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Introduction

Sonic histories of occupation

Russell P. Skelchy and Jeremy E. Taylor

Situating sound, occupation and history

Histories of occupation have been marked by the presence of iconic sounds. Second World War occupations of Europe, for instance, were famously known for the shattering explosions of rocket launchers and air-raid attack sirens, along with the low rumbling of armoured vehicles and the distinct hum of dive bombers (cf. Meilinger 2016). Sound, felt and heard in a wartime context, has also been weaponized to disorient, unnerve or disable opponents. During the 1942 German siege of Stalingrad, Soviet troops kept German forces awake late at night by playing Argentine tangos through loudspeakers. US forces employed similar tactics in the 1960s during the Vietnam War by blasting popular music, insults and the sounds of tanks and tigers through loudspeakers. During the 1989 US invasion of Panama, US forces did the same with loud heavy metal music, and more recently, following the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, military vehicles were mounted with loudspeakers that hurled insults in Arabic at enemy forces (Niiler 2018). Innovations in the field of sonic warfare have grown more sophisticated, especially through the development of acoustic weapons, both audible and inaudible, specifically ultrasonic (above 20 kilohertz) or infrasonic (below 20 hertz). Mysterious ‘acoustic attacks’ in Cuba (2016), China (2017), Austria (2021), and Vietnam (2021), causing abnormal sensations of sound, pressure and illness among US diplomats and leaders, have created suspicion about the use of ultrasonic weapons (McLoughlin 2018).¹ Furthermore, acoustic weapons classified as ‘non-lethal’, such as the Long-Range Acoustic Device (LRAD), which produces high-pitched piercing tones to disorient or disable, have been used by US and other military forces as well as law enforcement agencies to control large crowds and demonstrations (Huecho Pozo 2019).

Besides sonic warfare, the domestication or control of sound in occupied geographic spaces historically has been integral to imperial projects. In colonial Virginia of the early 1700s, European settlers were normally frightened by sounds emanating from surrounding forests, namely the howling of wolves at night and the whoops and cries of Native American hunters (McGill 2018). Efforts to smooth over the wild sounds of this setting included the use of ‘instrumental sounds’, or human-generated non-speech sounds such as bells, guns and musical instruments by Europeans to produce an auditory environment more familiar and secure. Large, heavy bells, for example, installed on plantations to summon children and others for meals and lessons, also made the colony sound more like England. The bells could be heard for several miles and, in some cases, became sonic beacons for lost travellers. These ‘soundmarks’ differentiated European settler spaces from the surrounding ‘wilderness’ inhabited by Indigenous people and animals. In this sense, the auditory environments created by European colonists in North America, similar to the sounds of sonic warfare, drastically reconfigured the contested soundscapes they had encroached upon.

Listening to the sonic histories of occupation in each of these instances involves the reception of multiple aural layers sensorially experienced through the body. Roland Barthes (1991: 245) differentiates *hearing* as a physiological phenomenon from *listening*, which is a psychological act, defined less by its object than its goal. In this context, listening to occupation does not entail an arbitrary hearing, but rather, as Nicole Huang (2013: 190) suggests, the close listening of a ‘total soundscape’, where politically charged sound bites saturate auditory space and social life. If we believe, as Peter Szendy (2007) does, that listening is an imperative (one must listen to be a ‘conscious listener’), then intrinsically attached to the act of listening is a sense of responsibility and awareness. How does such awareness contribute to a listening of occupation? How do we listen to occupation? Or, more importantly, why *must* we listen to occupation? Such questions also suggest that the structures of occupation – and the sounds of it – require a built-in implicit (if not explicit) threat of physical violence and cultural destruction. How can a heightened attention to sound and auditory environments help to navigate the wider threat posed by occupation?

Sonic Histories of Occupation takes a transdisciplinary and comparative approach to addressing such questions. It brings together scholars from multiple disciplines, perspectives and geographic regions working at the nexus of sound, history and foreign occupation and/or colonialism. The book employs a comparative approach which places less emphasis on regional borders to explore unique cases of occupation in different geographic and temporal contexts.

Although the volume considers how these cases are unique, it also rethinks the existing nation-specific literature that shares the 'occupation' label. A significant number of fields, including legal studies, political science and history, have contributed definitions of the word 'occupation', namely in the context of (state) discourse on territory, legal frameworks and sovereignty (Gross 2017; Dinstein 2009; Stirk 2009; Hassan 2008; Gregory 2004). Although it is not necessarily the objective of this volume to add to this expanding list of definitions, it is worth noting that 'occupation' here is defined broadly to include words such as 'colonialism', 'imperialism', 'conflict' and 'war'. A wide definition is necessitated by the impossibility of establishing a catch-all definition of occupation that can provide a basis for a critical discussion about auditory expression under vastly different conditions bearing the label 'occupation'. As Jeremy E. Taylor (2021: 6–9) observes, debates about the meaning of 'occupation' should be encouraged without allowing such definitions to mark an end point of scholarly enquiry. This approach suspends the search for a single, all-encompassing definition while encouraging discussions around such definitions (a framework that is already used in cognate fields such as genocide studies).

