“[Coffin for Head of State](#)”). We explore the politics of dissent under military rule, a form of government that predominated from the 1960s–1980s in sub-Saharan Africa. We follow Kuti’s story in order to see the origins of his Nkrumahist political party, Movement of the People.

Section 3.3: *Music and the Fight Against Apartheid.* Our first investigation into South Africa’s music focuses on its role in resistance to the apartheid regime. From the rhythms that powered resistance and hidden messages in popular music to the efforts of South Africa’s government Bantu Radio, we cover the complex terrain of government power and resistance during apartheid.

Section 3.4: *The African National Congress’s Electoral Dominance.* Centering on “Aweluth’ Umishini Wami” (“Bring Me My Machine Gun”), we study how dominant parties use music in political campaigns by turning to South Africa in the multiparty era. While dominant parties like the ANC use clientelism and kickbacks to lure key constituencies, they also use musicians to bring otherwise disenfranchised voters into the party fold and polling stations on voting day.

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Section 4: Music, Political Violence, and Reconciliation

Political violence, conflict, and civil war are of significance in the twentieth century, which encompassed more genocides than any other century in history. Political science focuses on *causes* of conflict and its conduct but considerably less on *preventing* conflict, transformation, and peacebuilding. Music, dance, and drama play a critical role in conflicts diverse as Rwanda's genocide, civil wars in Sierra Leone and Sudan, and South African apartheid.

Section 4.1: *Causes and Consequences of Civil War.* We focus on what defines civil war, its causes, narratives and goals that shape civil war, how civil wars end, and how they are resolved.

Section 4.2: *Music During and After Sierra Leone's Civil War.* Music pervaded Sierra Leone's civil war. This includes 2Pac songs and images used to organize gangs of child soldiers into cohesive military units and original music and dance in the post-conflict transformation process.

Section 4.3: *Conflict Transformation: Civil War in Sudan.* Sudan has experienced multiple Civil Wars. Emmanuel Jal is a critical voice in this history. A former child-soldier turned reggae musician, his stories demonstrate how music displaces memories of conflict and how music is suited to overcoming politically induced trauma.

Section 4.4: *Conflict Transformation: Rwandan Genocide.* When genocide touches an entire country—when neighbors and friends turn to enemies for 100 days—the social fabric of such a society needs incredible effort to be rebuilt. This module focuses on the role of music and dance in Rwanda in the post-genocide environment. Rwanda represented one of the first systemic, internationally endorsed attempts to integrate art into the process of post-conflict healing. It also plays a role in creating a *de jure* post-racial society in Rwanda at conflict with the realities on the ground in what is now a severely constrained political regime. We sit with Kizito Mihogo in circles at Gacaca courts in Kigali and see how his music has helped Rwanda transform its war-torn wounds. We also follow Mihogo and his music to Rwandan prison, where he serves a ten-year sentence for “conspiracy” against authoritarian President Paul Kagame.

Section 5: Music, Development, and Globalization

African music is of great interest to Western musicians. The final substantive section interrogates whether that interest provides net benefits or costs in the context of Africa's politics and development.

Section 5.1: *Western Music for Positive Change.* From USA for Africa to LiveAid and this generation's Bob Geldof (Bono), Western musicians engage with Africa by highlighting its chronic poverty and political strife. Recently, Somali refugee K'naan has drawn attention to the collapse of government and order there. What positive changes derive from these efforts?

Section 5.2: *Western Music and Unintended Consequences.* We turn a cynical eye toward Western music in Africa. What is of greater value for Africa in K'naan's music, a song about struggles in Somalia or “Wavin' Flag,” his song which became the Coca Cola anthem of the 2010 World Cup? Should Paul Simon be praised for how his work has shed light on Zulu musical styles, even though his album was recorded in South Africa during apartheid? Is Bob Geldof's version of Africa one that Africans themselves desire and idolize?

{ [Bibliography of selected course readings available at semsn.com](#) }

We are currently discussing plans for future issues of *SEM Student News*, including volume 15, numbers 1 and 2. If there are any topics that you want us to address, please contact the editor at semstudentnews@gmail.com.

Student Voices: Who Cares About Ethnomusicology?

A Student Union Column

By Kevin Sliwoski (University of California, Riverside)

In this, my first “Student Voices” column, I offer my thoughts on how SEM might extend its political influence. This column is inherently a forum for multiple viewpoints; I begin here with my own in hope that our readers will participate in this exchange of ideas around ethnomusicology as a field, a “brand,” and a positionality. My research this past year on the sonic and political consequences of the US Military overseas has led me to settings and conversations far outside of ethnomusicology, some of which made me intimately aware of various challenges within our field and its outward appearance. I want to begin a conversation to which junior and senior Society for Ethnomusicology members may contribute. I would like for this space to continue as an outlet for students to voice their thoughts and concerns and to challenge current practices and approaches with new ideas. As such, I warmly invite ethnomusicology students to participate in our Student Union and all readers to respond to our discussions in this publication via [email](#), [Facebook](#), and the [SU Blog](#). We welcome your perspectives.

Who Cares About Ethnomusicology?

How many times have you been met with awkward pauses, confusion, or skepticism when you tell someone—usually a family member—that you study “ethnomusicology”? How many times have you had to qualify or over-explain what an “ethnomusicologist” does? You might have experienced this exchange more than once. It does not help that ethnomusicology is a rather cumbersome, difficult-to-explain word (for example, see Nettl [1983] 2005). As representatives of the discipline, our soft underbelly is often our field’s lack of public legibility and institutional recognition. This barrier can frustrate our efforts to engage with individuals, communities, and institutions outside of our own. It can also make advocacy more difficult. Part of the problem is the reception of music studies by other disciplines. Nettl reminds us that, “in Western academic culture, musicians have made it known that others can’t really understand and talk about music, while people in other fields stay away” (Nettl 2010, 98). These arbitrary borders have isolated the study of music as an ultra-specialized field and music cultures as off limits to non-specialists, often leaving ethnomusicologists at a disadvantage. This divide has begun to thaw out with the injection of sound studies into the academy.

For many years, SEM as a collective has been moving toward deliberate and calculated public engagement beyond individual research, publications, and advocacy efforts. Our [2016 position statement](#) called for ethnomusicologists to “disseminate our research, teaching, and activism in ways that are more public and more political.” Certainly our efforts should be public, political, and present. However, for whom “has [it] become clear that our work is more important now than ever”? If one of the problems of our discipline is being known, then our position statements and research remain internal and, worse, peripheral within the academy and to the public. I am glad that SEM issues position statements that condemn actions,

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individuals, and organizations that oppose the ethical standards we hold ourselves to as researchers and humanists—but who, outside of SEM, reads them?

As ethnomusicologists, how can we expect to be engaged in the political—to be advocates—when those around us are not even sure what we do? How effective are our political positions if they are not widely read or disseminated? If our first conversation point is to define our profession, that is time spent explaining or defining a problem rather than time spent solving one. To take up the call of applied or engaged or political ethnomusicology requires us to have influence and recognition beyond our own ranks and beyond the borders of the academy.

I think SEM's proposed five-year strategic plan addresses the correct issues, especially the call to "Promote Ethnomusicology" and "Expand Public, Applied, and Advocacy Initiatives" (Cowdery 2018, 5). But how do we execute these suggestions? Before I offer my own ideas, I want to address one major issue that I think continues to hold back SEM's efforts to be a relevant political force.

As ethnomusicologists, how can we expect to be engaged in the political—to be advocates—when those around us are not even sure what we do? How effective are our political positions if they are not widely read or disseminated?

On Naming and Branding

Although labels and definitions have been much debated in ethnomusicology (see Nettl [1983] 2005 and 2010; Rice 2014; Bigenho 2009), it warrants a place here. We are still burdened by the fact that, during the development of our discipline, we were not entirely successful in representing and defining our field to the public. And now, the public and many other academics remain unclear on what ethnomusicology is, what we do, and why it matters. As of April 8, 2018, our society's [definition of ethnomusicology](#) on our website is somewhat opaque, yet it is our main point of contact with a public audience. Consider the opening phrase of our definition:

"Ethnomusicology is the study of music in its cultural context. Ethnomusicologists approach music as a social process in order to understand not only *what* music is but *why* it is: what music means to its practitioners and audiences, and how those meanings are conveyed."

This definition does not clarify ethnomusicology, or the work ethnomusicologists do, to the general public. Additionally, why is this fundamental information tucked away, three clicks from SEM's homepage?

However, as of April 8, 2018, our [profile and definition](#) are better represented with the American Council of Learned Sciences (ACLS):

"to promote the research, study, and performance of music in all historical periods and cultural contexts."

It's still not perfect, but it is clear and concise, and ACLS's user-friendly website makes this definition more accessible.

Now, compare SEM's definition of ethnomusicology to the [American Anthropological Association's answer to "What is Anthropology?"](#):

"Anthropology is the study of humans, past and present."

This definition is short, evocative and idealistic. It is easily found as soon as you click on AAA's main webpage. It forms an important part of AAA's brand, which is carefully and professionally rendered online. AAA has an

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attractively-designed website that is easy to click through. It has big text, bold headlines, and bright photos. It invites visitors in. The website shows how seriously AAA takes the business of anthropology and demonstrates the discipline's maturity and the value it holds for its mission and members. In his 2004 *SEM Newsletter* column on political advocacy, then-SEM president Timothy Rice found AAA's website to be "rich with ideas you might want to consider" (3). AAA has developed and invested in a brand—SEM should consider doing the same. Ethnomusicology does not have a unified, clear, and accessible definition of our discipline, and it does not have a dynamic brand. We, as a professional organization, need to define ourselves and debate what our public profile is going to look like. And, if engaging with the public and taking political positions is important to us, how much are we willing to *spend* to rehabilitate our public image so that our research is more known? With recognition, we might better advocate for those people and communities we care about.

Ethnomusicology does not have a unified, clear, and accessible definition of our discipline, and it does not have a dynamic brand. . . . if engaging with the public and taking political positions is important to us, how much are we willing to *spend* to rehabilitate our public image so that our research is more known?

Lobbying and Public Relations

I suggest that the Society for Ethnomusicology should consider hiring a professional public relations firm or a professional lobbying firm (or both) to better represent our society and our goals publicly to the world and to our elected officials. Instead of Executive Director Stephen Stuempfle breathlessly "pounding the pavement" of Capitol Hill (Barz 2018, 3), we might have professional advocates coolly working on our behalf full time who can devote their energies to advocating for ethnomusicology and for the humanities. I would guess that many of us would like to be more public and engaged as advocates but cannot because professional and institutional responsibilities (and sometimes distance) preclude us from such activities. Why not hire someone to cover the ground we cannot at the congressional level?

I recognize that outsourcing our problems and advocacy efforts may not satisfy any personal desires to be public advocates. And I am not suggesting that lobbying become a substitute; rather, it would be a supplement

(Lobbying) is a way to be professionally connected to politics without the considerable investment of time, travel, and money that may be out of reach for many practicing ethnomusicologists.

to other endeavors. It is a way to be professionally connected to politics without the considerable investment of time, travel, and money that may be out of reach for many practicing ethnomusicologists. In consideration of the balance needed between professional ethics and lobbying, we should be cautious and deliberate if we choose to lobby. Thanks to David Price (2016), we know some of the risks that political and governmental collaboration can pose to our ethical responsibilities as researchers. We do not want our discipline to be "quietly shaped" (xi) by government influence or follow the example of past academics who "ignored the political contexts in which the

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projects were embedded” (123), in exchange for research funding or access to communities provided through programs such as USAID in the 1960s.

However, reflexively examining our politics, ethics, and brand might result in works or actions that elevate our discipline and connect us to new people. *The Counter-Counterinsurgency Manual* (2009) organized by the Network of Concerned Anthropologists was a visible and public ideological challenge from an academic society against the US Military’s Iraq War counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine—the “winning hearts and minds” approach to combat, which emphasized culture and communication rather than bombs and bullets. It also served to condemn social scientists who embedded with US forces through the Human Terrain Systems (HTS) program (see United States 2007; McFate and Laurence 2016; Gonzalez 2015). The meta-commentary on HTS is complicated, but, in this effort, these anthropologists responded. They advocated for Iraqis, for ethical research practices, and for accountability they felt had been sacrificed. [SEM’s 2007 Position Statement on Torture](#) functioned in a similar fashion but on a much smaller scale. I am not sure what the public relevancy of that position statement has been, besides Suzanne Cusick’s (2006; 2008) exceptional series of articles, to which the statement directly refers. Could we—should we—have done more then? How can we do more now?

I note several obstacles we need to address when it comes to lobbying: funding, representation and management, ethics, and legality.

I note several obstacles we need to address when it comes to lobbying: funding, representation and management, ethics, and legality. In regard to funding for outreach and lobbying efforts, SEM could consider raising membership dues, which would be a simple, albeit possibly unpopular, solution. Likewise, for representation and management, SEM could create a service position (e.g., “Political Outreach Representative”) within the Ethics Committee to facilitate and communicate with our hired representatives. Ideally, this would include both student and professional input. Naturally, the Ethics Committee and board would need to thoroughly review such a project and verify whether a lobbying effort fundamentally violates the society’s mission. If the SEM board and/or society members could agree on a lobbying or PR campaign, there would no doubt

be a series of changes and adjustments to the bylaws of SEM. There are limits to the amount of lobbying a nonprofit organization can engage in, so as not to jeopardize the organization’s tax-exempt status. While the [Internal Revenue Service](#), as of May 21, 2018, outlines that “some lobbying” is acceptable, the IRS also explains that “organizations may . . . involve themselves in issues of public policy without the activity being considered as lobbying,” and use the examples of educational activities and the distribution of educational materials as an avenue of involvement without lobbying. While navigating the legal territory of lobbying might prove too much, I believe that influencing public policy through education and our expertise is within our reach and might satisfy efforts to expand political advocacy and activism within SEM.

Service Ethnomusicology

I think that being an advocate—a successful advocate—means setting aside a degree of self-reflexivity. Ethnomusicologists like to be present in their written work, and this is part of our training. Although self-reflexivity and autoethnography may be held up as important tools for the ethnomusicologist, it can be a shaky line between reflection and indulgence. Advocating is about *public* support for a cause, group, or individual. Advocating is not concerned with the wants and needs of the advocate—although, of course, there can be significant overlap. To be successful advocates today might require us to downplay the ego of self-reflexivity in

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our work and direct that energy inward to our discipline. This might then allow our communities to become the sole focus of our efforts.

In our pursuit to be engaged, applied, advocate, or public ethnomusicologists, the term that might best represent all such efforts is “service ethnomusicology.” We are in service to our consultants, our discipline, our society, and what SEM is now gesturing to: society and politics. I think the shift to a service ethnomusicology mindset or training might further point us in a more productive direction.

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SEM Student Union Blog

The SEM Student Union (SU) is composed of the society’s student membership and serves as a resource and voice for students in the society. In this blog, we share our experiences of music, education, and life. Please join us and share your musical stories at semstudentunion.wordpress.com, and email us at semsublog@gmail.com.

The *SU Blog* also features a variety of series, including:

- [Ethnomusicology and Parenthood](#)
- [In Discipline: Talks from the European Side](#)
- [From the Field](#)
- [Textbook Review](#)
- [Ethnomusicology Student Groups](#)

Thoughts from the Field

Student Impressions, Perspectives, and Experiences

By Hannah Adamy (University of California, Davis)

As a writer and musician, I like to think about the disruptive possibilities of my skill set. I like to think that my repertoire of skills is useful to the revolution. Often, however, I am most useful as a body, as someone who showed up.

When I began crafting a prompt for this music and politics issue of *SEM Student News*, I kept returning to this matter of showing up and the role sound might play within it. Ethnography, too, is a matter of showing up and of continuing to show up. Therefore, I asked the following seven scholars to describe a moment of musical disruption in their research. Each contribution highlights both a moment of showing up (the vignette) as well as a sense of return to the place and/or history of a community.

Therefore, with the help of our gracious guides, let us attune to the vortex of sound during a protest in New York City; publicly listen-in on a live guitar performance on the streets of Tunis; submerge ourselves in the cacophony of an impromptu sonic duel during the national elections in Lusaka; reflect on the transformation of a space through music during a celebration of the Cuban revolution; witness the disruption of genre expectations in a tweet; parse a Sudanese interlocutor's repertoire of both peaceful and violent songs in response to the conflict in his home country; and sing in a Japanese-American internment barrack at Heart Mountain, Wyoming. Each moment of sounding draws our attention to the ways in which sound facilitates attention to the bodies that show up.



CHRIS NICKELL (New York University): The tell-tale two-note chime of the Signal messenger app rings out from marshalls' phones as we round the northwest corner of [26 Federal Plaza](#) on our fourth circling. The

energy of our silent Jericho walk turns anxious as recognition courses up and down the human chain: Ravi Ragbir, leader of the New Sanctuary Coalition, is being detained. This is not a drill.

We gather in the nearby plaza to regroup while speakers stoke the crowd. All of a sudden, the air shifts. We look up from our posting and texting and emailing to better hear one of the speakers. His voice has fallen out of the usual protest speech cadence as he tells us Ravi is being taken away in an ambulance and directs the crowd to the vehicular exit.

We lurch backward then forward. We take new shape, transforming from pond to river, flowing toward the ramp where the ambulance is coming up as the first drops of us arrive. Brass players and drummers give our chants form, surrounding us with our own sounds as federal and local police encircle the ambulance, barking orders to disperse. In this improvisatory moment, we sound multitudes.

The ambulance makes slow progress, the driver careful not to be too careful. Police begin roughing

up the most recalcitrant of us, but we will not be silenced as our shouts of "Shame!" echo off the walls of the emptied urban canyon. The ambulance fakes a slow reverse only to break away at full speed down Broadway, playing chicken with the bravest among us.

As the ambulance sirens fade, the arrests begin. Human mics emerge to amplify the messages of our captured ranks. As the last are loaded into police vans, we sing together. Our song bears witness and marks a first collective step in processing. Passersby and journalists gather the soundbites we offer readily. We make plans for jail support, vigils, grabbing dinner together soon.



RACHEL COLWELL (University of California, Berkeley): The first time I heard the sound of live guitar on Habib Bourguiba Avenue—the main thoroughfare of the *ville nouvelle* in Tunis, Tunisia—I did a “double take,”

checking storefronts to see if the liveness I perceived was an illusion. Straight ahead, I came upon a crowd of spectators gathering around a handful of young Tunisian men who were singing, accompanied by guitar, melodica, and percussion, on the sidewalk.

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Thoughts from the Field

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Surrounded by a sea of recording smartphones held high, they played on nonchalantly, as if their actions, and the centripetal spatial-sonic affect it was causing, were commonplace. Previously, I had not seen any street music over the course of my thirteen months of walking that same route. Upon closer examination, I sensed a nervous energy flitting among the band members as they glanced up and down the road, keeping an eye out for police, who, as many Tunisian musicians informed me, capriciously arrest or ignore musickers as they choose.

