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Sounds across Borders and the Ukraine War

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Introduction

This chapter focuses on sonic responses to the Russia–Ukraine war during its first year, 2022. In many ways, it moves across lines familiar to migration studies, considering nationalism, politics and conflict. What I wish to add and emphasize in my contribution is fundamentally very simple. Through a close exploration and discussion of three musical case studies, I suggest that a focus on music as migratory has the potential to inform our thinking about migrant voices more broadly. Rather than accompanying geopolitical events from the sidelines, music and sound are crucial in narrating, influencing and shaping such real-world events and the lived experiences of those affected by them. In this chapter, I listen closely to three musical events that all sought to promote support for Ukraine and to protest, directly or indirectly, the Russian invasion: the Eurovision 2022 winning song 'Stefania' by Kalush Orchestra; the single 'Hey hey rise up' by Pink Floyd featuring Andriy Khlyvnyuk; and the Concert for Ukraine, organized by the British television broadcaster ITV. Rather than focusing primarily on the border crossing of people or goods themselves, my case studies emphasize the extent to which sound moves across borders and how it is bordered and either encouraged to, or prevented from, 'migrating'. I am interested in the extent to which migrant voices are envoiced or unvoiced, and the extent to which envoicement and silencing might occur simultaneously on different levels, thus directing our thinking towards questions of sonic access in the light of migratory experiences.

I use the term 'migration' broadly throughout the chapter to describe various facets of border crossing. There is much potential for conflict between concepts pertaining to globalization, transnationalism, interculturalism,

cosmopolitanism, migration, emigration, displacement, mobility, diaspora, exile, immigration and several more. Terminology in music studies might seem messy. Use of the terms exile (Baily, 2015), displacement (Levi and Scheding, 2010), diaspora (Cohen, 2012), journey (Hinton, 2012), mobility (Gopinath and Stanyek, 2014), heterotopia (Bohlman, 2008a) and in-betweenness (Beckles Willson, 2007) or the avoidance of any one specific term (Feisst, 2011) suggest disagreement at first sight. And yet, the lack of a steadfast terminology in this field does not stand in the way of much common ground as far as the actual debate is concerned. It mirrors the long history of evolving terminologies of border crossing (see Brooke-Rose, 1998) as well as the diverse auto-descriptions of migrants themselves (see Scheding, 2010).

My three case studies all share seeming prestige settings and elite connotations. Richly funded, these musical performances reached millions of viewers and listeners. They remind us of music's potential to construct communalities and solidarities across borders. And yet each of these case studies also reinforces and bolsters nationalist ideologies in both methodological and practical terms. I therefore seek to open a discussion on the extent to which the three musical examples, while aiming to support refugee causes, aid the exceptionalization of migration and prop up narratives of marginalization and ideologies of nationalism, and do so in diverse and ever-changing ways. Unlike the visual, the sonic is inextricably linked to the temporal. Sound can only be experienced across a duration of time, and it eschews a sustained gaze in the way that an image, for example, allows (see Samuels et al, 2010, p 338). Despite the resulting ephemerality of the sonic, soundscapes are not placeless. They interplay strongly with the construction of the geographic and of social space. Sound is a crucial factor in creating (discourses of) citizenship, for example, but it is simultaneously complicit in restricting access to the discourses and practices of citizenship. My three examples all create sonic spaces that engage in a power dialectic. They are shaped by, and also shape, ideologies of political hierarchy and access.