It is also worth explicating how the words in this volume's title evoke themes and topics examined by its authors. Occupation has long been a locus of debate in scholarly and legal circles, generating a significant amount of academic literature. Much of this scholarship has addressed the ethical concerns of how occupation has been experienced by 'occupiers' and the 'occupied'. In popular culture, the circulation of sounds and images in mass media related to, for instance, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Indigenous dispossession or the actions of the global Occupy movement has all created distinct associations with the word's meanings.² The US military invasions of Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003) marked a trend towards what might be called 'occupation studies' (Taylor 2021). In sound studies, this same moment inspired an expanding subfield of literature describing and theorizing the sounds of war, some of which will be discussed later in this Introduction.

The term 'sonic histories' alludes to the ways that paying attention to sound and listening can inspire novel perspectives and 'storylines' of the past (Smith 2001). The word 'sonic' pertains to sound, or the physical vibrations that create audible waves of pressure that are transmitted through a medium and received and perceived by the body as sound. Sonic also alludes to movement and the perception of sound, namely in describing how fast sound moves through air. Think, for instance, of terms such as 'supersonic', 'subsonic' or 'ultrasonic' – all of which refer to the range of sound perceptible to the human ear.

Over the past thirty or more years, historians of sound have become increasingly interested in the types of knowledge produced by listening to the past. Mark M. Smith (2004: ix–x) has suggested that attempting to understand the aural dimensions of human experience is not necessarily a new endeavour, as scholars from classical antiquity through to the twentieth century considered aurality, listening and hearing. Historians of the *Annales* school, as well as other thinkers such as Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong, have all contributed significantly to ideas on the history of the senses and the history of aurality (Erlmann 2004). In the 1970s, the emergence of social history amplified an interest in aural history, as did developments in intellectual history and the history of seeing. As Smith (2004) observes, interest in the field of aural history, while not qualitatively new, extends a deep genealogy that has flourished due to changes in historical research and a growing awareness of auditory technologies in contemporary life. For instance, Karin Bijsterveld's (2008) study of mechanical and industrial sound, building on the work of historians of sound such as Alain Corbin (1998) and Hillel Schwartz (1998), emphasizes a 'thoroughly historical' perspective by exploring a sequence of 'public problems of noise' over time. Attention to the audible has encouraged historians (and others) to listen with greater acuity not only to music and musicology but also to the materiality of sound (Hui 2013) and to a greater diversity of auditory environments and mediums (Rice 2016; Birdsall 2013). Studies of the history of sound and of hearing have been part of a wider trend towards a history of the senses, or a brand of social history that emphasizes intersensoriality (Rotter 2019; Classen 2018; Howes and Classen 2014; Morat 2014; Smith 2007a, 2004; Jay 2011). In fields such as deaf studies, an academic and activist field primarily associated with the teaching of sign language, clean divisions of hearing and seeing, and between hearing and deafness, have been called into question (Friedner and Helmrich 2012: 73). Deaf studies has urged a fresh response to the sonocentrism of sound studies that considers the visual (and other senses) as spaces of communicative and interactive possibility – for instance, reimagining how sound in the register of low-frequency vibration can challenge deaf–hearing dichotomies (Friedner and Helmrich 2012: 74–5; Gumperz 1962). By exploring the sonic histories of occupation, this volume interrogates how imperial power has created literal and metaphorical vibrations that have been interpreted, contested and perpetuated through the political, auditory and sensorial regimes of occupation and colonialism.

The relationship between sound and memory also correlates to how occupation has been experienced across the globe. As Jacques Rancière (2004) observes in the context of urban space, the historic dimensions of space have been constituted

by a 'distribution of the sensible', where acoustic materializations, in the form of voices, acts of speech, sounds and music mark the collective imaginations of a space, comprised through a wider acoustic materiality he calls 'memoryscapes'. In this formulation, sound is not merely an object but the medium that structures remembrance. In some cases, the acoustic dimensions of a colonial or colonized past appear unmarked and may remain seemingly mute, even if these acoustic dimensions structure sonic memory and serve as the basis of remembrance (Kellerman 2019: 96). Conversely, actual physical silence may create a space of sonic memory by invoking, for instance, the repression and political silencing of a certain period (McCormack 2020: 12). As contributors to this volume suggest, sound and auditory environments are often weaved into memories of trauma, violence or liberation. Closely listening, in this sense, plays an integral role in reorienting how listeners choose to remember and tell stories about previous conflicts and negotiate their liberation in post-conflict sonic environments.

