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On Redefining the “Local” Through World Music

Jocelyne Guilbault

Dove

Why is Defining the “Local” a Major Preoccupation Today?

Since the early 1980s, much literature in the social sciences has sought to explain the processes involved in the restructuring and transformation of the political and economic world order.¹ Within this framework, many critics have emphasized the globalization of culture and, correspondingly, the cultural industries and new technologies involved in the process of change. What interests me, as an ethnomusicologist who has been involved mainly with the study of local communities, is how the status of the “local” has been transformed within contemporary societies, but also why and for whom it has become vitally important to redefine it today. In this paper, I will use the phenomenon of “world music” as a case in point to assess the primacy of this question in the ongoing politics of popular musical culture.

It is no coincidence that the question of defining the local has become such a pressing issue in the 1990s, not only for small and industrially developing countries but also for traditionally dominant cultures. The globalization process of the 1980s has aroused fears worldwide, with varying reasons for different people, depending on their position in the scale of power and empire. For dominant cultures, the move towards a fundamentally delocalized world order articulated around a number of scattered production and distribution centres has imparted the fear that their traditional monopoly over the world financial and industrial system is being threatened (Robins 1989, 148).² In relation to the music industry, the importance given by the intellectuals to defining the local can therefore be connected to a growing concern that this change in the power structure has led to the fragmentation of the dominant traditions’ well-established markets and, consequently, to a redefinition of their relationships with other cultures.³ One of the results of a decentralized record production and distribution and hence of a more diversified global market is that popular musics such as rock, which have been dominant so far, can no longer be seen as “more central and less ethnically or racially specific than any other form” (Straw 1991, 372). The ethnicization of the mainstream forms of musics that had become almost synonymous with the so-called “global culture” can be viewed as both a sign and recognition that their historically privileged position is being challenged by the emergence of many other musics as well as networks of production and distribution. The current preoccupation in the traditionally dominant cultures with defining the

local can therefore be interpreted as a manifestation of the crisis occasioned by the repositioning of dominant cultures among themselves as well as with the "others."

The question of defining the local for small and industrially developing countries has come from at least two profoundly contrasting, albeit interrelated, perspectives. For some, it has come as a reaction linked with the fear of losing cultural identity in the face of worldwide homogenization. For others, defining the local has been perceived as an opportunity to redefine and promote local identity. In the context of decentralized production and distribution, this issue has been regarded as a cultural and political necessity. It has also sprung from an economic interest and opportunity to promote difference and to take advantage of the world market now more easily available thanks to the greater access to new technologies and polyilateral distribution networks. In both cases, however, the effect of trying to define the local has been subversive, causing people to question the significance of the opposition global/local, as it has been understood mainly in small, industrially developing countries. The tendency to equate dominant cultures with global culture because they have become the common denominator in many spheres of activity is being reviewed in light of the fragmentation of many markets, including that of music. Global culture is now thought of as contested terrain where there are only locals engaged in a battle over transnational markets.

The Battle of the Locals

The two contrasting perspectives on the global/local nexus has generated two types of actions, one directed to the protection, the other to the promotion of the local cultural capital and identity. The fear of losing local identity has been transformed for a number of politicians and social activists into a new interest in developing public policy to promote local, traditional cultures and, in some cases, in creating various protectionist measures against the invasion of foreign media programs by satellites.⁴ This growing interest in public policy already figured prominently in Wallis and Malm's exemplary study of twelve small countries (1984). In the 1990s these concerns now occupy central stage and dominate conference themes of organizations involved in the study of small, industrially developing countries, for example, the theme of the Caribbean Studies Association's 18th annual meeting in May 1993, "Caribbean Public Policy: Preparing for a Changing World," and recent publications featuring titles such as "Music in the Dialogue of Cultures: Traditional Music and Cultural Policy," edited by Max Peter Baumann (1991).