'I ask all of you, please help Ukraine': Kalush Orchestra at the Eurovision Song Contest

On 14 May 2022, Ukrainian group Kalush Orchestra won the Eurovision Song Contest. The win was notable in several respects. Their song, 'Stefania', won the highest number of phone-in audience votes in the contest's 66-year history. While the final in Turin did not attract the largest television audience in Eurovision's history, by the end of 2022 'Stefania' had become the most-watched Eurovision song on the contest's YouTube channel. It is possible that 'Stefania' has reached a larger international audience than any other Ukrainian musical event in history. Notwithstanding the musical quality of 'Stefania', the huge audience vote suggests that the performance of the song

was accompanied by an outpouring of solidarity with Ukraine, which had been invaded by Russia almost exactly three months earlier. Following their performance, Kalush Orchestra's Oleh Psiuk addressed the up to 161 million international television viewers, calling for help for the Ukrainian city of Mariupol, which was under siege by Russian forces and would be captured only days later. Referencing the steel plant that was the last Ukrainian-held position during the siege, he pleaded: 'I ask all of you, please help Ukraine, Mariupol. Help Azovstal, right now!' Eurovision contestants from Iceland and Germany, Systur and Malik Harris, also showed support for Ukraine, with Ukrainian flags on their instruments and calls for peace for the country at the end of their respective performances. It is difficult, then, to imagine an act of musical, indeed sonic, border crossing with an immediate wider global reach than on the night of 14 May 2022.

In this context, it seems perhaps surprising that the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the organizer of the Eurovision Song Contest, insists on the contest being a non-political event. Its rules ban and prohibit political statements or messages. The EBU swiftly decided that no action would be taken against Kalush Orchestra, arguing that 'the comments of the Kalush Orchestra and other artists expressing support for the Ukrainian people [were] humanitarian rather than political in nature'. Indeed, the 2022 contest had been mired in what one might view as political, or at least politically motivated, incidents long before the night of the final. Following the call from broadcasters from ten participating countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Sweden and Ukraine), the EBU had reneged on its initial decision to allow Russia to participate, excluding the country from the contest in the run-up to the Turin show.

There was controversy on the Ukrainian side too. In the national selection process, 'Stefania' had come second, beaten to top spot by singer Alina Pash and her song 'Тіні забутих предків' (Shadows of forgotten ancestors). Steeped in nationalism, the song's Ukrainian lyrics recount the country's long history of war and invasion until the Slavic gods Perun and Dazhboh hear the prayers of Ukraine's tribes and bring peace, calling for unity among the Ukrainian people. The song's title evidences a deep commitment to Ukrainian artistic and cultural history by continuing a cross-medial intertextual history. It references the 1965 Ukrainian film of the same name by Sergei Parajanov as well as the 1960 ballet by Vitaly Kyreiko, which are themselves based on the eponymous 1911 novel by Ukrainian author Mykhailo Kotsiubynsky. At the same time, the song faces west and positions Ukraine's cultural and, more specifically, artistic history as a part of the European cultural project more broadly. Pash likens Ukraine's longue *durée* of suffering to Dante's *Divine Comedy*, calls for Picasso's 'dove of peace', remembers a book of Shakespeare as her favourite toy and imagines the song as a continuation of the work of the Brothers Grimm.

Following her victory in the national selection process, it was, in fact, an act of border crossing that led to Pash's withdrawal from representing the country at the Eurovision Song Contest in Turin. After Russia's occupation of Crimea in 2014, the Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (UA:PBC), the organizer of the national selection for Eurovision, had decreed that artists who had performed in Russia or travelled from Russia to Crimea after 2014 were not eligible to represent Ukraine internationally. Following doubts over Alina Pash's border crossings, and suggestions that she had visited Crimea in 2015 via Russia, the singer's further participation in Eurovision was cancelled and the runner-up, Kalush Orchestra, was selected instead.

