



Resonating Occupation: Sound, Music and Imperialism

11 May 2018

**A21 Trent Building
Cultures of Occupation in Twentieth-Century Asia (COTCA) Project
University of Nottingham**



**University of
Nottingham**
UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA



European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

Programme

- 8:30 - 9:00 Registration and coffee
- 9:00 - 9:15 Welcome Remarks
Russell Skelchy, University of Nottingham
Sonic Frontiers *Sylvia Necker, University of Nottingham*
- 9:15 – 10:45 **Session 1: Imperialism and the Voice**
The Hush Harbor as Sanctuary: African-American Survival Silence During
British/American Slavery
Maya Cunningham, University of Maryland
- Voicing Occupation: Colonial Sensory Regimes and the “Vocal Apparatus”
Iris Blake, University of California, Riverside
- Songs of Courage and Compassion: Missionaries in Occupied China During
WWII
Sophia Geng, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University
- 10: 45 – 11:00 *Break*
- 11:00 – 12:30 **Session 2: Contextualizing Sound, Memory and Conflict**
Innovative methodologies in a deeply divided context: ‘Sounding Conflict’
in Derry/Londonderry
Fiona Magowan and Jim Donaghey, Queen’s University Belfast
- The Semiotics of Literary Sounds and Violence: The Case of J. M. Coetzee
Dimitri Smirnov, University of Graz
- Registering Sonic Histories in a Multiply Occupied Place: Sound and
Survivance in Makota’ay, Taiwan
DJ Hatfield, Berklee College of Music
- 12:30 – 1:30 *Lunch (served in foyer)*

1:30 – 3:30

Session 3: Sonic Responses to Colonialism in Maritime Southeast Asia

Cultural Convergences and Contestations Soundscapes of the Port Cities of British Malaya Prior to Independence

Sooi Beng Tan, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Loud Town, Quiet Base: Olongapo City, Subic Bay, and the U.S. Navy

Kevin Sliwoski, University of California, Riverside

Beyond Java and Bali: Sounds of Occupation During the Colonial Era in Indonesia

Mayco Santaella, Sunway University Malaysia

From Colonial Censorship to Embodied Liberty: “Si Pugo at Togo” and the Filipino Bodabil during Japanese Occupation

Jefferson R. Mendez, University of the Philippines

3:30 – 3:45

Coffee/Tea/Snacks

3:45 – 5:15

Session 4: Instruments of Sound during Occupation

Việt Nhạc (1948-52): The Last Bastion of Cultural Internationalism in French Indochina

Lonán Ó Briain, University of Nottingham

A Rhythm of Popular Unity: The Rhythms of Protest Chants

Maayan Tsadka, Haifa University

Transforming Everyday Sounds: The Loudspeaker in India, c. 1925 - 45

Vebhuti Duggal, Ambedkar University Delhi

5:15 – 5:45

Break

5:45 – 6:30

Discussion & Closing Remarks

6:30 – 7:00

Break

7:00 – 9:00

Dinner (served at DeVere Orchard Campus hotel)

Abstracts

Blake, Iris (University of California, Riverside)

Voicing Occupation: Colonial Sensory Regimes and the “Vocal Apparatus”

The mid-to-late nineteenth century, which marked a shift in colonialist thought from Enlightenment to Modernity, registered a rise in vocal scientists and practitioners’ discursive use of “the vocal apparatus” to describe a set of human bodily organs involved in the production of speech and song. I ask, how were technologies of voice and sound used in the contemporary medical, scientific, and pedagogical literature on voice to not only produce a consensus on what constitutes the vocal apparatus, but also to align this “apparatus” with a particular sensory regime such that voice could become an apparatus of modernity, racial capitalism, and colonialism? At the same time, how did the performative and imaginative work of voicing continuously exceed the “vocal apparatus”/“voice as apparatus” model, producing a critique of voice as colonial ideological apparatus?