Although these efforts have been largely concerned with promoting as well as protecting the local, other measures and actions have tried to support and develop ways to enter and participate more actively in the international markets. Governmental projects and private associations in many small, industrially developing countries including those in the Caribbean have sponsored workshops or long-term courses to train their own people in developing, outside the traditional professional and organizational cultures of the nation-state, the appropriate skills to deal with globalization in many sectors, including the music industry. New categories of professionals in these milieus have emerged, including, for example, international copyright lawyers along with managers and distributors involved with the international markets.

One way of interpreting these changes is to say, as has often been the case, that those who could be identified here as the "small locals" have simply assimilated the tools of the dominant traditions—hence the thesis of the greying of cultures. The other possibility, which I prefer, is to see,

homogenization and differentiation not as mutually exclusive features of musical globalization...but as integral constituents of musical aesthetics under late capitalism. Synchronicity, the contradictory experience of the universal market-place alongside proliferating neo-traditional codes and new ethnic schisms, is the key signature of the postmodern era (Erlmann 1996, 469)

Within this perspective, the appropriation by the small locals of the skills and resources of the dominant traditions must be seen as part of the necessary strategy (or as the necessary condition) for differentiation to emerge within the realm of commodity aesthetics. As Erlmann aptly remarks, "homogeneity and diversity are two symptoms of what one is tempted to call the Benetton syndrome; the more people around the globe purchase the exact same garment, the more the commercial celebrates difference" (Erlmann 1996, 469).

By way of illustration, examining the case of world music is particularly revealing. The term "world music" is a label with such ambiguous references that a typology of the various kinds of music it groups together would be necessary in order to understand its multifaceted meanings. Even then, however, no consensus would be reached: depending on the country, distributors, record-shop owners, and music journalists, the social, political, or demographic position of certain minority groups in a given country, the category of "world music" would vary in content and include various sets of musical genres.⁵ In this paper, I am referring only to what could be regarded as a subset of world music, that is, popular musics that have emerged in the 1980s; that are mass-distributed worldwide yet associated with minority groups and small or industrially developing countries; that combine local musical characteristics with those of mainstream genres in today's transnational music-related industry;⁶ and that have reached the markets of industrialized countries (cf. also Rijven 1989)—in essence, musics such as *zouk*, *rai*, and *soukous*. Within this framework, world music is associated with a specific time—its time of emergence (the 1980s)—and to specific conditions, in this case, the distinctive features of that decade's political and economic scene, including the breakup of the communist block; the resurgence of many ethnic groups; the realignment of various communities and the formation of new alliances; increasing problems of multiculturalism and polyethnicity; the consolidation of the global media system; and the reconfiguration of the world economic order with a more fluid international system—all marking the end of bipolarity. It is also associated with particular groups of people, defined more in relation to their racial affiliations, their group's economic position in the world economic order, their culture (in the sense of value system), and their traditional geographic space, that is, the location where these groups have been traditionally living, than in terms of gender, generation, or class.

7
Defining
"world music"

These denotations still seem to persist for world-beat music journalists and radio announcers, as well as for many of its listeners, despite the current claim in academia that "contemporary world music does not emanate from locally circumscribed peasant community or artisan's workshop... but the ubiquitous nowhere of the international financial markets and the Internet" (Erlmann 1996, 475).⁷ I would argue here that, while people from small and industrially developing countries take part in the new global culture, they can also choose to be in and out of this "space we all inhabit, irrespective of whether we find ourselves in the migratory or in the stationary mode" (Erlmann 1996, 476), they can also choose to be in and out of this specific transnational culture or only partially in it.⁸ As will be discussed further, there is not only one transnational culture in the postmodern era, but several, which are, depending on the sector of activity or historical time and context, "usually more marked by some territorial culture than by others" (Hannerz 1990, 244).