Why do these details matter? Against the background of daily news of bloodshed and battles between Ukrainian and Russian forces, the Eurovision Song Contest hardly seems to matter. Stephen Coleman (2008) has argued that Eurovision is seen as a ridiculous and embarrassing spectacle, and Graham Norton, who was a presenter at the 2023 Eurovision, held in Liverpool, and has hosted the British TV coverage on the BBC for several years, called Eurovision a 'silly song contest' on British broadcaster ITV's popular show *This Morning* on 26 September 2023. But, Norton continued, 'it does bring people together in a very serious way'. In fact, cultural studies scholars widely argue that Eurovision has the power to unite and forge communities along divergent lines of identity. George Cremona (2023) has invoked Eurovision as a vehicle to promote values propagated by the European Union, and Matt Weaver (2023) has called the contest the 'gay world cup', describing queer performers such as Austrian 2014 entry Conchita Wurst as invoking an alternative patriotism through a deliberate crossing and queering of national identities, a point also made by Catherine Baker (2015, 2019b). Performances of nationalism in Eurovision may be 'playful' (see Kyriakidou et al, 2018), but still provide 'a relatively long opportunity for small states to regularly promote themselves to a worldwide audience numbering in the hundreds of millions', as Dean Vuletic (2018, p 301) has highlighted.

Scholars widely debunk the EBU's claim of Eurovision as apolitical, so much so that Gad Yair and Chen Ozeri (2023) call the political nature of the contest an accepted truism. Ukraine's 2016 entry, '1944' by Jamala, sung in English with a chorus in Crimean Tatar dialect, won Eurovision with lyrics about the Soviet deportations of Tatars from Crimea, alluding to the Russian occupation of 2014. Displays of national mutual sympathies or antipathies reveal themselves in annual voting patterns, which frequently map onto geopolitical and migratory histories (see Yair, 2018). Ukraine, for example, has historically received high scores from other former Soviet bloc nations and from neighbouring Poland, while the Lithuanian diaspora in the UK (especially in Glasgow and London) and in Ireland frequently results in high scores for the Baltic country. The voting pattern between Russia and

Ukraine after the Russian occupation of Crimea likewise correlates with its geopolitical context. Since 2014, Russian and Ukrainian Eurovision juries have consistently refused to award points to each other's song entries. The televote paints a different picture, with Russian audiences awarding full points to Ukraine in the 2021 semi-final, less than one year before Russia's invasion in February 2022. The clash of diverse national performances on a stage of international broadcasting collaboration therefore simultaneously mirrors and reinforces varied forms of identities of national belonging within and against an international framework of border crossing and a history of mobility.

Andrea Bohlman and Alexander Rehding (2013) described Eurovision as 'soft politics' and suggested that music is ideally suited to reveal the complexities that define the interaction between the national and the transnational. Nations employ this soft power, according to Joseph Nye (2022), to garner transnational support. Indeed, Robert Seely (2016) has poignantly described Ukraine's win at Eurovision 2016 with Jamala's song '1944' as a Russian defeat. Eurovision, then, performs a politics of belonging and of difference, continuously negotiating between diverse identities and enabling nations to dance, as Bohlman and Rehding (2013) put it, to the varied tunes of the national and the transnational in the new Europe. Bohlman and Rehding's chapter forms part of a volume edited by Dafni Tragaki (2013), who chooses deliberately politicized language for the book and invokes Europe's long colonial history, entitling the collection *Empire of Song* (see also Meizel, 2015). The national, then, looms large in Eurovision, and it is in the interstitial space between national identity and transnational encounter that Eurovision can be situated.

Drawing on Eurovision in Kyiv in 2005, which played out against the backdrop of the pro-democratic Orange Revolution, Philip Bohlman (2011) has questioned the extent to which music, history and nationalism triangulate and either cohere or contradict one another. Bohlman pondered music's power to shape, reflect or give identity to the nation. We may love to hate music and nationalism, as Bohlman put it, reminding us that it is worth taking seriously the extent to which song not only sings the nation reflectively, but, in fact, sings it into being. Drawing on Johann Gottfried Herder's foundational theory of nationalism, Bohlman reminded us that it is the voicing of shared sound and communal sonic practice that are at the root of the nation. Who sings the nation state, Judith Butler and Gayatri Spivak (2010) asked provocatively, pointing to the access to voice as a constituent element of citizenship and the power of song to performatively construct, subvert and contradict the nation. Singing, and public singing in particular, are significant political acts and constitute claims to the rights of narrating the nation. Martin Stokes has argued that the access to and the practice of sound are crucial for a citizenship 'in conversational, multimodal, decolonizing, task-oriented terms' with a potential to 'shape collaborative

democratic futures' (2023, p 6). With its huge international audience, Eurovision provides a stage, quite literally, for nations to perform their own 'historical fiction', as Catherine Baker (2019a) has called it. Further, in the moment of performing the nation through the transnational mobility of sound, song 'legitimises political structures', to use Ben Wellings and Julie Kalman's (2020, p 17) words.

