International Workshop

“Sound and Music in War from the Middle Ages to the Present”

Sound and music have been mobilised both in warfare and in recollections of war and extreme violence. From sound descriptions in the chronicles of armed expeditions in the Middle Ages to the listening practices of soldiers in contemporary armed conflicts, people who experience war and extreme violence have mobilised musical practices and listening in different ways depending on their conceptions of the nature and the power of sound and music. Why do people sing when they are fighting in war? Why are sound descriptions used in the recollections of war and extreme violence? This workshop will outline answers to these questions by examining the ontology of sound and music from the points of view of the different actors as well as the interaction rituals in which sound and music are mobilised in times of war. In fact, far from being universal and shared concepts, music and sound must be questioned from a historical and anthropological perspective in order to reveal the significance that the actors have given them in specific contexts.

Firstly we will study how repertoires and musical practices have been used in the battlefield to coordinate military actions, delimit acoustic spaces, unify combatants around a ‘sound identity’, or establish emotional dominance over the enemy. Secondly, we will examine how music and ‘non-musical’ sounds are used in interaction rituals before or after fighting in order that they arouse specific emotions, promote group solidarity or create the categorical identities necessary to engage in armed violence. Finally, we will pay particular attention to the relationship between sound and memory in the descriptions of aural experiences of war and extreme violence given by both combatants and civilians.

The workshop is organised in three parts, each corresponding to an area of enquiry. First, we will develop a critical reflection on sources and methods available to researchers working on the relationship between music, armed conflict and extreme violence. A second part will be devoted to the ontology of sound and music in wartime and extreme violence dynamics. In the third and final part, we examine interaction rituals in which sound and music are mobilised during war and dynamics of extreme violence.

Areas of enquiry

1. Critical analysis of sources and methods
   - Sources available to study the relationship between music, violence and war from a historical and anthropological perspective,
   - Strengths and limitations of ethnographic enquiry in contemporary conflicts,
   - State censorship and self-censorship in torture or war testimonies,
   - Difficulties in translating oral and written sources.
2. Ontology of sound and music
   - Difference and overlap between sound and music,
   - Sound, music and sacred space and time,
   - Ontology of sound in chronicles of war and extreme violence,
   - Sound and memory in recollections of war and extreme violence.
3. Relationship between sound, music and interaction rituals
   - Links between music repertoires and interaction rituals,
   - Music, interaction rituals and identity fusion,
   - Sound, music and outbreak of violence,
   - Sound, music and effervescence,
   - Sound, music and emotional dominance.

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International Workshop

“Sound and Music in War from the Middle Ages to the Present”

Silvana Gallinotti, *Prófugos*, 2018

Organisation

Prof. Marion Uhlig
Dr. Luis Velasco-Pufleau

12–13 november
2018

University of Fribourg

Misericorde
Room MIS04 4112
salle Jäggi

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Program

Monday 12 November 2018

9:00–9:10	Welcome
9:10–9:30	Introduction **Marion Uhlig** and **Luis Velasco-Pufleau** (University of Fribourg)
9:30–10:10	**M. J. Grant** (University of Edinburgh): What did battle music sound like – and why?
10:10–10:40	Coffee Break
10:40–11:20	**Anna Papaeti** (Panteion University): Music, 'Re-education' and Violence in (Post) Civil-War Greece
11:20–12:00	**Makis Solomos** (University Paris 8): Greece, April 21, 1967. What can music do?
12:00–12:30	General discussion
12:30–14:00	Lunch Break
14:00–15:30	**Christian Gerlach**, **Nikita Hock** and **Christoph Dieckmann** (University of Bern): Understanding the impact of war-time violence through sound: The case of World War II Eastern Europe and 1971 Bangladesh
15:30–16:00	Coffee Break
16:00–16h30	The unheard sounds of war: a conversation with **Sebastian Meyer** (Photographer and filmmaker, New York)
16:30–17:00	Round table: Research on sound and violence: methods, sources and ethics

Tuesday 13 November 2018

9:00-9:10	Welcome
9:10-9:50	**Victor A. Stoichita** (Paris): How is music motivational for armed violence? Comparing the playlist of a Norwegian terrorist with those of US soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan
9:50-10:30	**Luis Velasco-Pufleau** (University of Fribourg) : Music, sound and sacred violence in the chronicles of the First crusade
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-11:40	**Sarah Kay** (New York University): Songs of war: Bertran de Born between music and noise
11:40-12:30	Final discussion