Musics of Struggle

Anthony Seeger

Introduction

If music were not a powerful resource in social and political struggles it would not be so widely censored, controlled, and surrounded with restrictions. All around the world music creates loyalties and galvanizes opposition so well that music itself sometimes becomes an object of struggle, rather than an expression of broader issues. Americans with long memories will recall the politically motivated artist blacklisting in the 1950s, the moral furor over the Rolling Stones in the 1960s, and many other so-called "crises" that prefigured today's uneasiness about rap and heavy metal. As I write, several states are debating record labeling statutes, *Newsweek* presents a cover story on rap music (March 19, 1990 with letters in subsequent issues), and Gary Trudeau's comic strip "Doonesbury" caricatures the generational, exclusionary, aspects of American popular music (*The Washington Post*, March 5-10, 1990). At the same time, song and dance accompany liberation movements in South Africa, the Baltic, and the Middle East; union halls swell with song, and musical groups in Latin America promote local community development.

"Other people" aren't the only ones who use music in their struggles. Did you ever make up a song about one of your teachers, a girlfriend or boyfriend, your boss, or try "rapping" about something that bothered you? Did you ever remain stubbornly silent when everyone else was singing something you didn't agree with? Maybe you recall singing (or *not* singing) "We Shall Overcome" as you marched in Washington, "I Ain't Gonna Study War No More" in the antiwar movement, or some other song that expressed political positions you held. Whether you joined with thousands of others in public or sang alone in the shower, you probably have some experience with the subject of this summer's music program, "Musics of Struggle."

Performers at the 1990 Festival of American Folklife will present some of the music they have used in their struggles, and you will have an opportunity to contribute your own songs of struggle to the archives of the Smithsonian Institution's Office of Folklife Programs by singing them to collectors at the Festival. This short essay outlines some general features of music in social struggles. By no means complete, readers can supplement it with examples from their own experience and with the books and records cited in the bibliography.[1]

How Is Music Meaningful?

Music consists of structured sounds, including pitches that are combined to form melodies, beats that are combined to form rhythms, and sound textures that are combined to form what musicians call timbres. Repetitive patterns are central to all music, and the patterns are given meanings by performers and their audiences, by fans as well as detractors. The patterns of each musical feature may convey meaning, and each can be varied to change or comment on its usual associations. Thus some people may associate a certain melody — a national anthem for example — with national pride and citizenship; but to others the melody may mean political oppression and exclusionary laws. Playing the melody to a different rhythm, at a different speed, or with unusual orchestration can mock or accentuate the sentiments usually associated with it.

Certain rhythms can be significant in themselves. The steady beat of a march may recall parades, wars, or sports events. A "disco" beat may inspire dancing while other rhythms may recall national, regional, or ethnic traditions. Sometimes rhythms can be quite specific. In Afro-Brazilian religious drumming, certain rhythms are associated with specific deities.

While Western musicology has rarely focused on sound qualities, these can have associations of their

The Musics of Struggle Program has been made possible, in part, by the Music Performance Trust Funds, the Inter-American Foundation and the Arab American Cultural Foundation.

[1]Most of the literature on music of struggle deals with specific traditions. Very few general observations appear to have been made about the relation of music to struggle outside of particular historical circumstances (but see Denselow 1989). This essay is an initial attempt at such an approach. Readers are invited to send their suggestions and comments to the author at the Office of Folklife Programs.

own. The same melody and rhythm performed on a brass band will have a different effect on the audience from a performance on violins or piccolos. Certain instrumental or vocal timbres become associated with class, regional, national, or even international traditions. The unique sound quality of Andean Indian instruments has itself become an emblem of an emerging ethnic and regional identity, quite apart from the melodies and rhythms performed on them. Sound qualities are directly associated with types of instruments (even in this age of the synthesizer), and certain sounds may be associated with the regional origin or social history of the instruments themselves. Swiss horns, Norwegian hardingfiddles, American banjos, Caribbean steel drums, Scottish bagpipes, African royal drums, and many other instruments have associations with a region, a way of life, and often with a type of music. Just a little bit of their sound carries with it many other associations.

Music is structurally repetitive. Sometimes the repetitions themselves are significant. They may even embody a cosmology, where a pattern is repeated for each of the cardinal directions, each of the major deities, or some other consecrated number.

As long ago as 1779 the French writer/philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau noted that the "meaning" of music does not reside in its physical sounds so much as in their interpretation. His famous description of how a certain song could make Swiss army troops burst into tears, desert, or even die, makes this important general point about music:

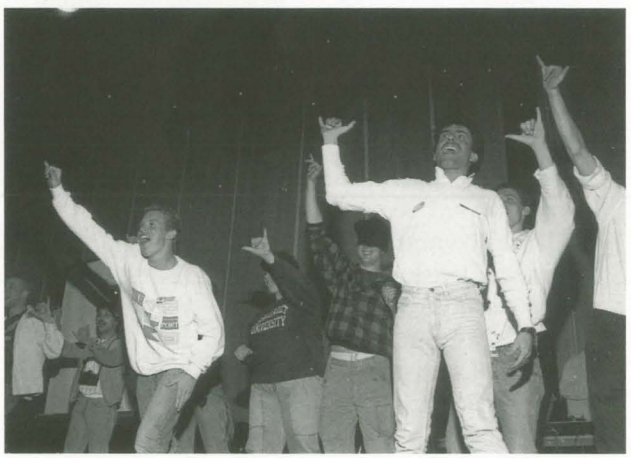
> We shall seek in vain to find in this air any energetic accents capable of producing such astonishing effects. *These effects, which are void in regard to strangers, come alone from custom, reflection, and a thousand circumstances,* which retrac'd by those who hear them, and recalling the idea of their country, their former pleasures, their youth, and all the joys of their life, excite in them a bitter sorrow for the loss of them. *The music does not in this case act precisely as music [physical sound], but as a memorative sign... It is not in their physical action we should seek for the great effects of sounds on the human heart.* (Rousseau 1975 [1779]:267, emphasis mine)

The "thousand circumstances" that give meaning to melodies, rhythms, and timbres are specific and historical. Since each aspect of music (melody, rhythm, timbre, repetitiveness) can be varied independently to comment on or modify the significance of the other aspects, music can be a complex system of signs capable of being used even without words in struggles.

Song is the combination of music and language. The addition of words to music adds rhetorical power and semantic complexity to the already subtle messages sent and interpreted through instrumental music. Most song texts are poetry, constructed within constraints of meter, sometimes rhyme, and sometimes the pitches of a tonal language. Song texts can convey information in many different ways and can be altered to suit the occasion even more easily than musical features. In comparison with speech, most song texts are relatively fixed, and their association with particular melodies can serve both memory and irony.

Songs permit the creation of complex relationships between the music and the text. Sometimes the music will be used to express one message and the text to express another altogether. A songwriter can take a popular melody and write new words to it that may even contradict the original song. Joe Hill, a labor songwriter for the I.W.W., took the melody from a hymn "In the Sweet Bye and Bye" and parodied its religious rhetoric with the words "You'll get pie in the sky, bye and bye." He also used the melody from a song about a prostitute and wrote words to it about a woman labor organizer; and took the melody of a popular love song and put words to it about a prostitute. The "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Solidarity Forever" use the same melody to express different ideas. The combination of a well-known melody with new words can be an important resource in the musics of struggle.

Music does not only convey messages. Performing music can increase feelings of community and solidarity. One way to turn a crowd into a community is to get people to sing, chant, or gesture together (the last being effectively used in the Gallaudet "Deaf President Now" protests in 1988 represented at this year's Festival). There are many participatory singing traditions in the United States, among them civic, religious, and popular songs. People will often join in when they know the music, and this is another reason many songwriters have taken old melodies and put new words to them.



Jeff Bravin and John Maucere lead the chant for a "deaf president forever" before a supportive crowd. (Photo by Jeff Beatty, courtesy Gallaudet University Press)

Although we may consider union songs or modified spirituals as seen in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement to be "typical" protest songs, no single musical form or song

cont. page 59

Songs and Stories of Struggle: Music and Verse As Ethical Discourse

Jacquelin C. Peters

The Pittston Coal Strike

The Greenwich, Connecticut headquarters of the Pittston Company is far from the southwest Virginia coal miners it employs both in miles and in attitude, from the point of view of organized labor. Citing a need to revamp Pittston's financial structure in the late 1980s, management decided to reduce costs by cutting a number of miners' benefits, including lifetime health care pensions. Since coal miners enter the occupation recognizing its high risk of black lung disease and other mine related ailments, health care benefits have been part of labor contracts for decades. Pittston also wanted mandatory overtime, increased numbers of non-union workers and sub-contracting to non-union companies. Fourteen months into negotiations, members of the United Mine Workers of America voted to strike; it began on April 4, 1989.