Although studies in sound (and music) have generally acknowledged the role of colonialism in shaping listening and performance practices, audition technologies and the science of audibility, few full-length studies have examined the role of sound in the imperial project globally. Although writers have discussed audibility and imperialism in diverse contexts and settings, such as war, jurisprudence, prison systems, noise reduction and urban spaces, a further examination of auditory environments beyond the scope of Europe and North America is needed. Part of the disconnect resides in orientation. Over the past decade, sound studies has emerged as a significant interdisciplinary field of inquiry in the humanities and social sciences, offering theoretical alternatives to visual studies of media and society that have innovatively 'unearthed repressed histories of sound and listening, while situating the ear as a major instrument in the production of social, cultural, and scientific knowledge' (Steingo and Sykes 2019).

In the early twenty-first century, the 'sonic turn' has produced useful ways to rethink the fundamental questions and assumptions of modernity, rationality, knowledge and experience. Important studies in technological modernity (Sterne 2003; Bijsterveld 2008), architectural acoustics (Thompson 2002), urban spaces (Bull 2000) and histories of aurality, listening, hearing and the body (Erlmann 2004, 2010; Szendy 2007; Schulze 2012) represent foundational works in the emerging field. Literature in the field of science and technology studies (STS) has also contributed to a focus on the materiality of sound as it is embedded not only in history and culture but also in technology and science, as well as its machines and ways of knowing and interacting (Groth and Schultz 2020: 420).

Some of these discussions are not entirely new to STS – for instance, historians of technology, such as Hans-Joachim Braun, have long advocated for the study of music and sound technology within the context of the history of technology (Pinch and Bijsterveld 2012: 10). The interweaving ideas and approaches of sound studies and STS have been particularly useful. As Pinch and Bijsterveld (2012: 103) suggest in the context of automobile technology, sound studies has been expedient in unravelling the early history of car sounds, their cultural meanings and the complexities of how these sounds are talked about, while STS has contributed robust theories on the testing and simulation of car sounds. These approaches together have clarified new sense-oriented ways of designing, testing and marketing cars. Although historians of science and technology and STS scholars have largely privileged the visual over the aural (and other senses), recent shifts in the STS field suggest further opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and exploration in the study of sound.

Nonetheless, an enduring critique of sound studies has been the lack of attention it has paid to research outside of North America and Western Europe. Writing in 2004, Veit Erlmann (2004: 4) observed, ‘The number of accounts detailing how the West’s sounds are cast back on it is still shockingly small. Even more striking is the absence from current debates of Third World scholars interested in auditory perception.’ Although a shift appears to be taking place as sound as an object of study gains traction among researchers globally, and as sound studies as a disciplinary configuration remaps itself, Erlmann’s comments remain pertinent. In this context, it is possible to surmise that one reason sound studies generally has not been attuned to the political conditions of occupation and imperialism is that few have conducted research in geographical regions where the experience of such oppressive conditions has been pervasive. Will simply shifting the focus of sound studies towards the so-called Global South change the fact the term itself has been formulated through colonialism and coloniality? (Chávez and Skelchy 2019). As Steingo and Sykes (2019) observe in *Remapping Sound Studies*, if the presumption that the South and sound lie at the heart of modernity, avoiding the reproduction of colonial logic may rest on approach and methodology rather than a simple remapping. A remapping implies more than reorienting the dominant ideas and narratives of a field focused on Europe and North America onto other world regions. Decentering Eurocentricism in the field requires that representations and knowledge of the world are situated both historically and geographically. In this regard, further efforts to decolonize the field of sound studies to address *who* produces knowledge on sound are as pertinent as how the field can be reoriented.

To a degree, these issues have been foregrounded in recent years as ethnomusicologists and anthropologists have become interested in sound studies, leading some to even question the privileging of ‘music’ as a cultural category based in relativism (Wong 2014). Since the 1950s, the field of ethnomusicology has maintained its commitment to a wide range of human musicality, especially of non-Western musical cultures, while attending somewhat to the traumas of colonialism. Although the discipline has been accused of appearing naïve at times to its own complicity in imperial projects, the work done by ethnomusicologists (and anthropologists) has resulted in shifts not only in geographic orientation but also in methodological approach to the study of sound. This is evident, for instance, in recent issues of journals (e.g. *Journal of Sonic Studies* and *Sound Studies*) and other publications where writers have examined auditory environments and practices in societies such as India, Turkey, Taiwan, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and the Caribbean (e.g. Basdurak 2020; Porath 2019; Lynch 2019; Hsieh 2019; Sykes 2018; Bronfman 2017; Cheung 2016; Östersjö and Nguyễn 2016). Researchers have focused primarily on the relationship of contested urban soundscapes to issues such as noise reduction, governmentality, spirituality and technology. Some of this literature consciously interrogates previously held theoretical ideas and approaches of sound studies by exploring how auditory environments outside of Europe and North America complicate (or disrupt) such ideas.³