The Eurovision Song Contest, then, simultaneously acts as a vehicle for transnational identity politics and relies on nationalist constructions of belonging. Marko Pavlyshyn has identified three factors in Ukrainian Eurovision entries: 'the potential and actual Russian reaction to the song; its meaning for Ukrainians in their domestic and international predicament; and potential and actual "Western" responses to it' (2020, p 131). This aspect is well illustrated by Kalush Orchestra's blend of global Western hip-hop with auto-orientalist tropes of folkishness. The Ukrainian song lyrics are directed towards a Ukrainian audience. While Kalush Orchestra suggested that 'Stefania' is about the mother of frontman Oleh Psiuk, the song likens the strong mother/child bond to that of the nation and the homeland, both heightened in times of hardship: 'She gave me a rhythm/ You can't take willpower from me, as I got it from her … I'll always come home, even on destroyed roads'. No sound is more closely associated with nationalism than folk song and folklore (Bohlman, 2008b, p 253) and the music of 'Stefania' signifies national identity, making use of the auto-orientalist strategies so common in Eurovision's narration of the nation on the international stage. Kalush Orchestra prominently pitch the telenka and sopilka, traditional Ukrainian flutes, against a more standard global pop music backing track. Members of Kalush Orchestra also wear traditional folkloric outfits on the Turin stage, with the keptar vest referencing the Hutsul ethnic group from western Ukraine.

At the same time, the sounds of 'Stefania' cross borders and seek to impact transnational discourses. While most non-Ukrainians will not understand the song's Ukrainian lyrics, the phonic message is nonetheless strong, suggesting a nation determined to sound and retain its voice on the international stage. Phonics matter. Ukraine's entry to the 2007 Eurovision, 'Денсінґ Лаша Тумбай' (Dancing Lasha Tumbai) by singer Verka Serduchka, appeared to sound like 'Russia goodbye' to several audiences and was described as offensive in Russian media (see Yekelchyk, 2010, p 229). (Since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Serduchka has decided to sing 'Russia Goodbye' in concerts.) Phonics are thick with semantic meaning also with regards to the music. In addition to the nods to Ukrainian folklore, the perhaps overriding musical idiom of 'Stefania' is hip-hop and rap. The message is clear: on the 'arena for geopolitical debates', as Daniel Montoya (2017, p 8) has labelled Eurovision, Kalush Orchestra narrates the nation as fiercely protective of its identity and yet fully part of Western culture.

‘Hey hey rise up’: migratory aesthetics and transnational collaboration

On 27 February 2022, three days after the Russian invasion, Andriy Khlyvnyuk, singer of Ukrainian rock band BoomBox, posted a video on social media. The recording shows Khlyvnyuk in Sophia Square in Kyiv wearing a military uniform, sunglasses and a dark New York Yankees cap. Holding a rifle, he sings an unaccompanied version of ‘Ой у лузі червона калина’ (Oh, the red viburnum in the meadow). Khlyvnyuk had cut short a tour with BoomBox and returned from the US to join the armed forces of Ukraine. A month after posting his performance on social media, he was injured in battle. The song Khlyvnyuk chose, a patriotic march of Ukrainian resistance, is thick with meaning. Possibly based on folkloristic songs, it exists in numerous versions. It was first published in 1875 by Mykhailo Drahomanov and Volodymyr Antonovych, proponents of Ukrainian nationalism and Europeanization, and it soon became a well-known patriotic anthem, propagating independence. It has a specific history as a song of resistance against Russian rule, and during the Soviet era singing of the song was banned. This became punishable again in Crimea after Russia’s occupation in 2014. Soon after posting, the video went viral and reached global audiences.

