

SOUNDING OFF!

MUSIC AS SUBVERSION/RESISTANCE/REVOLUTION



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Sounds of Resistance

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Music...site of oral history; sounds of war; social gathering for dancing, pleasure, fun, sex; emotional, spiritual, rapturous like Jimi Hendrix and Mozart's "Requiem"; career, stardom, commodification, cultural imperialism; state censorship; protest songs, punk, nueva canción, and Fela's "Zombie"; vibration and breath; the reason people go to political rallies!; slave trade and musical codes indomitable as heartbeats; noise, sound, soundtrack; immaterial and uncontrollable; music institutions, discipline and disciplines...

How has music gone from its "old role" as an organizing practice of social groups, to being entertaining fluff or employed for emotional effect in national causes? How can the "political correctness" of music be determined through an "objective" reading of lyrics? Why is it even possible to dissect a song and consider the music itself to be without meaning? These questions point to how music is represented in our society, representations which are not the revelation of some timeless Truth, but constructed by specific societal interests. In the following pages, I develop an understanding of music and noise as social forces, fully involved in the "dialogic process" of social life and as such, an important site of control—and resistance.

Political Music or The Politics of Music

As a practice, music is situated in particular social relationships and locations that are a product of complex intersections of culture, class, gender, etc., in lived experience. Music and representations of music are contextualized activities that have social and political meaning. This view shifts us away from asking: "which music is political?" to "what is the particular politics of a music and how is it political?" What is considered to be music itself is controversial and linked to large-scale ideological formations invested in defining "music" apart from non-music.

This operation is an effect of power, one that functions through discursive strategies that construct "music" as an aspect of civilization, while sound and noise are linked to the uncivilized. In Hieronymus Bosch's famous painting, "Garden of Earthly Delights" (early 16th century), hell is rendered through the din and chaos created by creatures playing fantastic musical instruments which swallow-up and torture the bodies of the damned. Epitomized by the



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Enlightenment and 18th century classical music, societal sound began to be brought under control through dominant representations linking "music" to order/civilization/mind, and "noise" to chaos/the primitive/body. In *Noise: The Political Economy of Music* (1985), Attali argues that a central controlling mechanism of the State is the monopolization of noise emitted in society. "...Music and noises in general, are stakes in games of power. Their forms, sources, and roles have changed along with and by means of the changes in systems of power." Through mechanical reproduction in the 20th century, sound has also been controlled through its incitement. Repressing rhythm and noise has become more selective, while its management has been enabled through the wallpaper-like proliferation and commodification of music.

The dominant constructions of music as non-referential and non-ideological (Western classical music) or as marginalized and primitive (popular and ethnic musics) are implicated in strategies of control that make legitimate music into something transcendental that exists apart from practice. This shields music from being implicated in relations of power and at the same time inhibits understanding about performative practices because it is difficult to conceive of performance or participation as a total experience. The closest we come to conceptualizing a performance that at once mobilizes music/dance/thought/history/play/spirituality etc., is the idea of ritual, but this word is problematic as it still marks off and compartmentalizes human activity. Music is neither transcendental nor trivial, but inhabits a site where hegemonic processes are contested. Placing music back in the world does not reduce music, but gives it social force.

In the following discussion of music and resistance, my purpose, in part, is to explode reified representations of "political music." Discussions of popular music have often suffered from a kind of reductionism by certain Left and reactionary positions, which sense the power of music but are uneasy about its inaccessibility to rational critique and control. I explore how popular music becomes a site of resistance through four lines of investigation: textual analysis focusing on the lyrics of songs; subaltern cultural production; music as performance and its relation to autonomy; and music as a sonic activity or tactic. I argue that oppositional music practices not only act as a form of resistance against domination, but generate social relationships and experience which can form the basis of a new cultural sensibility and, in fact, are involved in the struggle for a new culture.

Textual Analysis or, Bow wow wow yippee yo yippee yay, (George Clinton "Atomic Dog")

Textual analyses focus on the lyrics in music as the primary or only site of meaning. The words in music have been particularly important as a medium of communication in cultures and historical periods where there are no written texts, texts are only available to a privileged group, or to deliberately subvert the power of the written word. Beyond the notion of "protest songs," lyrics are multivalent, employing discursive strategies which form a poetics of resistance. I will also discuss the limitations of these text-based analyses, particularly with regard to meaning reception, the elision of social context and issues of cultural production, and most obviously, the inability to consider meaning in instrumental music.