Using the laryngoscope as a point of departure, I consider how the project of regulating voice through the “vocal apparatus” was an inherently colonial project. I examine how the conditions of possibility for Manuel Garcia’s actualization of this vocal technology in 1854 included colonial desires linking the territoriality of conquest with the spatiality of the body, and Garcia’s participation in France’s colonial occupation of Algeria in 1830. I argue that by shifting the focus from the scientific-medical-pedagogical “vocal apparatus,” which privileged human vocal cords and the sonic, to the practice of voicing as vibrational, multisensorial, and not exclusively human, another story of voicing emerges, one where voicing can be understood as an abolitionist praxis that actively created alternative orderings of the sensorial, the sexual, and the sacred. The attempted containment of voicing into the “vocal apparatus” in the mid-to-late 19th century can thus be understood as an acknowledgement of and response to the disruptive potential of voicing to the entwined projects of modernity, racial capitalism, and colonialism.

Cunningham, Maya (University of Maryland, College Park)

The Hush Harbor as Sanctuary: African – American Survival Silence During British/American Slavery

The African American culture was formed as a result of the British colonial project in North America. English colonists seized lands from Native Americans and enslaved West and Central Africans as colonial subjects to form plantations that rendered “cash crops,” like cotton, which had previously only been available through the Silk Road trade. African Americans consistently resisted enslavement through escapes, many of which were secretly assisted with code songs. They also resisted slavery through the practice of their religion, which was also facilitated through singing. While scholarship on these forms is plentiful, less discussed are the contexts of secrecy and silence in which these songs were performed. For survival, African Americans created spaces of refuge with “hush harbors.” Deep in the woods, hush harbors were private areas in which enslaved Blacks engaged in prayer meetings, ring shouts, and singing. Enslaved Blacks often would become ecstatic with religious fervor, their voices rising into ‘shouts.’ In order to muffle sound and prevent discovery, they hung dampened quilts over tree branches. Sometimes they prayed into large pots and sometimes they muffled the mouths of shouters. It was here that prayers against slavery and liberation messages of the Bible were voiced. The hush harbor was a sanctuary where quilts, pots, and hands transformed sound into silence for slaves’ very survival. Building on historical research in African-American studies on hush harbors (Nunley 2011 and Harding 2007), this paper argues that strategies of silencing and sounding employed by African-Americans under colonial occupation were equally important as methods of resistance. This paper examines WPA Slave Narratives, African-American autobiography, the anthropological work of Zora Neale Hurston and theories of power to excavate and analyze practices of silencing in hush harbors as strategies towards freedom within the brutal confines of slavery.

Donaghey, Jim and Fiona Magowan (Queen’s University Belfast)

Innovative Methodologies in a Deeply Divided Context: ‘Sounding Conflict’ in Derry/Londonderry

Among the research contexts of Queen’s University Belfast’s ‘Sounding Conflict: from resistance to reconciliation’ project is the city of Derry/Londonderry in Northern Ireland. Derry has been a prominent site in the long history of the conflict in the North of Ireland; it witnessed some of the worst of the Troubles and continues to be shaped by its post-conflict legacies. The British Army was deployed across Northern Ireland under the auspices of ‘Operation Banner’ from 14th August 1969 to 31st July 2017 – but the term ‘occupation’ cannot be applied straightforwardly in this context; the term has powerfully distinct connotations for the ‘two communities’, and this deeply divided rubric is manifested in terms of sound and music as well. We are investigating how sounds project and ameliorate community experiences, memories and narratives of conflict across cultures and different conflict/post-conflict settings of resistance through to

reconciliation. Our research in Derry/Londonderry has been focused around community music making initiatives aimed at 'peacebuilding', particularly the 'Music Bridge' training programme delivered by international NGO Musicians without Borders. Along with traditional ethnographic methods such as participant observation, interviews, and surveys, we have also been adopting and developing creative research methodologies. Some of these have been woven into MwB's programme, with the intention of complementing the training while critically reflecting upon it. Other methods have involved working with the participants on a one-to-one basis and encouraging them to produce creative work related to the 'Sounding Conflict' research themes and generate critical reflection through that process. This paper details some of the innovative methodologies we have been utilising, and appraises their success so far, especially in terms of how they can be integrated with traditional ethnographic methods, and how they can facilitate dialogical research practices, generate transformative impacts for the participants, and maintain 'methodological fit' with our research partner MwB.