The world musics to which I am referring illustrate par excellence how people from small and industrially developing countries have established in and out, border-zone relations with the transnational record-industry culture deeply marked by the dominant traditions. On the one hand, world music takes advantage of the skills and resources of the dominant traditions: it appropriates the latest technology and know-how in its production, marketing, and distribution and features many of the musical characteristics of the mainstream musics heard on the global market. By doing so, it uses a kind of lingua franca, if not understood, at least recognized by everyone. At the same time, however, world musics such as *zouk*, *rai*, and *soukous* juxtapose musical characteristics of a particular culture without any attempt to blend these elements with those of the dominant musical traditions—with the result that the output of the small locals is still clearly identifiable. The result of these strategies of composition—and here one really can use the word "strategies"

to refer to the conscious choice of musical elements made by these musicians, as was attested by field work on *zouk*⁹—has meant greater access to the music market controlled by the dominant traditions, as most commentators have been quick to point out. What has been acknowledged less often, however, is the fact that this new access to the markets of industrialized countries, designating the connection traditionally referred to as center/periphery, has constituted one of the venues, although not the only venue, by which world musics have developed commercial value and public recognition.

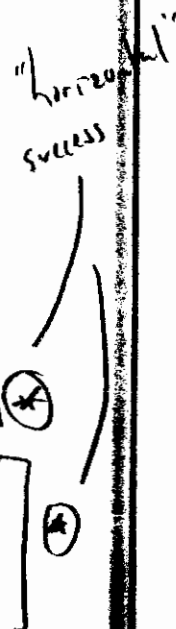
Except for rare cases such as the *lambada*, the emergence of world musics on the international market cannot be said to be tributary to the blind acceptance or/and promotion of something different by the dominant media. On the contrary, most musicians from small and industrially developing countries have experienced great difficulty in getting their musics played on the “big” channels. For example, until 1987 the French media (with the exception of “Libération” and “Actuel”) ignored the leading *zouk* group, “Kassav”—even after it had performed in 1986 before an audience of some 300,000 at the Pelouse de Reuilly in Paris (see Figure 8.1). The reasons given for this absence of media coverage could be interpreted as a translation of the malaise caused by the breakdown of formerly well-established colonial-inspired broadcasting categories and the consequent forced changes of rapport with the others. In reference to “Kassav,” for example, a French journalist commented sarcastically on her compatriots:

It seems they were too “tan” for the Champs-Élysées. On NRJ (Nouvelle Radio Jeune), Creole is still considered no better than static. They weren’t oppressed enough to make it into the pages of *Résistance*. And to pass muster at *Mosaïque*, you need to be a genuine immigrant. Until further notice, Kassav is French, given that they are Antilleans. (D. Elizabeth 1987)

For “Kassav,” however, there was little doubt: according to Gene Scaramuzzo, most of the interviewed members of the group were convinced that “this refusal to legitimize an Antillean identity separate from France [was] behind the media’s downplaying of *zouk*” (Scaramuzzo 1986, 31). Whatever the reasons, whether political or economic (the fear of the market fragmentation already discussed), the attitudes of the dominant media changed through force of circumstance. Musicians from small and industrially developing countries received some attention after succeeding in highly visible venues. After 1987 for instance, “Kassav”’s series of sold-out Zenith concerts in Paris compelled the French media to acknowledge the group’s huge success and subsequently *zouk* productions in general.

In fact “Kassav”’s success, like that of many other minority groups, has come about gradually by relying first on its compatriots at home and in diaspora. In the same way, to continue with “Kassav,” the group’s popularity in Paris has grown out of the support of West Indians in exile, African immigrants, and other minority groups. Its success was initially achieved horizontally, as it were, with the “small people,” as opposed to vertically (climbing the ladder) with the help of the “big people” in power—in this case, the French.¹⁰ “Kassav” has secured its position by creating a relatively autonomous space with minority groups despite the indifference and at times animosity of the French media—a space on which it has focused, in the words of the group’s founder, Pierre-Edouard Décimus “to show that things can happen, outside France’s realm of influence.” The promotion of Antillean music by and for other “small people,” he added, is a new way to assert itself vis-à-vis world political and economic powers.