Public musicking and its partner, public listening, have long been contested in Tunisia. Especially in urban settings, the appropriateness or “decency” of street music is bound up in Islamic concerns about gendered and classed social, sonic, and somatic interactions; the shadow of post-colonial rhetoric around racialized noise, manners, and hygiene; and the ruts of normativity well-worn from decades of authoritarian control. On this particular café-rich stretch of sidewalk, talk turns so often to the perceived failures of the 2011 Tunisian Revolution. But the act of filling the air with music, here in this location, precisely where thousands of protesters called for the ouster of now-exiled president Ben ‘Ali, is an emboldened and empowered claim to rights of mobility, access, and public expression, resonating in a city that is newly challenging restrictions on collective sounded presence.



MATHEW TEMBO (University of Pittsburgh): In August 2016, a few weeks before the Zambia national elections, I attended a campaign rally that was organized by the United Party for National Development (UPND) in the

Mtendere neighborhood of Lusaka. I got to the soccer field where the rally was to take place an hour before the 3:00 p.m. scheduled meeting. A crowd of UPND sympathizers had already gathered by the time I got there and the party’s theme song, “Dununa Forward (Kick It Forward),” was already blasting on repeat from the speakers that hung on the stage where UPND political leaders were to give their speeches.

About thirty minutes later, a minivan from the opposition Patriotic Front Party (PF), with huge

speakers mounted on its roof, drove past, blasting their theme, “Dununa Reverse (Kick it Back).” In the midst of the cacophony, the PF supporters in the van and the UPND supporters on the soccer field—some of whom were by then running after the PF minivan—were verbally “dununa reversing” and “dununa forwarding” insults at each other, disrupting the preparations for the rally. The media crew, mostly from privately owned MUVI TV, were packing their equipment and getting ready to leave. This went on for about forty minutes before the PF supporters in the van drove away, still blasting “Dununa Reverse,” while some UPND supporters were singing and chanting “Dununa Forward” in response. The rally was delayed until after 4:00 p.m.



KJETIL KLETTE BØHLER (Oslo Metropolitan University):

Throughout three years of fieldwork in Cuba, I was struck by the ways in which musical pleasure and forms of politics were intimately bound.

Pleasurable Cuban grooves were sources of national pride, black politics, and political critique, while simultaneously being powerful aesthetic experiences. However, few theories account for this level of musical politics, which has led John Street (2012) to conclude that we have developed a “political theory of music” but lack a corresponding “musical theory of politics.” How do we, for example, explain the ways in which the following words were disseminated to hundreds of thousands of Cubans when, in 2013, Roberto Carcasses improvised a sung call-and-response which transformed a celebration of the Cuban revolution into a space of political critique:

Coro: *I want, remember that I always want . . .*

Carcasses: *Free access to information, so that I can make up my own opinion.*

Coro: *I want, remember that I always want . . .*

Carcasses: *I want to elect the president, through voting and not another way.*

No other medium of communication would be able to express such a profound and direct

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Thoughts from the Field

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political critique to hundreds of thousands in Cuba. Inspired by Street, I encourage new ways of thinking about musical politics that draw attention to the surplus value that music adds to politics as political statements unfold temporally in specific arpeggios, diatonic movements, and syncopated structures, or other sounding structures, with correlated emotional affordances. Such an approach could then be complemented with other studies that focus exclusively on lyrics, policies, discourses, and larger institutions, and together create a more robust musical theory of politics.

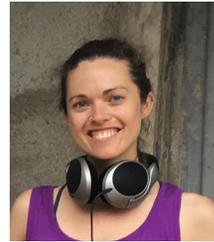


EVAN PENSIS (University of Chicago): In my own work, I note how frequently dwelling in aesthetic or sonic concerns feels like getting stuck, detached from the world where things like politics and justice are imagined

to take place. Yet the question of cultural authority in aesthetic expression (its conventionality) always troubles the making of music, and not only with things like citation or form but in less intentional ways, too, as in getting stuck on a project at the studio or on the page. For example, Dawn Richard, a musician from New Orleans and former member of the hip-hop girl group Danity Kane, frequently raises attention to this dimension of cultural authority. In January of this year, she tweeted, “dear folks. black girls exist in all genres. don’t limit us. thanks.” (@[DawnRichard](#), January 19, 2018) In her brief epistle, Dawn confronts mainstream stereotypes about black women and the music they are supposed to make.

With work that spans art pop, R&B, epic poetry, hip-hop, and electronica, Dawn’s music is thus disruptive: her affinity to cross and juxtapose genres shakes up the associations people as listeners and producers carry about genre, blackness, and black womanhood. Dawn’s tweet suggests a different frame to track how politics shows up in music—who gets to

make what and how—and the material illegibility that conditions a musician’s life when their artistry refuses to create and imagine on the terms of a racialized and racist industry.



SARAH BISHOP (Ohio State University): In 2017, I conducted several in-depth interviews with Mha Chang, a studio producer in Ethiopia. Though residing in Ethiopia, Mha Chang has friends and family in South Sudan and

has been personally affected by the ongoing conflict there. Consequently, many of his songs address the war and advise South Sudanese toward peace and reconciliation.

At least, that was my impression after our first interview. As we spent more time in conversation, inconsistencies surfaced, and I discovered some of his other songs are more likely to endorse conflict than peace. One of these, “Buom Nuer,” lauds the bravery of the Nuer ethnic group (of which Mha Chang is a member) and boldly states, “This country belongs to who? The Nuer!,” threatening to shoot those who betray them. Indeed, Mha Chang’s music has been purposely used disruptively: he recounted to me an incident in a refugee camp in which his songs were played as an affront on missionary pastors who the refugees thought were spies. A physical fight nearly broke out.

I had already encountered music’s entanglements in violence while doing field research in this region. Yet, this coming from Mha Chang, who is otherwise committed to peace-building, was surprising. “The people haven’t forgotten what’s happening,” he said. “So war songs continue until we find peace.” Though it is tempting to valorize music’s potential for facilitating reconciliation, this serves as a sobering reminder that even musicians who sing for peace have their limitations when collective trauma is intense and ongoing.

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Thoughts from the Field

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JULIAN SAPORITI (Brown University): Last October, I was on top of a mountain. My friend K was singing a haiku written seventy-five years ago, only a few miles from our perch. The haiku's author was one of thousands of

Japanese Americans sent to a concentration camp in rural Wyoming called Heart Mountain.

*With the high peak to my back
A thousand barracks
Under the autumn moon*

Sitting next to my collaborator Erin Aoyama, I watched a crow fly below us. The sky was blue. A filmmaker and two journalists were documenting our fieldwork and concerts in the area.

Erin and I tour the country behind [No-No Boy](#), a multimedia concert which uses storytelling, songs, and archival visuals to explore little known Asian-American histories, including the Japanese

Incarceration and my own family's history as Vietnamese refugees. There are roughly sixty songs based on oral histories, fieldwork, and archival research. There are also different modes of scholarly analysis which become available through creative practice. On tour, we find collaboration with the audience and the performance continuously evolves.

On our last day at Heart Mountain, after a morning spent researching and filming, K, Erin, and I played a concert in an original barrack. Erin wore a sweater knit by her grandmother, Misa Hatakeyama, who had been incarcerated here. Before our last song, I looked out the window at the mountain the Crow call Foretop's Father. I thought about the jazz band that once played dances here, behind the barbed wire and guard towers. We sang Cole Porter's "[Don't Fence Me In.](#)"

*Let me be by myself in the evening breeze
And listen to the murmur of the cottonwood trees
Send me off forever but I ask you please
Don't fence me in*

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The next issue of *SEM Student News* (volume 14, number 2) will focus on a theme of internal and institutional politics in ethnomusicology. If you would like to contribute to this issue, please contact the editor at semstudentnews@gmail.com.

Audiovisual Frames

What Films *Can Do*: An Interview with Jeff Roy

By Diego Pani (Memorial University of Newfoundland)

Ethnomusicologists continuously engage with media production. Starting from recording music making, using audiovisual technologies pushes our field toward new narrative forms, where audio and video outputs integrate not only into writing but become the very core of research projects. This column provides a space for thinking on the politics of audiovisual representation in ethnomusicological research by exploring the work of researchers who seek to overcome the limits of written scholarly production via documentary filmmaking, photo reportage, audio recording, and online platforms.

I first came across Jeff Roy's work when I read his 2015 doctoral thesis, "Ethnomusicology of the Closet: (Con) Figuring Transgender-*Hijra* Identity Through Documentary Filmmaking," where he actively engages his critical use of documentary filmmaking inside Indian trans-*hijra* performance with the (con)figuration of trans-*hijra* LGBTIQ+ identity.

Having earned his PhD at the University of California, Los Angeles, in 2015, Jeff Roy is now a Postdoctoral Fellow at Le Centre d'études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud at Université Paris Sciences et Lettres. He has worked as a director for several documentaries, including the medium-length *Mohammed to Maya* (2013) and the documentary series *Music in Liminal Spaces* (2012–2013), fostering a research commitment deeply connected with his public engagement as an activist for the rights of the Indian LGBTIQ+ community.

I chose to ask him some questions that are strictly related to his audiovisual work, his public role as an activist, and more broadly, how today's ethnomusicologists can engage with documentary production and the public dissemination of their research results.

DP: From your PhD dissertation to your consequent production, your research has been closely related to the creation of documentaries. In your vision, what is the contribution that documentary filmmaking-based researchers can add to the field of ethnomusicology?



JR: The use of audio-visual technologies is nothing new to the field of ethnomusicology. Many of us work with recording devices of different kinds and, in a way, their use defines our practice in the field. We can also point to a long line of ethnomusicologists and cultural anthropologists who have turned their audio-visual documentations into films—Margaret Mead, Hugo Zemp, Judith and David MacDougall, Amy Catlin, and Nazir Jairazbhoy, to name a few. One of the apparent benefits of the use of film-as-research is that it allows music to be heard and the music-makers to “speak for themselves,” although this does not entirely reflect what goes on in the field or editing suite, especially in the observational or even reflexive observational film genres.

I would venture to say that the contribution of filmmaking to our field is not just what comes after filming and the headache of post production but within the embodied practice of *doing* research. Participatory and performative filmmaking, in particular, allows us to engage music's creators, forms, and functions in interesting and sometimes surprising ways that also uphold the ethics of social responsibility and advocacy. I am borrowing the word “participatory” from *cinéma vérité* to describe the ways in which researchers and participants engage in the shared labor of decolonial scholarly praxis.¹

There are a number of ethnomusicological filmmakers out there who are doing this sort of thing. Zoe Sherinian (2011; 2014), whose work brings her to drumming communities of Dalit women in South India, is a great example of the ways in which the practice of participatory filmmaking can foster solidarity between women of diverse backgrounds.² Taking into serious account the long history of exploitation of queer and trans subjects in the media worldwide, my own film work with *hijra* and gender nonconforming performers in Mumbai has

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Audiovisual Frames

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involved performance not just as an object of study but as a method. In my latest projects—most recently with the Dancing Queens, with whom I have worked for many years—I investigate the ways the collaborative practice of filmmaking can manifest different shared imagined futures for performers who are invested in social change. I explain in detail what I call a performative, or queer, approach to ethnomusicological filmmaking in a forthcoming essay in *Queering the Field* (Roy, forthcoming).



Photos from *Dancing Queens: It's All About Family* (2016). Courtesy of Jeff Roy.

DP: The video medium can help a researcher to overcome the limits of scholarly written production, creating research output that can be accessed from different levels and speak to a broader public. Do you ever think about your documentary work in these terms?

JR: I think you're absolutely right. Since film has the power to speak on many levels to wide and diverse audiences, we must be critically attentive to how it represents and impacts the lives of those in front of and behind the camera.

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Photo from *Dancing Queens*. Courtesy of Jeff Roy.

DP: Your work is heavily tied to the politics of representation of the LGBTIQ+ community in India. What was the reception of your documentaries inside this community?

JR: It largely depends on the film. I've made films that have been received positively by activists and scholars from inside the LGBTIQ+ community in India. Some have even won awards at queer and mainstream film festivals in India and elsewhere. But I've also made films that, for one reason or another, have been challenged. All of these responses have informed my filmmaking practice in some way. Filmmaking is about opening up dialogue between your collaborators, yourself, and your viewers. When you make films and when you are creating a body of work in general, you are making something that lives and breathes. Your film's release date is the date of its birth, and you and your collaborators have to nurture the baby throughout its reception. Sorry for the clichéd birth metaphor, but I think I may have a bit of womb-envy.

DP: Can you give me an outline of the basic setup in which you conduct fieldwork and the consequent shooting of the documentary scenes (if these are divided)? Do you prefer a solo filming process or collaborating with a technical crew?

JR: Each film requires a different approach and set of logistics. But it has become increasingly important to me to involve study participants at all stages of film production, including pre-production (script writing, raising funds, planning of budget, hiring talent, scouting locations, buying and renting equipment, and other painstaking labors), production (actual filming), post-production (editing, color correction, sound mixing, more painstaking labors), and audience engagement (red carpet screenings, special events, classrooms, online streaming, and other distribution methods, also known as "the best part"). In my experience, it is important that you and everyone you work with have an idea of where the film is going to go before the first scene gets shot.

{ [Dancing Queens: It's All About Family \(2016\) Trailer](#) }
Co-produced by Godrej India Culture Lab, Courtesy of Jeff Roy.

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Audiovisual Frames

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Jeff Roy.

Photo by Ryan Ballard.

DP: Your work is permeated with a multilinear representation of the different voices, different perspectives on LGBTIQ+ rights in India. The characters in your films seem to be engaged in a dialogue with the camera. Can we talk about your research framework as profoundly influenced by the dialogical approach?

JR: I think this comes from my training with Marina Goldovskaya, my adopted grandmother of documentary from UCLA's Department of Theater, Film & Television. She encouraged her students—who she called her grandchildren—to consider the camera as a human character within the narrative of the film. (She is a very important figure in the *cinéma vérité* school of practice. Consider this an official “shout out.”) Humanizing yourself and your collaborators in the filming process tends to become a default position when in the field, since in most extremely low- or no-budget circumstances, you are your own cameraperson, sound person, director, and producer. But, I lean heavily on this approach even with a crew because it signals the presence and perspective of the filmmaker, weakens the objectifying gaze of the camera, and—if shot and edited in such a way—draws the spectator's attention away from that “object over there” to the lived encounter between two or more people. This reminds me of a quote from Lucien Taylor (1998, 3), who says that if documentation is not, in the end, participatory and self-reflexive, then it is not human.

{ [Mohammed to Maya \(2013\) Trailer](#) }

DP: Right after your directorial debut film (*Mohammed to Maya*), in 2013 you produced the documentary series *Music in Liminal Spaces* that comprises fourteen different episodes structured as portraits of Mumbai's underground musicians and dancers. What drove you to the choice of doing a series instead of a single documentary?

JR: I wanted to create a documentary series centering on the lives and experiences of members of Mumbai's queer, trans, and *hijra* music communities, without demonstrating a preference for any particular person, group, or non-governmental organization, in a way that would have happened in a single film. I wanted each of the films to speak on their own, not only for narrative purposes but also so that those with whom I worked would be able to claim the film as their own and use it for whatever reason. Some of my collaborators have used films and images to promote their own concerts, albums, social media personae, or political demonstrations, for instance.

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Audiovisual Frames

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{ [“Welcome to Mumbai \(Meet the Dancing Queens\).” *Music in Liminal Spaces \(2012–13\)*](#) }

Executive produced by Fulbright-mtvU, Courtesy of Jeff Roy.

DP: You have a strong media presence, especially on the internet. Dedicated websites and press reviews highly cover many of your projects. How much of the public showcase of your research work through internet and the press is essential for you? Is this, in some instances, attached to the values of the Indian LGBTIQ+ community’s representation that your work has?

JR: Absolutely, or in queer speak, *yass queen*. Much of the media attention came as a result of the stature that some of my participants already have in the public sphere—Laxmi Narayan Tripathi (a political figure and reality television star), the Dancing Queens (who regularly perform at Pride events), Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil (whose story was featured on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*), Alisha Batth (*Coke Studio India*), Alisha Pais (*The Stage*), and others. In other cases, the films helped to raise awareness about the lives and experiences of people who have a presence in their neighborhoods, community centers, and/or performance communities, but who may be lesser-known on a national or international scale. Much of the media attention that we received became part of the communities’ own efforts to amplify the voices and showcase the talents of those who have otherwise been silenced, sidelined, or shut out of public discourse. As I alluded to earlier, I am deeply invested in what films *can do* for those invested in their production. This means that the projects I take on must, from their inception to projection on the silver screen, align with the hopes, dreams, values, and practices of those who are involved in the collaborative process of making them.

{ [“Meet Alisha Batth.” *Music in Liminal Spaces \(2012–13\)*](#) }

Executive produced by Fulbright-mtvU, Courtesy of Jeff Roy.

{ [“Melodies \(and Maladies\) of a Monarch \(Interview with Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil\).” *Music in Liminal Spaces \(2012–13\)*](#) }

Executive produced by Fulbright-mtvU, Courtesy of Jeff Roy.

Endnotes

1. Bill Nichols (2001, 23) suggests that in the “participatory mode” of filmmaking, viewers bear witness to “a form of a dialogue between filmmaker and subject that stresses situated engagement, negotiated interaction, and emotion-laden encounter.”
2. Zoe Sherinian has produced and directed two documentary films, *This is a Music: Reclaiming an Untouchable Drum* (2011) and her more recent *Sakthi Vibrations* (2018), which focuses on the use of Tamil folk arts to develop self-esteem in young Dalit women at the Sakthi Folk Cultural Centre.

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Dear SEM,

A response column by Davin Vidigal Rosenberg (University of California, Davis) and Eugenia Siegel Conte (University of California, Santa Barbara)

For this issue, we asked a select group of senior scholars, reflecting upon their own knowledge and experience engaging with music-making in politicized contexts, to offer student scholars advice regarding the ethics of fieldwork amidst instability and to suggest how we can ethically and adeptly navigate highly-political music research. Below you will find thoughtful responses from Drs. Katherine Meizel (Bowling Green State University), Benjamin Raphael Teitelbaum (University of Colorado, Boulder), and Kay Kaufman Shelemay (Harvard University).



KATHERINE MEIZEL:

“Politics” is a complicated concept whose multiple, intercontextual definitions tend to touch on the negotiation of resources, relationships, values, agency, and perhaps most significantly, the

distribution of power. Because music is an act that also engages with these negotiations, and because academic research is inherently embedded in global power structures, an ethnomusicologist’s work—talking to people about music, writing and teaching about it, helping to create it, document it, curate it—is always political.