Recent literary criticism emphasizes the importance of "voice" in cultural resistance. For oppressed peoples under slavery, in colonial contexts and the underclasses of global capitalism, music has often been a central site for the intervention in dominant discourses and for creating forms of expression that are culturally affirming. Because of the dominance of metro-

politan languages, illiteracy or lack of access to print mediums, orality has played a major role in contesting the universalizing discourses of empire. Locating a position of vocalicity and self-representation is central to creating a counter-narrative, positing a counter-essence and in critically attacking the legitimacy of "objective" knowledge and truth.

Popular forms of music have become an effective site of enunciation and people involved in indigenous struggles have mixed traditional elements of music with rock to reach a mass audience through the circulation of world music. Essays in *Rockin' the Boat: Mass Music and Mass Movements* detail such political music from Hawaii and Australia. In Australia, Aboriginal musicians blend indigenous forms with rock to preserve traditional values, represent their own history and protest oppression. Contemporary Aboriginal music was first influenced by the guitar style and personal song genre of American country-western musicians and in the 1970s became highly influenced by the message of black liberation and reggae music of Bob Marley. Aboriginal Australians are using music as a "political weapon in the long-term struggle of Aboriginal people for dignity, respect, and land rights claims" (Green). The song lyrics by musician Archie Roach and bands, No Fixed Address and Us Mob, are direct social commentaries, convey the Aboriginal experience in Australia, or are programmatic like a song such as "AIDS, It's a Killer." Green largely lets the lyrics speak for themselves in his analysis of the music's politics.

In analyzing calypso lyrics of the 1930s and 40s, which are usually thought of as topical social commentary, the lyrics employ various discursive strategies beyond the surface "meaning." Together these devices form a poetics of protest which in some cases utilize techniques of reappropriation usually associated with postmodernism. Three of these discursive strategies are, first, that calypsos were a form of "autoethnography," through which a colonized people could represent themselves and retell history with their image and voice fully included. Second, through irreverence and parody, the calypsonians punctured the screen of colonial superiority by revealing scandals in the British ruling class and challenged the civilizing mission by contrasting it to the actions of the colonizer. Third, calypsos created a counter-narrative to official accounts of events.

As an example, I discuss a song written in the context of colonial rule, global economic depression and socialist organizing of the 1930s. In 1937, a black labor activist named "Buzz" Butler led a wildcat strike of Trinidadian oil workers which resulted in rioting and an extreme use of force by the government. Butler was jailed, but anger over police violence intensified when an official report whitewashing the incident was later released. Below are the last two stanzas of Attali's calypso, "Commission's Report":

They said through the evidence they had
That the riot started at Fyzabad
By the hooligan element under their leader
A fanatic Negro called Butler
Who uttered speeches inflammatory
And caused disorders in this colony
The only time they found the police was wrong
Was when they stayed too long to shoot people down.
A peculiar thing of this Commission
In their ninety-two lines of dissertation
Is there no talk of exploitation
Of the worker or his tragic condition

Read through the pages there is no mention
Of capitalistic oppression
Which leads one to entertain a thought
And wonder if it's a one-sided report.

Atilla's song thoroughly indicts the official story through mimicking the jargon of the report itself and unmasking media representations. He links the words "commission" and "dissemination" with "exploitation" and "tragic condition," syntactically showing their real connection. Atilla attacks the scapegoating of Butler by reappropriating the language of the media and defusing the "moral panic" induced by such buzz-words as "hooligan," "fanatic," and "inflammatory speeches." In this song, he also brings together the rioting and capitalist oppression, which challenges the controlling mechanism of representing these issues separately; rioting portrayed as unconscious acts of violence, while oppressive economic and social conditions are channeled into 'appropriate' avenues of reform.

However, political communication in music has traditionally been analyzed only in terms of the "self-evident" meaning of song lyrics. Examples of this programmatic approach to political music are common among the organized Left (and in nationalist causes) and are found in Pring-Mill's article, "Revolutionary Song in Nicaragua" (1987). These "didactic songs" include inspirational anthems and historical accounts, as well as songs which are educational, from the learning of multiplication tables to a song that replaces a written manual for the stripping down and reassembly of the "Carabina M-1" (by Luis Enrique Mejía Godoy). Pring-Mill's insights into the emotional meaning and educational uses of these songs are largely gleaned through analyzing a letter by one of the revolutionary leaders, Carlos Nunez Tellez, in which he praises the musical group Pancasán. His article gives little sense of the meaning of these songs in a broader context and, again, the lyrics are considered the only political component. In fact, Pring-Mill states:

"What may strike one as most surprising about that letter is its total silence regarding the music of such songs, which is simply taken for granted: their didactic and emotive functions, while reinforced by the music, clearly centre on the lyrics. Yet all the most successful songs owe much of their persuasive power to setting and performance—although the contribution of the musical element to the total 'meaning' of a song is something much harder to analyze than that of its text."