Striking coal miners use music as a morale booster on the picket line. (Photo by Richard Barbero, courtesy United Mine Workers of America)

A musical dimension of this struggle emerged in the newly composed lyrics sung to traditional gospel and bluegrass music. Mrs. Edna Sauls of the Daughters of Mother Jones emerged as an inspired lyricist, and the Rabbit Ridge Pea Pickers became well-known musical morale boosters. One lyric written in response to repeated encounters with Virginia state troopers and addressed to former Governor Baliles said:

Going to Richmond,
And when I go,
Tell that old Virginia boy
We ain't gonna haul no coal.

During the Christmas season, traditional carols were given a new slant with words that expressed the determination of the miners to stand firm.

Hazel Dickens of Mercer County, West Virginia, whose musical talents were featured in the Academy Award winning film "Harlan County, U.S.A." and in "Matewan," has sung what she calls "southern mountain music" for most of her life. Her father mined for a living and made music for enjoyment in addition to working as a Baptist minister. His eleven children grew up singing and playing instruments. Ms. Dickens' home community experienced lay-offs and strikes, and she lost her oldest brother and two brothers-in-law to black lung disease. Her songs on social issues and coal mining — including one she wrote on black lung — embody the experience and aesthetics of a vital, regional music tradition, interpreted through her own individual perspective and remarkable talent.

Ms. Dickens notes how similar the mine wars of the 1920s were to the Pittston strike. Then as now, "gun thugs" were used to try to intimidate the strik-

ers. Ms. Dickens observed that the Pittston strikers, like their predecessors 60 years ago, were "extremely spirited" in their resolve to fight. "It was great to see," said Ms. Dickens, who has given several performances to benefit the Pittston miners.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Camo Carols. 1989. Adapted by Julie McCall for the Labor Heritage Foundation. Madison, WI: Lakeside Press.

Dentzer, Susan. 1990. A healthy settlement for mine workers: Pittston strikers won big, but the fight over retiree benefits has just begun. *U.S. News & World Report.* January 15:45.

Fowke, Edith and Joe Glazer. 1973. *Songs of Work and Protest.* New York: Dover Publications.

Korson, George. 1964. *Minstrels of the Mine Patch: Songs and Stories of the Anthracite Industry.* Hathoro, PA: Folklore Associates, Inc.

Pittston Coal Miners. 1989. *Highlander Reports.* Fall:2-3.

Pittston Miners' Strike a Clash of Principles and Personalities. 1989. *Chicago Tribune.* Nov. 26: section 1, p. 11.

Thompson, Charlie D. 1989. The Pittston Strike. *Southern Changes.* 11(6):1, 3-6.

SUGGESTED LISTENING

Dickens, Hazel. *A Few Old Memories.* Rounder Records 11529.

_____. *Its Hard to Tell the Singer From the Song.* Rounder Records 0226.

_____. *Come All You Coal Miners.* Rounder Records 4005.

_____. *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard Hit People.* Rounder Records 0126.

Glazer, Joe. *Down in a Coal Mine.* Collector Records 1923.

_____. *The UAW: Fifty Years in Song & Story.* Collector Records 1940.

cont. from page 57

style can be isolated as "the music of struggle." Almost any kind of music can be used as a sign of struggle, depending on the meanings given to the performances by participants and their opponents. An instrumental arrangement can be as forceful as a lyric; a rhythm can be as expressive as a phrase. Sometimes an unchanged old folk song is as potent as a new composition. The meaning of a musical performance depends to a large extent on the specific context in which it occurs — the "thousand circumstances" referred to by Rousseau and rarely understood fully except after considerable investigation.

WHY USE MUSIC IN STRUGGLES?

Why do people involved in struggles make music at all? Wouldn't it be more effective to work silently and resolutely to change an unsatisfactory situation rather than sing songs about it? Although it has been argued "the pen is mightier than the sword," what would happen if everyone put down their pens, stopped making music, and took up swords? What indeed! They might all swing their swords in different directions, at different times, and at different foes. Among other things, music can focus attention, mobilize emotions, and coordinate activities.

To mobilize people toward a goal, you need to make the issues clear, you need to get people to agree with them, and you need to incite them to act. Music can accomplish these quite effectively. Songs can help bring certain issues into focus and specify an approach to them. Song words can be standardized and passed on without requiring that people read, write, or possess incriminating evidence. Music can focus attention on injustices, create feelings of solidarity, advocate a certain cause, encourage supporters, and frighten opponents. It can create links between the present and the past while helping to create a new and different future.

Music is not unique in its ability to act symbolically in struggle. Although language, dialect, speeches, written documents, dancing, theater, dress, and even food can all mobilize groups, music has several attributes that make it particularly suitable for mobilizing people. Songs often can be performed while doing something else (like working or marching); they don't necessarily require physical objects (props, stoves, plates, etc.), they can be changed quickly, and they can be sufficiently abstract to unify a wide range of support and confuse the opposition.

Although music is widely used in struggles, it is not found everywhere. Protest is sometimes expressed through silence or another expressive mode. Where most public forms of music are dominated by a central state, opposition to the state may take non-musical forms. Where individual opinions are not culturally sanctioned, new songs may not be composed. Where music is considered to be a low status form of activity, performers of higher status may choose other modes of expression. Opposition may be expressed by refusing to participate (silence) or refusing to attend performances (boycotting) rather than through music itself. Silence is probably a fairly common protest in societies where everyone is expected to participate, and where

all music is ritual and cannot be altered to convey particular messages. Boycotting performances (and attending other performances) is probably common in societies where attending an event is considered to indicate group membership or common cause with the organizers and performers.

Yet in societies with a fair degree of individualism, where musical composition and performances are considered to be voluntary acts, the use of music in struggles seems likely to appear.

Protest music especially written for a certain struggle can take a number of different approaches. They may simply state "we are here, and we endure." They may emphasize the common identity of group feeling or relate information and spread recent news (like aural newspapers) or recall past events that exemplify the struggle (like stories of massacres or victories), or commemorate movement heroes and even other songwriters. They may refer to ethical values and evoke emotions by describing a tense situation with humor or irony (often present in topical songs), or by making fun of powerful opponents — supervisors, teachers, politicians, a church. By commemorating the past and singing about heroes, songs can relate a local struggle to a larger social movement, endowing local events with a wider historical significance. Conversely, a larger movement may make more sense when its issues are exemplified by references to local events.

Music of struggle is often functional and disposable. When the situation changes, the music will be changed. A topical song may have a dramatic relevance one moment and be swiftly forgotten as other issues arise. The subtle relationship of music and text may be forgotten when the music no longer has the same associations. On the other hand, songs long dormant may be revived, changed, and used again, gaining and conferring cumulative historical significance.

The performances presented in the 1990 Festival of American Folklife all commemorate recent movements, or movements which are frequently recalled. Yet some of their songs have a long history.

Investigating Musics of Struggle

Many different kinds of struggle have musical expression. The best way to approach the subject is to examine first the nature of the struggle and then the way its participants use and interpret music, if they do so at all.

Struggle can be defined as "A continued effort to resist force or free oneself from constraint" (Oxford English Dictionary). It can be contrasted with "protest" which means to make a public declaration against something. Struggles include protests, but struggles are the larger social process which actually oppose particular social practices.

Human societies are filled with struggles, which take a variety of forms. Social life is characterized as much by conflict as by harmony. Virtually every social group is composed of smaller groups with different access to important resources and different power to constrain others — crucial differences that generate tensions and conflict. In some societies the main contrasts may be age and gender. In other societies divisions may fall along ethnic lines; in yet others they may be formed by birth, naming, or the inheritance of scarce knowledge or resources. In nearly every society some members of the groups so formed attempt to escape from these constraints or at least to create areas where constraints do not apply.

Some types of conflict are constant within a society, others appear from time to time, and yet others are very specific and occur only once in a while. Some of the most obvious forms of conflict appear between age and gender groups, within occupations, in political disputes, between culturally defined groups, and in international events.