“What advice can you offer students . . . [on] how to ethically and adeptly navigate highly-political research?” My initial response upon reading this question was to laugh—“When you figure it out, let me in on the secret!” Political contexts change, personal contexts change; so do our methods and approaches to fieldwork. I can say that prior to tenure I did less work that articulated a clear political stance. I can say that many ethnomusicology students working today are more courageous than I have ever been.

Until recent years, I worked hard in my writing to draw a political map for readers but allow them to put the pins in themselves. My first book (Meizel 2011) was sometimes criticized for not explicitly calling out *American Idol* as part of a corporate machine relentlessly crushing artistic agency and the future of truth in US society. Though there was certainly critique in my writing, this was honestly a fair point. But I had made a conscious decision not to make such a direct statement because I felt like it

would be a betrayal of the individuals I’d interviewed who believed in the show’s mission and process and who generously shared their experiences with me. I could not position my career or my experience above theirs—ethnomusicologists learn, along with the application of cultural relativism and a healthy fear of our impact on others, to avoid placing our own epistemologies ahead of anyone else’s.

That said, my *Idol* research was lower-risk than some, and another reason to suppress outright positional statements involves the researcher’s own wellbeing. Especially for ethnomusicologists whose identities are marginalized in “the field” where they work, or in academe in general, it is vital to remember that not privileging one’s experiences over others’ does not necessarily mean subjugating them for the sake of a project, or even for a relationship in the field. If politics means that a researcher is in danger, that’s a reality that should not be ignored. Take care of yourself, too.

I think there is perhaps no way to “adeptly” navigate highly-political research. But there are ways to messily navigate it, to lurch from mistake to mistake as in any other research context, while keeping in mind the ways in which politics affect both the research participant and the researcher. Know where you stand, but move aside when you need to. Speak your mind when you can but not over others. And don’t forget to talk about the music.

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Dear SEM,

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BENJAMIN RAPHAEL TEITELBAUM:

While we are accustomed to thinking about the social or physical dangers that can come with study in politically-charged environments, we often overlook intellectual pitfalls.

Few topics ignite our passions like politics. That intense emotional investment can be a powerful tool motivating us to dig deeper into our subject, but it also needs to be managed so that it doesn't undermine our work as scholars. No, I'm not talking about striving to be a "neutral" observer. Instead, my main message to students of music and politics is to remember that your first priority must be to learn about the people you are studying. Only secondary to that, if you must, should activism or "engaged research" set in. When that order is reversed it can lead to knowledge suspect for having been crafted to a moral agenda or, alternately, activism that rests on dubious epistemological grounds. Moral authority, as anthropologist Roy D'Andrade (1995) once wrote, flows from knowledge, and not the other way around. So for the ethnomusicologist, "right" is correctly understanding the people you are studying and their situation, while "wrong" is misunderstanding them. Following that principle helped me stay focused while studying actors whose cause I found both upsetting and threatening (see Teitelbaum 2017; 2018).

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KAY KAUFMAN SHELEMAY:

Among the many challenges that arise throughout the ethnographic process, ethical concerns connected to music and politics are ubiquitous. As an ethnomusicologist who

encountered extreme political instability in the field—a violent revolution that began midway through my doctoral fieldwork in Ethiopia (Shelemay 1991)—I learned that ethical concerns associated with politics were ever present and required unanticipated ethnographic improvisations. Suddenly, I not only had to evaluate my own responses to political changes and violence all around but also gauge the danger that my presence and actions would, or could unwittingly, have on the safety of others. My rural field sites were quickly rendered inaccessible due to fighting, travel restrictions, and general instability.

Although I was allowed, due to my marriage to a permanent resident, to remain in the Ethiopian capital for two more years after most researchers were ejected or had already left the country, living amidst daily threats and violence necessarily reduced a panoply of ethical worries to a single-minded focus on the most basic concerns of personal safety, both for myself and everyone around me. Contact with a foreign researcher could arouse suspicion in the context of a brutal regime. Therefore, as I purposefully shifted my research to documenting traditions and musicians at risk, I constantly re-assessed how this work might affect the welfare of others in very dangerous times.

There were practical, ethnographic outcomes to these realizations: I stopped attending Ethiopian church rituals and, through contacts, arranged interview sessions with church musicians in private places. Knowing as well that revolutionary forces might search our home, and that I would certainly have to pass my field materials by a government censor when I eventually left the country, I took care in my field notes not to document discussions of anything touching on the revolution, and suspended writing in my personal journal lest it be confiscated and endanger anyone I mentioned. As the revolution became more entrenched and it became clear that my time in Ethiopia could suddenly end as well as prevent my return for the foreseeable future—indeed, the revolution lasted seventeen years and I was not able to return until after more than a decade later—I tried to balance positive ethical actions against the risks they incurred. At calculated moments I did take chances, such as responding

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Dear SEM,

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to an urgent request to take for safekeeping sound recordings from an archive under threat, and carrying with me a private manuscript on my departure.

Today, it has become common to study music in situations of conflict. I usually advise students to be cautious in entering situations that are politically volatile and to be aware that the risks are not just theirs but can potentially impact on their interlocutors and colleagues in the field.

In our increasingly unstable world, with truly life-threatening political situations never beyond imagination, I urge those entering just about any field to always have a backup plan and to be keenly aware of rapidly changing political events on which one will have to base ethical decisions.

Reference

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“We’re Not Gonna Take It”

Trump and Striking West Virginia Teachers

By Dr. Justin Patch (Vassar College)



On February 22, 2018, public school teachers in West Virginia went on strike, leaving over 277,000 children across the state without classrooms for over a week. The educators’ demands were simple: a modest 5% pay raise (collectively, they are among the lowest paid in the nation) and access to affordable healthcare (Stewart 2018). Teachers and their supporters flooded the capitol building in Charleston to protest. CNN footage from February 26 captures striking teachers collectively singing the chorus from Twisted Sister’s “We’re Not Gonna Take It,” a song that just two years earlier was synonymous with Donald Trump’s presidential campaign.

If the defiant, anti-authoritarian hair metal anthem was an unlikely accompaniment for a septuagenarian real estate developer’s presidential run, it was an equally strange bedfellow for public school teachers in a state that voted overwhelmingly for Donald Trump. Not a single county in West Virginia voted for Clinton, and Trump carried a full 67% of the vote to Clinton’s 26%. What makes this concurrence even more remarkable is that in 1980s hair metal songs, teachers were often the targets of derision, presented as authority figures to be rebelled against and symbolically diminished through violent, destructive, or sexual fantasy. Films like *Pump Up the Volume* (Moyle 1990) and *The Breakfast Club* (Hughes 1985), videos like Van Halen’s “Hot for Teacher” (1984), and the lyrics of countless metal songs pit students against teachers and underscore rock’s antagonism toward institutions of social control and hegemonic power.

That West Virginia teachers chose “We’re not Gonna Take it,” a song from a genre that is overwhelmingly anti-teacher, as their rallying cry demonstrates several things. First, the polysemic nature of music. Musical sounds are open signifiers, and the ability to control public interpretation of sonic utterances is a demonstration of social capital and ideological power. Donald Trump excelled at this musical power play.

His defiance of intellectual property rights and obliviousness toward the texts and politics of the artists whose songs he used during his campaign struck a chord with voters. His supporters relished his refusal to bow to pressure and will to assert dominance over public culture as a rebuttal of the collectively despised “politically correct” status quo. His outsider stance and rebellious image allowed him to use songs like “We’re Not Gonna Take It” to sonically exemplify the pugilistic, zero-sum ethos of his campaign and those who chose to join its ranks.

Second, this confluence reveals the tenuousness of cultural power. Just as Trump’s campaign exhumed Twisted Sister’s hit from the dustbin of MTV’s early days and gave it new cultural relevance (apart from nostalgia or irony), it also opened the song to popular reinterpretation. Sounds of rebellion are easily co-opted by power, appropriated from the peripheries and brought to the center, but their journey does not necessarily stop there. There is always the potential for adding another layer, for re-signifying a song (Barthes 2012). Perhaps the West Virginia teachers envisioned themselves as outsiders, rejected and dismissed by institutions of power, and utilized a legible cultural symbol of resistance to the status quo. This ethos of the necessary forgotten mimics the Rust-Belt ethos that won Trump crucial support in states like West Virginia, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Michigan. In the case of the West Virginia teachers, it might not have mattered that the brutal status quo was the result of the policies and ideologies that “We’re Not Gonna Take It” supported less than two years earlier.

Third, this event shows that while people listen to politicians, they also talk back, at times reshaping political rhetoric for their own ends. Campaigning politicians make a point of performing listening. They re-narrate curated stories from constituents to bolster their policy decisions and ideologies, participate in focus groups and

Musical sounds are open signifiers, and the ability to control public interpretation of sonic utterances is a demonstration of social capital and ideological power.

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“We’re Not Gonna Take It”

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call-in shows, and emphasize how hearing the hardships and struggles of ordinary people affects their decision-making and fortifies their convictions. When citizens’ responses to candidates are played back through news media it is done in the context of discourses controlled by the political system. Established partisan views prevail, parroting existing political talking points with few critical variations. In the case of West Virginia teachers singing “We’re Not Gonna Take It,” we hear citizens’ political variation, an unconventional re-signification of campaign rhetoric and culture. It is clear that the West Virginia teachers heard Trump’s musical/political rhetoric and learned a new association between the song and an oppositional political stance, rather than an anthem to angst youth culture or a cheeky piece of nostalgia. Their singing extracted the rebellious stance and disconnected it from Trump, his party, and his rhetoric. They re-signified “We’re Not Gonna Take It” to bolster their own political maneuvers and confronted a Governor who switched parties in order to support Trump’s election and a Republican-dominated legislature with a cultural product they once embraced.

What is yet to be known about the political organization of the West Virginia teacher’s strike, which ended on March 6 with the teacher’s modest demands being met, is the process that organizers, teachers, and their supporters went through. As organized labor experiences losses and workers find themselves more vulnerable in a post-industrial economy, it is of vital importance to understand new labor activism from an ethnographic standpoint. As Eyerman and Jamison (1998), Mark Mattern (1998), Robbie Lieberman ([1989] 1995), the website traxonthetrail.com, and other scholars have pointed out, musical culture is an essential aspect of political culture. Recent ethnographic work on political movements, like Michael O’Brien’s (2013) on protest in Madison, WI, Max Jack’s (2013) research with St. Pauli Ultras in Germany, or my own (Patch 2013) work with anti-war protests in Austin, TX, are windows into the processes creating and maintaining movement culture. It is through ethnography that we can fully understand processes of re-signifying, of collectively remaking culture to speak meaningfully to the past and future as determined by the present. Since music is polysemic, analyses from a distance are limited (as this piece demonstrates). Engaging in activism is the most effective way to understand protest from the ground up.

It is through ethnography that we can fully understand processes of re-signifying, of collectively remaking culture to speak meaningfully to the past and future as determined by the present.

The difficulty with this sort of fieldwork is that it is unpredictable. The protests in West Virginia lasted slightly more than a week, and the 2011 protests in Madison, a few months. These movements arise to meet a collective challenge, injustice, or issue, and then often vanish or hibernate. One cannot anticipate when a movement will emerge, and researcher mobility is an issue. In the case of the recent “March for Our Lives” anti-gun violence rally in March of 2018, an ethnographer would have had a mere month to get to South Florida, gain the trust of the organizers, and document the proceedings to get an in-depth perspective. This is a tall order for both students and professionals. The only practical solution is to stay active, and to maintain relationships with activists in our own communities that might facilitate engagement when it occurs (and it nearly always is).

The only practical solution is to stay active, and to maintain relationships with activists in our own communities that might facilitate engagement when it occurs.

In these tense days, political critique and social justice pedagogy depend on engagement with dynamic political cultures, including their musical cultures. As Henry Giroux (2006) theorized, public pedagogy matters, and public cultures teach us how to be in

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“We’re Not Gonna Take It”

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the world, with ourselves, and with others. This necessitates engagement with musical cultures from positions of familiarity with processes of signifying and re-signifying. Activism and engagement are essential to writing ethnographies and teaching courses on political cultures that advance our understanding of the practical and theoretical roles of music in politics. Someday soon, perhaps we will know why the West Virginia teachers decided to sing “We’re Not Gonna Take It,” the role it played in garnering enough support to win them the pay increase and health insurance they deserve, and the influence this cultural enunciation may yet have on the myriad labor and social justice movements that are bubbling below the surface. We might also find out if the West Virginia teacher’s musical rendition was the inspiration for the [striking Oklahoma teachers’ marching band arrangement](#) that accompanied their protests in April 2018. Has recent political action remade a hyperbolic hair band anthem the new “This Land is Your Land,” with all of its contradictory uses and interpretations? And how do separate but connected groups of activists repurpose three-decade old sounds to speak on their behalf? The answers to these questions, of these multiple possible meanings and their cultural politics, can only be answered ethnographically.

Endnote

1. Other educator-centric videos of “We’re not Gonna Take it” include: a group of teachers from Valrico, Florida, lip-synching the song to protest students texting, chewing gum, and wearing revealing outfits (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ny-3HzD_1T4); a poor performance by what appears to be a teacher singing with a school rock band; and a surprisingly lackluster performance by striking teachers from 2012 (the last two videos are unattributed).

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Deconstruction as Political Discourse

in Janelle Monáe's "Q.U.E.E.N."

By Audrey Sloté (University of Minnesota)



The music video for [Janelle Monáe's "Q.U.E.E.N."](#) begins with the liberation of its heroes. Just prior to this first event, the singer and her fellow musicians are frozen behind glass in a futuristic museum (see figure 1). A

cool female voice emanating from a screen explains the exhibit over a soundtrack of restrained, orderly Classical music: the second movement of Haydn's Cello Concerto No. 1. A museum visitor infiltrates, surreptitiously puts a record on the turntable, and slips away. A groove starts to fill the room, silencing Haydn. Monáe stirs. The band emerges from their glass enclosures. They start to dance.

What ensues is a celebration of liminality. In her sartorial presentation, Monáe plays with gender, appearing first in a Napoleon-esque suit and sash, then reappearing in a tight-fitting dress and eventually a tuxedo. Her dance moves are sometimes fluid and flexible and other times reflect the angularity and coolness of an android. Overt flirtation with a girl in the dance troupe reflects her character's ambiguous sexuality.

The musicians' performance is not just a full, physical acknowledgment of their newfound freedom but also a continuation of the liberatory act of pushing through boundaries imposed on

them. The groove is the force of liberation from physical containment which the musicians then harness to defy metaphorical containment by socially constructed labels. Undergirding the dance, fashion, and text that overtly signify the deconstruction of binaries, an abstract musical structure enacts a parallel process of deconstruction.

In *The Electric Lady*, the album on which "Q.U.E.E.N." is the third song, Monáe roots deconstructive processes in an Afrofuturist aesthetic and, by extension, Afrofuturism's modes of political discourse. Monáe's theater of binary-blurring, and the musical structures that comprise its foundation, stem from a fundamental Afrofuturist project of deconstructing Eurocentric narratives of history. As Walter Benjamin (2003, 391) famously wrote, "With whom does historicism actually sympathize? The answer is inevitable: with the victor." To uphold narratives of history that valorize those who have claimed power at the expense of others is to uphold the status quo. Afrofuturists warp, fracture, and blur narrative arcs and complicate temporality to critique a concept of history as linear, teleological, and inevitably unfolding toward white progress.

Meanwhile, "Q.U.E.E.N." also participates in the Afrofuturist project of constructing alternative, utopian concepts of being in community. Daylanne K. English and Alvin Kim (2013, 217)



Figure 1. Monáe, center, and her fellow musicians frozen behind glass in a futuristic museum. Video Screenshot.

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point to this imaginative component when they define Afrofuturism as “African American cultural production and political theory that imagine less constrained social, racial, and economic orders.”

In the “Q.U.E.E.N.” video, Monáe performs a persona whose identity furthers Afrofuturist deconstruction. She dances and sings in *The Electric Lady*, and the albums that precede it, as Cindi Mayweather, a rebellious android fugitive-turned-pop star. As a humanoid robot, Cindi destabilizes the boundary between human and machine. Her position in this liminal space also implies other kinds of liminality. As Donna Haraway (2004, 36–37) writes, cyborgs are “super rich in boundary transgressions” and thus able to “make very problematic the statuses of man or woman, human, artifact, member of a race, individual identity or body.” While the human/machine binary does not restrict human beings per se, Monáe’s performance as Cindi enables her to critique those labels that do hinder real people.

At the same time, the character Cindi projects a queer identity in “Q.U.E.E.N.” through flirtatious interactions with a female dancer. By performing queerness, Monáe draws out an element of her character’s identity perhaps already implicit in the total liminality of the cyborg. But even when not couched in cyborg identity, queerness inherently

subverts norms. As musicologist Judith Peraino (2013, 826) writes, queer identity “represent[s] a broad range of behavior and representations that destabilize normative genders and sexualities.” Thus, by performing queerness, and by performing as a cyborg in the context of an Afrofuturist work, Monáe dons two binary-blurring identities with implications for undermining further binaries nested within them.

Visual elements of “Q.U.E.E.N.” blur the boundaries that separate binaries of human and machine, male and female, queer and straight. Sonic elements unspool a complementary narrative of deconstruction. Throughout the song, a B-minor ostinato functions as both a formal unit and a generator of melodic lines that are superimposed onto it (see figure 2). Though no literal transposition is involved, the verse can be considered what Joseph Straus (2003, 318) calls a “fuzzy inversion” of the ostinato; the verse relates to the ostinato via motivic inversion without all the intervals perfectly inverted across a specific axis. The basic motivic cell of the ostinato is a descending perfect fourth (B to F#), while that of the verse is its inversion, an ascending perfect fifth (B to F#, with intermittent D and E; see figure 3). Then, the chorus appears as a kind of dilution of the verse, with embellishments of its tonic triad composed out (see figure 4).



Figure 2. “Q.U.E.E.N.” B-minor ostinato with descending perfect fourth (B to F#).



Figure 3. “Q.U.E.E.N.” verse with an ascending perfect fifth (B to F#, with intermittent D and E).

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Am I a freak for dan-cinground? Am I a freak for get-tingdown? Don't cut me
6
up, don't cut me down And yeah I wan-na be, wan-na be Queen

Figure 4. "Q.U.E.E.N." chorus, similar to verse and without embellishments of its tonic triad.

Read through the Afrofuturist lens which the entire aesthetic of the album warrants, the ostinato and its interplay with melodic materials derived from it both deconstruct temporality and coalesce to construct a utopian space. As a continuously repeating unit, the ostinato has implications for how we perceive time in the song. In relation to the future, the ostinato undermines any sense of the music progressing toward a point of arrival. The relationship among ostinato, verse, and chorus demonstrates what Jonathan Kramer defines as non-linearity: "the principle of composition . . . in which events are understood as outgrowths of general principles that govern entire pieces." (quoted in London 2002, 716). In this case, the ostinato is the principle, and the other melodies are the outgrowths.