This quote speaks to the paradox of constructing political communication only in terms of the text. Whereas the meaning of these songs is only represented as a function of the lyrics, the music is critical to conveying the message. But what is the message of the music? Reading didactic lyrics as literal and complete in the communication of meaning ignores the many subtexts and levels of meaning occurring in the production and performance of music.

Within an analysis of political content based on lyrics, there are problems raised by semantics such as the unpredictability of sign activity, reception and how meaning is context bound and multiple. In understanding the meaning of songs, musical experience and cultural background are significant factors. In addition, one empirical study suggests only ten to thirty percent of high school and college students "correctly identified the 'intended messages' in songs." In a recent article, Angelica Madeira raises these issues to further ask: "wherein lies popular music's political power?" She doesn't fully address the question, but points in a direction forged by Bakhtin (a Soviet philosopher and literary critic), centering on the "indestruc-

tible character and universality of popular culture." She argues that "music is empowering not only because of the explicit political ends it is able to serve, but also because it formulates yearnings and values for an entire generation." While I find the direction of her argument salutary, she neglects to contextualize Bakhtin's writings and how emphasizing nonconformity, irreverence, festivity and pleasure in Stalinist Russia, requires a completely different analysis when applied to the contemporary United States. This highlights the necessity to locate resistance in relation to specific strategies of control and domination.

Understanding the politics of music from a text-based analysis is particularly problematic with forms of music that are heavily coded (possibly to avoid censure), or where the lyrics are of secondary importance or even misleading. And what might "protest lyrics" be in social contexts where the very language of struggle has been co-opted? In an interesting article, Rey Chow analyzes Chinese popular music and how it creates a discourse of resistance in a context where the rhetoric of class struggle has become part of the dominant discourse. In this situation, lightheartedness, emotion and physicality are the central trans-linguistic themes. Chow suggests that meaning is created in the clash of words (often from Chinese history) and rock music, a meaning which becomes audible through "striking notes of difference" from the single voice of official culture. Instead of emphasizing "voice" or "who speaks," Chow suggests we ask "what plays?" and "who listens?" She concludes with the critical distinction between passivity and "silent sabotage," through a literal and metaphorical discussion of the cassette Walkman creating a kind of sonic barrier. These examples show how music is a form of resistance beyond an objectified reading of political lyrics through emphasizing the structure of listening, in which meaning is mutually produced in different contexts.

Cultural Production or, "Classical music, jazz . . .

those are categories of things you buy, that's not music." (Yo Yo Ma, cellist)

In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin argues that technologies of artistic reproduction that originated in the early 20th century began to create an undifferentiated visual or musical terrain that separated the artist or author from his/her work. Since this time, critical theory has emphasized the mediation inherent in all mass produced cultural products and two primary positions have developed about mass culture. The first equates economic domination with cultural domination and implicates mass culture in the reproduction of hegemony. The second view argues that mass culture is a site of contestation and that popular music is not a completely controlled and manufactured product of the West. Electric guitars and synthesizers shape the sound of a transnational technoculture which reflects a process of urbanization, not Westernization, as musicians constantly create new sounds for their own purposes. In this section, I detail these arguments, along with ways in which decreasing costs of music technology have facilitated subaltern cultural production and have effectively challenged the hegemony of mass cultural products and ideologies.

Adorno's writings on music represent one extreme in arguments over the role and influence of cultural production in society. For Adorno, the centralized production of popular music is part of a system of control aimed at the creation of mechanized individuals whose habits and desires comply with the needs of capitalism and the State. While his position is understandable, having witnessed the power of music and the "loudspeaker" as employed by the Nazis, Adorno makes the mistake of equating all forms of popular, rhythmic music with sounds that

serve dominant interests. His view of popular music and serious music (Western classical) is manichean, and the role of popular music in society is to create escape or distraction, and as a social cement in which the rhythms of popular dance music and jazz produce a standardized individual.