David Gilmour, singer and guitarist of Pink Floyd, was first shown Khlyvnyuk’s recording by his daughter-in-law, Ukrainian artist Janina Pedan (see Grow, 2022). When Gilmour saw it, he asked Khlyvnyuk whether he could sample the song and issue it as a Pink Floyd charity single, with proceeds going to humanitarian aid for Ukraine. Gilmour had in fact performed with BoomBox at a benefit concert in 2015, although Khlyvnyuk was not present on that occasion. Pink Floyd had effectively disbanded in 2008, following the death of founding member and keyboard player Rick Wright, but on 30 March 2022, barely a month after Khlyvnyuk’s post and with Khlyvnyuk’s agreement, Gilmour, Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason, bassist Guy Pratt and, on keyboards, producer Nitin Sawhney recorded ‘Hey hey rise up’.

A promotional video followed soon afterwards. Directed by Mat Whitecross, it prefaces the song with sounds of war. We hear a Russian tank, identifiable by the ‘Z’ symbol used by Russian forces in Ukraine, presumably driving on a Ukrainian road, before we see and hear an explosion. The video cuts to Khlyvnyuk standing in military uniform in Kyiv while superimposed text informs audiences of Russia’s invasion, Khlyvnyuk’s artistic and armed resistance and Pink Floyd’s support of the ‘message of resistance’. From here, the video intercuts Khlyvnyuk’s social media post and Pink Floyd’s playing with images of war and refugees. Unexpectedly, the actual song does not begin with the voices of Pink Floyd or Khlyvnyuk, but with a brief excerpt of a traditional choral rendition of ‘Oh, the red viburnum in the meadow’ by the Veryovka Ukrainian Folk Choir. Led in by Mason’s drums, Khlyvnyuk’s

sampled recording follows, harmonized and accompanied by Pink Floyd. After a full rendition of Khlyvnyuk's now accompanied version, Pink Floyd insert a middle section with different harmonic progression that consists of two guitar solos by Gilmour, intersected by Khlyvnyuk's 'Hey hey'. A second full accompanied version of Khlyvnyuk's sample completes the song. It is possible to argue that this is a sensitive sampling of Khlyvnyuk's original recording. Pink Floyd do not add vocals, thus platforming and emphasizing the Ukrainian original. During Khlyvnyuk's singing, the accompaniment is restrained. The final line, with the words, 'гей-гей, розвеселимо!' (Hey hey, we shall cheer!), is sung unaccompanied, Pink Floyd leaving the last word to Khlyvnyuk.

'Hey hey rise up' is a remarkable case of musical mobility and border crossing. It is remarkable precisely because it represents a case of ostensibly static performers collaborating across borders facilitated in part by Gilmour's connection through Pedan to a migratory history. While the musicians did not themselves cross borders for the recording – indeed, Khlyvnyuk had abandoned an international tour to return to his native Ukraine – they employ the technological potential of sound's mobility to narrate and cross aural borders. Technology is the vehicle of creative production, and it is also the vehicle, just as in the case of 'Stefania', to reach global audiences. The musical components, too, negotiate the dialectic of place and mobility. The rendition of 'Oh, the red viburnum in the meadow' by the Veryovka Ukrainian Folk Choir points towards the powers of folk song to signify nationalism. Khlyvnyuk's version, sung in the historic centre of metropolitan Kyiv, invokes the power of the local within a cosmopolitan space, while Pink Floyd's addition of global Western popular music adds transnational aspects.