The ostinato sonically demonstrates an Afrofuturist approach to history in which the past is sedimented into current time. Invoking an Adornian conception of history, Tobias Van Veen (2013, 18; emphasis in original) writes, "The effect of cyclicity as a *historical form* means that each cycle contains within itself the ghostly aftereffect of a past cycle." The ostinato is the sound of a prior moment, compacted below that which developed from it. Through its repetition, the ostinato demands that the past be acknowledged. The portrayal of the musicians in the video as frozen in time, with their groove preserved

as an artifact on vinyl, suggests that the music long predates the scene itself.

The reinitiation of the ostinato groove on vinyl liberates the musicians from captors who physically and sonically reinforced the boundaries between past and present. By dancing to the music of their own past, they reclaim their own history. The ostinato breaks down the boundary. The binary-blurring currents set up a space of freedom by dissolving socially constructed strictures, and the ostinato and

By dancing to the music of their own past, they reclaim their own history. The ostinato breaks down the boundary.

superimposed verse and chorus imbue the space with a sense of self-perpetuating self-sufficiency. In Kramer's theory, non-linear forms have implications for how a piece's relationship to time is perceived. Kramer uses the term *moment time* to describe this phenomenon, which he derives from Karlheinz Stockhausen's concept of *moment forms*, which

are "in a state of always having already commenced, which could go on as they are for an eternity . . . an eternity that is present in every moment" (quoted in London 2002, 716). The form of the song reflects a utopian vision, self-contained and atemporal. Cindi Mayweather and her rebel collective have turned a sterile prison into a self-contained utopia.

When Monáe begins to rap at the end, the accompanying textural change constitutes the song's only formal boundary. She reappears in a tuxedo, alone under a spotlight in a darkened space, and addresses her cohort of rebel women: "We rising

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up now, you gotta deal you gotta cope / Will you be electric sheep? / Electric ladies will you sleep? / Or will you preach?" Currents of social critique throughout the song culminate in her call to political

action. Without real-world work on behalf of the marginalized, the accepting space of "Q.U.E.E.N.," which especially uplifts the bodies and voices of black women, is but a dream.

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Stadium Shows and Spotify

Popular Music and the Complicity of Consumption

By Simran Singh (Royal Holloway, University of London)

Acts of consumption can be understood as inherently political, as they are located, in both temporal and structural terms, within a wider system of capitalism. I make this assertion because we as music scholars and practitioners find ourselves as actors, willing or inadvertent, within this system. These acts of consumption occur in public; for example, buying tickets to watch bands we love at sold out stadium shows and selectively ignoring the excessive carbon footprints such spectacles leave behind. They also take place in private, such as streaming music on our mobile devices, which in turn are comprised and composed of resources and labour extracted from markets far flung from the spaces where we use them.

These actions take the form of political complicities within a wider system of global capitalism in that they depend on alliances, affiliations, and solidarities, and are often grounded in social, cultural, and economic

exclusion and exclusivity.

In this regard, drawing on Clifford Geertz's (1973, 89) work on the "cultural dimension" of religion, Timothy Taylor (2015) provides a vocabulary of signs and symbols to discuss how neoliberal capitalism can be conceived of as a cultural system. In contemplating popular music, we may locate a *relationship* to capitalism, which, in many cases, takes the form of tremendous monetary acquisition and success engendered by global corporate cultures, as embodied in stadium shows, within which are located entertainment industries, and which further encompass popular musical cultures. These relationships show us that neoliberal capitalism is a "powerful and pervasive . . . system, with its own logic and symbols, its own independence relative to any individual" (13). Neoliberal capitalism's functioning extends further than the comprehension of any one individual; its existence is ubiquitous, and whether

or not people desire or choose to be complicit in this system, they are enmeshed in no small measure.

In this regard, our place in this system can be understood through Taylor's argument that the notion of identity perceived through the frame of consumption is a powerful way for individuals to locate themselves in a wider consumerist culture. Here, the term "identity" relates to personal conceptions of one's individuality in an encompassing culture, such as those recounted at the start of this essay. Taylor acknowledges critics of neoliberalism, such as David Harvey ([1973] 2009), who argues that this discourse of individualism and choice has in turn been part of a neoliberal strategy of exploitation which has inhibited the successful organization of labor; an apparent ideology of self-determination and non-conformity points toward artistic freedom as indicative of a wider social and

economic limitation, which is an important component of the neoliberalization of culture. Nevertheless, through a particular focus on the rise of identity-centric discourses and practices in the context of neoliberal capitalism, Taylor shows us how identity construction is in part engendered through processes of consumption, challenging the understanding that such constructions are always based on a given and foregone cultural attribute.

This view of

consumption shows how certain commodities (e.g., footwear, clothing, and hairstyles) and means of communication (e.g., smartphones and tablets) act as global mappings of preference and pleasure. No less salient among these commodities is the consumption of music, via global channels of information such as the media, an equally prominent component of corporate cultures and entertainment industries. Here, popular music's heroes and superstars, and

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the discourses and causes they represent, all serve as means of self-identification and -representation in the forming and forging of emotional connections based on systems of meanings inherent to these objects and ideas.

What does the consumption and production of music allow us to perceive about the world around us? And, how do we make that perception work for us . . . (as) active participants and agents in the enjoyment of popular cultural forms?

Within this frame, our roles as individual actors in the global political economy of capitalism raises larger questions: What does the consumption and production of music allow us to perceive about the world around us? And, how do we make that perception work for us, not as passive dupes of consumer cultures but active participants and agents in the enjoyment of popular cultural forms?

According to Eric Watts (1997, 43), “Jean Baudrillard ([1976] 1993) argues that post-industrial societies have perfected modes of artistic replication so as to nearly eradicate the relationship between the sign and the signified, modifying the essence of both.” In dialogue, Sasha Newell (2013, 150) states that “abstract, largely immaterial images [and discourses] . . . replace the social relations once held between producer and consumer,” showing us how aspects of political economy insinuate themselves into our lived, everyday experiences. Here, as the materiality of an object is reduced to a copy in mass production, its qualitative uniqueness must be reasserted at the level of the brand. On this basis, we choose Spotify over Apple Music, and iPhones over Androids. The inherent uses of these services and products remain the same, but our consumer choices act as interventions, deeming worth and

appropriateness to our individual preferences. These forms of recognition and conformity act via a process that is dynamic in its inclusion of “anthropology, imagination, sensory experiences, and visionary approach to change” (Wheeler 2013, 6), all leveraged in the gaining of recognition and loyalty, and in turn serving powerful corporate actors in what is, in most cases, a political economy of exploitation.

Nonetheless, the relationships we as individuals form with commodities and causes capture strivings for meaning and mobility, including those of social and economic belonging. Likewise, these relationships point to novel and subjective uses and meanings, revealing negotiations with capitalism and its inequities. Such negotiations, both real and imagined, occur in seemingly disorganised yet dynamic ways. This is particularly the case in the global South, where the terms of capitalism take novel and surprising forms in the hands of and with effect to individuals and society (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Comaroff and Comaroff 2001), revealing interactions that “represent intermeshed cultural logics in which local understandings of performative magic merge with the anxieties over authenticity and imitative reproduction at the heart of capitalist economies” (Newell 2013, 140).

... the relationships we as individuals form with commodities and causes capture strivings for meaning and mobility, including those of social and economic belonging.

For example, my research on hip-hop in Uganda reflected how an economic transition to neoliberalism transformed the way that musicians and promoters relate to each other and to audiences. Besides encounters with American hip-hop, this also took the form of interactions

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Stadium Shows and Spotify

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with popular musical forms from other parts of Africa, notably contemporary Nigerian Afrobeat, which is similarly informed by global musical and social processes. These forms are easily transmitted through traditional media, such as radio, and also through unofficial—that is to say, pirated—compilations. However, in the present day, digital media has allowed for the proliferation of new formats such as MP3 (Sterne 2012), engendering an unprecedented ease of access and transmission. These modes of transmission are akin to Appadurai's (1990) conception of technoscapes, which theorizes the reach and power of technology to elicit the diffusion of imagery and information at an unprecedented scale and speed. In this, the commodification of music and competition among artists, producers, and distributors has created a vibrant musical space, rife with piracy but nonetheless dynamic in terms of access to music technology and musical releases.

Thus, while stadium shows and streaming services act as leviathan symbols of capitalism, the consumption of music also corrals space for smaller interrogations of and interventions within this system.

Thus, while stadium shows and streaming services act as leviathan symbols of capitalism, the consumption of music also corrals space for smaller interrogations of and interventions within this system. As Lipsitz states in *Footsteps in the Dark* (2007), popular music is complicit in the formation of alternative discourses of history—through the shared memory, aspirations, and experiences of people excluded from formal narratives (xi)—while also allowing “heroes” in the form of stars to emerge from these alternative histories. Individuals and groups arrange and align themselves in this system through proliferations and replications that encompass creative expression, commercial success, and cultural influence. Here, we as scholars and practitioners might, through our acts of consumption, fashion interventions through creative practice that both challenge and circumvent global capitalist inequalities.

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“Baile de Favela” and Its Sounding Transgressions

By Andressa Gonçalves Vidigal Rosenberg (University of California, Davis)



Before I begin discussing Brazilian funk and the 2015–16 protests in Brazil, I should disclose my situational instance (*lugar de fala*). I am a white, mid-upper-class Brazilian woman, born-and-raised in Maringá, Paraná—a town notorious for its rodeos, conservative politicians, and gentrification. I am not a specialist in Brazilian funk, but I am versed in the logics shared by many white Brazilians who tend to impose on funk qualities that simultaneously criminalize, mock, and fully de-characterize it as musical expression. I have followed funk, with my own personal biases, since 2014. One of the reasons I began studying funk was to tame my own mixed feelings toward the genre.¹ Another reason is the genre’s growing use in political protests. I originally wrote the following piece before Dilma Rousseff’s impeachment on August 31, 2016, and Michel Temer’s subsequent horrendous politics. I am still hopeful for social transformation through funk and protests.

Funk: Criminalization and Transgressing Potentials

The Brazilian funk song “[Baile de Favela](#)” (*Favela*² Dance), by São Paulo city-native MC João, was repeatedly parodied during the 2015–16 protests and used in at least four different Brazilian states (São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Paraná, and Bahia)—each time with completely distinct lyrics.³ Likewise, “Baile de Favela” has now received more than 193 million views on YouTube since being published on June 19, 2015. Given its popularity and use in diverse contexts, I ask: Why did “Baile de Favela” become substrate to protest songs in Brazil during a wave of student demonstrations extending from the end of 2015 until May of 2016? In this article, I investigate how transgressive references to Brazilian funk are in the context of protest. I argue that funk, with its inherent connections to race, marginalized sounds, and culture, has served as a means of transgression in public remonstrations in Brazil, itself becoming a protagonist in songs of protests.

Brazilian funk derives from US African-American genres such as funk, soul, hip-hop, and rap. The word “funk” in Brazil has been loosely used to refer to all of these genres since the 1970s. By the end of the 1980s, it became more closely related to low-budget songs, with simple or no melodic lines, sung to an electronic beat derived from Miami bass. In its earlier forms, the bass beat could be as simple as an electronic keyboard-generated-and-looped beat (Sansone [2003] 2004, 171–77). Today, funk maintains this low-budget aesthetic, with important emerging producers, such as KondZilla, releasing videos over YouTube—not via mainstream media such as radio or television.

There are several reasons why funk, like many other marginalized Brazilian musical genres, has served political protests in Brazil well. I believe funk’s blackness, sexual explicitness, and poverty-stricken origins are some of them. Funk has been criminalized since 1992, when, in Rio de Janeiro, two groups of competing *favelas* (shanty towns) gathered at the Arpoador—a small peninsula between the famous beaches of Ipanema and Copacabana—to have a public dance face-off in the rich neighborhood. The face-off merely reflected funk’s growing culture of dance-floor battles. However, the open-air, friendly dance competition at the beach with mostly black participants ended up being misinterpreted by (white) spectators and the national media as *arrastão*, a mass robbery. Thus, through at once racist and classist assumptions, funk began its infamous historical trajectory, often and again associated with violence, drug dealing factions, robbery, and crime in general (Vianna 1987; Denis 2006).

Brazilian funk, in all its variations, has been regulated and pushed toward marginalization, together with rap and hip-hop. Past and present, many laws criminalizing funk gatherings pose difficulties for organizers acquiring permits, including expensive and nearly unattainable demands from safety authorities such as metal detectors and warrants from firefighters; it is a common practice of Brazilian law enforcement to refuse warrants to gatherings which they dislike or disapprove of (Coutinho 2015, 534). Recent laws altogether prohibit public

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funk gatherings in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, with police raids targeting such events (Pereira 2012). In fact, even though funk *carioca*⁴ became a cultural heritage of Rio de Janeiro state in 2009, it can still be criminalized and/or censored by the state (Coutinho 2015, 536). In part, these limitations are imposed because funk still faces the difficult task of asserting itself as a bona fide culture, which to the Brazilian media, the government, and society at large is an outrageous idea.

MC João and His “Baile de Favela”

As with many other funk MCs (masters of ceremony), 24-year-old MC João comes from a poor family and precarious reality. In an interview for *G1* newspaper, he describes how he dodged criminal life through hard work as an office-boy by day and a *bailes funks* (funk dances) host by night (Ortega 2016). In his humble speech, MC João proposes an ostentation that is far removed from the musical genre *funk ostentação*'s typical character. *Funk ostentação* emerged in São Paulo, and it revolves around ostentation, that is, around showing-off possessions, new cars, expensive brand clothing, and all things bling-related (Pereira 2012, 1–4).⁴ Conversely, MC João intends to tell his own story through funk by showcasing how he overcame social and economic barriers. Although in theory MC João portrays his music as a premeditated act, during the same interview he admits to having forgotten what he was supposed to sing when recording “Baile de Favela” with producer KondZilla. Consequently, he made something up on the spot (Ortega 2016). Yet, this does not detract from any consciousness MC João had of his music-making but rather reflects the unpretentious and improvisational manner with which funk is often created. In its simplicity, “Baile de Favela” directly translates more of MC João’s ideas as an improvised song than it may have if it were entirely pre-composed.

“Baile de Favela” has a simple melodic structure with a three-note theme and rhythmic, ostinato-like pattern that resembles the *son clave*. In the lyrics, MC João does not talk about motorcycles or piles of money. Rather,

... MC João recites a list of the many *favelas* and *bailes funks* he frequented throughout his life. His persistent list sounds and feels like an ostentatious display and defiant celebration of these places.

he focuses on *favela* and *baile funk* sexuality as his core themes. He speaks of his lover and the sexual tension between them; and part of the lyrics are controversial for referencing the female reproductive organ, intercourse, and underaged boys having their way with women. In turn, the video displays more of the typical *ostentação* style by depicting MC João driving an expensive car with his friends through a *favela*—observers are in awe. Throughout the video, the static audience multiplies and begins dancing. The scenery evolves into a street party in the style of underground public funk gatherings. At the center is MC João and his brand-new car. Right after the oversexualized set of verses, MC João recites a list of the many *favelas* and *bailes funks* he frequented throughout his life. His persistent list sounds and feels like an ostentatious display and defiant celebration of these places.

In part, these limitations are imposed because funk still faces the difficult task of asserting itself as a bona fide culture, which to the Brazilian media, the government, and society at large is an outrageous idea.

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Parody in the 2015–16 Protests—How It All Started

In October of 2015, the very first parody of “Baile de Favela” was published on YouTube by the Movimento dos Estudantes Secundaristas (Secondary School Students’ Movement) of São Paulo state. The students mobilized in response to Geraldo Alckmin’s education reforms which entailed the closing of 93 primary and secondary schools and the relocation of around 300,000 students.⁵ This political movement was greatly successful, and by the end of 2015 the number of occupied schools neared 200 (Mendonça 2015). “Baile de Favela” was parodied by MCs Foice and Martelo (Sickle and Hammer, in reference to socialism) and offered as an anthem to the students who were occupying schools and resisting the reforms. This parody became “[Escola de Luta](#)” ([School of Struggle](#)). (To understand modifications made through parody, I offer a lyric transcription and translation of both “Baile de Favela” and “Escola de Luta,” available on [page 65](#).)

Instead of listing off *favelas*, Foice and Martelo list the schools which have been successfully occupied. . . . I hear the listing of occupied schools as an ostentation of the student movement’s prowess.

“Escola de Luta” portrays tension between state and students. Instead of listing off *favelas*, Foice and Martelo list the schools which have been successfully occupied. The new lyrics turn the song into a threat to the state and governor, as in “estado/Geraldo [Alckmin] veio quente, nós já tá fervendo” (“state/Geraldo [Alckmin] came hot, we were already boiling”). “Escola de Luta” maintains the musical traits of “Baile de Favela,” even though the lower-budget imitation is audible. I hear the listing of occupied schools as an ostentation of the student movement’s prowess. In the parody, Foice and Martelo substitute sexual tension with political tension between students and state. However, this political tension still evokes the sexual tension present in the original song through collective memory and shared knowledge. Thus, the song gains transgressive strength by placing the students as agents where the original song emphasizes sexuality.

Points of Transgression

In this brief example, Brazilian funk has provided an effective frame for protest songs in Brazil because funk, from *carioca* to *ostentação*, has been criminalized since its genesis (see Vianna 1987; Denis 2006; Pereira 2012). Michel Foucault affirms that “transgression incessantly crosses and recrosses a line which closes up behind it in a wave of extremely short duration, and thus it is made to return once more right to the horizon of the uncrossable” (1977, 34). “Baile de Favela” has crossed numerous lines on its own. Yet, with its protest parodies, “Baile de Favela” made its way to the “uncrossable” by lending itself to political protests while still remaining essentially of the periphery, the black, the prohibited, and the marginalized. In “Escola de Luta,” funk is the ultimate driving sound and force for transgression. It exposes the socially sanitized to flawed politics and legislation limitations; it also displays the black, the marginal, the extremely poor, and the unacceptably

“Baile de Favela” has crossed numerous lines on its own. Yet, with its protest parodies, “Baile de Favela” made its way to the “uncrossable” by lending itself to political protests while still remaining essentially of the periphery, the black, the prohibited, and the marginalized.

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sexual. Unacceptable because we have under-aged students evoking sexual tension through the sound of funk at elementary schools, where sexuality is almost a taboo subject—let’s not forget that even if the students may not be old enough to understand, the musical sexual innuendos of funk are easily recognized by adults/parents, who often react in aversion to the musical genre as a whole. Thus, funk has conquered new spaces to become a music of resistance in Brazilian protests. It is through Brazilian funk’s transgression of state- and media-imposed confinements that it gains additional social dimensions and functions in the process of resisting political oppression.