Duggal, Vebhuti (Ambedkar University)

Transforming everyday sounds: the loudspeaker in India, c. 1925 - 45

This paper examines the appearance of the loudspeaker in India, c. 1925 - 45. It weaves together conversations within sound studies on amplification (Devine 2013, Theberge et al 2015), sound media histories in Africa and Asia (Karel 2003, Khan 2011, Larkin 2014, Ravikant 2016 amongst others) with South Asian history looking at small and big technologies such as sewing machines (Arnold 2013) and railways (Prasad 2015). This paper follows the loudspeaker as it combines with other objects (radios, telephones, lorries, railways etcetera) to participate in a network of sensory infrastructures (Sundaram 2015). In so doing, political moments such as the civil disobedience movement and the Congress party are recast as sonic, affective and mediated forces. This is no surprise given similar theses about the Nazi party in Germany of the 1920s and 30s (Lacey 2013).

However, it is not the political entity's recasting that this paper wishes to focus upon. Rather, in mapping the network of infrastructures that the loudspeaker participated in, it hopes to be able to ask, and provisionally and tentatively answer, some of the following questions: (1) What were the mode/s and regimes of bodily habitation, of colonial subjects, which were prevalent and altered by the introduction of amplification? (2) How did these infrastructures of sound (amplification, transmission etcetera) and organised sound intervene in, produce and organise public cultures, especially around the late-colonial bazaar? (3) How did these infrastructures *fold* themselves into larger circuits, maps and geographies of business and industry (electronics, sound media) across the erstwhile British empire?

Geng, Sophia (College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University)

Songs of Courage and Compassion: Missionaries in Occupied China During WWII

In April 1938, under the hovering Japanese bombers, hundreds of nationalist soldiers were singing patriotic army songs at Kaifeng railway station in Henan Province, China. This was the only way left for the wounded soldiers to show their gratitude to the approximately seventy missionaries from the U.S. and Europe, who were treating their wounded, burying their dead and caring for their weak. After Kaifeng fell into the hands of the Japanese army in June 1938, these missionaries took 15,406 women and children into their refugee camps, hastily converted from convents or mission schools, to prevent tragedies like the Nanjing Massacre. Inside these temporary sanctuaries, hymns echoed in the sky of Kaifeng. In the winter of 1941, these missionaries became "enemy nationals" themselves and were put into concentration camps. From 1941 to 1945, over 2000 missionaries from the four corners of China were grouped into a concentration camp in Weixian town of Shandong Province. Here, every Mass and each hymn voiced their courage to survive occupation and their hope for a peaceful China. Amidst aggression, destruction and death, their songs became a voice of courage, compassion and hope for the suffering. Among all the sounds of occupation, these international missionaries struck a unique tone that transcended the boundaries of personal welfare, political entanglements and nation states. This research project uses the missionaries' correspondence, personal letters, memoirs, and oral histories to re-create the multifaceted sounds of occupation in different geographic and temporal contexts from the West to Beijing, Kaifeng, Weixian, Shanghai and then to Taiwan and Tokyo. Under the auspices of Saint Benedict's Monastery, the audience will have the opportunity to hear the songs that resonated in the concentration camps almost a century ago. In addition, the research project invites contemplation and examination of transnational mission movements in the backdrop of imperialism and colonialism.