A central problem with Adorno's argument is the positing of a subject as pure receptor. In his work on rock and roll, Grossberg cites communication theories that ascribe a more active role to the audience in the construction of meaning and ideology.

"...it is the audience that interprets the text, defines its message, 'decodes' it by bringing it into its own already constituted realities, or 'uses' it to satisfy already present needs. In either case, the audience make the text fit into its experiences."

While I agree with Grossberg's contextualizing and creating a dynamic of interaction between mass cultural products and audience, there is a danger of creating a subject in the Americanized sense of individual free will and choice. I am suspicious of theories based on boundaries and difference without thoroughly addressing how the production of difference often conceals a broader conformity that is not only little threat to capitalism but is vital to it.

In addition to the problem of Adorno's subject, his blatant Eurocentrism and dismissal of black cultural forms and their meaning in the context of racial oppression in the United States is, frankly, abhorrent. In a scathing indictment of Horkheimer and Adorno, who were writing in Los Angeles during WWII, Mike Davis states:

"They described the Culture Industry not merely as political economy, but as a specific spatiality that vitiated the classical proportions of European urbanity, expelling from the stage both the 'masses' (in their heroic, history-changing incarnation) and the critical intelligentsia. Exhibiting no apparent interest in the wartime turmoil in the local aircraft plants nor inclined to appreciate the vigorous nightlife of Los Angeles's Central Avenue ghetto, Horkheimer and Adorno focused instead on the little single-family boxes that seemed to absorb the world-historic mission of the proletariat into family-centered consumerism under the direction of radio jingles and *Life* magazine ads."

Before dismissing the "Culture Industry," it is important to consider the global stratification of the record industry and its economic and cultural influence, in addition to ways in which cultural products are interpreted and appropriated in local contexts. Wallis and Malm provide comprehensive data on the global production and media activity (such as radio airplay) of music and argue that corporate activity in the music industry duplicates large-scale patterns of economic change and distributions of wealth worldwide. Currently, five major record labels "dominate the greater part of the global production and distribution of recorded music. The smaller independents take the risks in the local market, and achieve a high degree of local competence developing artists and repertoire talent which the majors can occasionally exploit internationally." In addition to changes in recording technology, the organization of the music industry, issues of control, authorship, copyright, studio budgets, recording contracts, manufacturing budgets, distribution and payola are major factors in the global flow of mass music products. Through the forces of competition, Simon Frith argues that the industry is intensely conservative, protecting certain styles and their profitability rather than taking risks on new sounds and artists. He concludes that the prevalence of cassette piracy (which is estimated at 66 percent in some markets), and other structural changes in the industry and tech-

nology will provide new opportunities for the independents and make cultural production more in tune with the "sounds of the street" and "music as a human activity."

In *Cassette Culture*, Peter Manuel argues that the accessibility of music technology since the mid-1980s has decentered control in the music industry, creating a surge in local music production and the democratization of expression. Manuel sees technology itself as the major determinant of change in musical and political expression away from monopoly and towards pluralism in cultural production, particularly in "developing nations." His study of popular music in India shows an explosion of locally recorded, produced and manufactured cassettes, some of which sell only a few copies, but others become widely popular in ways that could not have occurred with earlier forms of music production and industry control. He argues that this change liberates public expression from the homogenizing and "decentering" effects of mass media products; preserves folk genres that might otherwise become extinct, as well as fueling "proletarian hybrid genres"; and promotes local and regional identity. While Manuel clearly espouses the revolutionary potential of cassette technology against foreign cultural domination, he admits that the localized quality of cassette "culture" reinforces and may even intensify pre-existing social divisions. Through recorded music and speeches, cassettes have been highly effective in political organizing, a "new media" for grassroots organizing and lower-class empowerment. But cassettes have been utilized by "every major socio-political campaign," including political and religious causes far removed from the "leftist mobilization and subaltern empowerment" envisioned by some.

Developments in music technology and mass communications have created avenues of expression for previously silenced groups, facilitated networks of alternative music like rap and punk, and create the potential for a transnational oppositional culture. By suggesting this potentiality, I do not argue that resistance to either economic or "cultural" imperialism is predicated on new technologies or that a single meaning can be gleaned from these developments. Reformulations of identity through the circulation of popular music products simply raises the possibility of new kinds of organization and community. At the same time, multinational capitalism's "restless search for markets" has meant the increased commodification and consumption of global cultural products, but the social meaning of this marketing and how musicians and cultural producers negotiate this terrain must be addressed in its particularities. Raymond Williams argues that technology is not a predetermined instrument of domination or liberation but "a moment of choice," and instead emphasizes "the intense vitality of some kinds of popular music, always being reached for by the market and often grasped and tamed, but repeatedly renewing its impulses in new and vigorous forms." The next section addresses how popular music production in recorded and live forms interacts with the politics of location.

