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9 Theories of Participation

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We are surrounded by forms of collective musical action undertaken entirely for the sake of those who join in, and which produce distinctive forms of collective sociality (a band, a party, a choir, a dance floor). We are invited (if we are invited at all) to get *into* it, to join *in*, to be *in* a groove, and this *inside* offers powers, pleasures, and dangers not available to those on the outside. While a piece of music may be studied at some distance by an observing subject, participation requires becoming part of something. It thus seems to blur the lines between knower and known. The rhythmic patterns and social structures that yielded their secrets a moment ago, the description of which could have fit on a single piece of paper, now fade from attention. Upon joining in, something quite different comes into view: a groove, a circle, a living, moving, musicking entity of which any individual is only a part. Because of these distinctive ontological possibilities, participation has long been regarded as a very particular sort of method, a mode of comportment that sacrifices critical distance in order to reveal a social collectivity larger than any one observer. Generations of ethnographers have attempted to tack methodologically between participation and observation in order to describe the power of collective performance. The participatory worlds that emerge, and their apparently incontrovertible truths, can be overwhelmingly seductive. Especially against a background suspicion about individualist humanism and scientific detachment, descriptions of group participation often ring out in tones of breathless celebration, extolling the pleasures of sharing, belonging, moral conviction, and metaphysical oneness.

Collective performance is nothing new, and the metaphysics of participation has been a source of philosophical controversy since Parmenides. But it wasn't until the twentieth century, in the midst of fervent nationalisms and anxieties about social disintegration, that advocates of participation (from anthropologists to theater directors, from music educators to theologians to political organizers) have argued zealously that we *ought* to participate—not just because it feels good, but because it appears to be "essential to our well-being as individuals and social creatures" (Ede 1997: 6). Others have argued that the pleasures and solidarities of participation can pose distinct dangers: mobs, for example, animated by a concerted totalitarian will, drunk with conviction, are often vehicles for political violence against outsiders (Adorno [1941] 2002; Levinas [1991] 1998; Turino 2008: 205). Much of the debate about the politics of participatory performance hinges on how to characterize the emergent socialities that it produces: as fascistic or radically democratic, as childishly regressive or politically progressive. The purpose of this chapter is not to make a moralizing case either for or against participation in general but to map out the terrain of the debates, trace out key philosophical lineages, and suggest some paths for deeper readings.[1]

Participation: The Philosophical Tradition

The ethnomusicological sense of *participation* refers both to a practical musical relation of absorbed interaction and to a metaphysical relation by which apparently separate beings inhere in a prior unity. This double meaning is implicit in the ancient Greek philosophical term *methexis* (translated into Latin as *participatio*, and thence to English).[2] Methexis referred both to a mode of ritual theatrical performance in which audience members join in and to a metaphysical relation by which apparently separate phenomenal particulars participate in a prior universal form. In the Platonic tradition, methexis is the key metaphysical term that draws a transcendent form together vertically with its worldly particulars and draws together a group of apparently separate particulars into a horizontal unity. One canonical Platonic image of methexis is a single sun that illuminates many things with one light; another is a single cloth laid over a group of people, making a unity out of many individuals.[3] In the Christian tradition, two well-known images for methexis are a single body with many limbs and the ritual partaking of Christ's flesh through communion.[4] Through exegetic commentary, methexis became a key metaphysical resource for Christian theological construals of spiritual unity and relational ontology, and this concept entered the Islamicate philosophical tradition through Arabic-language translations of Aristotle, Porphyry, and Proclus.[5]

Methexis is often contrasted with mimesis, a process of imitative (but never identical) re-presentation. While a mimetic copy always maintains its metaphysical distance from the original (as a movie star might "fall in love" again and again in successive films without actually falling in love), methetic participation is always bound up in immediate unity (as particular lovers participate in Love itself). The opposition between these two terms has been presented in various ways,[6] but from neoplatonic mysticism to Catholic theology to performance studies to groovology, participation nearly always serves as the favored term in a binary, in contrast to a mimetic opposite: presence vs. re-presentation, unity vs. duality, sincerity vs. duplicity, bodily involvement vs. reflective distance, live music vs. recording.

The revival of scholarly interest in participation in the twentieth century was enabled by the sociology of Emile Durkheim (1858–1919), founded on a vision of vast, coherent, supra-individual social forces.[7] In particular, Durkheim's account of "collective effervescence" (transformative ritual moments in which a group of people becomes united) influenced nearly every later theorist of participation:

> Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches them to an extraordinary height of exaltation… [B]ecause a collective emotion cannot be expressed collectively without some order that permits harmony and unison of movement, these gestures and cries tend to fall into rhythm and regularity, and from there into songs and dances.
>
> ([1912] 1995: 220)

Note that here, participation in a pre-given social totality *generates* rhythmic regularity; in ethnomusicological construals, it is usually the other way round.