Two important points follow from this example. One demonstrates how the music industry can no longer be conceived of in terms of the center/periphery theory, based on the principle of bilateral market.¹¹ World musics are an ideal illustration of how they are connected to poly lateral markets.¹² From another perspective, and this is my second point, the musicians of world musics also show that they are cosmopolitans who function in and out, at will, of what has been traditionally



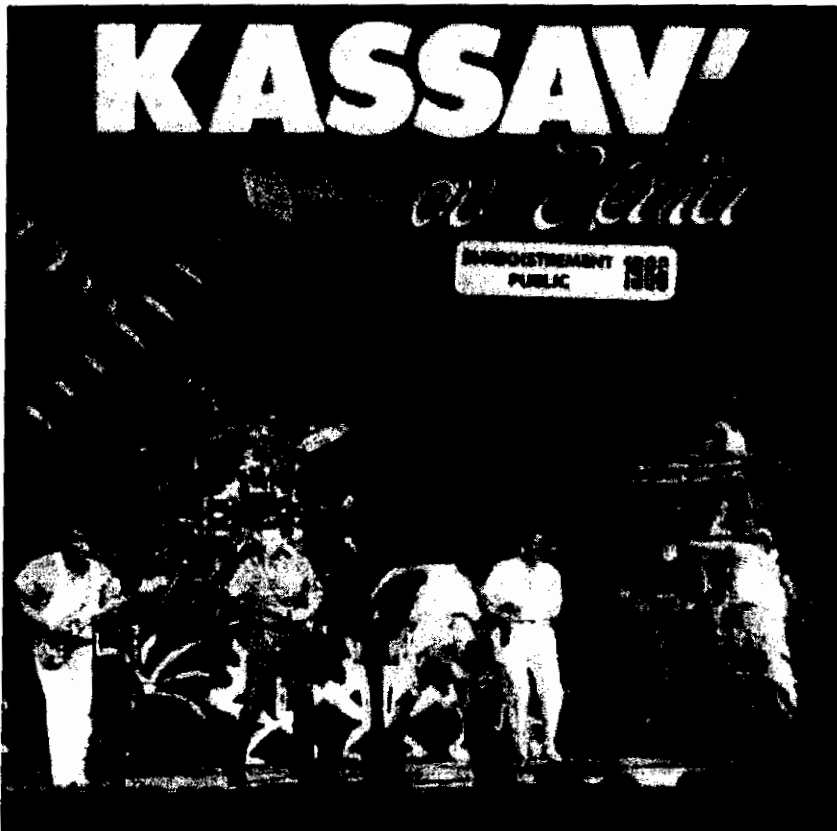


Figure 8.1 The zouk group "Kassav" Reuilly in Paris.

perceived as the totalizing "system," that is, the system controlled by the dominant cultures. Over the juxtaposition of elements from their traditional music, they have adopted the musical language of the dominant traditions and play that card commercially to enter the industrialized countries' networks. At the same time, they have also established connections with other musical cultures and music markets, in this instance by emphasizing some of the distinct musical characteristics akin to theirs or else by forming new alliances with other minority groups occupying similar positions in the world political and economic order. The acknowledgement of these new networks and market spaces does not negate the complete commodification of musical performance that is ubiquitous in the market place and through which these new contacts have been made in the first place. Rather it shows how the central role of the dominant traditions is now deemphasized through these polyilateral exchanges and new markets. From the small and industrially developing countries' perspective, defining the local within the new practices just outlined refers far more to choices motivated by political allegiances, cultural bonds, or economic necessities than to genealogical heritage or the sharing of a particular geographic location.