Endnotes

1. Funk can be empowering, oversexualizing, sordid, extremely explicit, objectifying of women’s bodies, and misogynistic, and therefore its complexity should defy any clear-cut opinion. For examples of these variations, hear: [MC Carol featuring Heavy Baile “Marielle Franco”](#); [MC Doguinha “Vem e Brota Aqui na Base”](#); [Jojo Marontinni “Que Tiro Foi Esse.”](#)
2. *Favelas* are improvised community conglomerations. They emerged during the slave liberations in the 1800s (Valadares 2005, 60) and are extremely poor neighborhoods predominantly populated by blacks. Today, they have achieved large geographical extensions and populate big cities such as Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Bahia, and Recife. They are often associated with precarious living on hill sides; yet, in Recife, for example, they are situated along or at the swamp (*mangue*) regions.
3. To get a sense of the different protest song parodies, hear: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSG6G_BHUTA; <https://www.facebook.com/FrentexPR/videos/972288116152855/>; <https://www.facebook.com/levantelavras/videos/772127299553974/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m2aj0nT9iCw>.
4. Nothing is simple when discussing Brazilian funk, but generally, *carioca* stands for funk from Rio de Janeiro and *ostentação* for funk from São Paulo.
5. For more information on the school protests, see: Bitencourt (2017); Romancini and Castilho (2017).

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Glocal Politics in Bavarian Slang Rap

“Wolli” by Liquid & Maniac

By Fabio Dick (Julius-Maximilians-Universität, Würzburg, Germany)



Located in Southern Germany, Eastern Bavaria, Regensburg is the capital of the Oberpfalz (Upper Palatinate) and an important economic and cultural center for the whole region (UNESCO, n.d.), which includes the nearby

district of Niederbayern (Lower Bavaria). In 2016, accusations of bribery and corruption against the then-mayor of the city, Joachim “Wolli” Wolbergs, became public. These allegations not only altered many citizens’ opinions of him as a person but also shaped and reinforced for others a negative attitude about politicians in general by confirming stereotypes of their local, national, and international agenda. The town was definitely affected by this political scandal. In early January 2017, Wolbergs was suspended from duty and even placed in investigative custody for a couple of weeks. Nearly simultaneous with this suspension, Regensburg-based hip-hop crew Liquid & Maniac released their song “Wolli,” titled after Wolbergs’ nickname. The tune was uploaded to YouTube on January 27, 2017, and after one year had received more than 30,000 views.

Liquid & Maniac both have German citizenship and US American backgrounds: Achim Schneemann, alias Maniac, was born in 1985 in Niederbayern and grew up in Greenville, South Carolina, where he lived with his family for eleven years before returning to Bavaria in 2003. Harold Merl, aka Liquid, is named after his father, a US American soldier who left the family before he was born in 1990. Merl grew up in Regenstauf, a village in the Oberpfalz near Regensburg. After they had finished their respective apprenticeships, Merl and Schneemann worked different jobs for several years; today, musicking serves as their full-time profession. While they each work on individual hip-hop projects, Liquid & Maniac’s “Wolli” illustrates their collaborative efforts in slang rap, which, in this context, simply refers to the permanent use of slang lyrics in hip-hop music—i.e., rapping texts in a regional or local dialect.

The slang rap community (made up of both artists and audience) in Bavaria established itself over the last decade, whereas German hip-hop had its boom in the 1990s. In comparison with the rest of the country, local language and conversation tend to be colored by a rather strong dialect, especially in



Figure 1. Liquid, Maniac, and “crew” wear homemade paper masks of politicians. Video screenshot.

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rural areas of Bavaria. So-called *Boarisch* or *Mundart* is generally understood better not only in Southern Germany but in the German speaking regions of the Alps (Austria and Switzerland). As a result, local artists might enjoy a huge increase in popularity on a regional level without receiving much attention throughout the rest of Germany at all. One of the first crews who performed songs in their local dialect was Doppel D (“[Watschnbaam](#)”). Their rather small success was vastly exceeded some years later by artists like Liquid & BBou (“[Mach doch dein Polt - Remix](#)”) and Dicht & Ergreifend (“[Zipfeschwinga](#)”). In 2016, many of the aforementioned pioneers formed a sort of all-star group and released a music video on YouTube titled “[Bavarian Squad](#).”

The idea of “glocalization,” as the term itself indicates, is based upon the relationship between the local and the global (Robertson [1995] 1998). Emphasizing a spatial meaning, this concept could be described as a process of spreading, flowing, and/or diffusion. Today, this is well established within cross-disciplinary contexts yet does not receive much public awareness. People may feel and recognize the tension between regional and international contexts but all too often subsume this into the logic of globalization. However, the impact of the local and global are interdependent and logical within the concept of glocalization. Here, I demonstrate these tensions as interdependent processes on many different levels.

Since it is not possible to explain nuances of Bavarian dialect(s) in detail here, I will try to sketch out one main characteristic and thereby focus on Oberpfalz and Niederbayern. In Oberpfalz, the intonation of the letter “u” in a word tends to be spoken “ou”—in Niederbayern, this “u” tends to be pronounced “ua.” For instance, “boy” in German is *Junge* or *Bub*. In these regions, the second “b” of *Bub* is left out, which results in “*Bou*” in Oberpfalz (e.g., the

name of the artist BBou [Boarische Bou] translates as “Bavarian Boy”) and “*Bua*” in Niederbayern (see Zehetner [1985] for detailed information about Bavarian dialect). The nickname of the former Regensburg mayor, “Wolli,” in fact sounds more like *Wolle/Wollä* in German written pronunciation, or *wolle/wolle*: in phonetic spelling. In the very same way, the slang expression “Scholli” is colored by dialect and therefore can function as a rhyme to “Wolli,” like the English word “story”—an anglicism from a German linguistic perspective. “Scholli” is a common colloquial term and difficult to translate. Its meanings range from something like bro or pal to villain/hustler/rascal, but the so-called person would in some way still be sympathetic and likable. The word is typically used in contexts of surprise and/or admiration within the standard phrase, “Mein lieber

Scholli,” or exactly as in Liquid & Maniac’s “Wolli”: “Wolli, Wolli—mei liaba Scholli!”

The lyrics of the song speak directly about the Joachim “Wolli” Wolbergs political scandal. (You can find a transcription and translations of the lyrics on [page 67](#).) By doing so, the tune itself becomes a part of the debate surrounding local politics. Moreover, the video projects them on a global scale by supporting

and referring to stereotypical notions of politicians. So, to summarize before explaining in detail: “Wolli” visualizes and narrates a version of glocal politics within this form of glocal music. It verbally refers to a local topic of a current political scandal but visually connects that with international politics. Furthermore, it combines the local Bavarian dialect with the global, internationalized genre of hip-hop.

“Wolli” begins with a long intro followed by a chorus. Although sung completely in Bavarian, every single part notably features more Anglicisms than local slang words. The ambivalent connotation of

“Wolli” visualizes and narrates a version of glocal politics within this form of glocal music. It verbally refers to a local topic of a current political scandal, but visually connects that with international politics. Furthermore, it combines the local, Bavarian dialect with the global, internationalized genre of hip-hop.

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“(mei liaba) Scholli” as mentioned above remains interesting. In using this expression, Liquid & Manic direct surprise, anger, and appreciation at Wolbergs all at once; they contradictorily designate him a nice cheater. Wearing a Donald Trump mask, Maniac raps the first verse, thematically linking the topic of public housing with corruption. He proposes himself as a candidate for mayor in a rather self-deprecating way, saying he then would organize apartments for everyone and legalize marijuana. Likewise, he calls the public affair a sad thing that makes him feel ashamed. Additionally, he postulates not to keep “it” (i.e., politics) going in terms of “business as usual” or to act as if nothing had happened: “ja/yo, i scham’mi / und so / konns a ned weidageh / ollawei, des is traurig” (“yes/yo, I feel ashamed / and / it can’t continue like this / all the time, that is so sad”).

Liquid sings the second verse “disguised” as Barack Obama. Similar to his predecessor—note that Obama follows Trump in the video, the reverse order of their presidencies—he bluntly criticizes Wolli. While the context is seen as a serious matter, the lyrics are simultaneously accusatory and teasing. For instance, Liquid asks the former mayor to lend him half a million euros “cash” to purchase new fancy clothes, a smartphone, and a recording studio. His comments also name two prominent people affected by the scandal: Volker Tretzel, director of the involved construction company; and Hans

Schaidinger, mayor of Regensburg from 1996 to 2014 and Wolbergs’ predecessor in office. Liquid compares these two figures to prostitutes. Finally, he suggests that Wolli use the donations that Wolbergs and his political party, SPD (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands) received from Tretzel as an investment in young people, instead of spending them on cocaine. Mockingly, Liquid assumes/implies that such an approach would consequently turn Wolbergs from “OB” (the German abbreviation for *Oberbürgermeister*, the mayor of a big city) into an “OG” (original gangster/gangsta). Such a makeover would also include a BMW (Bayerische Motoren Werke; Bavarian Motor Works) equipped with an SPD flag as a gang sign.

Because the whole tune stays in-dialect, listening comprehension for non-natives seems near-impossible. Nevertheless, anglicisms by far outnumber real slang expressions. They range from an isolated “gangstershit” spoken in the intro to entire sentences, including citing Wu-Tang Clan’s (idea of) “C.R.E.A.M.”—Cash Rules Everything Around Me—at the end of the first verse.¹ Additionally, the line “don’t drop the soap, sugar” in the second verse reflects a humorous hint/warning of Wolbergs’ upcoming time in prison. Moreover, the repeated usage of fill-in words such as “yo” and “ey” may be understood as “universal” hip-hop slang and thereby references to the genre.

Figure 2. One of the “crew” mimics Angela Merkel’s “typical” hand gesture. Video screenshot.



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Glocal Politics in Bavarian Slang Rap

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Figure 3. “Kim Jong-Un” gestures to the camera, the viewer, and the world. Video screenshot.

Five people dominate the foreground of the video. They all wear homemade paper masks that show the faces of the following politicians: Donald Trump, Barack Obama, Vladimir Putin, Angela Merkel, and Kim Jong-Un (see figure 1). Since no facial expressions except the ones imprinted on the masks are visible, the crew’s gestures have increased effect, and because the musicians disappear in this way, their acting creates both a critical and comedic outcome. Furthermore, they all reveal distinctive references to behavior often associated with hip-hop, for example, dance moves and hand movements in accordance with the rhythm. For instance, one of the crew frequently mimics Angela Merkel’s “typical” hand gesture, which they accompany with a shrug of the shoulders (see figure 2). However, this very gesture might be more recognizable to hip-hop aficionados for its occasional uses by world-famous rapper Jay-Z. Altogether, the shrug of the shoulders could be “read” both as a sign of innocence and a lack of interest, while the mask and the hands simply identify this individual as Angela Merkel—or as a “secret” rapper. Other striking gestures relate closely to the lyrics, context, and message of the song. These are sometimes subtle but usually evident and offensive; for example, Obama dabbing, Putin throwing money, and Kim giving the middle finger

to the camera, the viewer, and the world (see figure 3). While the overall setting remains the same, the background—in clear contrast to the movement in the foreground of the screen—brings into focus the town’s most distinctive landmark: the Regensburger Cathedral (Reng’schbuaga Dom) (see figure 4).



Figure 4. The Regensburger Cathedral (Reng’schbuaga Dom). Photo by Fabio Dick.

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Glocal Politics in Bavarian Slang Rap

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On the one hand, this article situated elements of the audio and video material and their construction of images and meanings on a musical dimension. On the other hand, it embedded the song in diverse contexts, providing a social, linguistic, and political backdrop. In doing so, I first and foremost wanted to connect spheres of dialect/slang, hip-hop/rap, and politics, not only from a local and regional to an international and global stage but also with an intertextual and semiotic approach. Yet, the visibility and audibility of Bavarian slang rap depends heavily on access to, and interest in, the world wide web. This network might provide a glocal concept for certain privileged areas of the world, but—with regard to

Fairness, equality, and freedom should always represent key elements for the local in and as the global in musics, and vice-versa, i.e., the global in, and as, the local—they might be different, but they mutually influence and require one another.

factors such as accessibility or usability—certainly not world wide. To what extent this situation in cyberspace mirrors the “real” world has to be taken into serious consideration. Fairness, equality, and freedom should always (cf. Baumann 2000) represent key elements for the local in and as the global in musics, and vice-versa, i.e., the global in and as the local—they might be different but they mutually

influence and require one another. The song “Wolli” demonstrates how closely and reflexively music and politics intertwine. It may help to hear and see, and maybe understand, the glocal in this particular piece of Bavarian slang rap.

Endnote

1. “C.R.E.A.M.” is a track off of their (1993) debut album, *Enter the Wu-Tang (36 Chambers)*, not a reference to the famous British rock band.

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Music and Conflict Resolution in Israeli-Palestinian Relations

By Teresa EnYart (Liberty University)



Music and conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has played an important role in the peacemaking and peacebuilding process. Initiatives in Israel that promote coexistence through music have directly and indirectly sought to change the social and political situation at the grassroots level. Music has also been used as a tool to promote cultural awareness while seeking to de-escalate tension and violence. These initiatives and projects seek to create positive spaces where it is safe to interact with the “other.” It is in these safe spaces that bridges are built through interaction, commonality, and empathy.

During my recent fieldwork in Israel, I explored three distinct projects. The first was with Ukuleles for Peace, which was founded by Paul Moore, an “outsider” from England. This project aims to promote coexistence through the collaboration between Arab and Jewish students in two separate suburbs of Tel Aviv (see figures 1–5). With the help of Paul’s wife, Daphna Orion, these students from Al-Tira and Hod HaSharon meet every week to play the ukulele together. The ukulele, an instrument developed from small Portuguese guitars by indigenous Hawaiians in the nineteenth century, brings these two inter-ethnic students together on a neutral level where they learn to build friendships. This project is also a wonderful example of community building as it does not involve just the students. As a participation requirement, the parents of the students must also be actively involved. This includes hosting rehearsals at their homes, carpooling the students every week, and other outside activities. This project has not only gained international recognition but has revealed itself over time to be a successful coexistence initiative.

Figure 1. Daphna Orion leads the group in their first rehearsal of the season in Hod HaSharon. Photo by Teresa EnYart.



Figure 2. Razi (Arab) and Yuval (Jew) working out and learning their parts together during rehearsal. Photo by Teresa EnYart.



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Music and Conflict Resolution in Israeli-Palestinian Relations

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Figures 3 & 4. The students take a few minutes between songs to laugh and joke around with each other. Photo by Teresa EnYart.



Figure 5. The students learning a new song. Photo by Teresa EnYart.

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Music and Conflict Resolution in Israeli-Palestinian Relations

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Next, the Arab-Jewish Orchestra at Haifa University brings Arabs and Jews together under the premise of “high-art” music. This orchestra seeks the highest level of musicianship while performing music that is culturally relevant to its inter-ethnic members. Taiseer Elias, an Arab-Israeli, is the current director of the orchestra. He is also a well-known oud player and was a member of internationally-recognized group Bustan Abraham (1991–2003), which also promoted coexistence through music. Elias’ experience has helped shape and develop this orchestra as it continues to grow. He believes that making music together testifies that coexistence is possible:

The very fact that Arabs and Jews work together and can come together and create this nice music together is really great. It means that coexistence is not only possible but it can be a very nice experience, because when you want to create music together you cannot

hate each other. You have to have mutual respect. We are like brothers. That is why I say that music can tear down walls of hatred and misunderstanding, because I am not able to sit down with you and create with you if I have presumptions or I hate you, or I don’t like you, it cannot work. [We cannot] just sit and play something and read the notes. (Elias, pers. comm., November 28, 2017)

Lastly, Avi Gilboa, a Jewish-Israeli, designed the Let’s Talk Music course at Bar-Ilan University, from the vantage point of music therapy, with the intention to create a dialogue between Arabs and Jews through their musical identities. Gilboa uses the concept of musical identity to explore national and cultural identity of oneself and the “other.” This concept includes not only music that people like, or identify with, but music that they do not like.

The inner circle, *My music*, includes all of the musical styles that one likes and defines as part of his or her musical taste. . . .

The second, more encompassing circle, *My culture’s music*, includes musical choices that are not necessarily connected to one’s personal taste but more to his or her cultural environment. . . .

The third and fourth circles define the negative sides of one’s musical identity, that is, the types of music that he or she dislikes or even disapproves of (third circle) and the types of music that he or she simply does not know about (fourth circle). The third circle is actually a person’s *musical alter-ego*. It contains types of music that the person knows but resists and disregards. The fact that there is a negative attitude towards these types of music implies that the person has an emotional connection to the music. (Gilboa 2016, 3–4; emphasis in original)

Gilboa designed the Let’s Talk Music course based on this concept. Creating and enhancing communication starts with listening to the “other” and their music, which eventually turns into dialogue. This project also aims to address social and political issues through an attempt to broaden one’s musical identity. Expanding one’s musical identity might then lead to acceptance and tolerance of the “other.” Musicianship is not required for participation, nor does it determine the level of success a person will have in the course. The way that this project is laid out, guided by a music therapist, creates an atmosphere amenable to healing and reconciliation.

“The very fact that Arabs and Jews work together and can come together and create this nice music together is really great. It means that coexistence is not only possible but it can be a very nice experience, because when you want to create music together you cannot hate each other. You have to have mutual respect.”

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Music and Conflict Resolution in Israeli-Palestinian Relations

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In each of these projects, there have been traceable levels of enhanced communication, broken stereotypes, trust building, and community building that have promoted identity transformation. Identity transformation is an important aspect when it comes to inter-ethnic conflict, particularly with nationalist identities drawing and enforcing strong divisions between ethnic groups. These nationalist identities need to be challenged, altered, and reconstructed to include the “other.” When referring to musical identity, Göran Folkestad (2002) believes that there is a post-nationalist identity in which multiple cultural identities are incorporated. These multiple cultural identities are where commonality lies, and in this commonality, the unifying element needed to bridge the gap.

Global youth culture and its music, because it is the same regardless of national, ethnic or cultural heritage of the context in which it operates, might have a non-segregating and uniting function. (Folkestad 2002, 160)

In his chapter, “Post-National Identities in Music” in the *Handbook of Musical Identities* (2017), Folkestad cites Jan Sverre Knudsen (2011), who suggests looking past national concepts of youth identity due to the ways in which culture is transmitted across national boundaries. Knudsen writes, “a post-national perspective not only challenges the significance of national identity, but also questions the emphasis placed on identity in general” (79).

If identity transformation or finding a common identity through music can build a bridge between people, then music cannot be disregarded as a peacemaking tool. Music and conflict resolution in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has led to innovative methods and concepts that could be applied cross-culturally in the context of a greater global culture. Music has proven to be an indirect but effective way to address social and political issues. In addressing such serious issues, music has helped relieve inter-ethnic tensions through the act of music-making. Music-making has further promoted a collaborative joint effort between two opposing groups while building trust and developing relationships. While music cannot be the sole answer to inter-ethnic conflict, it might be the missing link to get there. Yet, it is up to those in the conflict to decide what the next step is. “Sometimes it takes the people who actually live the conflict to do the resolution” (Gilboa, pers. comm., November 13, 2017).