Performance and The Temporary Autonomous Zone or, "Space is the Place" (SunRa)

The practice of oppressed groups in society trying to achieve "relative autonomy" is historically inseparable from domination itself. Critical studies that go beyond analyzing text and cultural production suggest a linkage between music practices and social formations that seek autonomy from the effects of power in the broadest sense. In developing a complex description of music activity as resistance in such situations, I explore three themes in this section: performance as social organization and cultural empowerment of oppressed groups; music as pleasure, use-value and threat to the necessary commodification of desire under capitalism; music as site of Refusal and the "temporary autonomous zone."

The performance of music is enigmatic from a Western/capitalist perspective because it is

often unproductive (materially) and yet it produces (socially). Popular music is a social activity, a site of interaction and ideology, a temporary community that usually includes some type of movement or physical expression that is pleasurable. While music performance is an "extreme occasion" because it is temporal and not repeatable, musicologist John Shepherd states that "all music should be understood within the context of the politics of the everyday." He argues that the activity of music, through its complex system of signification, has the ability to shape awareness, individual subjectivity, and social formations. It is only in the industrialized world that music has become constructed as privileged property, leisure activity or mass distraction. Through its ability to mediate the social—temporally, spatially and bodily—music is a powerful site of struggle in the organization of meaning and lived experience. "Music can at the same time 'territorialize' and 'deterritorialize' the everyday, evoking and transcending its terrains, spaces, and temporalities as these are visually and linguistically mediated."

Beyond music as a site of critique of dominant ideologies, cultural critics have stressed the importance of cultural solidarity that occurs through performance. For the African diaspora and other groups oppressed by colonialism and repressive regimes, cultural expressions of music and dance have been a source of strength and identity formation critical to liberation struggles. Gilroy states that "Black expressive cultures affirm while they protest." This is well demonstrated in the calypso music of Trinidad, which is historically linked to both emancipation and decolonization. The French Catholic tradition of carnival began to be celebrated in Trinidad in the early 19th century and for the next hundred years, carnival, freedom, rioting and music were all linked in various ways. The "yard" was a space of relative autonomy for slaves and through elaborate secret societies and coded forms of communication resistance to slavery was built. By the 1830s, an extensive network of information had evolved as slaves were overheard singing a song in Patois about a successful slave revolt in Haiti. After emancipation, plantation owners replaced slave labor with indentured East Indian immigrants, driving many blacks into urban centers and continued poverty. The tradition of music and expression continued in the urban yard and in the early 20th century carnival music began to be performed in performance "tents." The calypso tents effectively merged a music born in resistance and a broad-based audience into a regularized social gathering through which a counter-narrative to colonial discourse and an emergent cultural identity were shaped. As the songs were performed in front of an audience they were immediately validated or repudiated by the public, and the wit and creativity of the calypsonians were a source of cultural empowerment for all.

Another example of the interlocation of cultural affirmation and political resistance is elaborated by Fairley's discussion of the Chilean group *Karaxú!*, which was formed shortly after the U.S.-backed coup in 1973. Fairley argues that:

"...musical meaning is negotiated between elements of performance and between performers and audience. It is inextricably tied to lived experience, political praxis, feelings and beliefs. It is rooted in social and political life... The creation and performance of this music is part of the process of learning to live with, and making sense of, experience—of re-integrating the dis-integrated."

Fairley describes *Karaxú!*'s performances as important "ritual occasions" to emphasize both the complexity of meaning and inclusion of the audience as integral to the event. Their performances are an active, if symbolically rendered, reminder of historical events and political mobilization in which cultural expression and political commitment survive together in exile.