In the dominant traditions, the fear caused by market fragmentation and the change in relations with other cultures has led them to resort to old strategies in order to reinforce their control and power over emerging sociopolitical, cultural, and economic destabilizing forces. The creation of the label world music is itself very telling. For an ethnomusicologist, the use of the term is certainly not new. What is new, however, is the way it has been appropriated in the 1980s initially by eleven independent record companies in Britain and then by multinational labels in campaigns to promote non-Anglo-American pop music artists. By using this label in record stores, "the public would have an accessible section where they could find the records of [these] artists" (Rijven 1989, 216). The fact is, as Simon Hopkins argued in the notes to the compact disc "World Music: Songs from the Global City:"

There's seldom been a more confusing, arbitrary or universally detested a marketing term as the WM-words, and of all the arguments against it, this one seems the strongest: if all it takes for a record to end up in the world music rack is for it to come from Brazil, France, Iceland or in short, anywhere that the Queen's English isn't the first language, then the term is—let's be blunt about it—a meaningless load of crap. (Hopkins 1991)

This, I would argue, is why the label is in fact so telling.

On the one hand, it openly encapsulates a very wide range of new musics and, by so doing, succeeds more easily in controlling a market that had so far remained untapped and uncircumscribed by the dominant music industry. This label, in effect, has served as a means of recuperation and appropriation of popular musics that have developed "outside," as it were, the traditional channels of the Anglo-American industry. While helping to expand the economic market of the dominant cultures, the label world music, which Erlmann describes as "the mesmerizing formula for a new business venture, a kind of shorthand figure for a new—albeit fragmented—global economic reality with alluring commercial prospects" (Erlmann n.d., 8), could be thought of as an attempt to banalize difference by placing all these non-Anglo-American musics under the same rubric.¹³ This would indeed reflect the post/neo-colonial tradition, which continues to be based on the notion of a bilateral market, conceived in terms of us and them, center/periphery, superculture/subcultures, transcendent versus ethnic cultures.

It is symptomatic that, at the mass media level, in the industrialized countries, radio programming perpetuates the rigid categories of colonial times right into the postmodern era. In 1992 radio broadcasting in France and Holland still tends to isolate non-Anglo-American pop music artists from the mainstream, elite pop stars. Whether they are played on the main radio stations, periphery radios (in France) or illegal radios (in Holland) where they receive the greatest amount of airplay, musics such as *zouk*, *rai*, or *soukous* are still ghettoized in specific programs. In many ways, the label "world music" has thus reinforced the divide between so-called mainstream Anglo-American popular musics and non-Anglo-American musics by being used as a catch-all category and placed in the margins of the dominant music industry.

These broadcasting policies and practices in industrialized countries stand in sharp contrast with the more recent developments on radio stations in small and industrially developing countries and reflect the very different interests and goals that are at stake in the two cases. In the small Creole-speaking countries of the Caribbean, for example, *zouk's* international success has played a major role in the deghettoization of Antillean music in local radio programming, particularly in the French Antilles, where it is no longer confined to special programs. Since 1989 Antillean music has competed with other international musics on the hit parade; on Guadeloupe's "Radio Caraïbe International," for instance, it appears as part of a new program appropriately called "Melting Pot." This program publicly recognizes *zouk's* international value and, at the same time, frees Antilleans to express other musical tastes. As Guadeloupean political scientist Eric Nabajoth explained, it shows how *zouk's* international success has helped Antilleans to lose their inferiority complex and to feel comfortable in competing with others on the market (personal interview, 20 April 1990).

In the case of the dominant traditions, however, at the individual level, "elite pop artists," as Steven Feld remarked,

are in the strongest artistic and economic position in the world to freely appropriate what they like of human musical diversity, with full support from record companies and often with the outright gratitude of the musicians whose work now will appear under a new name. (1988a, 36–37)

Music appropriation is certainly not unique to artists from the dominant traditions, but what is clear is that according to Feld, "the flow of products and the nature of ownership is differentiated

When James Brown breaks down complex African polyrhythms and incorporates them into dense funk/soul dance tracks, we don't speak of a powerful Afro-American star moving in on African musical turf. Ten years later, when Fela Anikulapo Kuti seizes the essence of the James Brown scratch guitar technique and makes it the centerpiece of his Afro-Beat, we don't speak of a powerful African star moving in on Afro-American turf. The economic stakes in this traffic are small, and the circulation has the revitalization dynamic of roots. But when the Talking Heads move in on both James Brown and Fela Anikulapo Kuti and use scratch, funk, Afro-Beat and jùjú rhythm as the basic grooves for *Remain in Light*, something else happens. The economic stakes—however much attention is drawn to the originators as a result—are indeed different, the gap between the lion's share and the originator's share enlarged, and the discourse of race and rip-offs immediate and heated. (Feld 1988a, 37)