Situating ideas on sound and occupation

Efforts to rethink and ‘remap’ sound studies are also evident in a growing body of literature exploring the relationship between sound and colonialism. In *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*, Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan (2016) present a selection of studies that encourage a rethinking of how music and sound are understood within the sensory realm of empire. Featuring a diversity of disciplinary perspectives, geographic and historical orientations, *Audible Empire* examines the power relations that underscore connections between the audible (in this case, music genres such as jazz, hip hop and Chinese musicals) and imperial institutions (schools, corporations, archives) and the listening practices they promoted (e.g. Western ideas of tonality as a universal and colonizing force). Although the volume focuses on music, it draws on a sound studies approach to address the concept of ‘music’ as it is articulated within a wider framework of sound and specifically how ‘music’ has been used to

impose order on a sonically chaotic world. Furthermore, the volume reassesses how the celebration of modern technologies of sound established in earlier work in sound and popular music studies failed to account for capitalism's role in the emergence of internet social media platforms and technologies such as MP3. By re-emphasizing the importance of the local and cultural, Radano and Olaniyan move away from the 'excessive tendencies' in post-Cold-War cultural studies of sound towards emphasizing the historicity of empire's audible conditions that have resonated into the present (2016: 4).

Similar historical concerns regarding sonic practices in a colonial context, namely singing, listening, speaking and the writing of these practices, are explored in Ana Maria Ochoa-Gautier's *Aurality: Listening and Knowledge in Nineteenth-Century Colombia* (2014). As another instance of critically reorienting sound studies beyond the Euro-American world, Ochoa-Gautier foregrounds how distinctions between voice and ear, human and non-human, European and non-European, and nature and culture were created through networks that she calls 'acoustic assemblages' (Ochoa-Gautier 2014: 22–3). By simultaneously listening, theorizing about hearing and producing new political relationships, acoustic assemblages reference a colonial ontology of relationships that provides ways to think about the interactions between entities that produce or hear sounds. Through examining, for instance, the ways that the ear and voice 'imbued the technology of writing' with traces of the acoustic, Ochoa-Gautier describes how personhood and citizenship were denied (or granted) to certain groups or individuals in colonial Latin America. Often, these distinctions were made based on how Europeans interpreted sounds made by local people (e.g. as either animal-like or human) and how Europeans imagined or listened to the voices of the colonized.

Such interactions form the basis of volumes such as *Empire of the Senses: Sensory Practices of Colonialism in Early America* (2017), edited by Daniela Hacke and Paul Musselwhite. This book explores how European appropriations of the foreign were based on a sensory perception that shaped cultural encounters and European perceptions of distant environments. These perceptions, as Hacke and Musselwhite suggest, were observed, explained and reported via the senses. Focusing on sensory perception as a form of bodily practice (i.e. practices and modes as ways of understanding the world), the volume draws on the field of sensory history to explore how the historicity of the senses lies in the conceptualization and normative arrangement of the senses and their bodily affective experience.⁴ Foregrounding the interdependency and interconnectedness of the senses in perceiving the world also demonstrates

how Europeans, Indigenous peoples and enslaved Africans in the Americas constructed 'sensescales' in the process of defining relationships with each other. By exploring how these sensescales were consciously structured through the imperial project in the Americas, the collection explores how the creation and contestation of sensescales as imperial devices were asserted through European institutions that defined intercultural sensory encounters between Europeans and non-Europeans (Hacke and Musselwhite 2017: 12).

As Carolyn Birdsall describes in the case of Nazi Germany, the struggle for public and social space involved not only the threat of physical violence but also multiple 'corporeal and acoustic strategies for achieving sensory appeal' (Birdsall 2012: 32). Creating 'resonance' within urban and rural acoustic settings suggests how the concept of 'resonance' spans from resonant systems of specific body parts (such as vibrations in the ear or vocal canal) and extends towards a wider notion of acoustic power (Augoyard and Torgue 2005: 108). The reverberance of sounds has historically been symbolic of sound as a source of potential power, used to mediate acoustic presence across distances. In the context of empire, the systematic weaponization of sound – for instance, the use of ammunition, heavy military vehicles, bells, loudspeakers and popular music – has made sound integral to the project of resonating imperial power.

The aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States and the subsequent US invasion of Iraq in 2003 marked a significant watershed in the study of the sound of conflict and occupation. These and other events provided a context for writers to interrogate the violent effects of auditory production in the global context of conflict and militarism. Earlier volumes to address the relationship between music and violence include Svanibor Pettan's *Music, Politics and War: Views from Croatia in the 1990s* (1999), which situates music in a wider field of sonic practices while documenting local perspectives on the crucial role of music in arduous periods of war. Another example is John O'Connell and Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco's *Music and Conflict* (2010), which uses musicological and ethnographic analysis to focus on the role of music in social and political conflicts by examining how the practices and materials of music-making can promote and resolve conflict. Other examples include Jonathan Pieslak's *Sound Targets: American Soldiers and Music in the Iraq War* (2009), which describes the role of music in the everyday life of US military personnel, while key articles on the listening practices of US soldiers (Gilman 2010), the use of sound in interrogation and torture techniques (Cusick 2006, 2008), and the political economy of military experimentation with sonic booms as a form

of state power in the Cold War (Suisman 2015) illustrate how the weaponization of sound has impacted people's bodies in the context of war.