The specific turn to participation as a philosophical theme is largely due to Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1857–1939), a philosopher and avid follower of comparative metaphysics who was deeply influenced by Durkheimian social theory and fascinated by missionary accounts of failed conversions. Lévy-Bruhl projected the methexis/mimesis binary onto a pair of distinctive *mentalités*: a "primitive" mentality characteristic of indigenous peoples and a "civilized" mentality characteristic of the European colonizers who (much to their own surprise) often failed to convert them.[8] Lévy-Bruhl claimed that these unconvertible "primitives"

were not, as many European commentators had long assumed, racially deficient; they simply had a different mentality, one founded on participation. By participation, "the one and the many, the same and the other" were bound together in a "mystic community of substance." Whereas for a "civilized" mentality, an individual may *represent* a group, a participatory understanding maintains "actual identity" between one and many without any sense of logical contradiction (1926: 77). Lévy-Bruhl's work was met with near-unanimous criticism from anthropologists—partly for his uncritical acceptance of missionary accounts and partly for his racialist generalizations about so-called primitives.[9] He later renounced the idea of a distinctive "primitive mentality" in favor of the idea that participation was "available in every human mind" ([1938] 1975: 100–101).

Lévy-Bruhl's vision of participation as a universal human capability became central to the work of his most forceful exponent, metaphysical literary theorist Owen Barfield (1898–1997). Inspired by the anthroposophical mysticism of Rudolf Steiner, Barfield offered a critique of alienated modern "idolatry," in which objects are taken to have an independent reality apart from their perceivers (58) and prophesied a coming new age of "final" participatory awareness, in which the world would appear in its luminous participatory metaphysical aspect (1965: 133). Crucially, this was a matter of ethical refinement for Barfield; he insisted that the practices that enable final participation require not just "hypothetical thinking," but active "thought, feeling, will, and character" (141). The idea that participation is a cultivated way of being that remedies modern alienation was at the foundation of later ethnomusicological construals of participation, such as Charles Keil's activist writings (discussed below).[10]

Participation: The Political Tradition

Treatises on statecraft, war, and liturgy have long recognized the small-scale, local solidarities produced by singing and moving together,[11] but participatory music making appears to have arisen as an explicit model for large-scale, socially cohesive political formations with particular force in the age of nationalism. From the French Revolution to Indian anti-colonial nationalism to the Industrial Workers of the World, participatory singing (on the scale of dozens of people) cultivated a vivid sense of vast, unprecedented macrosocial solidarities (on the scale of millions).[12] In interwar Germany, the ideal of *Gebrauchsmusik* (participatory music for useful purposes) animated both communist and Nazi populisms, elevating the communal vitality of everyday song and dance over the "decay" of bourgeois high art (Eisler in Pritchard 2012: 35; Shirer in Turino 2008: 207). German musicologist Heinrich Besseler was an early advocate of participatory music as a method of forging a national community. He celebrated simple participatory pieces for singing and dancing in glowing, Heideggerian terms: we engage in everyday singing and dancing "with personal commitment," he believed, in contrast to the contemplation of "high art" music, which occurs at a distance through a special "aesthetic attitude" ([1959] 2012: 60). But after World War II, the taint of Nazi ideology—and Besseler's own enthusiastic participation in the Nazi party—largely discredited the concept of Gebrauchsmusik (Hinton [2001] 2014).

The vision of a participatory politics grounded in participatory performance, however, was given new life in the postwar American counterculture. The civil rights movement repurposed traditions of African American song performance for building solidarities of resistance (Turino 2008: 215). The forms of political theater practiced by Amiri Baraka (1934–2014) and other experimental writers and theater directors invited audiences into "ceremonial communion" with the performers, fusing a loose communitarian politics of solidarity with a metaphysics of unity (Azouz 2015; Bishop 2012). The New Left of the 1960s, repelled by the totalitarian horrors of Stalinism, looked to spontaneous, non-hierarchical

forms of improvised participation for a political model. Informed by these traditions, a distinctly improvisational set of political practices emerged among recent anti-war and anti-globalization activists, visible in forms of "direct" participatory performance (such as street theater and the various "occupations" of the Occupy movement) that seem to present an alternative to the failings of "indirect" politics (i.e. merely voting for representatives) that mirrors in politics the metaphysical distinction between methexis and mimesis.[13]