Domestic Struggles

Not all struggles involve ethnic groups, political parties, or labor unions. Some struggles occur in the home, between parents and children and between men and women. Conflicts between parents and children and between an age group and its nearby age groups are common in many societies. There is often more harmony between more distantly related people — grandparents and grandchildren, older and much younger — than between adjacent groups. In the United States the family is an arena of considerable conflict. Children's struggles with their parents are amply documented in popular music, which may become the object of parental protest — witness the furor over Madonna's song "Papa Don't Preach."

Relations between men and women define another area of considerable conflict in many societies. Relations between men and women have been a topic of songs for centuries. An old lament goes:

Oh hard is the fortune of all womenkind
Always controlled and always confined
Controlled by their parents until they are wives
Then slaves to their husbands the rest of their lives.

If that has changed, it has been through individual, collective, and legislative struggles. The women's rights movements of the 20th century have stimulated many excellent songwriters.

U.S. popular music tends to highlight the difficulties confronted in relationships with members of the opposite sex in musical forms produced for dancing with them. Many country music lyrics speak of loneliness and isolation. Often decried for ignoring larger social

cont. page 63

KURDS

Jacquelin C. Peters

Kurdistan — "land of the Kurds" — a fertile area rich in oil, chrome, copper, iron and lignite, occupies an expanse of land only slightly smaller than the state of Texas, but it cannot be found on standard maps today. For thousands of years, Kurds have inhabited the Zagros and Taurus mountains of eastern Anatolia, which span parts of present day Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey, and Soviet Armenia. Kurdish attempts to assert political autonomy have been opposed — often violently — by the governments of surrounding countries.

Continuing clashes between the Kurds and the national powers have devastated and displaced their population. Deported and subjected to chemical warfare in Iraq, the Kurds have been especially hard hit in the 1980s. The assault on this ethnic group takes on cultural aspects in Syria and in Iran, where traditional clothing and holidays, such as the Newroz (New Year's Day), have been declared illegal.

Wearing national dress, Kurds celebrate Newroz (New Year's) on March 24, 1990. These material, ceremonial and cultural expressions of ethnic identity are forbidden by governments seeking to assimilate or eliminate the Kurds. (Photo courtesy Kurdish National Congress)

In the hands of artists such as Shivan Perwer, Feqiye Teyra and Temo Ezzadin, the tambour — a traditional instrument with three sets of doubled strings — makes music that is perceived as a threat by the countries they fled. Said Gabari, a musician who resided in Syria, is said to have been blinded ten years ago as a result of his musical themes. Other renown Kurdish singers living in exile include Naser Razzazi, who performed for the Kurdish Newroz celebration sponsored by the D.C. chapter of the Kurdish National Congress, and Sherin, who employs nationalistic themes and exemplifies the prominent role women have had throughout Kurdish history. The poetic message of the songs, sometimes strong, sometimes subtle, is dangerous rhetoric or high art according to the listener's perspective.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Bois, Th. V. Minorsky and D.N. MacKenzie. 1960. Kurds, Kurdistan. *The Encyclopedia of Islam* (new edition). Leiden, The Netherlands: E.J. Brill.

Kurd. 1985. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica.* 7:40.

Laber, Jeri & Lois Whiteman. 1988. *Destroying Ethnic Identity: The Kurds of Turkey: A Helsinki Watch Report, March 1988.* New York: Human Rights Watch.

The Proliferation of Chemical Warfare: The Holocaust at Halabja. 1988. Washington, DC: People for a Just Peace.

Woodson, LeRoy, Jr. 1975. We Who Face Death. *National Geographic.* 147(3):364-387.

SUGGESTED LISTENING

Chants et Musiques du Kurdistan: Groupe Koma Zozan. Arion ARN 33719.

Kurdish Folk Music from Western Iran. Recorded by Dieter and Nerthus Christensen. Ethnic Folkways Library FE 4301.

Kurdish Folk Songs and Dances. Recorded by Ralph S. Solecki. Ethnic Folkways Library FE 4469.

Temo, Barde du Kurdistan: La tradition et l'exil. Ocora. Radio France 588 573, MU 218.

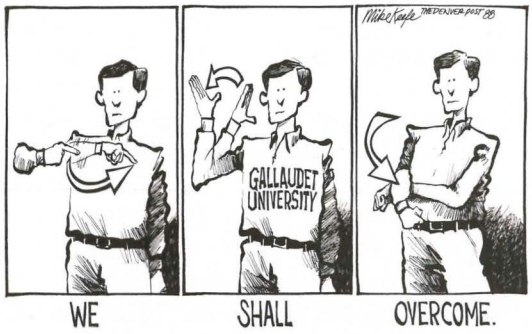
Feqiye Teyra. *Kurdistan 1988.* Gema GVL 31126.

The Gallaudet "Deaf President Now" Movement

Jacquelin C. Peters

Gallaudet University students galvanized the deaf community and revolutionized global perceptions of deaf people in their "Deaf President Now" (DPN) Movement in March, 1988. "The time is now" was their rallying cry, which held implications for deaf pride, self-assertion, and civil rights extending beyond the DPN issue.

Gallaudet University, founded by President Lincoln in 1864 and funded primarily through Congressional appropriations, educates deaf students from pre-school age through graduate school. When the sixth president, Dr. Jerry Lee, announced that he was retiring, there was optimism on campus that, for the first time in the University's 124-year history, one of the two qualified deaf candidates, Dr. Harvey J. Corson or Dr. I. King Jordan, would be voted into the vacated position by the Board of Trustees. When the Chair of the 21-member board, only five of whom were deaf, announced the board's choice of Dr. Elisabeth Zinser — a hearing educator who knew no sign language — initial shock, anger and disbelief gave way to student mobilization and strike from March 6 through 13, 1988.



The "Deaf President Now" Movement drew inspiration from other struggles involving civil rights. (Cartoon by Mike Keefe of the Denver Post)

Four student leaders — Greg Hlibok, Jerry Covell, Bridgetta Bourne, and Tim Rarus — together stood at the helm as organizers, spokespersons and morale boosters. On the first day of the strike, 500 students set out to shut down the campus after a stormy meeting with the university administration. While the school remained open, students claimed that 90 percent of the campus community participated in the strike. Campus entrances were blockaded with shuttle busses after the tires were flattened. The faculty voted 147 to 5 to back the students.

The civil rights movements of other groups, such as African Americans, South Africans and women, served as points of comparison and reference in the DPN struggle. During the campus rallies, student leader and cheerleader Bridgetta Bourne led sign language chants such as "Deaf Power!" "Deaf President Now!" and "Zinser Out!" to keep spirits high as the freedom songs did in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. A waving sea of hands signed to the 4/4 rhythm of impromptu percussionists at DPN demonstrations the way that a dance class or a cheerleading practice at Gallaudet moves to a drummed beat.

The Friday "Deaf Pride Day" march on the Capitol, which attracted 3,000 marchers from all over the U.S., was headed by a banner borrowed from the Crispus Attucks Museum emblazoned with the message "We Still Have a Dream"; the same banner had been used in a march to have Dr. King's birthday decreed a national holiday. The "Deaf Pride Day" march and demonstration on the National Mall took place as planned despite Zinser's previous resignation, as the strikers waited for the response to their other demands. Using sign language and lip synchronization, students of the Model Secondary School for the Deaf (MSSD) presented "The Time is Now," composed by theater teacher and playwright Tim McCarthy.

The words the deaf world had been waiting for came on Sunday, March 13, when Dr. I. King Jordan was voted in as the eighth president of Gallaudet University. A majority deaf task force was named to formulate a majority deaf board. Ultimately there were no reprisals against the strikers. A surprisingly peaceful scene awaited President Jordon on Monday, March 14, when he arrived on campus to begin his administration.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Bruske, Ed. 1988. Protest Gained Sympathy Nationwide. *Washington Post.* March 10.

Gallaudet Faculty Backs Students. 1988. *Washington Post.* March 10.

Gannon, Jack. 1989. *The Day The World Heard Gallaudet.* Washington, DC: Gallaudet University Press.

Kannapell, Barbara M. 1985. *Orientation to Deafness: A Handbook and Resource Guide.* Washington, DC: Gallaudet College Printing and Graphic Services.