That the song was issued as a Pink Floyd single 'featuring Andriy Khlyvnyuk of BoomBox' is instructive in this context. (One could perhaps equally imagine 'Hey hey rise up' as a song by Khlyvnyuk backed by Pink Floyd.) Pink Floyd's singer and guitarist David Gilmour made clear the rationale behind the decision to market the song as the first release in 28 years of new original music by one of the world's most famous musical groups:

> I've got a big platform. [Pink Floyd is] the biggest promotional vehicle … it's so vitally, vitally important that people understand what's going on there and do everything within their power to change that situation. And the thought, also, that mine and Pink Floyd's support of the Ukrainians could help boost morale in those areas: they need to know the whole world supports them. (Quoted in Petridis, 2022)

Song proceeds go to organizations for humanitarian aid in Ukraine. 'Hey hey rise up', then, employs the capitalist marketing pressures and strategies

of the Western music industry to promote a transnational collaboration of a song that celebrates patriotism and agitates for support for Ukraine.

It is tempting to employ the theoretical framework of migratory hubs suggested by Nadia Kiwan and Ulrike Meinhof (2011) to disentangle this case of transnational musical collaboration. They posit that hubs are crucial for migrants, providing fixed points along the network of migrant flows and creating a nexus of transnational and transcultural mobilities. While Kiwan and Meinhof refer to migrant communities, their concept of human hubs through which migratory aesthetics travel maps onto the mobile collaboration of Pink Floyd and Khlyvnyuk. Further, acting as a strategic hub, the Pink Floyd brand is the entry point into the Western market and Western audiences. My suggestion to interpret 'Hey hey rise up' as migratory further chimes with the advocacy of Nina Glick Schiller and Meinhof (2011) to embrace music's potential to blur the migrant–native divide and enact a paradigm shift away from methodological nationalism towards transnational approaches.

In my reading, the aesthetics of 'Hey hey rise up' is markedly migratory, regardless of the fact that none of its performers are migrants. Migration is not a necessary, much less a sufficient, condition for migratory art. Mieke Bal (2007) introduced the notion of a migratory aesthetics that circumscribes possible relations with the migratory rather than pinpointing them, continuously escaping attempts to offer fixed definitions. For Jill Bennett (2011), migratory aesthetics may not be a unified or identifiable style, but rather a strategy that foregrounds transitional politics and interstitial spaces. She has suggested that a diverse migratory aesthetics is well suited as a subversive response to oppressive political systems. Bennett highlights the potential of migratory aesthetics to subvert fixed categories of identity, to invert tradition and question our understanding of it, and to form a transnational, mobile communality. 'Hey hey rise up' clearly invokes nationalism, but it also has the hallmarks of the migratory in that it was created in transnational collaboration and, in that sense, might be seen as 'exilic' art (Said, 2002), as the creation of an alternative space with the potential to subvert fixities and totalitarianisms.

In the West, reception following the release of 'Hey hey rise up' was almost exclusively affirmative, with several mainstream media in the UK praising and promoting the song (see, for example, Petridis, 2022, and Savage, 2022). At time of writing, the song's promotional YouTube video has been watched over 12 million times, and comments by viewers in English, French, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish and Ukrainian suggest that reactions across Europe are overwhelmingly positive. Critique emerged from a perhaps unexpected corner. Former bass player and founding member of Pink Floyd, Roger Waters, a controversial figure who left the band in 1985, referred to the song as 'lacking in humanity' and said that it 'encourages the continuation

of the war', which he viewed as 'probably the most provoked invasion ever' (quoted in Willman, 2023; see also D'Souza, 2023).

Who sings for charity? ITV's Concert for Ukraine

On 16 March 2022, British broadcaster ITV announced a benefit concert to raise funds for Ukrainian victims of the Russian invasion. The concert took place less than two weeks later, on 29 March, in the Resorts World Arena in Birmingham. Following a well-established tradition of charitable concerts for humanitarian causes – perhaps the most famous being Live Aid, organized in 1985 by Bob Geldof and Midge Ure – the ITV Concert for Ukraine boasted a star-studded line-up, including performers such as Ed Sheeran, Snow Patrol, Billie Eilish, and the Manic Street Preachers. Ukrainian singer Jamala performed her song '1944', which won Eurovision in 2016. Several British actors and journalists, including newsreader Trevor McDonald, comedian Mel Giedroyc, actress Tamsin Greig and actor Eddie Marsan, read out tributes and reports from Ukrainian refugees. Broadcast in the UK, Ireland and Australia, the concert raised more than £13 million within 24 hours.