Other notable publications explore the relationship between war and auditory experience as part of a historical setting – for instance, Carolyn Birdsall's *Nazi Soundscapes: Sound, Technology and Urban Space in Germany, 1933–1945* (2012) and David McDonald's *My Voice Is My Weapon: Music, Nationalism, and the Poetics of Palestinian Resistance* (2013). Birdsall's book examines how the Nazi regime used mediated sound and cultural phenomena (e.g. radio, voice, music) to transform acoustic environments, listening experience and urban space under wartime (and interwar) conditions. More specifically, Birdsall interrogates the role of sound, especially through radio, in constructing the 'people's community' (*Volksgemeinschaft*) as well as how the war decisively altered the city of Dusseldorf's auditory environment. By exploring public spaces and the implementation of surveillance and control through sirens, loudspeakers and special announcements, Birdsall studies how sound was used to encourage residents to self-monitor. McDonald uses popular song to explore the relationship between Palestinian nationalism, protest song and the ongoing 'Palestinian crisis' to provide an 'ethnohistorical' account of occupation and the significant events, musical styles and key artists active during his fieldwork. Employing a sociopolitical approach to examine the performativity of resistance, McDonald emphasizes how Palestinian cultural production has taken on dynamic approaches towards resistance, often utilizing and reshaping established discourses on national loss.

In sound studies, two landmark publications, namely Steve Goodman's *Sonic Warfare: Sound, Effect and the Ecology of War* (2010) and *Listening to War: Sound, Music, Trauma, and Survival in Wartime Iraq* (2015) by Martin Daughtry, explore the sonic dimensions of modern warfare, often overlooked in the experiences and representations presented through visual media. Both books share a transdisciplinary approach to theorizing the sonic experience of war and its affective dimensions of sound. As Daughtry (2015: 6) explains, *Listening to War* provides an ethnographic grounding to Goodman's broad ontological foundations by focusing on precise details and compelling stories. Furthermore, Daughtry describes how the 'belliphonic', a word he coins combining the Latin and Greek words for war and voice, respectively, represents the sonic dimension of the US military's 'Operation Iraqi Freedom' expressed through the layered sounds of weaponry, vehicles and voices. Importantly, Daughtry's rich and emotive accounts of war intertwine the perspectives of both Iraqi civilians and US soldiers in combat zones (and other spaces) to provide chilling immediacy to his theorization and sonic evidence. Goodman's focus is on how

sound, specifically vibrational force within certain environments, contributes to an immersive atmosphere or ambience of fear and dread. Using the idea of the 'politics of frequency', *Sonic Warfare* foregrounds the relationship between vibration, power and war by analysing a diverse range of sounds including military sound bombs, the global clubbing industry and seemingly innocuous yet intrusive musical technologies such as Muzak.

The allusion to military occupations as not only noisy (in actual combat zones) but also musical has been studied in the context of 'musical militarism', a term associated with diverse implications including religious indoctrination, the introduction of instruments (e.g. brass), the reorientation of instrumental practices, musical pedagogy, the manipulation of aesthetics and musical style, European ideas of tonality and listening practices (Baker 2008; Irving 2010; Dolan 2013; Agawu 2016). Audible legacies of imperialism generally became absorbed aesthetically in taste preferences of the listening public and in the circulation of Euro-American popular music (and culture) across the globe (Radano and Olaniyan 2016: 5–6).

Without explicitly focusing on sound's relationship to war and colonialism, Jennifer Lynn Stoever's book *The Sonic Color Line: Race and the Cultural Politics of Listening* (2016) also examines how sensibilities, tastes and sensitivities are implicit in the control over a racialized soundscape. More specifically, Stoever explores how listening has operated as an organ of racial discernment, categorization and resistance in the United States. In the pre-Civil-War era, essentialist ideas about Black sounds and listening practices provided white elites with new methods to ground racial abjection in the body while cultivating white listening practices as critical, delicate and, more significantly, the standard of citizenship and personhood. Sound, in this formulation, functioned politically as a set of social relations and a medium for racial discourse. Through what Stoever (2016) calls the 'sonic colour line' – the process of racializing sound or how and why certain bodies in the United States are expected to produce, desire and live among particular types of sound – hierarchical divisions between 'blackness' and 'whiteness' are created. The codification of sound with racialized bodies, such as music and everyday ambient sounds, established 'noise' as sound's unruly 'Other'. Since the 1980s, for instance, the sound of hip-hop music pumped at a high volume through car speakers became a stand-in for the bodies of young Black men in US culture. As Stoever (2016: 12–13) argues, the labelling of such sounds as noise is not merely about measuring loudness in decibels but rather rendering as Other certain sounds (and the bodies that produce and consume them). Although Stoever's 'sonic colour line' does not reference occupation per se, it is not hard to situate it conceptually and historically within ideas of

US and European colonial hierarchies of ethnicity and sound. The ‘sonic colour line’, as a heuristic, encourages further questions about how dominant listening practices accrue and change over time while continuing to exert pressure to conform to the norms of the ‘sonic colour line’. Through surveillance, discipline and interpretation, certain associations between sound and ethnicity become normalized and naturalized through dominant culture.