This example clearly illustrates that world music has come to be increasingly located in issues of power and control "because of the nature of record companies and their cultivation of an international pop music elite with the power to sell enormous numbers of recordings" (Feld 1988a, 37). While world music has attracted Anglo-American musicians to its new materials, products, and ideas, it has been kept, as much as possible, at a comfortable distance from the main channels of promotion and distribution.

World Music and the Creation/Confirmation of Space

For the small and industrially developing countries, world music has in many ways contributed to the redefinition of the local. For one, it creates considerable stress in the countries of origin by underscoring how its relations with the international market reformulates local traditions and creative processes.¹⁴ As it emphasizes the workings of the world political economy at the local level, world music renders the definition of the "we" as a site of difference more problematic for the locals. It challenges in fact the traditional way of thinking about the "we" as a self-enclosed unit by highlighting its relational character.¹⁵

At another level, world musics have contributed to some degree to the repositioning of the local cultures to which they are associated, by being part of a world movement that advances the desire of every nation not only to be recognized but also to *participate* in the workings of global economics and power. In this connection, *zouk* provides a case in point. The apprenticeship of "Kassav"'s Antillean musicians in the French recording industry—from recording-studio high technology, to marketing techniques, to acquiring the know-how to attract sponsorship and develop a star image—has ironically led them to conquer this same market. "Kassav," as well as—eventually—other *zouk* groups and singers, has indeed become such a dominant force in the French music business that it has convinced French authorities of its competitive strength on the international market. After having been segregated socially, culturally, and economically for years within the French system, Antillean artists not surprisingly felt a sense of victory in the choice of an Antillean female artist (Joelle Ursull) to represent France at the 1990 Eurovision competition.¹⁶

In its contribution to the redefinition of the local, world music, as mentioned earlier, faces a double bind. On the one hand, in order to assert a distinct local identity within the dominant system, musics such as *zouk*, *rai*, and *soukous* are forced to a great extent to use the dominant system's language (its technology, for instance).¹⁷ In the process, they necessarily take on some of the characteristics of the system from which they aim to distinguish themselves. On the other hand, as Louise Meintjes points out (1990, 68), "to regulate and incorporate subordinate groups, the dominant class is forced to reformulate itself constantly so that its core values are not threatened. In reformulating itself it necessarily takes on some features of the subordinate groups that it suppresses."¹⁸

double
bind
wm
in pop music
industries

To regulate and incorporate subordinate groups in the music industry, the dominant cultures have, as we discussed earlier, created a label. This in itself has helped confirm their power to define the "others" and to level their differences and means of differentiation by framing them in a single category. In this sense, world music has been treated more as an additional commodity to market and control than as an agent of change in the redefinition of the status or position of the dominant cultures in the music industry. At the same time, while many world musics may have seemed to confirm the central value of the mainstream language of popular musics, they have paradoxically attracted the attention of elite pop artists and enabled them to explore new aesthetics. World music seems far ahead of other fields in its use of active social forces that are diverse and contradictory as agents of change along with its reliance on both local and international forces in shaping local identities. Although world music may have triggered a subtle transformation of the power centers in the music industry, it remains to be seen whether it will succeed in fostering the acceptance of world differences without parallel shifts in political and economic systems.