Participation: The Ethnomusicological Tradition

Ethnomusicologists are not alone in their attraction to participatory performance. Both the method of participant-observation and the topic of communal joining-in have long been matters of reflection for ethnographers. In particular, studies of small-scale egalitarian societies, such as the Mbuti of Central Africa (Turnbull 1961) and the Kaluli of Papua New Guinea (Schieffelin 1976; Feld 1982), have emphasized the links between participatory performance and social cohesion. Participation has likewise been a key theme in the field of performance studies (see Waterman, this volume), emerging out of collaborations between ethnographers (Richard Bauman, Victor Turner, Linda Hess), experimental theater directors (Amiri Baraka, Paul Carter Harrison, Joseph Chasikin), and theater scholars (Margaret B. Wilkerson, Kimberly Benston),[14] broadening the theoretical scope of participatory performance beyond staged theater into group bonding, public ritual, and politics. The concern of Victor Turner (1920–1983) with the processes and transformational effects of participatory ritual (rather than its abstract forms, artifacts, or symbols) led to his theory of *communitas*: "anti-structural" moments generated by participatory performance in which participants step out of conventional structures of social status, bonded together in a notional, ritually sustained equality (1969).

But ethnomusicologists, perhaps more than anyone else, have thematized participation as a distinctive form of collective musical practice. Some, to be sure, simply note that some music is meant for joining in, not for spectators. But the most extensive and influential accounts of participation are infused with the metaphysical, intellectual, and political traditions outlined above. Building on a disciplinary aversion to the supposed mimetic inauthenticity of high art and mass media, as well as a disciplinary attraction to the methetic immediacy of performance, ethnomusicologists have long celebrated the power of participatory music to cultivate unity. Alan Lomax (1915–2002) teased out a cantometric link between the participatory "vocal empathy" of Pygmy choral singing and the famously egalitarian "cooperative style of their culture" (1962: 437).[15] Edward Henry's studies of South Asian folk song led him to a distinction between nonparticipatory and participatory music; the latter was aimed at "sonic unity" (1988: 149). Martin Clayton has demonstrated that the force of synchronized rhythmic entrainment is so strong that Hindustani *tanpura* players can unintentionally fall into sync when making music together (2007). John Miller Chernoff grounds participation in a normative formulation of African performance: "the African orchestra is not complete without a participant on the other side" (1979: 50). Drawing on Alfred Schutz's formulation of "inner time," Ruth Stone charted out a sophisticated account of the "inside" of Kpelle song, sustained by "temporal and sonic fit" between performers, which allows a group of participants to "[go] down the same road" together (1982: 71). Victor Grauer goes so far as to claim that the participatory musical practice of polyphonic interlock (as in the "Pygmy/Bushmen" style he identifies throughout the world) is the oldest and most fundamental musical practice in the world, providing the basic condition of possibility for egalitarian social life (2006).

The first to systematically introduce participatory metaphysics into ethnomusicology was Charles Keil, a wide-ranging scholar of African and American musics. His theory of

participatory discrepancies (PDs) (1987, 1995) explicitly drew inspiration from the metaphysical tradition of Lévy-Bruhl and Barfield. But Keil was also a musician and a veteran of the American participatory counterculture that looked to spontaneous involvement rather than aesthetic distance as a remedy for alienation. He thus drew on his practical experience with the "groovy, sensual musics of the world" (1995: 1) to link metaphysical participation with a participatory politics. Keil had already marked out the conceptual territory for this theory in earlier work (1966), which counterposed processual "engendered feeling" (linked to the pleasures of swing, movement, and dance) against syntactic "embodied meaning" (linked to the temporality of delayed gratification, aesthetic distance, and above all to Leonard Meyer's theory of musical feeling [1956]). By 1987, Keil had re-conceived this binary in terms of participation and alienation, joining the solidarities of political resistance ("the opposite of alienation from nature, from society, from the body, from labor") to a Barfieldian participatory metaphysics of unity. "If you can participate once," he wrote, "in one song, dance, poem, rite, you can do it more times and in more ways until you are 'at one' with the entire universe" (1987: 276). One might expect that the musical expression of this metaphysical oneness would sound like eternal droning unison, but Keil argues that it is precisely *discrepancies*—processual tensions that never quite resolve into a stable sonic unity—that invite participation. PDs in music may be rhythmic ("the little discrepancies within a jazz drummer's beat, between bass and drums, between rhythm section and soloists" [277]) or textural ("the blended harmonics of two trumpets … a certain bright and happy sound that invites people to get up and dance" [278]).[16] But in all cases, the "urge to merge" (1987: 276) in participatory oneness is brought about by dynamic tensions rather than resolutions and is itself a form of lived cosmology, in which "the universe is open, imperfect, and subject to redefinition by every emergent self" (1994a: 171).