Sanchez, Carlos and Martin Weil. 1988. Zinser Quits Gallaudet Amid Student Uproar. *Washington Post.* March 11.

cont. from page 60
issues, U.S. popular music does focus on a few of the common experiences faced by parts of the population.[2]

A musical genre itself may become an emblem of an age group, and an expression of its protest against the standards of another group. This may happen in any country, and often involves the adoption of a new musical form by a certain class or age group. In the United States during the 20th century almost every generation has been identified with an emerging musical style (although its members may listen to many different kinds of music). One group will support the style, another group will oppose it, and the arguments will be waged at the dining room table, on the pages of *Billboard Magazine*, *People Magazine* and sometimes in the halls of Congress. The United States has a long history of attempting to ban music and dance as lascivious and dangerous to the public good. At times musical performance itself becomes the battlefield, rather than simply the expression of a larger conflict over self determination and authority. The original social condition is not remedied, but instead song content about it is censored (a point reiterated by many of the defenders of the music industry against the censorship of offensive texts).

School is one of the first experiences many children have with authority beyond the family, and one would expect experience in schools to contribute to some rather pithy songs. A "Talking Homework Blues" I wrote in 7th grade is an example of a song that describes a child's struggle at school but does not propose a remedy (except perhaps not falling behind in the first place). Given how important teachers are to their students at all levels, it is surprising that there is no bibliography on children's songs about school.

Work Struggles

Many kinds of work involve hierarchical organization, inequality, and often outright exploitation of some people by others. The struggles to survive with low wages, to grow enough crops to pay back borrowed money, to improve working conditions, to organize workers to negotiate with, contend against, or escape from their supervisors, bosses, middlemen, or owners (in the case of slavery) have fostered hundreds of songs over the decades.

Some occupational songs are fitted to the work itself: woodcutting songs and sail-raising songs coordinate collective activities while long ballads may help pass away tedious hours spent in repetitive tasks. Other songs describe a worker's life and the difficulties of surviving under harsh discipline on low wages. Songs related to union organizing have become the archetype for songs of struggle in the United States.

The U.S. labor movement has a long, bitter, and embattled history. Certain industries have seen prolonged strife over union organizing, strikes, and retaliation by company owners often supported by local, state, and even national authorities. The eastern coal mining industry is one of the most famous of these industries. Difficult, dangerous, and unhealthy working conditions, the fluctuating markets for coal, the rural location of mines, and changing mining technology have resulted in long and violent conflicts, of which the recently settled Pittston Coal strike is only the most recent example. Some of the most famous union organizing songs, such as "Which Side Are You On?" (They say in Harlan county/There are no neutrals there./ Either you're a union man/Or a thug for J.H. Blair.) originated in mining strife.

Many songs about work and labor unrest are composed about particular events and then forgotten when the crisis passes, perhaps to be replaced by another song about something else. John Greenway notes,

> except for the very simple ones ("We Shall Not Be Moved") and the very best ones ("Union Maid") [songs of protest] are likely to become forgotten quickly because it is easier to set to the basic tune new words more relevant to immediate issues and circumstances than it is to remember the old. (John Greenway 1953:6)

To Greenway's comment one can add Pete Seeger's observation that "almost every old song can teach you good things, but it can also teach you bad things, and you have to balance the two when you sing it..."(*Sing Out!* 29 (3): 4). Songs are not only replaced because they are forgotten, but also because they are not entirely appropriate to a new situation.

Professional musicians have taken some songs from local communities and made them part of the national repertory. The song "Which Side Are You On?" (mentioned above) was forgotten in its home community while it was being revived as a union song in other places. Pete Seeger recalls:

> In 1940 I learned the song "Which Side Are You On?" from a folklorist who had been researching in eastern Kentucky in 1932. Later, I met Mrs. Reece, who wrote the song. At that time it was unknown except in the memories of her family and a few miners of Harlan county who heard her daughters sing it in the 1932 union meetings. (P. Seeger 1972: 76)

Partly because of Pete Seeger's use of "Which Side Are You On?" in the union movement and later in the

cont. page 66

[2] U.S. popular music has often been criticized for its distance from the social and political realities of people's lives. Regardless of what it does *not* portray, what it does select is an important part of American culture. There are no examples of family and generational struggle with the music program this year, but examples should be familiar to anyone acquainted with the popular music scene.

South Africa

Jacquelin C. Peters

Since the Dutch first settled at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652, South Africa's bountiful land and mineral riches have been sources of conflict. Over the course of several centuries, Dutch (now the Afrikaners) and British settlers were able to seize land from the indigenous African peoples. By the end of the 19th century, the Europeans dominated over 90 percent of the territory. When diamonds and gold were discovered in the late 19th century, European settlers prevented Africans from sharing in the land's wealth and transformed them into a tightly controlled, poorly paid labor force.

When the Union of South Africa came into existence in 1910, the new settler-run government held absolute political and economic power. Segregation was the order of the day and, with few exceptions, Africans could not participate in political decisions. They were allowed to hold jobs only as unskilled, cheap laborers.

Since 1948, the Nationalist Party has been in power. It has promoted a policy called *apartheid* (separateness), which built on and intensified European domination through a vast array of laws and edicts. The Population Registration Act categorized people into different racial groups; the Groups Areas Act separated different racial groups in the urban areas; the Abolition of Passes and Coordination of Documents Act forced all Africans above the age of 16 to carry passes which controlled their residence and movement. The government's ultimate objective was to consign African people, 75 percent of South Africa's population, to bits of impoverished land called Bantustans or homelands, on about 13 percent of its poorest land. In order to achieve that, the government forcibly removed an estimated 3.5 million African people from their homes between 1960 and 1980. The government also insured that Africans would continue to have inferior education by structuring a school system that favored European children. The government allocates $296 for the schooling of each African child compared to $1,194 for each European child (Williams, 1990:23).

Music and dance were vital components of the reception welcoming Nelson Mandela to Lusaka, Zambia. (Photo by D. Michael Cheers, courtesy African Studies and Research Program, Howard University)

African leaders and organizations have challenged the injustices and inequities of colonial rule at every step. A leading organization representing Black opinion has been the African National Congress (ANC), founded in 1912. Along with other African protest and trade union groups, the ANC challenged colonial rule through non-violent strategies until the government outlawed the opposition in 1960, and banned the ANC, Pan African Congress (PAC) and the Communist Party. The bannings and failed attempts to effect a peaceful settlement led the ANC and the PAC to turn to armed struggle. Government repression of Black dissent has been forceful in recent decades, but political, church, community, student and trade union groups have sustained the struggle and captured worldwide attention.

In February, 1990, the government lifted its bannings on Black opposition movements and released ANC leader Nelson Mandela, who had been in prison for 27 years. But despite the release of Mandela and other anti-apartheid leaders, many more political prisoners remain in jail. Despite the legalizing of organizations such as the ANC and the PAC, the State of Emergency remains in effect. Despite the government statement that exiles may return to South Africa, they may still face prosecution and jail for their political acts. Moreover, Blacks do not have the vote, and the three

key apartheid laws — the Natives Land Act, the Population Registration Act, and the Group Areas Act — still endure. The government has done away with some discriminatory laws, but apartheid is still in force.

Music of struggle in South Africa has many forms and performance contexts. It is based on a variety of regional styles including unaccompanied polyphonic singing, which is an integral part of everyday life. Another regional influence on music used in struggle is praise poetry, often a rap-like poetic recitative that affirms the cultural significance of particular people and events. Such poetry is found today among urban laborers who use the genre to express their physical prowess and to give voice to problems they face far from their families. Amahubo, clan identity anthems with slow, synchronized movements and high kicks, is another traditional base for men's songs and dance steps performed in the setting of workers' compounds.

South African music of struggle also has had sources in European musics and in the musics of touring choirs and musical reviews. Influences on South African composers and arrangers during the early 1900s include African American music of the Fisk Jubilee Singers and choirs of the charismatic Church of God in Christ denomination; minstrel music, and ragtime, the popular syncopated American music of the turn of the century. Blending such genres with their own traditional music, noted South African composers working in the makwaya ("choir") genre — such as Caluza, Bokwe, and Tyamzashe — combined rising nationalistic feelings and social commentary with compelling harmonies and rhythms.