Second, I address music as pleasure, the politics of forms of pleasure that exist as "use-

value" and how this is a threat to the capitalist commodification of desire. With few exceptions, political theory and activity in the West has been constructed as a totally serious and difficult practice. While I would certainly agree with most political activists that the global history of genocidal campaigns, ongoing struggles against oppression and even the smallest acts of social and physical domination evoke both rage and the necessity of political organization and action, I also argue that political ideology and strategies need to be continually reformulated. In this period, which might be thought of as the historic defeat of the Left, questions have been raised about paradigms of political theory and praxis, particularly with regard to the thinking behind slogans like "the road is hard but the future is bright." Constructing politics and pleasure as incommensurable spheres has been a major problem, creating both a denigration of the body (which has been implicated in forms of political tyranny), and it also has difficulty explaining both the attraction and persistence of forms of "entertainment" and "spirituality."

Some theorists are beginning to recognize the need to reintegrate these spheres and develop more complicated notions of resistance distinct from the purely politically instrumental. McClary and Walser critique the traditional Left and musicology for their positivist, Enlightenment-derived approach to meaning in music, and implicate both in systems designed to reinforce norms rather than liberate.

Part of the problem is one that chronically plagues the Left: a desire to find explicit political agendas and intellectual complexity in the art it wants to claim and a distrust of those dimensions of art that appeal to the senses, to physical pleasure. Yet pleasure frequently is the politics of music—pleasure as interference, the pleasure of marginalized people that has evaded channelization. Rock is a discourse that has frequently been at its most effective politically when its producers and consumers are least aware of any political or intellectual dimensions...

In a unique approach, Attali (1985) theorizes historical change in society through a semiotic reading of sound. He maps the global spread of capitalism through the control of societal sound and the "deterritorializing" of music's "old code"—locus of social organization, mythology and healing. Attali articulates the difference between music produced by an industry and music as unproductive, an end in itself with the capacity to create its own code. Music is a threat to hegemonic forms of discourse and social relations because it offers the greatest potential to create new forms of communication and create "pleasure in being instead of having." Attali's construction of music as resistance follows from both Marx's theory of commodity fetishism and Foucault's theory of power as the saturation of discourse, social relations and bodies.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries a form of power comes into being that begins to exercise itself through social production and social service. It becomes a matter of obtaining productive service from individuals in their concrete lives. And in consequence, a real and effective "incorporation" of power was necessary, in the sense that power had to be able to gain access to the bodies of individuals, to their acts, attitudes and modes of everyday behavior (Foucault 1980).

Are there not ways in which music is a constant reminder of the existence of pleasure as use-value and as such poses a threat to a system that necessarily seeks out and exploits all forms of pleasure and energy for productive use?

My third point addresses Attali's notion of music as a site of "reality under construction." This idea is echoed by cultural critics who write on subcultures, black expressive culture and by theorists who articulate resistance in the broadest possible sense—beyond political ideolo-

gy to a total transformation of values and lived behavior. I suggest thinking about these ideas through a more mobile category that conceives of forms of collective, cultural resistance as the situated practices of specific groups. The "Temporary Autonomous Zone," or TAZ, is useful in articulating this concept and I apply it to music in specific situations. Hakim Bey's theory of TAZ begins with a critique of revolution from two main positions. He argues that the current period is one in which a "vast undertaking would be futile martyrdom" and, coming from an anarchist tradition, he distrusts revolution because of its historical tendency to reinstitute authoritarianism in a different guise. He contrasts revolution with uprising, focusing on this activity as a kind of "free enclave," as festival, and a temporary or limited refusal in which to "withdraw from the area of simulation." Bey views the TAZ as both a strategy and "condition for life." He states,

"The TAZ is thus a perfect tactic for an era in which the State is omnipresent and all-powerful and yet simultaneously riddled with cracks and vacancies. And because the TAZ is a microcosm of that 'anarchist dream' of a free culture, I can think of no better tactic by which to work toward that goal while at the same time experiencing some of its benefits here and now."

Ultimately the TAZ is a space beyond the gaze of power and the State. Bey draws inspiration from the spirit of the Paris Commune and the maroon communities of Jamaica and Surinam.