The theoretical power of Keil's work, however, is not in offering "mere ideas" (Keil, personal communication to Feld, quoted in Feld 1988: 104). Like Barfield, Keil teaches by example; his poetic style (filled with lilting rhythms, ecstatic interjections, and participatory exhortations to a prior "we") performs, rather than merely describes, these discrepant soundings. He offers an invitation to dance. One prominent interlocutor to take him up on this invitation was Steven Feld (see the discussion of groove, below). Their many years of improvised dialogue, shot through with interruptions and provocations (published as the book *Music Grooves* 1994b), foreground the active process of theorizing. Two key theoretical dispositions emerge in this work, and they are mapped onto a twentieth-century cultural geography of Manhattan: the "uptown" of official scholarship (heady, intellectual, reflexive, distanced, mimetic) and the "downtown" of poetry and musicking (groovy, emotional, activist, involved, participatory). Keil's practical ethics of doing theory was quite explicit:

> rather than saying that we need to think through the fixed concepts in order to grasp the groove…it's the reverse; we need to groove more in order to break open some concepts, drop others, keep all mere ideas at a safe distance.
>
> (Keil, personal communication to Feld, quoted in Feld 1988: 104)

Thomas Turino brought participation into the mainstream of "uptown" ethnomusicological inquiry in the 2000s. Turino explicitly draws on Keil's work on participation (2008: 26) and shares his zeal for lived participatory relationships in which "we feel, for those best moments, as though our selves had merged" (19). His key theoretical distinction, between participatory music and presentational music, was at first a way to account for a distinctive indigenous participatory ethic of the Shona people of Zimbabwe, which, he argues, invites "the fullest participation possible" and where "there is little or no distinction between performers and audience." This is contrasted with a presentational capitalist-cosmopolitan

ethic that "emphasizes rationalist control of the performance, increased objectification of the art object, and the distinctions between artists and audience that make ticket and recording sales possible" (Turino 2000: 46–50). The distinction between participation and presentation later became the key guiding theme of his influential *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (2008).

Turino's approach is novel in several ways. First, while Keil tends to focus on the small-scale dynamics of groove and participation, gesturing only occasionally toward pre-given "societies," Turino is deeply concerned with the power of participatory performance to *shape* cultural formations. This emphasis on the politics of participation offers an alternative to the politics of re-presentation that had dominated ethnomusicological studies of identity in the 1990s. Second, Turino's account of participation is pitched in terms of C. S. Peirce's semiotics (see Beaster-Jones, this volume), accounting not only for linguistic reference, but also for non-verbal signs that seem to mean what they mean directly—by virtue of association and resemblance rather than arbitrary symbolism. This expansive semiotics gives Turino a means to describe the power of participation as a participatory immediacy, rather than a symbolic mediation. Turino pays particular attention to one of Pierce's sign types, the *dicent-index* (a "sign of actual relations and fact") by virtue of which "direct kinesic and sonic response to others may well be experienced as a deep type of communion, although one can rarely fully express the feeling in words" (1999: 241). In Turino's later work, he creatively maps Peirce's ontological categories (the *thirdness* of mediated re-presentation, the *secondness* of direct relation, and the *firstness* of pure being) onto an original "phenomenology" of musical states (2012).[17] Thus, in Turino's scheme, distanced reflection on music corresponds to thirdness; direct participation corresponds to secondness, in which "participants are fully in the moment and integrally united with each-other-and-sound-and-motion" (2014: 204); and firstness corresponds to an ineffable state of pure being, where "all thought and perception have ceased" and where the conscious self "is in-and-of-itself" (205). At many points in Turino's writing, distanced reflection and thirdness in general is set up as a sort of problem to be solved, presented as a barrier that keeps us from "the most direct way of being-in-the-world" (2014: 213). For these moments, Turino's ethical prescription is very much in tune with Keil: "we should simply participate" (213). At other times, unlike Keil, Turino also suggests a competing ethics of a "balanced self" that requires distanced reflection as well as participation.