Ngoma, songs and dances performed at weddings, together with mission school "action song," laid the groundwork for mbube, which consciously adapted a European (homophonic) four-part harmony vocal style[1]. In 1939, a young migrant worker Solomon Linda made the first recording — entitled "Mbube" — which named and documented the genre; the melody would be identified by American audiences as "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." Isicathamiya ("walk softly") and cathoza mfana ("walk steadily, boys"), other forms of Zulu male singing which developed from mbube, have gained international commercial acceptance.[2]

Mbube songs expressing political protest against exploitation were often heard on the South African Broadcasting Corporation until the late 1940s, when stringent monitoring became the rule. "*Vukani Mawethu*" ("Wake Up, My People"), a well-known makwaya song, frightened radio censors with its potential to mobilize Africans. And until recently it was illegal even to hum the ANC anthem "*Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika*" ("God Bless Africa"), although this has not prevented people around the world from learning the song. The circumvention of censorship continues to be a challenge to South African musicians and composers; South African music has served as a means of defining opposition to colonial rule and affirming African identity and unity.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Baker, Pauline. 1989. *The United States and South Africa: The Reagan Years.* New York: Foreign Policy Association.

Bracker, Milton. 1961. African Rallies Marked by Song. *Sing Out!* 11:(3).

Coplan, David. 1985. *In Township Tonight!* New York: Longman.

Edgar, Robert, ed. 1990. *Sanctioning Apartheid.* Trenton, NJ: African World Press.

Erlmann, Veit. Liner notes for *Mbube Roots: Zulu Choral Music from South Africa, 1930's-60's*. Rounder Records 5025.

Mattera, Don. 1987. *Sophiatown: Coming of Age in South Africa*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Meer, Fatima. 1990. *Higher Than Hope: the Authorized Biography of Nelson Mandela*. Harper & Row.

Murray, C. 1981. *Families Divided: The Impact of Migrant Labour in Lesotho*. London: Oxford University Press.

Rhodes, Williard. 1962. Music as an Agent of Political Expression. *African Studies Bulletin*. 5(1).

South Africa. 1985. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*. 11:32-33.

South Africa. 1988. *The Statesman's Year-Book.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Thompson, L. 1985. *The Political Mythology of Apartheid*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

cont. page 66

[1] "Action song" is accompanied by controlled movements allowing a physical response to music, short of dancing, which was forbidden by the church fathers.

[2] Contemporary major exponents include the Boyoyo Boys, whose singing first caught Paul Simon's ear, leading to the success of Ladysmith Black Mambazo outside of Africa. "Ladysmith" serenades its international following — with a non-political repertory — in English as well as Zulu.

Williams, Juan. 1990. At the Gates of Freedom. *The Washington Post Magazine.*

SUGGESTED LISTENING

Amaduduzo. *Siyabamukela.* Rounder Records 5043.

Boyoyo Boys. *Back in Town.* Rounder Records 5026.

Harry Belafonte and Miriam Makeba. *An Evening with Belafonte and Makeba.* RCA LSP3420.

Ladysmith Black Mambazo, African Zulu Male Choir, others. *Mbube Roots: Zulu Choral Music from South Africa, 1930's-60's .* Rounder Records 5025.

Let Their Voices Be Heard: Traditional Singing in South Africa. Rounder Records 5024.

Manka Le Phallang, Manonyana A Moama, Sebata Sebata. *Sheshwe: The Sound of the Mines.* Rounder Records 5031.

Music of Lesotho. Recorded and annotated by Bill Wood. Smithsonian/Folkways 4224.

Radio Freedom: Voice of the African National Congress and the People's Army Umkhonto We Sizwe. Rounder Records 4019.

South African Freedom Songs. Smithsonian/Folkways EP 601.

South African Trade Union Worker Choirs. Rounder Records 5020.

cont. from page 63

Civil Rights Movement, the song has been a part of musical performances in a variety of struggles. As in other areas, professional musicians play important roles by bringing (often arranged) versions of local traditions to wider, sometimes international, audiences. Many people not directly involved in a struggle may hear about it first through songs.

Smithsonian/Folkways Records has issued two recordings in time for the Festival that deal with labor struggles and union organizing: "Don't Mourn — Organize! Songs of Labor Songwriter Joe Hill" (SF40026) and Woody Guthrie's "Struggle" (SF40025). One of the richest areas of American protest music, union songs have a vast bibliography and discography.

Struggles For Political Autonomy

The political boundaries of modern nations are very often shaped more by wars, treaties, and colonization than by cultural homogeneity. Most nations today contain many different cultural or ethnic groups within their borders. Ethnic strife in Ireland, the USSR, Eastern Europe, and the United States provide examples of the difficulties states have in dealing with culturally different populations within a single state. The heterogeneity of modern states has led to two related social processes that have both used music: 1) the forging of a "national identity" out of (or over) a variety of local identities and 2) the creation and maintenance of local identities in the face of a (forged) national identity that does not usually recognize local differences.

Faced with heterogeneous populations and the necessity of defending political borders, many nations have "created traditions" to establish a national unity (see Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). The traditions may include national songs (national anthems are such a form), national dress composed of an amalgamation of regional dress forms, and a national identity based on a variety of symbolic forms such as celebrations of independence, the birthdays of heroes, and stories about the founding of the state that establish its identity as a nation and downplay regional differences and conflicts.

While national institutions create their own sense of tradition, groups within the nation often struggle to assert a degree of autonomy. This is often done through language, dress, religious affiliation, and music. The controversies over whether schools should be under local control, whether English should be the sole U.S. national language and the square dance the official U.S. national dance, and other issues of ethnic identity raise issues here in the United States that are similar to those being raised in Eastern Europe. African Americans, Polish Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and many other groups have asserted cultural autonomy by perpetuating particular secular and religious traditions through music.

Several performers at the Festival of American Folklife represent regional populations that are struggling for an independent identity within states largely controlled by members of other groups. These include the Kurds and the Palestinians, among many others that might have appeared.

Political Issues

Participants in political conflicts have long used songs to spread their messages and to create unity among their compatriots. Recent examples include the movement against the Vietnam war in the 1960s, the

cont. page 69

U.S. Civil Rights Movement

Jacquelin C. Peters

In the early 1950s the continuing struggle of African Americans for basic human rights was directed toward winning crucial liberties long denied them — a good education and the vote. The NAACP sought to challenge the laws limiting educational opportunities by enlisting the legal strategies of African American attorneys such as the late Wiley Branton, who was to become Dean of the Howard University Law School, and Thurgood Marshall, currently a Chief Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court. The U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown vs. Board of Education* decision rendered in 1954 cited the sociological and psychological findings of Dr. Kenneth Clark and others who maintained that the *Plessy vs. Ferguson* "separate but equal" doctrine instituted in 1896 was harmful to both Black and White students. The justices ordered in 1955 that all children be admitted to tax-supported public schools "on a racially non-discriminatory basis with all deliberate speed."

Close on the heels of the Brown decision came a series of events which jolted the Civil Rights Movement into the nation's consciousness. Mrs. Rosa Parks' arrest for violating the bus segregation ordinance in Montgomery, Alabama, sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott on December 5, 1955, four days after her detention. Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., then 26 years old, was elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, the organization which organized the boycott. It took 386 days, but the city officials were finally convinced that integration of the buses was crucial to their economic health, and the bus boycott was discontinued. Three weeks later, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was founded with Dr. King as president, and the forces that would guide his destiny as a charismatic leader and a national hero gained momentum.

When four black college students staged the first sit-in on February 1, 1960 at a Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina, a wave of similar student protests followed, sweeping the Deep South. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which provided many "foot soldiers" in the desegregation and voter registration efforts,was founded at Shaw University on April 15, 1960.

James Farmer of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) led the Freedom Riders on a Greyhound bus from Washington, D.C. on a perilous journey through Alabama and Mississippi. On "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965, the nation witnessed on television the assault of hundreds of peaceful demonstrators by

Spirits are high in this civil rights rally in an Alabama church. Freedom songs strengthened the resolve of non-violent demonstrators, who were prepared to encounter persecution and imprisonment. (Photo by Joe Alper, courtesy Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon)

Alabama state troopers. One week later, the Johnson administration presented a voting rights bill before Congress. On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act.

Song and eloquent oratory are integral to African American religious expression, and they were pervasive, spiritually sustaining elements of the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. In emotionally tense or physically threatening situations, the standard of non-violence and a serene attitude were maintained through song, prayer, and words of encouragement. Massive church rallies, picketing demonstrations and even jail houses echoed with the sounds of resolve, declaring, "Just like a tree standing by the water,/ We shall not be moved."

Sacred African American music provided the basis for many freedom songs. One such spiritual, "I Will Be All Right," has evolved to become the universal anthem of protest, "We Shall Overcome." Techniques such as call and response, "worrying the line" (using melismatic vocal embellishments), or "lining out" a hymn (the song leader's singing or reciting the next line of verse before the end of the previous one)

are other retentions from traditional African American song.