Situating Sonic Histories of Occupation

The issues raised in the critical literature on sound mentioned previously drive the methodologies and discussions explored in this volume. Besides adding to existing research in sound and music studies in a non-European/North American context, the case studies presented here examine how colonization and occupation have been experienced sensorially through specific ‘auditory regimes’ (Daughtry 2015; Morat 2014). The questions raised here urge readers to rethink ocularcentric histories of occupation or, as Radano and Olaniyan (2016: 2) suggest, how Western imperial orders and their political democracies have ‘been matters of the ear’. This book contributes to an understanding of not only why sound is integral to the study of occupation and colonialism but also how sound has been deployed in efforts to control, negotiate and resist in disparate geographical, political and affective spaces.

The volume addresses a number of core questions, including:

- (1) How is sound implicated in controlling and disciplining colonized or ‘occupied’ peoples and aural spaces?
- (2) How do listeners under conditions of occupation form new types of auditory or vocal expression?
- (3) How do sound and memory overlap in histories of occupation, conflict and trauma?
- (4) How can the study of the sonic histories of occupation and colonialism contribute to the development of new research methodologies in sound studies and history?
- (5) How does occupation give rise to distinctive auditory environments and music cultures?

In responding to these questions, the book is organized into three parts: ‘Voice and occupation’, ‘Memory, sound and occupation’ and ‘Auditory responses to occupation and colonialism’. Each of these thematic parts represents compelling

ways of examining the auditory experiences of those living through foreign occupation, imperialism or conflict, and each responds to at least one of the aforementioned core questions.

Part I, 'Voice and occupation', explores how the human voice has been discursively created and used to navigate conditions of occupation. For example, in Chapter 1 – 'The vocal apparatus' colonial contexts: France's *mission civilisatrice* and (settler) colonialism in Algeria and North America' – Iris Blake explains how the 'vocal apparatus', beginning in the late nineteenth century, was used discursively to describe how human bodily organs produced speech and sound. Blake suggests that the discursive formation of the vocal apparatus in medical, scientific and pedagogical literature was intended to not only consolidate its meaning but also align it with contemporary ideas about modernity, racial capitalism and colonialism. Indeed, she shows how scholarly advances in the study of the vocal apparatus were linked directly to the French colonial project in North Africa. Blake's chapter 'de-universalizes this Western conception of voicing [i.e., the vocal apparatus]', demonstrating how its 'historical and cultural construction' are 'inseparable from histories of colonial occupation'. She also introduces the notion of 'voice-as-territory', demonstrating not just how the vocal apparatus could be 'subjected to colonial spatial ideologies and disciplining projects' but also how it was linked directly to settler colonialism in the North American context. In doing so, Blake's chapter demonstrates how sound and the physical occupation of colonial territory are intertwined in discursive and physical ways.

In Chapter 2, 'The hush arbour as sanctuary: African American survival silence during British/American slavery', Maya Cunningham explains how 'in African American life during slavery, sound and silence . . . were closely related', with her chapter covering two seemingly opposite yet closely related 'sounds of occupation': 'coded speech by day, and secret meetings in hushed tones by night'. Drawing on accounts found in the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Slave Narratives, numerous published memoirs and anthropological work, Cunningham shows how enslaved African Americans on cash crop plantations in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century North America resisted enslavement through the performance of secret 'code songs', often within a religious context, that could be used to communicate clandestine messages to listeners while also representing a way in which to assert agency. At the same time, 'hush arbours' – spaces in which 'enslaved Blacks could speak, sing, pray and preach freely' but in hushed tones – represented a quite different form of sonic resistance. Be it in literal 'hush arbours' within wooded areas where trees muffled the sound of

singing or worship, or in the use of objects (such as pots) that aided in muffling sounds of prayer or song, Cunningham shows not only that the deliberate practice of ‘hushing’ sonic expression enabled African Americans to create both physical and figurative spaces for sonic expression under slavery but also that such practices had legacies that stretched well beyond abolition.