While Bey briefly mentions "music as an organizational principle," Hebdige and Gilroy link African music to a kind of oppositional, utopian space. While both tend to essentialize African music in a way I find problematic, the substance of their discussion of subcultures and black performance traditions speaks to this idea of temporary autonomy. Hebdige stresses the ideological character of everyday activities and how subcultural style in Britain is a symbolic form of struggle against the social order, or "a practice of resistance through style." In describing punk, Hebdige argues that music and dance formed a central site in which to perform revolt that "undermined every relevant discourse" and created an "alternative value system." "Conventional ideas of pretentiousness were jettisoned... fragments of school uniforms were symbolically defiled... punk dances like the pogo upset traditional courtship patterns... overt displays of heterosexual interest were generally regarded with contempt and suspicion... frontal attacks (on) the bourgeois notion of entertainment or the classical concept of 'high art'..." Hebdige's account resonates with my own involvement with punk in San Francisco in the late 1970s and early 80s. What I found most significant about this scene was that it fostered an ethos of "direct action" through which behavior and ideologies (mostly reactionary positions and some aspects of leftist politics) were overtly challenged and in some cases transformed. This sense of engagement had a significant impact on gender roles as many women were not content to be fans or only singers, but began playing instruments in bands and expressing themselves in numbers that were virtually unprecedented in Western popular music.

Paul Gilroy discusses British punk and its links with reggae through the "two-tone" movement and youth organization, Rock Against Racism, but focuses primarily on black expressive culture as a site of "collective memory, perception and experience in the present... the construction of community by symbolic and ritual means..." Writing on rap, funk and reggae, he argues that the public spaces in which dances occur "are transformed by the power of these musics to disperse and suspend the temporal and spatial order of the dominant culture." In Rastafarianism, "Babylon system" symbolizes the total rejection of "mental slavery," racism and exploitative economic conditions under capitalism; it is "a critique of the economy of time

and space which is identified with the world of work and wages from which blacks are excluded and from which they, as a result, announce and celebrate their exclusion." In Gilroy's recent work he also stresses the need to distinguish the "political aesthetics" of different music groups within black popular culture.

My last example centers on an article by Pablo Vila, "Rock Nacional and Dictatorship in Argentina" (1992), in which he argues that concerts created a space in which a "we" was constructed that formed a cultural challenge to the ideology of the dictatorship. As the military regime took power in 1976 and sought to disperse all collectivities and suppress traditional political formations, rock concerts became a site of heavily coded oppositional activity. Vila refers to these sites as autonomous spaces of interaction "for broad sections of youth, a refuge, a sphere of resistance, and a channel for participation in the context of a closed and authoritarian society in crisis." The common experience of youth rebellion and its form, the rock concert, became highly politicized in the context of the military dictatorship and the censure of political and cultural expression.

Vila states that the message was in the activity as the music fostered a culture which demanded incorruptibility against *transar* (interactions with the system) and for *zafar* (escape from the system by all possible means). He cites the importance of the *rock nacional* movement for Argentinian youth as "salvaging the meaning of life in a context of lies and terror, consolidating a collective actor as a means of counteracting an individualistic model of life, counterposing a supportive community of actions and interests to the primacy of the market."

In this section I have shown ways in which music as a popular performance medium which engages the body and mind in a collective expression, has the power to transform values, ideology and lived behavior through generating a "temporary autonomous zone." Music is hardly just sound that is passively listened to, but a sonic force that acts on bodies and minds and creates its own life rhythms; rhythms that power recognizes and tries to monopolize through a relentless domination of societal noise. But, because of its unique properties music can be employed as a powerful counter-hegemonic device that goes beyond thought to being. Music as socially organized use-value is a threat to the individuated, consumption-oriented desiring machine of advanced capitalism. As a pleasurable collective expression the practice of music provides important clues to what Foucault describes as the "art of living counter to all forms of fascism" through constantly creating "de-individualization" and how it is "the connection of desire to reality (and not its retreat into the forms of representation) that possesses revolutionary force" (1992).

Sonic Squatting

In this final section I show how subordinate groups have used music as a weapon which is able to penetrate walls and minds. In addition to the fact that drumming can reproduce language, territorialization through sound marks off areas of political or cultural significance and has played a major role in human activities such as religion and war. From kettledrums to bagpipes, sound exhorted troops, relayed commands, and was used to terrify enemies. Sound has remained a potent weapon, a force that disturbs through the fact that it is unhinged from the visual or the knowable and symbolically acts on the imagination, infiltrating and destabilizing power.

In Arguedas' novel, *Yawar Fiesta*, about indigenous struggles in the highlands of Peru, the *wakwak'ras*, or "trumpets of the earth," are a very disturbing sound for the local authorities. The trumpets announce the Yawar Fiesta, an indigenous form of bullfighting that articulates conflict in the novel. While the town of Puquio is geographically divided by class and ethnicity, and con-

trolled by the Civil Patrol, sound is not so easily contained, as the "voices" of the *wakawak'ras* well up "from below" and invade every house, every room, every person. Sound is not only a form of resistance, but an attack on domination materially represented in distinct forms of spatiality.