Important contributions to the repertory of freedom songs were made by composers whose music sprang out of the Movement. The gifted Bertha Gober, one of the most prolific composers, sometimes received her inspirations while actively involved in demonstrations or while sitting in a jail cell; memories of those who were martyrs for the movement also provided histories for Ms. Gober and many others to put to music. Social contexts were established in song lyrics by naming the protagonists, antagonists, or locations where conflict was intense.

Grounded in the tradition of Black congregational song, choral quartets and ensembles transmitted the Movement's musical message to audiences far from the locale of the struggle. The Montgomery Gospel Trio, the American Baptist Theological Seminary Quartet — also known as the Nashville Quartet — and the CORE Singers proved to be solid songleading groups.

Nationwide support was garnered for SNCC through the works of four singers: Rutha Harris, Bernice Johnson, Charles Neblett, and Cordell Reagon, who organized the group known as the original SNCC Freedom Singers. Reagon delivered most of the interpretive information in performances which made the world sit up and take notice. Two other configurations of this group emerged: another group of Freedom Singers, followed by the Freedom Voices. This year's music stage features the original SNCC Freedom Singers with Ms. Bettie Mae Fikes standing in, as she has in the past, for Dr. Bernice Johnson Reagon. Ms. Fikes, originally of Selma, Alabama, is known as one of the strongest song leaders of the Civil Rights Movement.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Carawan, Guy and Candi, recorders and editors. 1989. *Ain't you Got a Right to the Tree of Life: The People of Johns Island, South Carolina, Their Faces, Their Words and Their Songs.* Athens: University of Georgia Press.

_____. 1990. *Sing For Freedom.* Bethlehem, PA: Sing Out!

Franklin, John Hope and August Meier, eds. 1982. *Black Leaders of the Twentieth Century.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Garrow, David J. 1986. *Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.* New York: William Morrow.

Hickerson, Joseph C., compiler. 1974. A Brief List of Material Relating to Freedom Songs of the Civil Rights Movement. Washington, D.C.: Archive of Folk Culture, Library of Congress.

Ploski, Harry and James Williams, eds. 1989. *The Negro Almanac: A Reference Work on the African American.* New York: Gale Research, Inc.

Reagon, Bernice. 1987. Let the Church Sing "Freedom". *Black Music Research Journal* 7.

_____, in collaboration with Dr. Doris McGinty. 1980. Liner notes for *Voices of the Civil Rights Movement.* Smithsonian Collection of Recordings R023.

The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr. 1984. Selected by Coretta Scott King. New York: Newmarket Press.

Walker, Wyatt T. 1979. *Somebody's Calling My Name: Black Sacred Music and Social Change.* Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.

Williams, Juan. 1986. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years: 1954-1965.* New York: Viking Press.

SUGGESTED LISTENING

Been in the Storm So Long. Smithsonian/Folkways SF 40031.

Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs, 1960-1965. Smithsonian Collection of Recordings R023.

Sing for Freedom. Smithsonian/Folkways SF 40032.

Singing freedom songs, marchers led by Stevie Wonder braved the elements in Washington, D.C. every January 15th until Congress passed a bill making Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a legal holiday in 1983. (Photo by Sharon Farmer)

cont. from page 66
songs of soldiers who served in Vietnam, the opposition to nuclear power in the 1970s and 1980s, the feminist movement, and the Latin American popular political music Nueva Cancion, among many others. The United States can boast of a long history of political songs, from the early 19th century up to the present. From Jefferson through Gerald Ford, with some notable examples from the Roosevelt years, political songs were published in newspapers and had the kind of exposure we now associate with mass media. The songs themselves were a direct expression of attempts to sway public opinion and votes by creating positive images of the candidates and supporting their policies (Folkways Records has several recordings of political songs from different eras).

Many songs of the Civil Rights Movement were based on African American church music. Some, like "We Shall Overcome" were only slightly altered hymns familiar to many of the participants. The performance style, audience participation, and importance of music in the Civil Rights Movement owed a great deal to the African American churches from which were derived much of the movement's organization and power, and also to the kind of mass actions in which the movement was engaged. Although the Civil Rights Movement adopted a doctrine of non-violent mass protest from Gandhi's non-violent independence movement in India, the Indian movement itself was not a particularly musical one. Church music was a cultural resource available in the U.S. Civil Rights Movement that was not available in multi-ethnic India.

Conclusion

Musical performances can be a part of social movements in a number of different ways. From marked silence through the revival of old musical forms to the composition of new genres, musical performances have both expressed and created feelings of community, have defined central concerns and aspirations, knit small communities together and projected messages to large international audiences. Music can be an effective resource for social movements because of the variety of ways it can be used — with subtlety or bluntness — and its ability to be heard in spite of censorship. Forged, transformed, and even abandoned in the crucible of struggle, music is part of the complex web of sounds and signs with which we experience and make history.

Citations and Further Readings

Here are just a few references. The Denisoff bibliography is a good guide to the older sources; Pete Seeger's book includes many observations of a participant in a number of social movements; Elbourne's book is the best historical study of music I have run across; the Greenway book is a classic; and *Sing Out!* magazine provides the words and music to many contemporary songs.

Denisoff, R. Serge. 1973. *Songs of Protest, War and Peace: A Bibliography and Discography.* Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio.

Denselow, Robin. 1989. *When the Music's Over: The Story of Political Pop.* London & Boston: Faber and Faber.

Elbourne, Roger. 1980. *Music and Tradition in Early Industrial Lancashire 1780-1840.* The Folklore Society Mistletoe Series. Suffolk: D.S. Brewer; Totowa, NJ: Roman and Littlefield.

Green, Archie. 1972. *Only a Miner.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Greenway, John. 1953. *American Folksongs of Protest.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 1975 [1779]. *A Complete Dictionary of Music.* Reprint of the 1779 edition. New York: AMS Press.

Seeger, Pete. 1972. *The Incompleat Folksinger.* Edited by Jo Metcalf Schwartz. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Suggested Listening

A complete list of over 50 Folkways recordings related to this theme is available from the Office of Folklife Programs. The following are fairly easily available examples of a large discography:

Come All You Coal Miners. Rounder Records 4005.

Don't Mourn - Organize! Songs of Labor Songwriter Joe Hill. Smithsonian/Folkways Records 40026.

Sheshwe: The Sound of the Mines. Rounder Records 5031.

Sing For Freedom. Smithsonian/Folkways Records 40032.

Rebel Voices, Songs of the Industrial Workers of the World. Flying Fish 484.

Songs of Struggle and Celebration by Guy Carawan. Flying Fish 27272.

Woody Guthrie: Struggle. Smithsonian/Folkways Records 40025.

Israelis and Palestinians

Amy Horowitz

Amy Horowitz, a Ph.D. candidate in Folklore at the University of Pennsylvania, received a grant from the D.C. Community Humanities Council in 1986 to do five radio shows on culture in disputed territories featuring Israeli and Palestinian protest artists. Amy has worked for Sweet Honey in the Rock since 1977 as artist representative.

Situated at the crossroad of East and West, the Middle East has been the site of struggle for millenium. For over 3,000 years, the land between the Mediterranean, the Jordan River and beyond, which now occupies the center of controversy for Israelis, Palestinians, Arabs and Jews has been called by many names, claimed by many peoples and occupied by countless foreign rulers. Many Israelis date their claim back to the Hebrew Kingdoms of Israel and Judea (722 B.C. - 70 A.D.) and even beyond. Palestinians point to indigenous inhabitants living in the area throughout history as well as a continuous Muslim majority since the 7th century A.D.

In the 19th century, during Ottoman Rule (1500-1917 A.D.), European nationalism began to capture the imagination of peoples throughout the world. This trend had a strong influence on both Arabs and Jews. Various Arab national movements emerged in response to occupation under the Ottomans. When the empire was divided up after World War I, Arab nationalists resisted European dominance and sought to create a unified Arab world under the banner of the Arabic language and a common regional heritage. For European Jewry, the nationalistic trend emerged in the form of Zionism calling for a return to their Biblical homeland. They hoped that in their historical birthplace self-determination would replace centuries of exile and victimization.

These two incompatible movements clashed during the British occupation of Palestine (1917-1948). The dispute was intensified after Nazi annihilation of European Jews (1936-1945) resulted in greater numbers of Jews seeking refuge in Palestine. Arab and Palestinian nationalism increased in response to Jewish immigration and efforts to create a Jewish state.