In Chapter 3 – ‘Music and sound in Weihsien Internment Camp in Japanese-occupied China’ – Sophia Geng also touches on the use of ‘coded songs’, though in a very different context – internment camps for civilian Allied prisoners in Japanese-occupied China. Drawing from first-hand accounts of life in the largest of these camps, Geng describes how particular songs, especially those from a liturgical or Christian tradition, were used by internees to defy Japanese control. In addition, however, Geng argues that musical creativity in this wartime setting forged a sense of community among internees, and in some cases, helped them to survive a shared experience of trauma. Geng also details other examples of sonic transgression by inmates, from clandestine radio listening to more overt acts of resistance – the ringing of bells by inmates to celebrate the surrender of Nazi Germany in 1945, for instance.

Part II of this volume, ‘Memory, sound and occupation’, considers the role of sound in reconciling communities to shared histories of conflict and/or colonialism using methodologies that engage with Indigenous knowledge systems, ethnography and community-based research. Chapter 4, ‘Occupying new sound worlds: Debordering sonic imaginaries in StoryMaps’, demonstrates how new research methodologies in sound studies might be used to overcome the traumatic memories of sectarian violence and ‘the Troubles’ in Northern Ireland. In this chapter, Fiona Magowan, Jim Donaghey and Annette McNelis reflect on the ways in which sounds project and ameliorate community experiences, memories and narratives of conflict – but also reconciliation. The chapter focuses on the city of Derry/Londonderry in Northern Ireland as a case study to explore the different conflict/post-conflict settings of resistance and reconciliation, as well as the research potential of the StoryMap platform. In articulating the sonic memories and listening practices of Annette McNelis, a local musician, the chapter explores Annette’s border crossing, analysed through her own StoryMap, to critically examine how the complexities emerging from border studies and human geography inform a theoretical shift from decolonization to ‘debordering’.

In Chapter 5, ‘Loud town, quiet base: Olongapo City, Subic Bay and the US Navy, 1950–70’, Kevin Sliwoski recounts the sonic environments of the American naval base at Subic Bay in the Philippines and the adjacent Olongapo City, which

grew to meet the needs of the base's 40,000 year-round residents in the period after the Second World War. Sliwoski explores how a wide range of sounds from war-fighting drills and air strips to nightclubs and cover bands became auditory signatures in that era of an ongoing US occupying presence that shaped the relationships between Filipinos and Americans in the immediate area. The chapter details the disparities between memories and records that depicted Olongapo City as dirty and noisy compared to the quiet and clean naval base at Subic Bay. Representations of sound, silence and volume, according to Sliwoski, were constructed along racial and gendered legacies of US colonialism in the Philippines later inherited by US service members and civilians alike. Referencing the literature on foreign occupation and US military bases – a growing body of research which explores military bases as a new form of occupation (e.g. Lutz 2009) – the chapter also explores how the US Navy exerted strict control over the sonic environment of the Subic Bay region through sound regulations and military life outside the confines of the base.

In Chapter 6, 'Registering sonic histories in a multiply occupied place: Sound and survivance in Mangota'ay Taiwan', DJ Hatfield explores how Indigenous Cepo' Pangcah communities in Taiwan register histories of occupation by various forces through the invocation of the sound of features of the natural environment, expressing and asserting their relationship to land (and sea) under settler occupation. As Hatfield observes, the intent of Pangcah sonic practices is revealed only through a close and informed listening of specific sounds that evoke massacres, oppression and other trauma. Cepo' Pangcah communities have survived the arrival of European merchants, navies and priests, Chinese settler colonists, the Japanese empire and, more recently, the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Through the registration of colonized histories expressed through sonic practice, the chapter shifts the question of 'what occupation sounds like' to explore how Indigenous people themselves record and inflect occupation in sound.

Part III, entitled 'Auditory responses to occupation and colonialism', articulates how the circulation of sounds through media, art, music and technology under colonialism and foreign occupation has created new identities and aural spaces. In Chapter 7, 'The sonic occupation of Central Asia: Sound culture and the railway in Chingiz Aitmatov's *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*', Dimitri Smirnov explores changes to the auditory environment of Central Asia brought about by the introduction of railway systems in the era of Russian colonialism as it is expressed in the literature of the Kyrgyz author Chingiz Aitmatov. As a way of consolidating its territorial

possessions, the Russian Empire (and, later, the Soviet Union) pursued a practice of 'railway imperialism' – a development which meant changes not only to the landscape but also to the soundscapes of Central Asia. Smirnov's chapter recounts specific sounds and responses to sound in Chingiz Aitmatov's 1980 novel *The Day Lasts More Than a Hundred Years*, specifically referencing sounds from trains and railway stations to contextualize the novel's auditory dimension as part of a wider imperial heritage of the Soviet regime. As Smirnov observes, through the deafening roar of the trains and loud sounds emanating from the surrounding railway infrastructure (such as loudspeakers which were used for announcements and for playing music) the railway literally sounded the Russian occupation of Central Asia.