Hatfield, DJ (Berklee College of Music, Boston)

Registering Sonic Histories in a Multiply Occupied Place: Sound and Survivance in Makota'ay, Taiwan

In this presentation, I explore how a community at the margins of national histories registers sonic memory as a means of survivance. Makota'ay, a Taiwanese indigenous (Pangcah) community in present-day Hualien County, has both benefitted and suffered from its location at the mouth of the Siugulan River. As Pangcah oral history recounts, river and ocean brought the ancestors of Makota'ay Pangcah to Makota'ay and still delivers resources. The river also conveyed colonial merchants, armies, and settlers (including Taiwan's ethnic Chinese majority). Thus, Maokota'ay Pangcah live in multiply occupied places in which sounds index both ancestral presence and a series of colonial occupations from the late 19th Century to the present. Employing soundscape documentation as well as oral historical and archival research, I listen for more than sonic traces of these multiple occupations: I consider how Pangcah register these traces as sonic memories. I argue that such registrations often display a gap between the intentions of occupiers and the lived experience of the community, a kind of failed mimesis through which indigenous people sound traces of occupation, making these sounds resonate as figures of survivance. At times, sound, such as the echo of waves within a coastal cave or a drop of dew into a canyon, transforms relationships of occupation; when these sounds are narrated, they become alternate histories. As such, sound in its various registrations forms part of an ethics of place opposed to settler presence. To understand the ethical force of remembered sound, I argue, requires us to think more clearly about how indigenous people employ sonic practices—some traditional but others borrowed from settlers—to register sounds of occupation. This work will require closer engagement with indigenous sonic practices and also suggests frameworks for collaborative sound installation art.

Mendez, Jefferson R. (University of the Philippines)

From Colonial Censorship to Embodied Liberty: "Si Pugo at Togo" and the Filipino Bodabil during Japanese Occupation

While vaudeville reached its demise in the early part of the 20th century in the United States, it proliferated in the Philippines during the Japanese occupation (1942-1945) and up to 1960s. By examining the Filipinization of vaudeville, known as Bodabil, this paper will present ways to think about censorship, improvisation, and liberty of the occupied individuals or groups who operated under occupation especially the bodabil and other Filipino regimes. During the Japanese occupation, bodabil was used to poke fun at the occupying forces. Today, the Philippine TV versions always have comedians parodying politicians; a cultural legacy of foreign occupation where it represents a common state of affairs in the modern Philippine era (Tan 2018). The soundscapes created by Bodabil, combined with burlesque, cheap and often vulgar entertainment have had complex roles in the history of subjugation in the Philippines because of their reliance on improvisation. The Philippine soundmarks created by bodabil actors, such as "Si Pugo at Togo," will be discussed, scrutinized, and assessed in this proposed paper as improvised performances that respond quickly and accurately to the audience's needs during that time. The irreverent and improvisational nature of bodabil enables Filipino in understanding any loss of liberty from strict censorship on their entertainment during occupation. This highlights how Filipinos understand their experience as colonized subjects. At the end of this proposed study, I will present a discussion on the role of censorship in Bodabil and how improvisation becomes a space? in understanding society's embodied liberty.

Necker, Sylvia (University of Nottingham)

Sonic Frontiers. The European Central Bank (ECB) building in Frankfurt/Germany

One of the two ECB's headquarter buildings in Frankfurt is based in a lively square located in the city centre, opposite of the Opera house and near the central station. As part of safety precautions the ECB building is surrounded by physical barriers which also mark a sonic frontier between the bank and the public space. My sound work explores this frontier through field recordings and will make it hearable. This sound approach raises further research methodological questions related to the themes of the Resonating Occupatio wnorkshop. I am a Nottingham (UK) and Frankfurt (Germany) based historian, curator and sound artist. Below are links where you can listen to my work:

<http://sylvianecker.com>

<http://soundcloud.com/neckersound>

O'Briain, Lonán (University of Nottingham)

Việt Nhạc (1948-52): The Last Bastion of Cultural Internationalism in French Indochina