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Peacebuilding, Not Politics

Music and MESPO's Model for Changing the World

By Jon Bullock (University of Chicago)

If you're at all like the 83% of US American social media users who recently admitted they avoid entering political conversations on their social media pages, an *SEM Student News* issue devoted to music and politics may seem like just another post to hide from your mental newsfeed (Duggan and Smith 2016). I'll admit that my own initial thoughts on the subject left me feeling that, for most of us, political engagement through music probably seems irrelevant at best and impossible at worst. Recently, however, I spoke about these issues with Hastiar Sheikhani, the co-founder and current executive director of MESPO, the Middle East Sustainable Peace Organization. According to the organization's [Facebook page](#), "MESPO is a religiously and politically neutral youth-founded, youth-led organization promoting peace and globalization through education, peaceful dialogue, and resolution of conflicts caused by religious, ethnic, political, and other differences." Throughout our conversation, Hastiar preferred to speak about peacebuilding rather than politics—not only as a tool with which to effect change within the region but also as a way to build new connections between individuals. He also focused on interventions extending far beyond the Middle East, concentrating on worldwide problems such as "energy, the environment, and sea levels" rather than "oil, politics, and war." In his focus on peacebuilding at both local and global levels, I believe Hastiar was perhaps offering a more sustainable understanding of politics itself, refashioned precisely in terms of personal connection. You can read portions of our conversation below.



HS: First of all, my name is Hastiar Sheikhani, and I was born in Kirkuk. I am from Kirkuk, Kurdistan region of Iraq, which is actually a disputed area by the Kurdistan Region and Baghdad, the central government. I

studied mechanical engineering at the American University of Iraq-Sulaimani. But while doing so, since it's a liberal arts school, I took a lot of classes in different fields that were not relevant to mechanical engineering. These courses included civilization, history, politics, a course on Israel and Palestine, international relations, comparative world religions, and history of the religions in Iraq. I got the opportunity to go to the US for a program about religious pluralism and democracy in the United States. So this program was a very good and a very unique opportunity. We spent five weeks in the US studying the religions that exist there, how people live together, their history, the type of government and how the government deals with religion—these types of things. So when I came back, I was supposed to have an action plan, so I started a club at the university (which was all I could do at that time), which was called the Dialogue Club. What we were doing was gathering twice per month or so. Either we would have dialogue sessions among ourselves, or over Skype with a group of young people from

different countries, especially ones that had conflict. Because of all this, I got the chance to go to India with a different organization called United States Institute of Peace (USIP). This program took twenty-eight young people, peacebuilders from [countries that had] conflict within them, and Iraq was one of these countries. So while I was there, I met the Dalai Lama, and we got motivation from him. So once I was there, I felt like I was the only one there not doing the job, not doing the peacebuilding in an organized way. I didn't have an organization. So when I came back to Iraq, to the Kurdistan Region, I started looking for organizations to work with, that were doing peacebuilding. I found zero peace organizations that were local and were actually active in the community. There were just a couple of foreign organizations that were doing very minimal, like low-key sorts of activities each year. So I and some friends, we started Middle East Sustainable Peace Organization.

JB: And you often have workshops in the [Iraqi Kurdistan] area. Is that correct?

HS: Yes. So basically, the way we approach our work—peacebuilding—is in six different ways. We can name them goals, or we can name them themes. They are religious pluralism, democracy and good governance,

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Peacebuilding, Not Politics

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peace education, gender equality and women's empowerment, preservation of cultural heritage, and lastly, conflict resolution and management. Six departments.

JB: Can you talk a little bit about the role that music has had in these sorts of processes?

HS: Right. Music has been a very important part for us because we believe that happiness brings peace, and vice versa. So as an example, on the International Day of Peace, in September last year, we had a very unique musical celebration with the Kurdish *daf* [frame drum], and we did our best to try to introduce this instrument as a tool for peacebuilding. And not only the *daf* but other musical styles and instruments. Also we had six singers from different backgrounds, from different Kurdish dialects, and from different languages. We had Arabic singers, Turkmen singers, Assyrian singers, and Kurdish singers of course. And we will do the same this upcoming year in 2018. We will have a much bigger event, and we will have a variety of different performances.

JB: What do you think it is about music that speaks in a different way or allows for this sort of collaboration?

HS: I have a lot of different thoughts. I believe that humans, as we interact, as we learn about someone or something (it doesn't have to be a human), the more we learn about it, the more we have feelings for it. The more we love it. So I think music is also an interaction. It's also a culture that can be learned. So for example, if a Kurdish guy meets an Arab from Iraq or a Turk from Turkey, which they normally have conflicts with in their countries, if they exchange musical cultures, they would be learning about each other. And once they do this, once they do this interaction, there's a connection. Also, music, if we talk about it in the scientific way, music initiates the release of happiness hormones like dopamine and endorphins. And these hormones make you happy. And whenever people are happy, they come to be less violent and more cooperative and more open to new ideas.



Hastiar Sheikhani and His Holiness the Dalai Lama exchanging gifts (Kurdistan flag and two books by the Dalai Lama) in Dharamsala, India, May 2016. Photo courtesy of Hastiar Sheikhani.

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JB: I saw a while back that you shared an article about Kurdish music as protest in Rojava [a region in Syria currently occupied by Turkish-backed military forces]. I wondered if you would mind sharing a little bit about that—sort of, again, what you think it is that music is doing there.

HS: Music in history, not only Kurdish history but in human history, has had a lot of influence, like its own role in politics, in governments, even war, even peace. So I think, even for Kurds, in Rojava right now, as they are an armed movement in a civil war, they are trying to, you know, motivate their people, their fighters, their supporters, with the music that they are making. Because as you probably know, even in Turkey, in Syria, the only thing that Kurds might have would be their culture, you know, their own connections between them. So if this culture dies, they have nothing else left. So I think music is a very important part of this culture.

Hastiar went on to share his thoughts on the economic benefits of global peace, citing research from the Institute of Economics and Peace that lists the annual global expenditure on peacebuilding efforts at a mere \$2 billion (according to the same report, the annual global

expenditure on ice cream is \$9 billion). But in the end, it was Hastiar's focus on building connections between individuals that provided me with the most provocative way of thinking about politics, a concept he himself suggested plays only a minimal role in MESPO, where individuals "come with their political identity, but with a different mentality—a mentality in which they can communicate peacefully and learn about each other." Even in Iraqi Kurdistan, a region that has been hopelessly caught up in the devastating politics of colonialism and modernization for over a century, Hastiar suggested that

"it's the people here who will build a future. It's the people who will plan for the future, and it's the people who decide what the future looks like. Instead of giving them reasons to leave, we should give them reasons to stay and reasons to hope for the future."

To return to the theme of music and politics, what might it mean to understand and position our work in terms of peacebuilding processes? Would this make our work more relevant to the 83% who avoid "politics" at all costs? Or, to use Hastiar's words, could it perhaps offer, even in the current US American political divide, a mentality in which we could actually communicate peacefully and learn about each other?

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Ethnomusicology and Empathy

By Dr. Katherine In-Young Lee (University of California, Los Angeles)



One. In late March of this year, I took a taxi from a hotel to Reagan National Airport in Washington D.C. The driver was chatty and we instantly struck up a conversation. We discussed the unseasonably warm weather following a

snowstorm and D.C. traffic. During the conversation, I recognized a song on the radio as an Ethiopian *tezeta*—a melancholic ballad form. I inquired politely as to whether we were listening to *tezeta*. The driver immediately turned around, peered directly into my eyes, and gave me the deepest smile I have ever seen. He began to speak animatedly: “You know *tezeta*? You know Ethiopia?” He noted that Orthodox Easter was soon approaching and that the Ethiopian radio station was playing a medley of *tezeta*. The driver said wistfully, “It reminds me of home.”

Two. During graduate school, I taught a small discussion section for an undergraduate ethnomusicology course. One day, two students—who were actually a couple—spoke to me excitedly before section. They wanted to let me know that they had dined at an Armenian restaurant in Watertown, Massachusetts, over the weekend. In their conversation with the waiter, they mentioned that they had learned about Armenian music in their class at school and fallen in love with the sound of the *duduk* (a double reed woodwind). The waiter was notably surprised and impressed with the young couple. The couple received special treatment from the waitstaff and were given extra side dishes and dessert for the table, free of charge. Their delight in sharing this story with me was palpable.

Three. On September 11, 2001, I was on a plane bound for Seoul, following the completion of my Master’s degree in ethnomusicology from the University of Washington. My flight, which was supposed to depart from Detroit at 8:54 that morning—ten minutes after the first hijacked

plane was flown into the North Tower of the World Trade Center—was grounded by the FAA and all passengers were forced to deplane. On large-screen monitors at the airport I witnessed the unfolding of events that fateful morning: the collapse of the two towers, the Pentagon attack, and the downed plane in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. After leaving Metro Airport and returning home, I spent the next several days glued to the television set in disbelief, unable to focus on anything but the coverage of the 9/11 attacks. I also underwent a period of uncertainty, questioning whether my journey to South Korea to embark on language study was a trivial pursuit when the world seemed to be falling to pieces in front of my eyes. Unable to reach the airlines to rebook my reservation, I wallowed in doubt, couch-bound, for several days. It was a bleak period that shook me to the core.

The connective thread that ties these short stories together is my realization of the relevance of ethnomusicology as a field of study. After 9/11, my life could have easily taken a detour. But what brought me out of a fugue state was a recognition that at the heart of my own encounters in ethnomusicology

But what brought me out of a fugue state was a recognition that at the heart of my own encounters in ethnomusicology were lessons inscribed in cross-cultural exchange and understanding.

were lessons inscribed in cross-cultural exchange and understanding. These lessons seemed valuable in light of the historical moment that we were poised to enter, when fears of the “Other” ushered in the imminence of war. Thus, despite the ominous false start to my trip to South Korea, I traveled to Seoul for language study. What was supposed to be one year turned into four. After a few years of language study, work, and travel, I

eventually made the decision to return to academia. In the fall of 2005 I began a doctoral program in ethnomusicology at Harvard University and have since stayed the course as an ethnomusicologist.

Now a professor in higher education, I teach undergraduate and graduate courses in ethnomusicology. Like many of my colleagues,

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Ethnomusicology and Empathy

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I have regularly taught an undergraduate survey course called “Musics of the World” and its regional variants. These courses, typically designed as a global musical tour for non-music majors, are the bread and butter of undergraduate teaching for many ethnomusicologists. One can only imagine that several thousands of students have enrolled in such courses at universities to date. Students take these courses for a variety of reasons: to satisfy

General Education or Diversity requirements; to balance their STEM-related coursework with something from the humanities; or to simply take a music class because they have an interest in music. Over the years, I have come to think of the “world music” lecture course and other similar ethnomusicology courses as vehicles through which to teach students about empathy. This may seem like a tall order, but it is one to which I believe ethnomusicology is particularly well-suited.

Regardless of whether a world music course is organized geographically or by theme (e.g., “music and religion” and “music and politics”), lectures are excursions to different sound worlds, different values, and different worldviews. We give students tools to learn how to listen to music analytically and to describe what they are hearing. We also present them with cultural contexts through musical case studies. In Kay Kaufman Shelemay’s (2015) tripartite “soundscapes” model—sound, setting, and significance—this context refers to both the “setting” and the “significance” of a particular musical performance, style, genre, or tradition. In a world music course, we ask students to memorize unfamiliar names and terms in addition to identifying an eclectic array of listening examples in order to pass exams. But it is my hope that the final take-away for students is an understanding of and appreciation for cultures that may be different from their own.

Granted, there are still fraught issues within our discipline and within our institutions of higher learning. I do not mean to be naively idealistic so as to diminish the following: critiques that call for decolonizing ethnomusicology, the blatant inequities surrounding contingent labor, gendered and racialized micro- and macro-aggressions in the workplace, and the shocking prevalence of sexual harassment and assault in the academy (yes, even

within venerable programs in ethnomusicology). We still have much work to do. In thinking about the current political climate in the United States, however, I wonder whether we as ethnomusicologists might reflect on the work that we have done and continue to do as teachers in educating the current and future voting populace. While music may be the centerpiece of what we present to students in large world music surveys, we are trained to illuminate details that give significance

What we can offer is an opportunity to deflect ethnocentrism, instruction on how to develop closer listening skills, presentation of musical examples that may later spark unexpected conversations, and an argument for tolerating, understanding, and embracing difference.

to different cultural systems. What we can offer is an opportunity to deflect ethnocentrism, instruction on how to develop closer listening skills, presentation of musical examples that may later spark unexpected conversations, and an argument for tolerating, understanding, and embracing difference. And, because we are trained in the art of listening, ethnomusicologists are in an ideal position to guide students through the focused act of listening attentively to others with both understanding and empathy.

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After the Mudslides

The Ethics of Singing, Witnessing, and Fieldwork

By Eugenia Siegel Conte and Lauren Vanderlinden (University of California, Santa Barbara)



Early in the morning of January 9, 2018, during a violent downpour, the fire-stripped mountainsides around Montecito, California, became liquid. A river of mud and debris swept through the coastal enclave, decimating the town. Twenty-three people died. A 114-year old Episcopal church, All Saints-by-the-Sea (ASBTS), became the primary triage location, where mud-encrusted walk-ins sought warmth, food, medical attention, and evacuation. Fourteen families in the congregation lost their homes. In the subsequent months, the church alternated between a trauma treatment center, a site of community solidarity, and a spiritual

home to a broken and mourning congregation. This came on the tail end of multiple evacuations throughout the duration of the massive Thomas Fire, which threatened Montecito and adjacent areas in a swath that measured over forty miles in the largest fire in California's recorded history.

In December and January 2018, we found ourselves—as employed choral “ringers,”¹ ethnomusicological researchers focused on choral practice, and residents of Santa Barbara County—witnessing the trauma of a grieving community. As singers at ASBTS recently hired in the fall, we had front-row seats to physical and philosophical parish transformations that guided this community through trauma, witnessing, advocacy, active assistance, and underlying it all, the instability of grief, sometimes explicit and sometimes undefined. The ASBTS church choir, a small group made up of volunteers and paid singers, was emblematic of the church's shifting priorities in the aftermath. Providing music for worship services and community memorials, the choir's mission was malleable, adjusting to different acoustic spaces and liturgical needs.

We, as participants, witnesses, and researchers, had many choices to make about our approach to documenting and theorizing this experience. Indeed, first we had to determine if it was ethically sound to pursue this research at all. Both of us had grave concerns about even asking to research the choir during this time. It seemed exploitative, as though we were rubberneckers—like the drivers clogging up the 101 highway by slowly crawling through Montecito where the mud was still evident—mining an established community's trauma for our own academic ends. Particularly due to our relative newness in the parish, we may have felt a personal resistance in trusting our own reactions, trying to keep our own experience of the traumatic events and the aftermath separate from both our professional singing gig and our fieldwork observations. We were not “victims.” We were not “evacuees.” We were not “volunteers.” We were not even members of the church or the greater community of Montecito (we live in Goleta, about fifteen minutes' drive away).

But we were not detached “researchers” either. Both of us are recent transplants to the central coast of California and through this time experienced our first extreme natural disasters at close quarters. The sirens, smoke, ash, road closures, and unnatural *quiet* in the aftermath of the fires and mudslides were part of our experience on the periphery. Therefore, the label of “witness” is appropriate but perhaps not entirely apt. We, too, had felt the ground shift, in more ways than one. Here, we detail our individual approaches to working with this community and the ethical questions that continue to guide our fieldwork processes.

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LV: I was hired mid-December as a temporary singer for the Christmas season, initially just an extra voice for the holiday services. But as the fire and mudslides wreaked havoc on the community of Montecito for more than a month, my primary role changed to providing stability, reliability, and added strength to an ensemble of displaced, worn-down, grieving people. I continued singing with the choir into the new year, and in the last five months have continually dealt with my own desire to grieve for the losses of this community while putting the congregation's needs first. It has not been easy. My default mode of compassion is quietude; and singing and writing about this experience has been a difficult process as I have tried to untangle my own introversion from the church's need for strong, supportive voices raised in song. Additionally, I did not know most of the people at ASBTS when I took the job. As the year has progressed, I have gotten to know the people of ASBTS through witnessing them in their most vulnerable hours of grief and need. This has brought the members of the choir (and the congregation) into a greater sense of intimacy, dependency, and shared community; but where exactly is my place in that closeness as someone who was not part of the group prior to the fires and mudslides, someone who is paid to be part of that group, and someone who is doing research surrounding the very trauma that brought us all together?

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ESC: While working with ASBTS—where I was hired in September, several months before the fires and flood—I was welcomed into the community. By the time of the mudslide I was on first-name terms with the whole choir as well as with many parishioners and clergy. After the deluge in Montecito, I quickly realized that, as a scholar of choral contexts and traditions, I could frame my experiences with the traumatized ASBTS community as a specific type of field site, noting how choral music could be used to react to and ease trauma in regularly scheduled services and additional events. And so, throughout this time, I thought of myself as split into three roles—paid singer; academic researcher; and, as a bedrock beneath it all, a second- and first-hand witness to these events in Santa Barbara county. At a service entitled “A

... throughout this time, I thought of myself as split into three roles—paid singer; academic researcher; and, as a bedrock beneath it all, a second- and first-hand witness to these events in Santa Barbara county.

Gathering of Hope & Remembrance,” marking the one-month anniversary of the mudslide, the three roles I had firmly separated in my mind came into volatile contact. As the choir sang a repeated, meditative line drawn from the French *taizé*² service, members of the community wrote their thanks and remembrances on a banner laying across the altar table. Before this ritual, there had been an open discussion of experiences from that day, which included harrowing details of death, loss, and bewilderment. “Come and fill our hearts with your peace,” we sang. “You alone, O Lord, are holy. Alleluia!” I struggled to retain a professional singer's detachment in service to the musical aesthetic and line, and I became acutely aware of the decision I had to make: either detach from the proceedings of the service and be a good “ringer”; or allow emotional witnessing to dissolve

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my professional vocal engagement into a more personal reaction that could better help me understand the event. Eventually, I entirely lost control of that decision and wept along with participants as they signed the banner and hugged each other. But even this loss of control contained layers of ethical responsibility. Should I assume the grief of this congregation when I myself am both a paid participant and a researcher whose career could potentially profit from these experiences? And, as a remote witness, rather than one directly affected by the mudslide or fire, what claims could I make to the grieving process? Was this empathy? Or simple abdication of responsibility as a peripheral, supporting member of the community?