Despite the appearance of Jamala, the Concert for Ukraine was notable for its dearth of Ukrainian musicians. For example, Antytila's offer to appear was turned down. Formed in 2007, Antytila are a hugely successful group that, at the time of the Russian invasion, was releasing their seventh studio album. Their 2018 promotional video for the song 'Lego', which at the time of writing has been viewed more than six million times on YouTube, featured a cameo performance by future Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Like Andriy Khlyvnyuk, Antytila's band members joined the Ukrainian armed forces following Russia's invasion. When Antytila heard of the planned concert, they contacted the organizers and posted a message on social media to headliner Ed Sheeran. The video shows Antytila in military uniform in front of a damaged apartment block in Kyiv. Singer Taras Topolia offered Antytila's participation in the concert, performing via video link from Kyiv:

> We are musicians of the Ukrainian band Antytila. … In peacetime, our concerts gathered stadiums. … The war has changed our lives and now we are fighting with weapons against the Russian occupiers. We thank you and all the British people for their support. Believe me, we are grateful, and we will always, always remember this. Today we learned about your charity concert for Ukraine, which will take place in Birmingham. And we offer to make a live broadcast between Kyiv and Birmingham with Antytila temporary [sic] joining the gig remotely. Our band will play our music in Kyiv, a city that has not

> surrendered and will never surrender to the Russian occupiers. You will play in Birmingham. We are not afraid to play under the bombs. Through music, we want to show the world that Ukraine is strong and unconquered. We will fight and sing for victory in front of the whole world that supports us. So, on March 29, we are ready.

The concert organizers rejected Antytila's offer, arguing that 'for this specific concert, it would not be possible for us to feature them, as we are only able to focus on the humanitarian situation, not the politics or the military conflict' (quoted in Lavin, 2022). The parallels with Eurovision's claim to be non-political are apparent. And yet, while the EBU did not impose sanctions on Kalush Orchestra, the organizers of the ITV Concert for Ukraine decided to exclude Antytila.

The absence of performers representing the intended recipients of charitable events and benefit concerts is not unique to the Concert for Ukraine. Bob Geldof defended the decision not to include enough African performers in Live Aid by referring to their lack of popularity among Western audiences, arguing that the fame of participants directly correlates with the financial success of the event (see Davis, 2010). Moreover, the refusal to platform Antytila can be seen in the context of British Right-wing anti-migration politics, in which Ukrainian musicians were refused visas to perform on British soil. For example, members of the Khmelnitsky Orchestra were refused visas to perform in the UK in April 2023 (see Pidd, 2023). The performances were planned as part of a European tour of the orchestra, and in the autumn of 2022 the British government had, on its websites, trumpeted the concerts as a show of British solidarity with Ukraine (see British Embassy Brussels, 2022).

In the 1950s, Donald Horton and Richard Wohl coined the term parasocial interaction to describe the psychological phenomenon of audiences coming to think of on-screen celebrities as familiar or even as friends despite the fact that they have no personal interaction with them. This engenders a sense of ritualistic trust and identification, which, as Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz (1992) have suggested, encourages audiences to back a cause, not because they believe in it, but because they believe that the cause is important to the performers on screen. In the political arena, imagined relationships with prominent media personas and the resulting parasocial interactions have huge potential for persuasion and real-world influence (Demetriades et al, 2023). It is in this context then that one may make sense of the organizers' seemingly peculiar strategy to ask well-known British actors and media personas to read out reports from Ukrainian refugees rather than invite refugees to speak (or sing) for themselves.