This paper reconstructs the forgotten history of one of Vietnam's most popular music ensembles from the mid-twentieth century. Between 1948 and 1952, the musicians of Việt Nhạc performed arrangements and original compositions live on air to a radio audience across French Indochina. They were the first all-Vietnamese ensemble to appear regularly on Radio Hanoi, and they pioneered local ways of making music for a growing indigenous audience, a technique that was later deployed to great success by musicians sponsored by the Communist Party of Vietnam. Playing a unique blend of popular chansons in Vietnamese and local folk styles, these creative artists also sounded out the final stages of colonial-funded cultural internationalism in the region. Drawing on archival records, historical recordings and interview data, this research excavates the story of the Việt Nhạc ensemble from the uncomfortable crevice between colonial and postcolonial history. In retelling this story, the research exposes the sensitive yet oft-ignored process of cultural change (and loss) in the years leading up to independence and decolonisation.

Santaella, Mayco A. (Sunway University, Malaysia)

Beyond Java and Bali: Sounds of Occupation During the Colonial Era in Indonesia

In her study of cultural formations and transformations during occupation, Koikari (2015) highlights the almost nonexistent discussion of the US occupation in Okinawa within a mainland Japan focused *senryō kenkyū* (occupation studies). Similarly, discussions of cultural developments during the Dutch and Japanese colonial eras in Indonesia have largely highlighted the Javanese and, to some extent, the Balinese experience. Considering the under-representation of marginal cultures in Indonesia (in islands such as Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Sumatra, etc.) within occupation discourses and the development of new music repertoires and genres during the Dutch and Japanese colonial era, this presentation interrogates present-day paradigms largely governed by an acceptance/rejection dyad of cultural idioms. It does so by considering Winichakul's (2003) post-nationalist discourse towards a look at a "history of margins" and the development of new soundscapes during the colonial era beyond Java and Bali. Utilizing a transnational and comparative approach to the study of new cultural expressions produced during the colonial era in Indonesia, this presentation investigates: 1) The introduction of new musical instruments and the development of new ensembles and genres; 2) The (colonial) socio-structural changes that lead to the production of new genres and repertoires; and 3) the development of new values focused on the 'individual' during the colonial era that led to new genres and repertoire. The analysis considers new material culture, soundscapes, aesthetics, and values product of occupation in Indonesia that developed a myriad of sonic experiences in regions such as Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Sumatra across different ethnicities during the colonial era.

Sliwoski, Kevin (University of California, Riverside)

Loud Town, Quiet Base: Olongapo City, Subic Bay, and the U.S. Navy

During the 1950s and 1960s, the U.S. Navy developed U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay in the Philippines into a major overseas military installation after its destruction during World War II. As the U.S. Navy constructed new facilities and the population grew, the base's adjacent community, Olongapo City, also grew and adapted to the needs of the nearly 40,000 year-round base residents and the millions of sailors present for liberty and refueling at the height of the Vietnam War during the 1960s. Together, these communities were home to a range of sounds such as nightclubs, cover bands, air strips, and warfighting drills. These sounds shaped the relationships between Americans and Filipinos and often served as auditory signatures of occupation. In this paper, I address the disparities between memories and records that depicted Olongapo City as loud, noisy and dirty, compared to representations of a quiet, peaceful, and clean U.S. Naval Base, Subic Bay during the 1960s. I argue that issues about sound, and control over volume and silence at Subic and Olongapo were constructed on racial and gendered legacies of U.S. colonialism in the Philippines that were inherited by new generations of U.S. service members and civilians. Through interviews with U.S. Navy veterans and readings of military agreements, newspapers, and U.S. Naval records, I show how the U.S. Navy exerted strict control over sonic life at Subic Bay, and how sound regulations and culture off base were extensions of continued U.S. influence in the Philippines. By focusing on military history through sound and using the military base as a research site, I ask questions about U.S. militarization, and draw attention to the ways the U.S. Military has repeatedly rebranded its presence overseas and historically minimized its role as an occupying force at military bases around the world.