As you can see, we are left with questions about our involvement, our implied roles, and our interpolated personality differences. However, it seems that this constant recycling of questions can help us to guide our experience as fieldworkers. Instead of settling on a particular tack or set of afforded fieldwork permissions, allowances, and responsibilities, this type of cyclical questioning can help us to reevaluate our positionality and responsibility. Our privileges as members of the choir and as ethnomusicologists-in-training, and our responsibilities as witnesses, can move us to new levels of engagement in the community as we triage our nebulous membership. As Diana Taylor says about witnessing the events and aftermath of the 9/11 attacks on New York City through photography, which she shared and discussed with friends and colleagues Lorie Novak, Marianne Hirsch, and Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett:

To *do* something, I kept taking photos. . . . Speaking about the need to photograph with them made up for what the photos could not communicate in themselves, a recognition, perhaps, that taking a photograph was in itself an act of interlocution, a need to make sense and communicate. It was a way of assessing whether we had all seen the same things, or if our takes on the events—apparently so similar in photographs that we had a hard time remembering who took which—were in fact quite different. Our views had perhaps little connection with the viewfinder—the seeing, again, dislocated from knowing. (Taylor 2003, 243–44)

We have similarly benefited from the opportunity to work together on this project, and to find our individual ways of witnessing through the same “viewfinder,” in the hopes that the diversity of our thoughts, choices, and responses can help better illustrate the kaleidoscopic variations of trauma, witnessing, singing, and healing at All-Saints-by-the-Sea.

Endnotes

1. “Ringers” is a term used to describe singers who are either habitually or periodically hired to sing in church choirs for weekly services, special events, and religious celebrations. Here, we use this term to differentiate from a “section leadership” role (which implies that there is only one hired singer per section). Both of us are in the alto section. Though we are included in a paid capacity, we are not predominantly responsible in guiding other “volunteer” (non-professional) singers from the congregation in musicianship and vocal production, a role that section leader positions often require. See Hershenson (2005) for a colloquial discussion of this term.
2. *Taizé* choral services were popularized around the world in the 1970s, fashioned after a practice developed in a monastery near Cluny, France. Composer and organist Jacques Berthier composed short, repeatable chants in Latin, and later in a variety of other languages, that could be intoned repeatedly (Wilson-Dickson 2001). This meditative choral practice was espoused by ASBTS’s choral director, Nelson Hueber, in the aftermath of the mudslides; and these chants are still periodically in use at the church, usually during communion rites.

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Beyond the IRB

Affirmative Consent in the Field

By Gillian Irwin (University of California, Davis)



Last month I hit the six-month mark of my year-long field research period, a point at which I'm sure most researchers are re-evaluating their research questions, preliminary findings, and methodologies. During this time, I've found myself musing over the process of asking for consent in the field.¹ My research explores how the school system in Central Java, Indonesia, emphasizes character education and how that emphasis affects music education, particularly in non-Western music classes like a Chinese drum club or Javanese gamelan ensemble. My research is not explicitly about a sensitive subject, and in general, the questions I ask are fairly innocuous, like "What do you do when students misbehave in your class?" and "What values can Javanese gamelan teach to students?" My research is classified as "minimal risk" by my university's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the only reason I have to worry about signed consent sheets at all is because most of the students participating in my research are under eighteen and their parents need to sign for them.

Consent sheets are unfamiliar to most of the students I'm working with, and to their parents. Although I'm trying to give back to my schools and be a resource for them as they assist me in my research, it's true that I'm asking some big things of them in return. I want to observe classes for a prolonged period (in weekly visits for about six

months), which could be a distraction for students and teachers. I also want to talk to students, which means taking up their breaks or asking for their time after school. I am doing these things, in most cases, without meeting students' parents.

I am always aware, as I go through this process of obtaining consent, that if just one student in a class fails to return a consent sheet, or if their parent does not agree to let me observe their child's class, I cannot use data from that classroom. As a result, I am very concerned about phrasing my requests so that parents, teachers, and principals will not be confused, intimidated, or bothered by my work but instead see it as an opportunity for their children to interact with a foreign researcher and be involved in

Although I'm trying to give back to my schools and be a resource for them as they assist me in my research, it's true that I'm asking some big things of them in return.

an important project. Sometimes, however, despite my efforts, parents may assume that I am asking for more than I actually am. I have already experienced this—one student's older sister texted me after I sent the sheets home and asked if participating in the project required a fee from the students. I immediately replied, "No, definitely not!" While I have tried to explain my project very carefully, I am concerned about other outcomes of situations

like this, where parents or guardians might misunderstand what I am asking but ignore the paper rather than ask me about it as this sister did. I want guardians to feel that they are free to say no, but I also hope that they want to say yes and that they fully understand what they are permitting.

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Many scholars have tackled the issue of ethnographic refusal—either refusal on the part of the participant to provide information or on the part of the ethnographer to include that information in their work—but generally, these issues have to do with ethnographic projects that are particularly sensitive in nature (Ortner 2005; Simpson 2007; Tuck and Yang 2014; Gaztambide-Fernández 2015; Crampton 2015). But how should projects that are dependent upon the consent of parents proceed? How can ethnographers encourage positive, enthusiastic consent to our research processes without acting as though we are entitled to it? I don't have perfect answers to these questions (beginner ethnographers rarely do), but I'm trying to live by the same rules I believe all people should use when negotiating other issues of consent: valuing my participants' autonomy, asking permission

How can ethnographers encourage positive, enthusiastic consent to our research processes without acting as though we are entitled to it?

clearly and often, and pursuing a human connection rather than seeking consent that checks off a box on my IRB report. In my own research, this has meant working through my Indonesian-language consent sheets with my language teachers to ensure that my language is clear and easily understandable; developing mutual trust with teachers before entering their classrooms;

providing my phone number to parents and teachers; and regularly discussing issues of consent with Indonesian friends and other researchers in my field. My hope is that discussions about the consent process can be included in seminars and workshops for ethnographers preparing for fieldwork. As researchers, we should continue interrogating our methodologies and assumptions about consent to encourage an atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, and enthusiastic, informed consent in the field.

Endnote

1. I conceived this article as part of my personal response to the #MeToo movement in academia (see Weinhold 2017). In learning about abuses of power in the wider academic world as well as in my own department, I felt it necessary to examine the ways in which I am complicit in a culture that often does not demand or value affirmative consent in cases of sexual harassment and assault and in other areas of life. I hope that by engaging with the #MeToo movement and by questioning power dynamics in the academy at large, we can move toward an academic culture that protects and respects participants, students, and researchers at home and in the field.

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Analogies of Political Structure in Ethnomusicological Writing

By Brian Fairley (New York University)

Theories of political organization in the West have long had recourse to metaphors of form and function. Plato's *Republic* gives us the classic "ship of state" trope, while Aristotle, the consummate biological taxonomist, tended toward the model of the organism when discussing political structure. The organicist model persisted through the Renaissance with such ideas as "the body politic" (Christine de Pizan, Francis Bacon, and others), eventually augmented during the Enlightenment by mechanistic models of physics, physiology, and social organization.¹ The ecology of metaphor in music writing likewise sounds changes on these organicist and mechanistic themes, whether in anthropomorphic visions of musical instruments or in the celestial clockwork implicit in the Harmony of the Spheres.

At times, these two conceptual worlds meet when forms of political organization—like democracy, tyranny, or anarchy—are employed rhetorically to elucidate forms of musical organization, and vice versa. These meetings constitute the theme of this essay. By understanding in broadly synoptic terms the theoretical orientations that account for such analogies, we can turn a critical eye to the cross-domain comparisons so common in an interdiscipline like ethnomusicology. In turn, the recent application of the political and aesthetic theory of philosopher Jacques Rancière to music studies (Moreno and Steingo 2012) may point to the limits of such formally analogic thinking for understanding music as either a reflection of politics or political action.

A Facebook post I recently saw reminded me that one popular object (target?) of political analogy is the Western symphony orchestra, employed by Christopher Small (1998, 68–69) in his influential *Musicking* as a model of industrial production and hierarchical rule. Likewise, in *Tiv Song*, ethnomusicologist Charles Keil (1979, 183–86) quotes at length Elias Canetti's (1963) depiction of a symphony concert as a totalitarian state, with the authoritarian figure of the conductor at its center. One of Keil's aims in citing Canetti is to demonstrate the inadequacy of Western analytical frameworks—implicated, like the symphony, in hierarchical relations of political dominance—for studying Tiv "life energies," which, Keil argues with characteristic exuberance, is "temporal-aural-horizontal-egalitarian" (1979, 183). Reading this passage today, Keil's aggressive Other-ing of his interlocutors and their worldviews comes off as something like a hegemonic move itself. Setting that aside, Keil's use of the symphony/authoritarianism analogy fits a larger disciplinary anxiety in ethnomusicology, eager to stake a claim for methods that subvert the dominance of Western-oriented musicology.

By far the strongest twentieth-century statement of isomorphism between musical and political organization was Alan Lomax's cantometrics project (1968; 1976). Classic critiques of Lomax (McLeod 1974; Feld 1984) reveal weaknesses in the predictive power of Lomax's song/society categories, which have generally not been accepted within academia.² Even so, Lomax's work may be seen primarily as an extension or amplification of the dominant anthropological school of structural-functionalism, expressed by Alan Merriam in his defining text *The Anthropology of Music*:

[A]s human behavior, music is related synchronically to other behaviors, including religion, drama, dance, social organization, economics, *political structure*, and other aspects. . . . In a very real sense [the investigator] finds that music reflects the culture of which it is a part. (1964, 47; emphasis added)

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Chief among these persistent, unspoken assumptions was the idea of homeostasis or equilibrium: that all the different parts of a society work together for a period of time to keep everything in balance (as long as everything stayed in its proper place). Analogies with political structure likewise presume a kind of homeostatic cooperation. Even in an article exploring the connection between musical improvisation and anarchism (Bell 2014), the different musical backgrounds and knowledges of a group of improvising musicians serve to work together toward a kind of utopian whole.

The lingering influence of structural-functionalist thinking leads, I would argue, toward such off-hand comparisons as the one that appears in the second edition of Bruno Nettl's venerable "red book," *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts*:

In the culture of Carnatic music in Madras (Chennai), the term *kaccheri* is used for a large concert with an ensemble. . . . It's a kind of event that has always struck me as a reflection of the older Hindu social organization, the caste system, no longer legally operative but still in evidence. The ensemble reflects a variety of castes, and even the outcastes are represented by the tamboura. Parallels can be drawn at various additional points, but suffice it to say that structurally, the parallels are clear. (Nettl [1983] 2005, 350)

This is a classic demonstration of the lure of the explanatory paradigm. The Indian caste-system remains the seductive sociocultural model *par excellence*, even as scholars demonstrate how rooted it is in colonial modalities of knowledge production and control.

This is a classic demonstration of the lure of the explanatory paradigm. The Indian caste-system remains the seductive sociocultural model *par excellence*, even as scholars demonstrate how rooted it is in colonial modalities of knowledge production and control. As Nicholas Dirks writes about the mid-nineteenth century, "caste came to be viewed as the primary institution—and sphere of social relations—that articulated the legacies of tradition, standing in place of the historical-mindedness that was seen as absent from Indian sensibilities" (2015, 39).

Caste is not the only way to do this work, however. Regula Burckhardt Qureshi (2002) employs Marxian analysis in order to ask the question, "is Hindustani music feudal?" In Marx's history of political economy, feudalism was primarily significant as a precursor to capitalism, yet Qureshi extends this framework to look at the systems of feudal patronage that helped shape the world of hereditary musicians in North

India. Although Qureshi does not see feudalism reflected in "the music itself," choosing instead to focus on modes and conditions of production and value creation, Peter Manuel (2002, 45) makes such a leap, arguing that "formal structures in Western music reflect a general aesthetic conditioned by social economy." In particular, Manuel is concerned with "closed musical structures" like sonata and song forms, and the narrative structures of development and closure which are distinct, in his view, from additive, strophic, or ostinato forms typical of pre-modern musical life. Mindful that "on the whole, musicologists, like most other mainstream scholars, have tended to regard theses about sociomusical homologies with suspicion, if not outright derision" (46), he nevertheless cites developments of industrial modernity like timepieces, printing, and widespread literacy for these forms' appearance.

In the interest of space, I only nod toward one of the major mobilizations of political analogy in recent music history, namely the use of jazz in Cold War diplomacy as a metaphor and intended catalyst for democracy and anti-Communist freedom. Much excellent work has been done to critique the premises of this analogy, both for the way it misrepresented power structures within jazz ensembles and served to obscure the reality

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of racial segregation in the United States (Davenport 2010; Von Eschen 2004; Monson 2007). I also skim over the development of semiotic theories over the past three decades by Thomas Turino (2008; 1999) and others, which promise an overarching framework for interpreting the signs at play in musical performance on equal terms as the significant structures of social and political life. A representative passage in Turino's *Music as Social Life* (2008, 190–219) contrasts the use of unison choral singing in Nazi Germany—among other practices—with the “call-and-response” structures of some gospel songs used during the Civil Rights movement. “Like all interlocking practices in participatory music,” Turino writes, formal structures like call-and-response “both articulate and are the result of social coordination and unity” (217). To be sure, there is still much scholarly energy invested in mapping social structures onto musical structures, even without the guiding orthodoxy of structural functionalism or Marxist cultural analysis.

Enter Jacques Rancière. In *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, Rancière (2004) sums up two pillars of his thought. First is his idea of the “distribution of the sensible” (*le partage du sensible*), that is, a “system of self-evident facts of sense perception” which establishes, at a given historical moment, both “something common that is shared and exclusive parts” (12). Second is Rancière’s historical scheme of “regimes of art”: there have been three so far, namely the *ethical* regime, the *poetic* or *representative* regime, and the *aesthetic* regime. In an illuminating essay, Jairo Moreno and Gavin Steingo (2012) elucidate Rancière’s regimes and their particular application to music, noting that music does indeed serve as “a model of the political community” (489), insofar as, like society as a whole, music identifies certain sensory experiences as proper to itself and enacts divisions within those experiences. Specific forms or genres of music, however, do not have inherent significance

for politics. Moreno and Steingo cite the example of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (Lewis 2008), whose members reject the connection of African-American music to any particular rhythmic or

formal aspects. In this way, the AACM asserts the principle of radical equality which, in a process Rancière dubs *dissensus*, has the power to catalyze a shift in political life (Moreno and Steingo 2012, 491–92).

While Steingo draws on Rancière for *Kwaito’s Promise* (2016), his study of South African popular music and musicians, an argument could easily be made that Rancière’s aesthetic theories are too bound up in a Western distribution of the sensible and are of limited usefulness outside the Euro-American intellectual milieu. Rancière’s significance for ethnomusicology, I propose, lies not in simply making his political aesthetics fit whatever musical practice we happen to investigate. Rather, his work on the aesthetic regime of art, in particular, points to an intellectual lineage in which all of us doing ethnomusicological writing participate. Rancière (2009, 9) sees in eighteenth- and

... music does indeed serve as “a model of the political community” (Moreno and Steingo 2012, 489), insofar as, like society as a whole, music identifies certain sensory experiences as proper to itself and enacts divisions within those experiences. Specific forms or genres of music, however, do not have inherent significance for politics.

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early-nineteenth-century writers like Vico, Schelling, and—importantly for us—Johann Gottfried Herder, the celebration of art as the expression of an “anonymous collective power.” This is the elevation of the anonymous to a place of aesthetic consideration, a decisive break from the representative regime. Herder’s folk-song collections, long considered “foundational for the history of ethnomusicology” (Herder and Bohlman 2017, 5), established the idea that music could reflect the true social, religious, and political character of a people. In a very real way, such attention to “anonymous” or everyday music made ethnomusicology possible. However much distance, then, we put between our field and the reductive frames of Herder’s *Volk* or Lomax’s culture areas, we may still be drawn by the play of resemblance to see our politics playing out in sound.

However much distance, then, we put between our field and the reductive frames of Herder’s *Volk* or Lomax’s culture areas, we may still be drawn by the play of resemblance to see our politics playing out in sound.

Endnotes

1. For these and other early metaphors, see Saccaro-Battisti (1983).
2. For an insightful overview of this period of Lomax’s work, see Gage Averill’s (2003) essay for a selection of Lomax’s writings.

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Politics & Music

An Annotated Bibliography

By Wangcaixuan (Rosa) Zhang (University of Pittsburgh)

The study of the interrelationship between politics and music is not a new one. Long before the rise of ethnomusicology in the 1950s, scholars, from Aristotle in *Politics*¹ to Alain Locke in *The Negro and His Music* (1936),² had been exploring the topic. However, the scope of this research was limited and focused largely on political and dissident musical utterances. By reconsidering the political as power relationships reiterated through daily life practices, and re-defining music as culture, scholarship considering music and politics has extended to studies on ethnicity, gender relations, cultural politics in people's daily musical practices, and more.

Such developments in scholarship provide a path toward gaining more fresh perspectives and understandings of communities and their musical cultures. For example, while mainstream popular music has often been deemed non-political in Western contexts, popular musics have, for example, served as

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1. Aristotle, in his *Politics*, especially book VIII, discusses the influences of music to one's characters and ethos, which are crucial to governance. He mentions music as part of education and provides a detailed analysis of musical affect in terms of musical modes and harmony.
 2. Alain Locke, an American writer, philosopher, educator, as well as an activist of the Harlem Renaissance, explores racial politics in America through African American musics. See Locke, Alain. 1936. *The Negro and His Music*. Washington, D.C.: Associates in Negro Folk Education.

Politics & Music

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propaganda songs in China during the 1990s,³ and, in some cases, been used for intimating dissent in pre-revolutionary Iran.⁴ As such, we have opportunity to explore political musicking to further deepen our understanding of how music and politics intersect in people's everyday lives.

Speaking from my own experience in completing this column, I was overwhelmed by the large volume of scholarship and scholars' abiding enthusiasm toward the topic. With a hope that this following annotated bibliography could offer an interesting yet fundamental introduction to the topic of "politics and music," I have included sources dealing with an extensive list of keywords, including state and censorship, protest songs, war and trauma, nationalism and propaganda, colonization, cultural politics, and gender studies. You can find a more extensive bibliography at semsn.com.