In Chapter 8, 'Auditory and spatial regimes of US colonial rule in Baguio, Philippines', Russell P. Skelchy explores how the creation of the hill station of Baguio was achieved both spatially and sonically through the work of US urban designers such as Daniel H. Burnham. In the early twentieth century, Burnham's plans for Baguio (and Manila) inspired a model of auditory and spatial planning that colonial administrators hoped to replicate across the archipelago. In this context, the chapter examines how the design and control of Baguio's auditory environment were part of a wider process to transforming the rural military outpost into a comfortable resort city for American expatriates, members of the Filipino elite and others to escape the noise, heat, disease and insurgency of Manila and the lowland areas. Furthermore, Skelchy explores Baguio as an 'auditory contact zone' where sound configured and framed the interactive dimensions of the imperial encounter between Filipinos and US expatriates. The re-engineering of urban spaces under the US colonial administration was integral in establishing sound as a material symbol of imperial power.

In Chapter 9, 'Soundscapes of diversity in the port cities of British Malaya: Cultural convergences and contestations in the early twentieth century', Tan Sooi Beng examines how the soundscapes of colonial port cities such as Penang and Singapore were articulated musically through Malay social dance and theatre forms such as *ronggeng* and *dondang sayang*. Tan argues that the diverse cultures of such port cities created new multiethnic identities that simultaneously engaged with global circulations of popular music genres and which featured texts promoting specific ideas of 'progress'. Listening beyond the cultural boundaries of the nation state, the chapter explores the permeability of borders in the colonial period and the ways that local musicians and communities defined a sense of place while interacting with structures of colonial power.

Sonic Histories of Occupation engages in a dialogue with other recent volumes published on sound and imperialism (e.g. Radano and Olaniyan 2016), engaging also with the recent literature foregrounding sound studies' Eurocentric epistemological and ontological history, however. This book seeks to widen such debates by addressing specific questions about the relationship between sound and occupation beyond Europe. This volume points to the ways that the study of occupation can contribute to a novel understanding of its legacies in different auditory environments across the world – from colonial North Africa to Soviet-controlled Central Asia and US bases in the Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, the volume elicits greater nuance and perspective as to how listeners living under occupation (in various forms) have responded to auditory environments to create new forms of auditory expression. Finally, the volume reveals how comparative studies across geographical and temporal contexts can contribute to a better understanding of occupation and its multidirectional arrangements of power. Indeed, many of the chapters in this volume have sought to engage with the ways in which their own case studies respond to recent debates about the very definition of 'occupation'.

While the topics presented here are far from all-encompassing, the volume works towards a reorientation of sound studies through new ideas and geographic spaces. As the trend towards the 'remapping' or decolonizing of sound studies gains traction, *Sonic Histories of Occupation* features case studies from Asia, North Africa, North America and Europe by writers of diverse disciplinary, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Undoubtedly, there are silences in this volume, especially related to sound in the context of well-known territorial occupations – Iraq, Afghanistan, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and various other well-documented cases of 'occupation' are not addressed in chapter form in this volume – or in addressing colonization in the context of gender, bodies and sexuality or constructions of civilization and migration/immigration. The editors nonetheless hope that the questions raised by this volume will help to widen the debate on both sound studies and the study of occupation. In this regard, *Sonic Histories of Occupation* encourages further collaborative explorations into the relationship between sound and occupation using a transdisciplinary and comparative approach.

Notes

- 1 'Kamala Harris trip delayed over possible "Havana syndrome" case,' BBC News, 25 August 2021. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-58322593>.

- 2 A shift in the use of the word 'occupation', which once belonged primarily to the military sphere, has now entered mainstream political discourse, especially since the Occupy movement started in 2011 (Rancière 2012). The words 'occupy' and 'occupied space' in this particular context referred to assembly (the material configuration of space or symbolic configuration of a community), horizontality (an anti-hierarchical subversion) and consensus decision-making in mass assemblies (Graeber 2011; Schneider 2013; Kinna 2020), anarchist ideas that defined the movement and its reconfiguration of public space. The word 'occupy' has taken on specific political meanings in settler-colonial societies where the word is associated with Indigenous sovereignty and dispossession (Kauanui 2016). For instance, during Occupy Wall Street, Indigenous activists and critics challenged the use of the term 'occupy' in relation to actual settler-colonial occupation. In this case, Indigenous dispossession was the precondition for the construction of Wall Street, a metonym for the US finance industry, where a wall was built to keep the Lenape people out of their homeland in an area now known as lower Manhattan (Barker 2011).
- 3 Sykes (2018) and Hsieh (2019), for instance, both argue against the idea of a 'singular, omnipresent' or 'holistic' understanding of the word 'soundscape'. Instead, both scholars argue for a soundscape that is moving, contested, relational and mutually constitutive. Although this shift does not necessarily derive from their case studies in Singapore and Taiwan respectively, it does suggest ways that research on non-Western auditory environments may inspire a rethinking of commonly understood terms in sound studies.
- 4 The field of sensory history also has contributed to the study of sound, occupation and imperialism, often in a European and North American context (e.g. Smith 2004, 2007b; Denney 2011; Morat 2014).

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