After World War II, the United Nations Partition Plan divided the area (the size of New Jersey), into contiguous Palestinian and Israeli nations. Jewish leaders accepted the plan and the State of Israel was proclaimed in 1948. Palestinians rejected any plan which established a Jewish state on Palestinian land. The result of this dispute was the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Following Arab defeat, Israel expanded its territory allotted under partition, Jordan annexed the West Bank, and Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip.

Thousands of Israeli Jews and Palestinians joined together to protest the election of Rabbi Meir Kahane to the Kenesset in August, 1984. This demonstration took place in front of the Kenesset on the first day Kahane arrived to take his place in Israel's Parliament. Protesters sang out against the racism and religious fanaticism that characterize Kahane's movement. The placards "Judaism — yes; coercion — no" and "Enlightened Judaism and Democracy" reflected mainstream Israeli opposition to Kahane which subsequently succeeded when he was barred from the Kenesset and from elected office for racist activities. (Photo by Amy Horowitz)

During the 1948 War, vast numbers of Palestinians fled or were expelled from Israel, crossing borders into Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt, where they became refugees in the West Bank, Gaza and surrounding Arab countries. Those Palestinians who remained became Israeli citizens. At the same time, thousands of Jews, escaping oppression in Europe and Arab countries arrived in Israel. The stage was set for continuing conflict.

Subsequent Arab-Israeli wars (1956, 1967, 1973, 1982) have intensified hostilities and further altered geo-political borders. Portions of Jordan and Egypt came under Israeli occupation after the 1967 war. These territories — the West Bank and Gaza — are the site of the current Palestinian uprising.

Israeli Palestinian singer performs a peace song in Hebrew and Arabic at the "Women Go For Peace" Conference, January, 1990. The conference was organized by Jewish and Palestinian Israelis from the "Women's Peace Movement" in conjunction with several Palestinian women's organizations in the Occupied Territories. The agenda was peaceful co-existence, but the woman wears a raincoat in anticipation of being sprayed by police vehicles with dyed water used to disperse demonstrations. (Photo by Amy Horowitz)

But these historical landmarks do not fully articulate the complexity of the conflict. Many sub-groups among Israelis and Palestinians express a variety of positions and claims to the area. Each position relies on its own historical justification of rights to the land. Some Israelis and Palestinians seek compromise as the only just way to resolve the crisis. A growing minority in Israel opposes the occupation and supports establishment of a Palestinian State next to Israel.

The conflict centers on the difficulty of reconciling conflicting claims to one piece of land. Israeli claims portray the sole Jewish country surrounded by dozens of hostile Arab nations. Palestinian claims portray a stateless people dislocated by a hostile foreign presence. Cultural, political and religious passions are rooted deeply in this rocky soil that is held sacred by Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

A story is told in which an Israeli and a Palestinian went to visit a wise old woman. They asked her who owned the land they both claim. She put her ear down next to this restless soil and then turned to them and said: "Do you know what the land told me? That she belongs to neither of you but that you both belong to her."

Sabreen ("patience"), formed in 1980 and based in eastern Jerusalem, has been making music under conditions of Israeli occupation. Since 1987, the beginning of the Intifada — the uprising organized by Palestinians against the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza — the band members report that it has been more difficult to acquire space for rehearsals, recording sessions, and performances. After they made sacrifices to finance the production of their two cassettes, sales on the West Bank were restricted by laws enacted to prevent trade between Palestinians in Jerusalem and in the other occupied territories. "We are not a direct threat to the authorities, because our songs are indirect in their message, but we are one of the threads that ties the Palestinian people together, so in that sense we are a threat" (Lems 1990). The growing numbers and enthusiastic response of their audiences in Jerusalem, the United States and Europe seem to nevertheless confirm the power of music to extend beyond governmentally imposed boundaries.

Traditional music and poetic forms of Arabian and Middle Eastern cultures provide the backbone for what they call their Palestinian "new song." Traditional instrumentation — stringed instruments including zither, bozuk, oud, and an array of percussion instruments — is augmented with guitar and bass. Vocalist Kamilya Jubran of Galilee sings in the melismatic style of classic Arabian music. The song lyrics are written by local poets and express contemporary Palestinian reality with the context of traditional Arab poetry. The fusion of past and present

Thousands strong, Palestinian and Israeli women joined by European and American supporters marched together across the invisible but very real boundary between West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem. This march represented an historical landmark at the outset of the 1990s as Arabs and Jews in the thousands together crossed over the border that divides their communities. The placards "The emerging solidarity of Arab and Jewish women" and "Negotiate now with the PLO" are messages conveyed by women protesting the occupation of territories held by Israel since the 1967 war. (Photo by Amy Horowitz)

affirms the inclusiveness and unity of the culture they champion. "We are creating tomorrow's folk songs and traditions," remarks bozuk player Oden Turujman.

Although the music calls for a response in movement, the poetic imagery demands contemplation:

I tell the world, I tell,
About the house whose lamp is broken,
About the axe which destroyed a lily,
About the fire that burned a braid. . .
(from "The Smoke of Volcanoes," written by Samih al-Qassem)

A verse from a different song employs the symbolism of the fertile land and affirms, "The valley will become full with new clusters of wheat." Both lamentation and celebration have the aim of making a "cultural contribution to the morale and education of their people" (Lems 1990).

Sara (Shuv) Alexander, born in Jerusalem, Palestine before the creation of Israel in 1948, raised on a kibbutz near Haifa, half Sephardic, half Ashkenazi, exhibited both a musical and independent spirit from a young age. She began playing the accordion at age thirteen. The same fiery spirit carried her through her service with the Nahal Entertainment Troupe of the Israel Defense Forces.

Alexander is an Israeli peace activist and singer/composer. In the 1960s, she was one of the first Israeli Jews to lend her voice to protest her country's policies regarding the Palestinian question. In the 1970s, "banned from the airwaves" in Israel, she left to live in France. She considers herself a member of the Israeli "Peace Now" group and travels to Israel to perform and participate in dialogue and demonstrations. "There are no good occupations" she says. About the confiscation of Palestinian land she sings the song of the almond trees that cry, "For such a long time the tears of the Arab people have watered the earth, it does not surprise us that the fruits are bitter." At the same time, Alexander addresses the oppression and persecution of Jewish people throughout history.

Sara has helped to organize Jewish-Arab music festivals in Europe and has performed with Palestinian musician Imad Saleh in the United States. She says, "It is necessary that Israelis and Palestinians recognize each other at last. The dialogue is essential."

Her songs and poems draw on historical references to Arabs and Jews, personal experience with Palestinians and Israelis, and images of her native land. In this way they are similar to Palestinian protest poetry that also draws heavily on natural imagery of the region. The song texts give voice to her conviction that for Palestinian and Israeli the solution must be "two peoples, two states, one future." In the song "My Brother and I" she says:

Thousands of years ago
Between the waves of sand and the palm trees,
We led our sheep together to the water.
Since the water has flowed in the Jordan,
We have been born brother and sister,
Blessed by the sea and by the shade of the olive tree.
It is said that without roots the tree dies.
It is said that without hope the heart stops.
... How much time, how much blood
Must be spilled until we learn
To forget our past errors and find the road to peace?

Sara's musical heritage combines folk melodies inherited from her Turkish mother and Eastern European traditions from her Rumanian father with traditional and contemporary Arabic and Jewish influences of her childhood in Palestine and Israel. These are blended with western elements to create a music combining traditional and contemporary ingredients. Sara performs with guitar and accordion and sings in six languages: Hebrew, French, Arabic, Yiddish, English and Spanish.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Binur, Yoram. 1989. *My Enemy, My Self.* New York: Doubleday.

Eban, Abba. 1984. *Heritage: Civilization and the Jews.* New York: Summit Books.

Elmessiri, A.M., collector and translator. 1982. *The Palestinian Wedding: A Bilingual Anthology of Contemporary Palestinian Resistance Poetry.* Washington, D.C.: Three Continents Press.

Lems, Kristin. 1990. Sabreen — Palestinian New Song. *Sassafras: the Journal of the People's Music Network for Songs of Freedom and Struggle.* January(17).

McDowall, David. 1989. *Palestine and Israel. The Uprising and Beyond.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Morris, Benny. 1988. *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Muslih, Muhammad Y. 1988. *The Origins of Palestinian Nationalism.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Palestine. 1985. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica.* 9:81-82.