Selected Annotated Bibliography

- Bohlman, Philip Vilas. 2011. *Focus: Music, Nationalism, and the Making of the New Europe*. New York: Routledge. Through fieldwork and historical accounts all around Europe, Bohlman examines the interrelationship between music and nation building, demonstrating how the usage of music to advance political agendas contributed to the shape of cultural politics and political environments among European countries and what positive and negative influences this might entail.
- Gilman, Lisa. 2016. *My Music, My War: The Listening Habits of U.S. Troops in Iraq and Afghanistan*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. *My Music, My War* is an ethnographic account about how soldiers use and listen to music in the context of war. The author investigates how the listening habits of US soldiers had an impact on dealing with fear and violence during wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Providing perspectives from scholarship on gender, community, trauma, as well as politics, it is a convincing book offering insights on war through the study of music listening.
- Hall, Patricia. 2018. *The Oxford Handbook of Music Censorship*. New York: Oxford University Press. Organized by nature of censorship—religious, racial, and sexual—and forms of government—democratic, totalitarian, and transitional—*The Oxford Handbook of Music Censorship* offers a comprehensive introduction to music censorship around the world with thirty individual articles. Focusing on various genres of music, time periods, and perspectives on individual composers and artists, this handbook wonderfully illustrates how music is an essential agent of power and resilience. It will be a valuable guide for all research regarding music and politics.
- Hutchinson, Sydney. 2016. *Tigers of a Different Stripe: Performing Gender in Dominican Music*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Through the study of *merengue típico*, a traditional music of the Dominican Republic that, unlike other genres, involves women as instrumentalists and even bandleaders, Hutchinson offers a fascinating ethnographic account of Dominican female musicians. By incorporating different positionalities into her fieldwork, as participant observer, researcher, and a merengue típico musician herself, this book probes into the complex nexus of class, race, and music that problematizes the binary between male and female, revealing rich ambiguities about gender relations in the Dominican Republic.
- Jones, Andrew F. 1992. *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music*. Ithaca, NY: East Asia Program, Cornell University. This is the first extensive study on Chinese popular music and contemporary

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3. See Andrew F. Jones. 1992. *Like a Knife: Ideology and Genre in Contemporary Chinese Popular Music*. Ithaca: Cornell East Asia Program.

4. See Farzaneh Hemmasi. 2013. "Intimating Dissent: Popular Song, Poetry, and Politics in Pre-Revolutionary Iran." *Ethnomusicology* 57 (1): 57–87.

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China. Drawing from his fieldwork experience in Beijing in the summer of 1990, Jones dives into the rock music scene and discusses how music reflected and contextualized different ideologies around a critical point in Chinese history (right after Tiananmen Square protests of 1989). By pointing out the “official” versus “unofficial” binaries in the Chinese popular music scene, Jones offers an insightful understanding of the interrelationships between music and politics, and genre and ideologies in contemporary China. The collection of photographs of various musicians in different music scenes is also a highlight of this book.

- Lipsitz, George. 1994. *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism and the Poetics of Place*. London: Verso. Focusing on a great range of musical fusions—Puerto Rican *bugalú* in New York; Algerian *rai* in Paris; Chicano punk in Los Angeles; Indigenous rock in Australia; *chanson* Quebecois in Montreal; swamp pop in Houston and New Orleans; reggae, *bhangra*, and *juju* in London; and *zouk*, rap, and jazz in Europe, Africa, and the Americas— Lipsitz discusses how power relationships manifested in juxtapositions of various musical forms in postmodern society and, more importantly, how some of the musical fusions also served to change such unequal power relationships between ethnic groups. This book addresses the anxiety over ethnicity that manifests in music under globalization and neoliberalization.
- Peddie, Ian, ed. 2012. *Music and Protest*. Farnham: Ashgate. Consisting of some of the best scholarship on music and protest, this edited volume will be a great entry point for researchers who are interested in this specific topic. Covering a wide range of genres as well as geographical areas and topics, such as revolutions, environmentalism, class, identity and the history of protest music, this book presents music and protest in various contexts through perspectives from music scholarship, cultural studies, anthropology, and political science.
- Rollefson, J. Griffith. 2017. *Flip the Script: European Hip-Hop and the Politics of Postcoloniality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. This book examines the use of hip-hop, created by African Americans to address concerns regarding race and repression, among immigrants from former colonies in Europe. Through analyzing select recordings and other media, as well as ethnographic accounts of hip-hop communities, Rollefson investigates how hip-hop’s appropriation by Senegalese Parisians, Turkish Berliners, and South Asian Londoners to perform a “double consciousness” in postcolonial Europe, both differentiating themselves from and relating themselves to the dominant culture.
- Taylor, Timothy D. 2007. *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. *Beyond Exoticism* focuses on the musical manifestations of colonialism and imperialism, studying how non-Western music was presented and interpreted in Western music within a broad cultural and historical context.
- Weintraub, Andrew N., and Bart Barendregt, eds. 2017. *Vamping the Stage: Female Voices of Asian Modernities*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press. Exploring how women’s voices in Asian popular music supported, challenged, and rewrote narratives of gender norms across fourteen individual essays, *Vamping the Stage* is a cutting-edge study of women, modernity, and popular music in Asia. By incorporating perspectives from anthropology, Asian studies, cultural studies, ethnomusicology, and film studies, this book presents a holistic view of the ascendancy of women, represented by female performers, in a wider social context.

Did we miss something? Contact us with your comments and suggestions at semstudentnews@gmail.com. We will be happy to add citations and resources to the online versions of our resource lists, available at semsn.com.

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Davin is a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at University of California, Davis. His research focuses on flamenco in the Americas wherein he explores musicking spaces and senses of place, groove as a sociomusical process, and intersensory modalities. For his dissertation project, “Grooving into Place,” he is collaborating with Arizonan flamenco practitioners to explore the social and sensory experiences of local flamenco. Davin is also a musical instrument repair technician and enjoys playing samba and flamenco guitar.


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Eugenia is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She completed an MA in ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University, researching identity in choral music and performance in Oahu, Hawai'i. Previously, she earned an MA in music research at Truman State University, focusing on gender and sexuality in Benjamin Britten's opera *The Turn of the Screw*. She is currently interested in voice studies and sound studies and how they may be applied to choral musical practice.


Heather Strohschein, Outgoing Copy Editor

Heather is a recent PhD ethnomusicology graduate from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. She holds a BA in world music and an MA in ethnomusicology from Bowling Green State University. Her dissertation focuses on Javanese gamelan use outside of Indonesia as well as the performance of affinity and community. Heather also currently teaches online and face-to-face world music courses at the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu, Bowling Green State University, and Owens Community College. This is Heather's final issue as copy editor of *Student News*. She would like to thank colleagues and friends, particularly Davin Rosenberg and Gen Conte, for a wonderful three years!


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Katherine is an MA/PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She holds a BA in music, with an emphasis in ethnomusicology, from Reed College, where she completed an ethnographic thesis examining music education in underserved public schools. She is currently interested in local music scenes in cities along the Mexico/United States border.


Hannah Adamy, “Thoughts from the Field” Columnist

Hannah is a PhD student in ethnomusicology and a graduate student researcher in community engagement at the University of California, Davis. She received her MA in performance studies from Texas A&M University, where she studied processes of heteronormativity in Euro-classical vocal pedagogy. Her current research focuses on regional music scenes in the California Central Valley and the creation of exclusive musicking spaces. She currently volunteers with Girls Rock Sacramento as a band coach and is embarking on a research project in collaboration with them.


Diego Pani, Media Columnist

Diego is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at Memorial University of Newfoundland. His research focuses on media as learning devices among young generations of musicians, and the roles of audio and video materials in the vernacular traditions of Sardinia. Diego also produces documentary films, web documentaries, and photo reportages. Besides his academic work, he sings in the rock 'n' roll band King Howl and manages Talk About Records, a DIY record label specializing in blues, rock 'n' roll, and punk musics.

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Kevin Sliwoski, SEM Student Union Liaison & “Student Voices” Columnist

Kevin is a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology at the University of California, Riverside, with research interests in sound studies, the US Military, and jazz history. His dissertation addresses sound, music, and infrastructure at former US Naval Base, Subic Bay, in the Philippines during the 1960s. Kevin holds Masters degrees in United States history and musicology from the University of Oxford. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in music from the University of Hartford.


Simran Singh, Contributor

Simran recently completed her PhD at Royal Holloway, University of London. Her doctoral research explores hip-hop in Uganda, and combines post-modern scholarship on popular music, media, and cultural studies and perspectives from post-colonial studies. She holds an MA with distinction in media and international development from the University in East Anglia and has served as Visiting Tutor in the departments of Music, and Politics and International Relations, following a seven-year career as Creative Director of a branding firm in India.


Jon Bullock, Contributor

Jon is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago. He holds a BA in religion and an MA in ethnomusicology. Jon’s research interests include constructions of time and place in contemporary Kurdish music, with a focus on the interstices of music and nationalism, modernity, and global migration/diaspora. He has also written about music and religion, including music censorship within the Christian church, and various sonic phenomena within Islamic performative and theological traditions.


Brian Fairley, Contributor

Brian is a first-year PhD student in ethnomusicology at New York University, pursuing research on practices of the voice and media archaeology in the Republic of Georgia and among theater ensembles in the Polish physical theater tradition. He received his MA from Wesleyan University in 2017, with a thesis entitled “The Gurian Trio Song: Memory, Media, and Improvisation in a Georgian Folk Genre.” Brian is also a pianist, dramaturg, and member of Gamelan Kusuma Laras in New York.


Wangcaixuan (Rosa) Zhang, Researcher

Rosa is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of Pittsburgh. She holds a BA in music from Emory University and an MA in ethnomusicology from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where she completed her Master’s thesis entitled “Buddha’s Songs: Musical Practices in Taiwanese Buddhist Renaissance.” Rosa’s primary interest is Chinese popular music and the rise of various singing contest reality shows. She is currently investigating how reality shows construct a “Voice of China” and a narrative of the “Chinese Dream.”


Solmaz Shakerifard, Social Media Manager

Solmaz is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at the University of Washington, Seattle. Her research interest lies at the intersection of ethnomusicology and music education, with special focus on the pedagogy of Iranian classical music, the interactions of this musical tradition with those of Euro-American musics, and the socio-political contexts of musical change and continuity. She has been an active community music organizer in Seattle. She is currently an assistant at the University of Washington’s ethnomusicology archives.

Appendix

“Baile de Favela” and Its Sounding Transgressions

Lyrics to [MC João’s “Baile de Favela” \(Favela Dance\)](#).

Transcription and English translation by **Andressa Gonçalves Vidigal Rosenberg**.

<i>Ela veio quente, e hoje eu tô fervendo [x2]</i>	She came up to me hot, and today I am boiling [x2]
<i>Quer desafiar, não to entendendo</i>	[She] wants to challenge [me], I’m not understanding
<i>Mexeu com o R7 vai voltar com a xota ardendo (vai)</i>	Messed around with R7 you will go back with your pussy on fire (go)
<i>Que o Helipa, é baile de favela</i>	That Helipa is a funk dance
<i>Que a Marconi, é baile de favela</i>	That Marconi is a funk dance
<i>E a São Rafael, é baile de favela</i>	And São Rafael is a funk dance
<i>E os menor preparado pra foder com a xota dela (vai)</i>	The under-aged are ready to fuck with her pussy (go)

(The funk goes on to name other funk dances and then repeats from the beginning)

Lyrics to [“Escola de Luta” \(School of Struggle\)](#).

Transcription and English translation by **Andressa Gonçalves Vidigal Rosenberg**.

(Brief opening dialogue)

<i>Salve, Salve, Martelo!</i>	Whazzup, Martelo!
<i>E, aí, Foice? Firme, mano?</i>	Wazzup Sickle? All good, bro?
<i>Não, né, tio? Cê é loko, Alckimin aí fudendo com os estudantes . . .</i>	No way, mang! Alckmin is there fucking with the students, dude . . .
<i>Cê é loko, ouvi dizer né, mano, vai fechar uma pá de escola, aí, o cara fecha escola e abre cela; tô nem entendendo, tio.</i>	Yeah, I heard he’s going to close a bunch of schools, the dude closes schools and opens cells; I don’t even understand, man.
<i>Mas é isso, eu ouvi dizer que os estudantes tão organizado, né, não?</i>	But that’s it, and I heard the students are all organized, no?

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Appendix

“Baile de Favela” and Its Sounding Transgressions

Lyrics to “[Escola de Luta](#)” (School of Struggle) continued . . .

(Song begins)

<i>O estado veio quente, nós já tá fervendo [x2]</i>	The state came up hot, we are already boiling
<i>Quer desafiar, não tô entendendo</i>	[They] wanted to challenge [us], I don't understand
<i>Mexeu com estudante vocês vão sair perdendo</i>	Mess around with the students, you will end up losing
<i>Por que? O Fernão é escola de luta</i>	Why!?! The Fernão is school of fight/struggle
<i>Andronico é escola de luta</i>	Andronico is school of fight/struggle
<i>Ana Rosa é escola de luta</i>	Ana Rosa is school of fight/struggle
<i>Fica preparado que se fecha nós ocupa</i>	Be prepared because if you close it we will occupy!
<i>Vai, vai!</i>	Go, go!

(The funk goes on to list all the schools that up to the time of the recording were successfully occupied by the students)

(Closing commentary)

<i>Estudande tudo zica, mano! Essa é uma luta autônoma organizada. Nós tem que incentivar essa porra, tio.</i>	The students are making a stink, man! This is an autonomous and organized struggle. We have to encourage this shit, man.
<i>É isso, é nós por nós, né, mano? Porque tá fudendo pro nosso lado, se nós não se organizar, mano, cê é loko, tio! Mas é isso, o recado é esse! Né, não? Pá cada escola que ele fechá, nós vai ocupá é duas.</i>	That's it, we have to fend for ourselves, right, man? Because shit is going down on our end, and if we ain't organized, man, are you crazy, man! But that is the message! Isn't it? For each school he closes, we are going to occupy two.
<i>Cê é loko? Não podemo deixa os companheiro pá trás não. Cê é loko? Nenhuma escola a menos!</i>	Are you crazy? We cannot leave our comrades behind. You're crazy? Not even one less school!
<i>É isso, nenhuma escola a menos, carrrrralho!</i>	That's it, not even one less school, shiiiiit!

Appendix

Glocal Politics in Bavarian Slang Rap: "Wolli" by Liquid & Maniac

Lyrics to Liquid & Maniac's "[Wolli.](#)"

Transcription and translations by Fabio Dick.

*[Anglicism/foreign word](#); [slang/Mundart expression](#) (alternative spelling/pronunciation/word).

Bavarian	German	English
Intro		
Wolli, Wolli <i>gangstershit</i> ey, ey, ey	Wolli, Wolli <i>gangstershit</i> ey, ey, ey	Wolli, Wolli gangstershit ey, ey, ey
CHORUS (x2)		
Wolli (e/ä), Wolli mei liaba Scholli (e/ä) [x3] Wolli, Wolli was wor des fir a <i>Story</i> (e/ä)?	Wolli, Wolli mein lieber Scholli /Kumpel [x3] Wolli, Wolli was war das für eine <i>Story</i> ?	Wolli, Wolli my dear pal/bro [x3] Wolli, Wolli what kind of story was this?
Verse 1 (Maniac)		
Wolli, i frog mi wos is los mim Wolli wia was mim Maniac firn Biagamoasta ja/yo, des kon i dann dad i Wohnungen organisian und zwar fir Ohle und Mari (e/ä) - huana werd legalisiert für den Anbau und Hobby des sog i Politiker woin ohle nur des oane von da Lobby und des gibts a bei uns in Rengschbuag ja/yo, i scham'mi und so konns a ned weidageh ollawei , des is traurig Wu-Tang Clan hod scho gsogt <i>cash rules everything around me</i>	Wolli, ich frage mich was ist los mit dem Wolli wie wäre es mit dem Maniac für (als) Bürgermeister ja/yo, das kann ich dann täte (würde) ich Wohnungen organisieren und zwar für Alle und Mari- huana wird legalisiert für den Anbau und Hobby das sage ich Politker wollen alle nur das Eine von der Lobby und das gibt es auch bei uns in Regensburg ja/yo, ich schäme mich und so kann es auch nicht weitergehen allerweil (immer), das ist traurig Wu-Tang Clan hat schon gesagt <i>cash rules everything around me</i>	Wolli, I'm asking myself what is going on with (you) Wolli what about Maniac as mayor yes/yo, I could do that then I would organize apartment for everyone indeed and mari- juana gets legalized for cultivation and hobby I am saying (telling you) politicians are always only after one thing and this kind of lobby does even exist here in Regensburg yes/yo, I feel ashamed and it can't continue like this all the time, that is so sad Wu-Tang Clan already (once) said cash rules everything around me

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Appendix

Glocal Politics in Bavarian Slang Rap: "Wolli" by Liquid & Maniac

Lyrics to Liquid & Maniac's "[Wolli](#)" continued . . .

Bavarian	German	English
CHORUS (x2)		
Verse 2 (Liquid)		
Wolli, konnst du mia <i>Cash</i> leiha? Wei mei Hobby une mei Pulli die san echt deier so a hoibe mille derft reicha fir a neis studio und a <i>Smartphone</i> mit a bissl mehr Speicha Wolli, laft geil, <i>Digga</i> bei dir, am Volker Tretzel und beim Hans Schaidinger i moan echt fast es geht nimma peinlicher erinnert mi an Nuttn jede hod an Preis, <i>Digga</i> ja/yo, Wolli <i>don't drop the soap sugar</i> wenns wieda draussn bist kanntst moi was obdrugga vo die sogenannten Spendengeida do muass ma was fia die Jugend doa und ned am Klo (a) Koks schnupfa ja/yo, Wolli, bei uns in <i>Rengschbuag</i> wird da OB zum <i>OG</i> und dreht durch und fohrd mit seim BMW durch dei Gengd duch ausm Fenster Gangzeichen vo da SPD, <i>Bua</i>	Wolli, kannst du mir <i>Cash</i> leihen? weil mein Hobby und mein Pulli die sind echt teuer so eine halbe Million dürfte reichen für eine neues Studio und ein <i>Smartphone</i> mit ein bisschen mehr Speicher Wolli, läuft geil, <i>Dicker</i> bei dir, dem Volker Tretzel und bei Hans Schaidinger ich meine echt fast es geht nicht mehr peinlicher erinnert mich an Nutten jede hat einen Preis, <i>Dicker</i> ja/yo, Wolli <i>don't drop the soap sugar</i> wenn du wieder draussen bist könntest du mal was abdrücken von den sogenannten Spendengeldern da muss man was für die Jugend tun und nicht am Klo Koks schnupfen ja/yo, Wolli, bei uns in Regensburg wird der OB zum <i>OG</i> und dreht durch und fährt mit seinem BMW durch deine Gegend durch aus dem Fenster Gangzeichen von der SPD, Bub	Wolli, can you borrow me some cash? Because my hobby and my pullover they are really expensive about half a million could (would) be enough for a (recording) studio and a smartphone with a bit more memory Wolli, it's going great, homie for you, Volker Tretzel and Hans Schaidinger I am almost thinking this can't be even more embarrassing it reminds me of whores everyone has her price, homie yes/yo, Wolli don't drop the soap sugar when you get out you could give some money of the so-called donations away - you have to support the youth instead of doing cocaine on the toilet yes/yo, Wollie, here in Regensburg the mayor becomes the OG and is going crazy and drives with his BMW through your neighbourhood out of the window gang sign(s) of the SPD, boy
CHORUS (x2)		
Outro		