"From the four quarters, as the night began, the bullfight music would rise up to the Girón Bolívar. From the Chaupi square, straight up to Girón Bolívar, the *turupukllay* rose on the wind. In the shops, in the pool hall, in the notables' houses, the girls and the townsmen would hear it.

'At night that music sounds like it's coming from the graveyard,' they'd say.

'Yeah, man. It troubles your mind....'

'That *cholo* Maywa is the worst of all. His music goes right down to the depths of my soul.'

The sound of the *wakawak'ras* interrupted the *misiris'* conversation under the lamps on the corners of the Girón Bolívar; it disturbed the peace of the diners in the houses of the leading citizens. In the Indian neighborhoods, the boys would gather when Don Maywa played...

Sometimes Don Maywa's trumpet was heard in the town when the Priest was saying the rosary in church with the ladies and girls of the town and with some of the women from the Indian neighborhoods. The bullfight music was dispiriting to those pious souls; the Priest, too, would pause for a moment when the melody came in to him. The girls and ladies would look at one another uneasily, as if the brindled or tawny bulls were bellowing from the church doorway.

'Devil's music!' the Vicar would say." (Arguedas)

Beyond associations with the bullfight, the simple moaning of the *wakawak'ras* is complex in its signification, at once recalling the presence of the Indians and the threat posed by their historically incomplete domination by both church and state. The music is particularly powerful in its ability to conjure up unknown aspects of the Other, unleashing fear and anxiety that exists in the minds of the *misiris* (*ladinos*). In this regard it operates as a psychological/spatial tactic that is difficult to contain.

Sound or P.A. systems may create an internal spatiality or "temporary autonomous zone," but through them music can traverse and challenge spatially organized social divisions. In his work on the cultural character of ethnic and class divisions in Cartagena, Colombia, Joel Streicker describes the use of sound as resistance and a "non-spatial way to reclaim space." He historicizes the construction of urban space which has become increasingly divided by class and race to make certain areas "safe" for the "rich" and tourism. The spatial separation of rich and poor is culturally symbolized by the Independence Day Festival which once involved all social groups, but more recently local elites have shaped it into an event which excludes the poor (who are largely of African descent). Many lower class youths have reclaimed the Festival's dance through what Streicker describes as a "budding, racially conscious, popular class cultural movement centered on music and dance called *champeta*." In addition to constructing an alternative identity through African music as opposed to Latin music, the loud sound systems at these dances broadcast the music past the walls of the colonial city. "This music speaks of—and is—a presence that the rich cannot avoid, a nearly dusk-to-dawn siege reminding the wealthy of the popular class' Otherness...and a way for disenfranchised groups to exercise control over space...." Through broadcasting their own music directly into the site of official culture the *champetudos* create a struggle over class privilege and identity through sound.

Conclusion

In this article I have shown how popular music can be a site of counter-hegemonic activity. For explanatory purposes I have deconstructed music activities and forms in an artificial way. Performance and commodification of music products are not clearly bounded and how musicians and audiences negotiate these spheres varies in every situation. There is no correct strategy here. In fact, resistance is necessarily a creative, imaginative process and arguments that purport to have "the one answer" are increasingly suspect. Instead, I argue that music and resistance are shaped in the moment of their coming into being, a musical/political praxis that is negotiated by social actors in particular spatial and temporal locations. As fixity itself is increasingly recognized as a necessary condition for the deployment of power, performative practices like music and dance suggest forms of resistance that produce experience in ever changing forms.

It is important to remember that music is a universal activity that emerged with "culture" as a defining characteristic of human communities. I do not raise this point to suggest some essentialized meaning or origin of music, but to generate further thought about deep cultural assumptions in the West that are prevalent across the political spectrum. In an era when music and the arts are being eliminated from public schools in the United States through specific discourses about the "productive" individual and an emphasis on education that facilitates employment, I argue that these actions have more to do with a particular kind of social reproduction than simply balancing budgets. As music is a common practice of subordinate groups and its practice is a form of social organization, it is an important site of management by dominant forces in society. Finally, I suggest that music draws its power from the fact that it is both ordinary and mystical. Music is something pleasurable that everyone can participate in and create their own bit of magic outside the loop of production and consumption. This is why it is so dangerous.

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