In fact, the absence of refugee voices is a common feature in debates about migration. While imagery is widely used to depict suffering, those persecuted

are often portrayed as voiceless. The idea of voice or, rather, voicelessness, is a prominent trope in humanitarian campaigns and in the thinking about forced migration. It raises issues of agency and heterogeneity and invites us to examine humanitarian practices of using refugee voices and to listen to the tropes that emerge through them. Heath Cabot (2016) has pointed out how projects seeking to advocate for refugees in Greece follow the logic of using tragic tropes that fail to represent refugee voices and unwittingly silence them. Cabot argued that ethnographic and scholarly work is complicit in this silencing of oppressed voices, which, in turn, reinforces the power structures that led to the causes of oppression in the first place. Liisa Malkki (1997) has pointed out how narrative representations of charitable causes discursively infantilize and feminize refugees, while Nando Sigona has highlighted tensions 'between dominant representations of the refugee as an agency-less object of humanitarian intervention, and refugees' quest for recognition as political subjects' (2014, p 370).

In a fundamental sense, then, the ITV Concert for Ukraine constructed and reinforced what Josh Kun (2000) has termed aural borders. It is difficult to underestimate the sonic power of concerts reaching huge audiences, like the Concert for Ukraine, in these bordering processes. In fact, it seems to me that the aesthetics of bordering is as least as important as the lines on a map that separate nation states, if not more so. Borders 'are technologies of social circulation; and societies are the products of bordering, rather than the other way around' (Western 2018, p 481). Music may have the potential to engender transnational communality, then, but it also has the power to construct borders with rigid barriers between envoicement and unvoicement, between the access to being heard and silencing. Jopi Nyman and Johan Schimanski (2021) have suggested that artistic representations mediate borders and, as such, are integral parts of bordering processes. They posited that aesthetic forms 'are central to the political process' and remind us of Hannah Arendt's powerful advocacy for access for the voices of oppressed groups. Since ours is a 'world of appearance', visibility and being heard are necessary to achieving political participation and recognition (Arendt quoted in Nyman and Schimanski, 2021, p 3).

Conclusion

The three musical events I explored in this chapter have their own nuances, but they all engage with borders in sound, even in the moment of sonic border crossing. They create, narrate, transcend, reinforce and subvert aural borders. In highlighting the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022 (and is ongoing as I write) and in drawing our attention to the human suffering it causes, they reinforce crisis narratives. They remind us of the idea of voice as a prominent trope in humanitarian campaigns,

turning our attention to issues of agency and heterogeneity, and getting us to listen to the tropes that emerge through them. In so doing, one might argue that they further well-trodden paths of sonic essentialization in which representations of individual refugee stories often carry dehumanizing aspects. They tackle the issue of heterogeneity and the agency of individuals differently, but they all foreground the relationship between voice and silence, representation and exploitation.

Despite such reservations, songs like 'Stefania' and 'Hey hey rise up' do have the potential to engender trans-border communalities. If we highlight their migratory aesthetics, we may find an alternative focus on sound that has the potential to counter methodological nationalisms on which discourses of exceptionalization and lack of access to debates of citizenship rely. Rather than furthering narratives of urgency and crisis, I believe that a consideration of migration through the lens of sound and music can enrich wider understandings of migration and mobility. In a broader sense, my chapter seeks to remind readers that migration is sonic and that music and sound are not on the fringes, but at the centre of real-world politics and activisms. Amid the dominance of visually and textually based media and scholarship, this truism is sometimes drowned out from our engagement with human mobilities. The sometimes cacophonous public debates on migration leave little space for migrant voices, and migratory sounds themselves can seem unvoiced and unheard. The case studies in this chapter thus sit on a dialectic sliding scale between trans-border communality and bordering essentialization. In a disjunctural historical moment of border closures and talk of unprecedented numbers of refugees, of European war and of rising Right-wing extremism, discourses of crisis set by media and humanitarian narratives dominate and narrate movement as problematic. As Philip Bohlman (2012) has pointed out, music can sound the historiography of these disjunctures. Any song that has the potential to narrate, shape and counter them is worth listening to.

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