Smirnov, Dimitri (University of Graz, Austria)

The Semiotics of Literary Sounds and Violence: The Case of J. M. Coetzee

Under occupation, sounds gain a violent dimension. The forms of violence which manifest themselves through sounds under occupation, however, are always manifold: Acoustic phenomena can indicate physical violence but they can also be products of systematic oppression when entire auditory environments change due to occupation, assuming the form of 'structural violence' (Johan Galtung). Literary texts possess aesthetic properties which allow them to make the connection between sounds and violence even more apparent. However, there is still a lack in methodology for describing this connection in more precise terms. The paper introduces a semiotic approach to determining the relation between literary sounds and violence. While researchers from sound studies used semiotics in the past (Holger Schulze, Carla J. Maier, Jochen Venus), literary studies and postcolonial studies have neglected such an exact analysis of sounds and their violent attributes. The paper suggests three different forms of auditory violence in literary texts based on Charles S. Peirce's sign trichotomy of index, icon and symbol. This theoretical approach is illustrated through a case study on novels by J. M. Coetzee which center on military occupation (*Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Life & Times of Michael K*). The discussed examples of literary sounds in the author's works include screams emanating from a room where a prisoner is tortured but also the deafening noise of a military convoy. In exemplary readings, the semiotic relation of these sounds to violence will be established.

The paper does not only demonstrate the staging of sonic occupation and its violent effects in literature but it also provides researchers working in similar fields with an analytical tool to examine sounds as signs for violence, enabling a clearer understanding of how sound relates to aggression, conflict and oppression.

Tan Sooi Beng (Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Cultural Convergences and Contestations: Soundscapes of the Port Cities of British Malaya Prior to Independence

Colonial port cities were urban centres with multiethnic multireligious polyglot trading communities in the first half of the twentieth century. They served as transaction centres for the European trading companies and were regional hubs for the circulation of goods, people, institutions, printed materials and new ideas. The meeting of diverse peoples engendered the development of local hybrid music that was disseminated by way of the gramophone, talkies and live performances by travelling musicians. Through an analysis of the music accompanying Malay social dancing and theatre such as the *ronggeng* and *dondang sayang* recorded by His Masters Voice and Pagoda in the early twentieth century, this paper shows that the soundscapes of the port cities of British Malaya articulated the convergence of diverse cultures and the creation of new multiethnic identities that straddled different worlds. At the same time, the appropriation of and the blending of the upbeat Anglo-American dance rhythms such as the waltz, foxtrot and tango with song texts about 'progress' and 'the way forward' illustrated the rise of social and political consciousness prior to independence in 1957. This essay illustrates that the soundscapes were created by the local communities who were trying to define a sense of place as they interacted with the structures of colonial power. The article takes a perspective that looks beyond the nation-state proposing that cultural boundaries were permeable during the colonial times. External developments such as empire-building, migration, trade networks, communication technology and the spread of Anglo-American popular music impacted on the routes and types of changes that occurred in the soundscapes of the Malayan port cities.

Tsadka, Maayan (Haifa University)

A Rhythm of Popular Unity: The Rhythms of Protest Chants

Growing up in a major conflict area, where occupation is very present in one's reality, I have been invested, personally and professionally, as an activist, and as a musician, in the sonic dimension of such reality. My dissertation work included an analysis of protest chants from various places around the world, as well as a new musical composition based on those rhythms and some of the rhetoric inherent to this phenomenon. I have been generalizing different chants as "crowd mobilizing rhythms", which are one of the most striking social behaviors of peoples' spontaneous expressions of resistance and solidarity. Throughout the world, and in different social and cultural situations, rhythms and beats are used to engage, organize, and mobilize people. The rhythms of protest and revolutionary chants and songs, various sporting events, children games and rhymes, share many features. I will identify those most common rhythms, give examples, categorize them into three distinct groups, and offer a hypothesis about their origin and commonality in different places around the world. The prevalence of similar rhythms around the world, in many languages and cultures, led me to wonder whether there is some kind of "universal protest rhythm," or perhaps, more broadly, a universal crowd mobilizing rhythm.