Notes

1. I am most grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for sponsoring this research. I want also to express my warmest thanks to Stan Rijven and Marcia Rodrigues for their stimulating comments and support. This is a revised version of a paper presented at the International Colloquium of IASPM held at Carleton University, Canada, 30 October 1992.
2. The threat felt by the dominant cultures of losing their monopoly over the music industry can be connected with at least two factors, the first associated with the creation of new and commercially important music markets outside of the traditional channels of production and distribution. The means to produce records in small and industrially developing countries have existed since at least the 1960s. What is new and what can be seen as a threatening force, however, is the polylocal networks of distribution that have emerged in the 1980s among minority groups. "Kassav," for example, produced by the independent Antillean producer Georges Debs, had already achieved fame not only in the West Indies but also in France and in French Africa and had important commercial value before it signed contracts with CBS. The second factor can be related to the shift of power among the dominant cultures themselves, which Reebee Garofalo illustrates in describing some of the profound structural changes in the ownership of the transnational music industry: "Only one of the top five transnational record companies—WEA (Warner Brothers/Elektra/Atlantic), a division of Time-Warner—remains in U.S. hands, and in 1991, Time-Warner entered a partnership agreement with Toshiba and C. Itoh to the tune of \$1 billion. Further, with its \$6.6 billion purchase of MCA in 1990, which included Geffen Records and Motown, Matsushita has also made a bid for a share of the international marketplace. To the extent that the United States is identified as the main imperialist culprit in the exportation of pop and rock, it must be noted that the United States is no longer the main beneficiary of the profits" (Garofalo 1992, 6).
3. This is reflected, for instance, in the social sciences, particularly in anthropology, where debates over the changes in relations with other cultures have led to a critical examination of how ethnographic authority has been assumed and "displayed" in scholarly writings. Cf., for example, Clifford 1983, Clifford & Marcus 1986, Geertz 1988, Marcus & Fisher 1986, to name only a few.
4. The notion of "traditional" cultures has become increasingly problematic in relation to the new emphasis placed on the globalization of culture. Whether invented or not, I take the term "traditional" cultures in Hobsbawm's sense, that is, as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past" (Hobsbawm 1983, 1). Within this framework, it should be noted that "traditional" cultures are in fact defined from an ideological point of view and are consequently subject to redefinition locally as new political orientations arise. For a thorough discussion of an example in Guadeloupe, cf. Lafontaine 1983.
5. In this regard, it is interesting to note, for example, that in the United States, where there is an important Latino population, *salsa* is usually not considered world music (because it is no longer perceived as foreign), whereas in Britain, with a considerably smaller Latino population, the same genre is included.
6. The musical characteristics of mainstream genres that are commonly integrated with musical languages and instruments of non-Western origin typically include the use of instruments such as the electric bass and guitar, as well as synthesizers, along with the adoption of harmonic progressions based on the Western classical tonal musical language.
7. The emphasis on geographic space to identify a world-music group or singer is, according to Dutch music journalist Stan Rijven, deeply influenced by the pop music practice in the West, which always focuses on "localizing" the music, by identifying its place of origin (e.g., the Manchester scene, Prince from Minneapolis) and the year it was released (personal communication, December 1992).
8. In this connection, see Clifford's insightful article "Traveling Cultures" (1992), in which he skillfully brings out the complexities of traveling cultures and border-zones relations.
9. Cf. Guilbault (1993), in particular chapters 2 and 8. It should be noted that, while many features of world music are in effect selected after conscious choices made by the musicians or managers (from the kind of harmonic language featured