Turino also offers a vision of participation that is ethnographically observable from the outside, drawing on social scientific theories of rhythmic solidarity—synchrony (Hall 1983), flow (Csikszentmihalyi 1975, discussed below), and "muscular bonding" (McNeill 1995). It is partially for this reason that Turino's version of participation has proven to be such a handy resource for ethnomusicologists who want to account for the power of collective music making (Widdess 2013: 124; Fischer 2014: 18; Miller 2016). Diane Thram's inquiry into music's therapeutic potential posits a single efficacious principle: it is participation (the "joining of one's individual energy with the communal energy of the whole") that generates "a physical release, a unique buoyancy, a feeling of being carried or made weightless," all of which "has a therapeutic effect…on the entire being of the individual" and generates a (presumably desirable) "loss of self-consciousness" (2002: 135). As we will see, the controversies over participation often hinge precisely on the ethical and political value of this self-consciousness.[18]

Related Theories of Musical Process: Groove, Musicking, Flow

Groove, in its technical sense (developed rigorously in Steven Feld's "Aesthetics as Iconicity of Style" [1988]), is not so far off from its casual sense: a distinctive rhythmic dynamism, ever-changing yet coherent, like a gait, that one enters into. Even on the scale of seconds,

it is easy to feel when one has entered a particular groove. Like participation, grooviness is known in part by its pleasures: "pleasurable sensations ranging from arousal to relaxation," "a positive physical and emotional attachment," comfort, and "feelingful participation" (1988: 75). But one never simply grooves in general; one is necessarily in some particular groove or another. Responding (like Keil) to Leonard Meyer's canonical formulation of style (1967), Feld's grooves are always local and specific. But unlike Meyer's highly mediated metaphorical workings of style, the particularity of each groove lies, in principle, in an unreflective, "iconic" homology between style and lifeworld. [19] In other words, each groove, in principle, not only *seems* natural and inevitable but actually *is* a "direct" and "feelingful" connection between the "thing-out-there" and the "feeling-in-here" (1988: 93). The model groove that Feld returns to again and again is *dulugu ganalan* ("lift-up-over-sounding," a Kaluli practice of creating collective, non-overlapping, layered musical textures). Dulugu ganalan, to the extent that it is a groove in Feld's sense, is in principle iconic with a general Kaluli style of ethics, politics, and labor: "collaborative autonomy," "anarchistic synchrony," "non-hierarchical yet synchronous, layered, fluid group action" (83–84). To conceive of dulugu ganalan as a groove, then, is to consider it as a "distilled essence" (74) of Kaluli life.[20]

These distilled essences can, in principle, be heard in recordings, allowing comparative work on groove across many places and times without extensive participant-observation. This enables Kofi Agawu, for example, to assert that groove in general and a specific kind of African groove in particular (rooted in divisive time, inviting participation) is the essence of African music in general, an aesthetic and ethical lingua franca across hundreds of ethnicities; non-groove practices (such as the additive time of declamation or reflective listening) emerge only as occasional exceptions to the rule (2015: 258–59). Mark Abel, on the other hand, claims that groove is something rather more musically and historically specific: metrically multi-leveled, pulse-based time marked by syncopation and backbeat, originating in early twentieth-century Western popular music (2014). Though Abel's narrow sense of groove likely would not accommodate Ewe dance music or Kaluli dulugu ganalan, he nonetheless follows Feld's path through style and iconicity, suggesting that groove is essentially emancipatory, reworking the "the abstract, alienated time of capitalism" into a "praxial figuration of a liberated temporality" (256).

The creative reworking of the term *musicking* by Christopher Small (1927–2011) opens similar ontological questions about essence and process. The word itself is no stranger than the common English word "picnicking," and has for centuries been used to refer to singing, dancing, and playing instruments. But Small's technical usage is far broader: "to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by [composing], or by dancing" (1998: 9). This much seems flatly relativistic. And yet it becomes clear that, for Small, the morally normative way to "take part" is through participation. His account of concert hall listening practices, for example, describes a loss of sociability, a lack of communication and social contact among performers and audience members (27).

More importantly, musicking opens a crucial analytic horizon, directing our attention to actions (singing, listening, amplifying, dancing) rather than to musical objects (works, scores, recordings, genres). As with the conventional usages of dulugu ganalan (Feld 1988: 83), *to musick* grammatically requires us to consider verbs alongside nouns and thus to emphasize process over product. A rigorous commitment to this analytic would disclose a world in which "there is no such thing as music" because "music is not a thing at all, but an activity, something that people do" (2). This offers rather different possibilities than does *groove*; a hard ontological commitment to processes could never disclose anything as fixed as a distilled essence. The musicking heuristic likewise opens up a rich practical politics of

musical *action*, in contrast to the more familiar interpretive project of excavating the politics contained in a musical object. For example, it opens the consideration of violent (176), misogynistic (150), and disruptive (160) *acts* of musicking, rather than simply assigning abstract violence, misogyny, or rupture to a text.