Said, Edward. 1985. *After the Last Sky: Palestinian Lives.* New York: Pantheon Books.

Shehadeh, Raja. 1984. *Samed: Journal of a West*

Bank Palestinian. New York: Adama Books.

Songs for Peace and Justice in the Middle East. 1985. *Broadside: The National Topical Song Magazine*. February(159).

SUGGESTED LISTENING

Palestine Lives! Songs from the Struggle of the People of Palestine. Paredon P 1022.

Sara Alexander. *Peace, Shalom, Salam, Paix*. Sapem Sap 212.

Silence as Protest

Silence: Not all societies have protest songs. Some use silence. Silence doesn't express much unless everyone *else* is making noise. But there are some situations (singing a national anthem, a school song, a required chorus) when silence can be a statement of opposition. In some societies silence is more elaborately used.

Among the Suyá Indians of central Brazil, dissatisfaction was often expressed by non-participation. Living among them for two years, I never heard a lullaby or a work song, much less a protest song. Even direct verbal confrontation was relatively rare — anger was expressed through silence. All music was ceremonial; all song texts were said to be "revealed" rather than composed by human beings. Complete community participation in ceremonies was considered "beautiful" and good. But if a person was angry (and anger was sometimes related to politics) he could sing along without enthusiasm (a weak but public form of protest), go out fishing when everyone else was singing (a stronger form of protest), or sit silently and refuse to sing at all (a strong public declaration of anger). Each of these attitudes would be noticed and mentioned. Silence was protest in this society where music itself was only used as a statement of community.

Singing an Old Song In New Circumstances

Members of a social group engaged in political struggle sometimes perform traditional songs without changing them at all — neither lyrics nor music refer directly to their struggle. It is rather the larger context of the performance that lends political significance to the event and makes the unaltered traditional music a music of struggle. Many American Indian communities maintain traditional musical styles in spite of intense political and cultural pressures. Few if any protest song movements grow out of their traditional musical forms. Instead the songs are sung as they have been. Performing traditional music and speaking local languages not only recalls a past when that was normal, but can be a strong statement that the present situation is wrong and that the future should embody continuities from the past in these and other ways.

Unaltered traditions performed in situations of very severe oppression attest that simply maintaining an old tradition is itself part of a larger struggle for survival. To many North and South American Indian communities, whose social, political, and religious institutions have been supressed for centuries, the musical performances have complex meanings. But to people outside the society the message is often, "we continue to survive" and "we are not completely members of the surrounding society."

QUICHUA

Jacquelin C. Peters

Chimborazo, the 20,000 foot apex of the Andes Mountain range in Ecuador, is an extinct volcano in the center of the country. On this mountain live an indigenous people known as the Quichua. Indigenous empires (Cara, Inca), the Spanish colonial rule (from 1526 to 1830), and long-standing border disputes with Peru, which sits east and south of Ecuador, have come and gone. Enduring are the *campesinos* of Chimborazo Province. A quarter of a million people, they are the largest group of Native Americans in the country. They are also among the most poverty-striken peoples in South America.

They have endured exploitation for generations through a hacienda system which has resulted in general illiteracy, financial dependence, and social marginalization. Efforts by national and international organizations to improve these conditions have not always been successful, especially when they have failed to take into account the social and cultural contexts of development. Productive efforts to assist the campesinos have been spawned by grassroots organizations with a deeper perception of what was needed and how best to communicate with their compatriots.

Feria Educativa performs a skit depicting campesinos riding on a bus. Music and drama are used to engage Quichua communities in discussions on development needs and strategies. (Photo by Julia Weise-Vargas, courtesy Inter-American Foundation)

Feria Educativa, "Educational Fair," was a seminal group in these latter development efforts. Formed in 1974, the Feria formulated an agenda of goals identified by the campesinos themselves. The Feria's training programs have included some 100 musical performance groups; the Feria has sponsored four festivals of traditional music and dance, produced three cassettes, and generated many pamphlets on the local folk arts and historical lore. Bakeries, artisan-managed workshops, community centers, and reforestation projects have proliferated thanks to Feria Educativa's collective efforts.

Music and skits have been used to foster a dialogue with campesinos during the more than 750 community tours that Feria Educativa has been invited to undertake in the last 11 years. Singing in their indigenous Quichua language and wearing traditional clothing, the members of the troupe perform to encourage creation of and participation in a community defined by shared culture. After this, the business of collectively identifying and solving problems begins. One skit that draws nods of recognition from the crowd enacts the dilemma of an unschooled campesino unable to read an important letter and dependent on an unscrupulous person who misinterprets the information. Following the performance, an enthusiastic community usually hosts the visiting group until the wee hours of the morning.

CITATIONS AND FURTHER READINGS

Ecuador. 1985. *The New Encyclopedia Britannica.* 4:360-361.

Feria Educativa. 1986. *Aprendamos Nuestra Musica.* Quito: CEPID.

_____. 1986. *Los Alzamientos Indigenas en la Audiencia de Quito.* Quito: Abya Yala.

Harrison, Regina. 1989. *Signs, songs and memories in the Andes.* Austin: University of Texas Press.

Instituto Otavaleno de Antropologia. 1979. *Lengua y Cultura en el Ecuador.* Otavalo, Ecuador: Instituto Otavaleno de Antropologia.

Kleymeyer, Charles and Carlos Moreno. 1988. La

Feria Educativa: A Wellspring of Ideas and Cultural Pride. *Grassroots Development: Journal of the Inter-American Foundation*. 12(2).

Whitten, Norman E., Jr. 1981. *Cultural Transformations and Ethnicity in Modern Ecuador*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

SUGGESTED LISTENING

La Feria Educativa. 1986. *Nuestro Canto es Rebelde*.

_____. 1990. *Rucanchij Taqui*.

_____. 1990. *Pinay Taqui*..

JOE HILL: UNION ORGANIZING

Some of the most famous songs of struggle in the United States were written during labor conflicts from the mid 19th century up to the present.

Joe Hill (1879-1915) was a songwriter for the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.), a radical movement in the early 20th century committed to the formation of a worldwide workers' organization: One Big Union. His songs described struggles with strikebreakers ("Casey Jones — The Union Scab"), the plight of the homeless and unemployed ("The Tramp"), the economic base of prostitution ("The White Slave"), and charity organizations that help support an oppressive status quo ("The Preacher and the Slave"). His execution in Utah on November 19, 1915, for murder, a charge his supporters considered a class-oriented conspiracy, raised Joe Hill to powerful symbolic status within the labor movement. Many songs and poems were subsequently written about him, among them, "Joe Hill," "Joe Hill's Ashes," and "Joe Hill Listens to the Praying." Both as a songwriter and as the subject of songs, Joe Hill continues to be an important figure in United States labor history.

In a letter to the editor of the I.W.W. newspaper *Solidarity*, from the Salt Lake County Jail, Joe Hill told why he wrote songs as tools for organizing:

> A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over; and I maintain that if a person can put a few cold, common sense facts into a song, and dress them up in a cloak of humor to take the dryness off of them, he will succeed in reaching a great number of workers who are too unintelligent or too indifferent to read a pamphlet or an editorial on economic science.
>
> There is one thing that is necessary in order to hold the old members and to get the would-be members interested in the class struggle and that is entertainment. November 29, 1914.

Seventy-five years after his death, the name Joe Hill is not as widely known as his influence is felt. But Joe Hill remains an inspiration and a model for many songwriters and performers who organize through music.

Smithsonian/Folkways Records, in conjunction with the 1990 Festival of American Folklife and the Joe Hill Organizing Committee of Salt Lake City, Utah, has issued an album of songs by and about Joe Hill that illustrates his skill as a songwriter and shows his influence on the international labor movement: *Don't Mourn — Organize! Songs of Labor Songwriter Joe Hill* (SF 40026, available on CD, LP and cassette).

Anthony Seeger is curator of the Folkways Collection and Director of Folkways Records in the Office of Folklife Programs. He was previously employed at the Museu Nacional in Rio de Janeiro (1975-1982) and Indiana University (1982-1988). Anthropologist, ethnomusicologist and archivist, Dr. Seeger is the author of three books and many articles on the social organization, cosmology and musical performances of the Suyá Indians of Brazil. He was exposed to musics of struggle from early childhood and has performed them as part of his participation in a number of social processes.