- to the way they dress), not every aspect of the music is consciously decided. The process of Westernization has long been integrated, so that the use, for example, of the electric guitar, has simply become part of the soundscape.
10. On popular music as alternative communication, see Martins (1988). It should be noted that, when I refer to "Kassav's" success as having been initially achieved horizontally, with the "small people," I do not mean to imply that the horizontal connections among "small people" have been in themselves without hierarchies and without internal competitions. An Antillean group is not received the same way as a Latino group in an African community in Paris. The expression "horizontal connections" is used here to highlight the polylateral networks and markets among small people that have been so far largely ignored in popular-music studies.
 11. For a thorough discussion of this subject, cf. Chambers 1992.
 12. Cf., for instance, Pacini Hernandez 1993, in which she describes the polylateral markets that link the Spanish Carib bean.
 13. In their stimulating article "World Beat and the Cultural Imperialism Debate" (1990), Andrew Goodwin and Joe Gore refer to Stuart Cosgrove, who has pointed out that "for many World Beat fans in the West, what is offered is exotism—world music sounds as aural tourism." On this issue, the two authors perceptively comment: "Here we confront the problem of the construction of an undifferentiated, usually African, 'Other'. In merely inverting the interpretation of an Africa or the Orient that remains undifferentiated, do contemporary World Beat and rap culture notions of globalism actually help to reproduce ethnocentric ways of seeing (and hearing) the world?" (Goodwin & Gore 1990, 76–77).
 14. This subject has received considerable attention in relation to co-optation: cf. Frith 1987; Garofalo 1987; Vila 1989; and Randel 1991. On the interrelations of the international and local markets and their implications for musical aesthetics and politics, cf. Coplan 1985; Feld 1988b; Manuel 1988; Meintjes 1990; Turino 1988; and Waterman 1990a, 1990b.
 15. On this issue, cf. Clifford & Marcus 1986; Cohen 1985; Marcus & Fisher 1986; Grenier & Guilbault 1990; Rabinow 1986; Rosaldo 1980; Turino 1990, and Waterman 1990b.
 16. Eurovision is an annual song contest in which many European states and a few other countries around the world take part.
 17. Keil noted the same politics at work when he observed: "In class society the media of the dominant class must be utilized for the style to be legitimated (1985, 122).
 18. This quotation from Meintjes was inspired by Stuart Hall's article "Culture, Media and the 'Ideological Effect'" (1979). Hall's analysis of the dialectic situation is echoed by many other writers, cf., for example, Garofalo, 1987, 89.

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The Canned Sardine Spirit Takes the Mic

Marina Roseman

Old Man Pungent: The Temiar Spirit Medium

Old Man Pungent, a Temiar spirit medium in the community of Kengkong in the forest of peninsular Malaysia, was known for his biting humor, ascerbic wit, brazen stance. By the time I arrived in 1982 to his highland Temiar village far upstream on the River Berok, he had heard from lowland village relatives about my plans to study, observe, and record Temiar healing ceremonies. Old Man Pungent, or *Ta? Acuj*, had also heard about my tape recorder and microphones; indeed, on trips to Malay market towns on the forest's edge, he'd seen Malay pop singers on television, singing into their mics. Master performer that he was, he'd watched them playing to their audiences through this cone-shaped device that sucked the animated voice up and spewed it back out. Though wary it might steal the head soul that flows into voice as animated spirit, this ribald medium also saw in the microphone another potential prop for his show, a new form of engagement with co-participants and, perhaps, with the larger world of those from 'beyond the forest' (*gɔb*).

And so, after a period of my living, talking, working, singing, dancing with the villagers of Kengkong, when the villagers finally gave me the go-ahead to tape a ceremony, Old Man Pungent had some idea of what he was getting into. For several nights previous, curing ceremonies had been held for a young woman suffering from feverishness, stomach cramps, and diarrhea. Old Man Pungent had been attending to her together with another healer of the village, *Ta? Rəgəəl*, whose name recalled the *Rəgəəl* tree, home of a *barɔh* bird, that fell one day across his path. He had brought the tree trunk home to become part of his house structure, and from that time was known as Old Man *Rəgəəl*. Together, in curing ceremonies, while singing songs given to each of them during dreams, the two men would be calling upon their spirit familiars for assistance in curing.

In preparation for the ceremony, I strung up one of my microphones from the round wooden rafters of the thatched, bamboo dwelling where the healing ceremony was to be held. This mic was suspended over the area where female chorus members, respondents to each song phrase the medium sings, sit before a log placed on the floor, beating pairs of bamboo-tube stampers in percussive accompaniment. The floor, made of bamboo slats lashed together and suspended about eight feet off the ground, reverberates with the beat of bamboo tubes and the movements of dancers: thus,

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