A rather more individualistic way of describing participation in music is through recourse to the concept of *flow*, given its technical sense by psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: "the holistic sensation that people feel when they act with total involvement" (1975: 36). Flow states seem to occur in complex activities (such as basketball, chess, or rock climbing) that are neither boringly easy nor frustratingly difficult (49). Like participation, flow is defined oppositionally against a taken-for-granted background state of self-consciousness and reflective cognition. Flow thus stands out in relief against what it is *not*, marked by a *lack* of dualistic, distanced reflection (38), a *limited* field of stimuli (40), an *absence* of extrinsic goals, and a *loss* of self-awareness (42). On the surface, this would seem to account well for many everyday musical pleasures. But Csikszentmihalyi begins and ends with the individual, and thus his sense of "flow" does not account easily for the emergent socialities of participation. To the extent that there are other people involved at all, flow emerges against a static social backdrop with fixed rules in which there is "no need to negotiate roles," "no deviance," and no ethical reflection "about what should or should not be done" (43). While most ethnomusicological accounts of collective musicking concern themselves with forms of social relation, flow largely foregrounds pleasures, annoyances, and sensations. Indeed, the basic psychological terms of flow analysis are grounded in the economy of individual attention (49), and the principal theoretical utility of flow is in accounting for the intrinsic pleasure that a flow activity offers a single person (1). Even the "politics of enjoyment" that Csikszentmihalyi hazards (185 and passim) is grounded in arranging for the personal contentment of individual laborers at work, rather than in any sort of solidarity, resistance, or structural reform. Ethnomusicologists have nonetheless found ways of applying the notion of flow to manifestly relational situations, in which flow states emerge precisely from group interaction (e.g. McLeod and Herndon 1980; Turino 2008; Widdess 2013). As Turino points out, flow is only one means among many for achieving a participatory "secondness" (see above) of direct relation (2014: 206).

Participatory Listening

For many advocates of participation, merely listening to music is presented as the opposite of joining in. But this assumes a very particular figuration of listening (distanced, aesthetic, structural, seated, still), geared toward discerning the large-scale designs of art music and thus modeled, in many ways, on seeing at a distance.

There are, of course, other ways of listening, some of which would seem to be inherently participatory. Jean-Luc Nancy, for example, construes listening to *timbre* as a sort of resonance characterized by "methexis: participation, contagion (contact), contamination, metonymic contiguity rather than metaphoric transference" ([2002] 2007: 22). In contrast to a violent politics of the "objectifying gaze," Nancy's participatory "politics of sonority" offers a political vision founded on mutual resonance between free individual subjects, which Lauri Siisiäinen, writing on Nancy's work, characterizes as "free from the domination of the gaze" (2010: 40, n13; see also Erlmann 2010). Architectural theorist Paul Carter has likewise advocated for a move away from a mimetic, visualist politics of re-presentation to a methetic "acoustic knowledge paradigm" modeled on the ambiguities of ever-present echoes and mishearings, an orientation to listening that "presupposes a participatory model of making and marking" (2001). Ana María Ochoa Gautier's account of clashing regimes of aurality in colonial Colombia draws on Carter's work to highlight the participatory

ambiguities of echoic mishearing, in contrast to the mimetic certainties of colonial sonic re-presentation (2014). Maria A. G. Witek likewise focuses on the aural capabilities ("the groove state of listening") that make participation in groove possible in the first place (2009). In her account of "deep listening" practices, Judith Becker argues that a porous, participatory form of the self is necessary for trancing, in contrast to a "bounded, unique, inviolate" self that resists trance (2004: 89).

The very prospect of a number of people participating in a shared musical world would seem to likewise require some notion of shared practices of listening: shared temporalities, shared attunements, shared ways of musical being and knowing. Steven Feld's *acoustemologies* (common, mutually resonant acoustic epistemologies among groups of aural subjects) would thus seem to be a necessary condition of participation (2015). One conceptual pitfall in assuming such a principled commonality, however, is the conflation of a contingent, local acoustemology (say, of a choir or a hunting party) with a putative ethnic acoustemology characteristic of an entire culture "group." Ethnomusicologists have thus had to resist the temptation to assign acoustemologies to cultures (e.g. "Kurdish acoustemology," "Yanomanö acoustemology," "Western acoustemology") as though each person in a society, by virtue of their essential habits of listening, spends their days in a single, culturally determined acoustical world. This would reduce a processual, participatory way of knowing to a static collective re-presentation, returning us to a familiar "net of reifications" (Feld 1984: 405) made of imaginary, internally homogeneous (though empirically elusive) social totalities. (The theme of listening practices and Feld's acoustemology are also central in the field of sound studies. See the chapter by Meizel and Daughtry in this volume.)

