

INTRODUCTION TO THEMATIC ISSUE ON MUSIC IN ASIA

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This issue brings together articles from diverse disciplines to examine music in Asia. Drawing upon theories and approaches in media studies, gender and fan studies, as well as anthropology, history, political science and ethnomusicology, these articles engage in a timely dialogue on how music impacts discourses of the nation state, identity formation and transnational flows of cultural production. The five articles in this volume also share surprising connections: they examine the power of music to cast an ecstatic, communal spell among youth in South Korea, as well as rural villagers in India. They trace the connections between music and politics, in Bali and the Philippines. And, they examine how music shapes identity in both diasporic communities and at home.

Korean popular music, or "K-Pop" has attained worldwide popularity, at a time when the academic study of popular culture is taking up new modes of fan production as an object of study. Yet, not as much attention has been paid to the ways that Korean popular music operates together with its domestic fan base. Timothy Gitzen's article "Affective Resistance: Objects of Korean Popular Music" examines the underpinnings of the idea that consumers are stakeholders in popular culture by focusing on the affective relationships built on shared intimacy among Korean communities of pop idol fans. In Gitzen's astute diagnostic of fan relations, intimate networks are built not only through shared consumption of idol singers and their music, but also cathartic resistance to unpopular decisions by the corporate agencies that own K-Pop bands. Gitzen's concept of affective resistance is both momentary and monumental, individual and collective, as it traces the process through which fans are bound together through shared emotional experiences. The autoethnographic elements of Gitzen's article, in which he offers a nuanced description of his own experiences attending concerts, offer a vivid portrait of these affective, communal events to readers unfamiliar with the electric atmosphere of live K-Pop performances. In addition, by focusing on fans' resistance to the departure of Korean American idol singer Park Jaebeom from both his band, 2PM and South Korea itself, Gitzen discusses Korean nationalism

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and examines its relation to "protest culture" as a form of fan resistance that builds and concentrates affective relations.

Kaori Fushiki's "Social and Political Effects of *Pop Bali Alternatif* on Balinese Society: The Example of 'XXX'" also takes a form of music popular among young people, and describes its impact on their identity. Fushiki's article continues the theme of exploring the wider social and political influences of music that runs through many of the articles in this thematic issue as she explores the effect of the music genre "*Pop Bali Alternatif*" on contemporary Balinese society. Fushiki first presents the historical background that saw the emergence of this new genre of music that became so influential among Balinese youth, and proceeds to establish the influence this musical genre has on social community formation. She traces the ways that Pop Bali Alternatif evolved by incorporating various styles of Western pop music—heavy metal, punk, etc.—in a local setting. Performed first as music for tourists, Pop Bali Alternatif subsequently evolved to become instrumental in enacting a new Balinese identity. Fushiki proceeds to investigate the connections between one band, "XXX," and Balinese politics. The deep personal connections between this music genre and local politicians intent on harnessing its popularity provide a very different reading of the relationship between music and identity than the deep, affective, yet often anonymous relations that Gitzen traces in Korean pop music.

J. Lorenzo Perillo, in "Theorising Hip-Hop and Street Dance in the Philippines," explores the global phenomenon of Hip-hop music and dance through the lens of gender relations and performance studies. Like Gitzen and Fushiki, Perillo also focuses on the ways that youth are inventing new forms and traditions that impact and express their identities. However, in contrast to the first two articles in this thematic issue, Perillo focuses on the flow of transnational cultural expressions through national borders when he investigates the various factors involved in the creation of the Filipino Hip-hop scene. These include postcolonial Americanisation and the global popularity of a certain idea of Blackness, but are also highly dependent upon the unique forces, both historical and contemporary, that shaped this Southeast Asian archipelago. Perillo's goal is to outline the ways through which Hip-hop dance acquires meaning, through a detailed analysis of what he terms a "dance-based system of knowledge." To do this, Perillo considers linguistic features particular to Tagalog, analysing four culturally specific terms that he corresponds to different modes of Hip-hop activity within contemporary Filipino culture. In this way, Perillo is able to offer an alternative to binary oppositions that limit understanding of localised global phenomena: such as commercial vs. underground, and authentic vs. inauthentic. In their place, Perillo's analysis of the various dimensions of dance offer a focus on intersubjectivity that does not elide a discussion of internal conflicts in the world of Hip-hop in the Philippines.

Analysing the forces of globalisation from a different perspective, Kim Rockell's article: "The Philippine *Rondalla*: A Gift of Musical Heritage in a Migrant Context," examines how a particular form of music—the plucked-string ensemble *rondalla* of Hispanic origin—became connected to notions of Philippine national identity in Filipino diasporic

communities. Rockell examines recently developed *rondallas* in Filipino immigrant enclaves in Taiwan and Australia to explore the migrant flow of traditional music, with a particular concern about how the connection between music and national identity is transmitted to second generation Filipino migrants. He contrasts the particular forms of multiculturalism in Taiwan and Australia that have influenced the development of each respective *rondalla* to reveal how diaspora Filipinos have been able to reconstruct a treasured musical heritage despite a lack of resources through the recollection and transmission of musical memories. Rockell concludes with suggestions on how this valuable musical tradition may be supported and expanded.

Finally, continuing the focus on traditional music, Lidia Guzy's "Ritual Village Music and Marginalised Musicians of Western Orissa" explores the relationship between music and death, memory and illness in a culturally distinct area of India. Guzy offers a close analysis of the psychological and physiological effects of ritual music in a local community whose various ethnic groups engender a complex set of social relations. Guzy's eight-year period of ethno-musicological fieldwork in this area enables her to document and analyse the little-known, and vulnerable, musical traditions of non-Brahmin priest-musicians with ambivalent social status. In Guzy's astute analysis of her fieldwork data, these marginalised musicians, accompanied by the ecstatic dance of ritual priest-dancers in the worship of local goddesses, express a unique, local spirituality that resonates in a system of sounds mediated in the human body. In this fashion, village musicians are able to function as mediators between diverse social groups. Guzy offers vivid ethnographic descriptions of these musical rituals, in which male priests, dressed in red sari skirts and adorned with flowers to signify their embodiment of the goddess, fall into a trance and dance ecstatically to wild music that enflames the watching crowd. According to Guzy, these socially marginalised musicians, of a caste considered "untouchable," are able to channel the wild, uncontrolled power of the sacred through the mediation of ritual music.

The contributors to this issue on Music in Asia each, in their own way, explore a range of ideas and concepts that link music to a particular culture, and to human life in general. They do not seek to define or represent a unified Asia or a general concept of "Asianness"; rather, they explore the social meaning of music in complex realities in which national and/or regional identities are expressed in and through gendered, ethnic, generational and religious identities. Music is a cultural production that offers a shared, affective experience. As a form of communication that negotiates the liminal space between the personal and the political, music is a mode of self-expression that is central to community life around the globe.