Participatory Powers and Dangers

From corporate drum circles to esoteric initiation rites, from *Lock! Her! Up!* to the Occupy movement to ecstatic Sunday morning hymn singing, participatory performance is everywhere. Participation, famously a tool of anti-capitalist countercultures, has also become a cornerstone of the "new capitalism," widely prescribed for teambuilding exercises and optimizing productive efficiency (Vrakas 2015; Saddler 2017). Given this wide practical reach, few theorists have been willing to categorically embrace or reject musical participation as such. The loudest critic of participatory musical consciousness was Theodor Adorno (see Manuel, this volume, and Wallach and Clinton, this volume), who famously warned that "rhythmically obedient" types attracted to popular dance music were "susceptible to a process of masochistic adjustment to authoritarian collectivism" ([1941] 2002: 460). But even the most enthusiastic advocates of participation acknowledge this much. Keil warns of "participations fueled by fear and desperation" that foster "cargo-cult beliefs," and he furthermore suggests that participation can become "the very essence of fascism" when practiced by "large-scale nation-state organizations with aggressive purposes" (1987: 276). (Keil's litmus test for these bad participations is, however, a bit vague, hinging on whether they are "large-scale" and whether they exacerbate inequality (277)—the latter of which would seem to reduce participation to a mere means to an end.) Turino, noting that "the powerful semiotic potentials of music can be used in mass movements for dangerous ends," dedicates a sizable chunk of *Music as Social Life* to Nazi participatory music, the explicit goal of which was that "the German people might be willingly led anywhere and to do anything," (2008: 210). Nor is participation necessarily empowering, as evidenced by the mandatory participatory singing forced upon Jewish prisoners in Nazi concentration camps (Brauer 2016). Even Durkheim's participatory collective effervescences took on a chilling new dimension after his death. The rise of fascism in Europe shocked his student Marcel Mauss, who was horrified to see that the populations of modern nation-states "could be

hypnotized … and set in motion like a children's roundabout." Where an earlier generation of sociologists could romantically hold out hope that "it was in the collective mind that the individual could find the basis and sustenance for his liberty, his independence, his personality, and his criticism," the twentieth century revealed the political dangers of ecstatic participatory collectivities (Mauss in Lukes 1985: 339 n 71).

The very idea of participation remains intellectually seductive, and one well-established critical tradition urges caution precisely for this reason. Michelle Kisliuk points out that the "mystique" of egalitarian participation may well lead ethnographers to overlook subtle contestation, resistance, and inequality in group performance (2000). The very idea of radical immediacy underlying so many ethnomusicological construals of participation would seem to surrender the critical function of ethnomusicology in unveiling oppressive forms of mediation and mimesis. Harris Berger critiques Keil's model in which sonic discrepancies automatically and universally generate ecstatic participation, pointing out the severe moral stakes of a normative theory in which refusing to participate can only be aberrant (Berger 2010: 82–84). David Hesmondhalgh's careful consideration of participation locates the desire for social integration in capitalist modernity, critiques the "reflectionism" that assigns participatory politics to participatory performance, and hazards a psychoanalytic caution about founding a musical politics on a yearning for unity (2013: 100–01). Emmanuel Levinas noted that Lévy-Bruhl's conception of participatory being had, for better or worse, reshaped twentieth-century philosophy by placing collective social experience at the center of being (1998: 51); he cautioned that a participatory orientation in which "the subject not only sees the other but *is* the other" ([1947] 1987: 43) collapses alterity into a comprehensive oneness, reducing true ethical responsibility into the mere maintenance of an all-consuming self.[21] To the extent that participation excludes "any possibility of duplicity" (Turino 2008: 136), it is a form of power, albeit a pleasurable one, that establishes "an order from which no one may keep his distance" (Levinas [1961] 1979: 21). In a recent essay (2017), I have extended Levinas's critique of participation into a consideration of what ethnomusicology might gain from a musical metaphysics grounded in irreducible alterity, rather than participatory unity.

Is there an "iconicity of style" between performance and politics that would allow us to groovologically distinguish between participatory singing at Nazi rallies and at civil rights marches simply by listening? Or is participation simply a neutral, universal musical technology put to various uses? Is it possible to imagine a laudable participatory politics in the service of an oppressive political regime? Or does advocating for participation simply amount to advocating for the political solidarity of a favored social formation? No one doubts that participation can be pleasurable and powerful. But if we are willing to admit that these practices may *feel* good without *being* good (or, for that matter, without necessarily being *evil*), then theories of participation offer a way of understanding these powerful entanglements of performance, metaphysics, ethics, and politics.

Notes

1 The notion of participation is related to the notion of social practice, and this latter theme has been of interest to scholars in a wide range of academic disciplines and intellectual movements in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. On social practice and practice theory, see Text Box 2.1. —Harris M. Berger.

2 The translation of *methexis* into Latin and then English adds some conceptual baggage not found in the Greek. For example, "participating" in a survey, a vote, a program, and so forth, involves hundreds or millions of independent parts-of-a-whole who never meet each other (Gadamer [1988] 2007: 311). The theological sense of active liturgical participation (*participatio actuosa*) joins the Greek and the Latin meanings, so that participation in ritual is, in principle, a form of immediate unity (see Skeris 1990).

3 In Plato's dialog, the *Parmenides*, these metaphors are presented as a provisional dialectical scaffolding, rather than as a final answer (131b), and the familiar images of "horizontal" unity are quickly shown to be inadequate to the larger metaphysical task at hand.
4 For example, 1 Corinthians 10:16–17, in which Paul speaks of methexis and *koinónia* (communion) in parallel, as though they were synonyms, or 12:26, where he writes "if one member suffers, all suffer together."
5 On participatory metaphysics in Christian liturgy, see Cavanaugh (2003: 184) and Tilling (2015: 265–66). Rice (2016) reports a similar metaphor, perhaps inspired by the Pauline image in the Sunni homiletic tradition. As far as I know, there has not yet been a comprehensive study of participation in Arabic literature, but among the Arabic translations for *methexis* were *al-qubūl* and *al-ishtirāk*. I am grateful to Carl Ernst and Cristina D'Ancona for these leads.
6 For more on this tradition, see especially the neoplatonic commentaries of Plotinus, Proclus, Porphyry, and Iamblichus, many of which are available in Algis Uzdavinys's *The Golden Chain* (2004). Book IV of Proclus's commentary on the *Parmenides*, in particular, is dedicated to problems of methexis.
7 Durkheim's ideas were foundational for the development of functionalism and structural-functionalism in the discipline of anthropology. See Berger and Stone (introduction, this volume).
8 S. A. Mousalimas (1990: 44) points out that Lévy-Bruhl was concerned with the metaphysics of the methexis/mimesis binary from the beginning to the end of his work. See also Throop (2003).
9 See especially the thorough and sympathetic critique of Lévy-Bruhl by Edward Evans-Pritchard (1934), as well as his productive correspondence with Lévy-Bruhl (1952).
10 On the notion of modernity, see Manuel (this volume) and Wallach and Clinton (this volume).
11 See McNeill (1995) on the history of military "muscular bonding," Van Orden (2004) on music and dance in early modern French military discipline, Kertzer (1988: 13) on ritual and politics in classical China, and Skeris (1990) on participation in liturgy.
12 On French Revolutionary song, see Mason (1996) and McKinley (2008). On singing in Indian anti-colonial nationalism, see Bakhle (2005) on musicologist Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande's nationalist vision of India singing a song together and see Schultz (2013) on nationalist kirtan performance. On the songs of the Industrial Workers of the World, see Denisoff (1983) on "magnetic" traditions of participatory song.
13 On horizontalism and direct action, see Sitrin (2012) and Dean (2017). See also Gayatri Spivak's wise caution against conflating political representation and metaphysical re-presentation (1988).
14 It's worth noting that Richard Schechner, one of the founders of the field of performance studies, fits in all three of these categories. For a further discussion, see Waterman (this volume).
15 On Lomax, see also Manuel (this volume).
16 For multiple perspectives on PDs, see the special issue of *Ethnomusicology* dedicated to this topic (1995).
17 Though Peirce himself seldom used this term, Turino's approach is intended as "phenomenological," in the broadsense that it is meant to account for lived experience. On Peirce, Turino, and phenomenology, see Berger (2015, n. 13).
18 For a related discussion of self-consciousness in performance, see Berger (this volume).
19 Like Turino, Feld looks to Peircean iconicity as a justification for im-mediacy. The role of the Peirce's interpretant, however, is passed over in silence. On homology theory, see Manuel (this volume).
20 See Feld's and Keil's conversation "Dialogue 2: Grooving on Participation" in *Music Grooves* for a dialectical elaboration on the idea of internally consistent, holistic "shared culture" (1994a: 161).
21 On Levinas and phenomenology, see Berger (this volume).

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