

Introduction

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The presumption that music is an invariably uplifting and ennobling art form is well established and dates back to antiquity. For the Pythagoreans and the Greek philosopher Aristoxenus of Tarentum, music carried healing powers: while medicine healed the body, music soothed the soul.¹ In the much older Ayurvedic tradition, music was (and is) recognised for its holistic influence on both physical and mental processes. Informing both elite and popular ideas as well as the discipline of musicology, this positive and therapeutic view of music has tended to obscure the darker side of the tune, as it were²: the implications of music's long and equally well-founded associations with war, punishment and humiliation across diverse historical periods and cultural and geographic regions.

Despite the tendency to focus on music's benign and positive role, we are confronted today with clear disclosures of its role in torture and human rights violations. Recent revelations of music's use in the detention and interrogation centres of the so-called 'War on Terror' have underlined music's potential to wound and cause suffering – to damage subjectivity by inflicting pain both physically and psychologically. Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib have attracted global media attention, but by no means are they unique cases. As perhaps the most publicized recent examples, they illuminate the problematic nature of the use of music in detention and have provoked much public discussion and debate. From the latter, some key questions

can be gleaned: Can music be considered as a form of torture? Is it music in itself or the high volume and repetition that transform it into torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment (hereafter CIDT)? Can the use of music in detention be beneficial for the prisoners, or is it always aligned with an intention to subdue, break, and often ridicule them?

These difficult and contentious questions have not gone unnoticed by musicologists, although it must be said that musicology as a discipline has mostly passed over them in silence. Over the last seven years, however, a painful opening up within the discipline has taken place, prompted by a small group of scholars and researchers who have refused the tendency towards avoidance. U.S. musicologist Suzanne Cusick's investigations into the use of music as a weapon of torture in recent conflicts has stimulated vigorous debates within U.S. musicology.³⁻⁶ Her work and findings prompted the boards of the American Musicological Society, the Society for American Music and the Society for Ethnomusicology to pass a joint resolution in March 2008 condemning the use of music for physical and psychological torture. On the other side of the Atlantic, the Research Group 'Music, Conflict and the State', also established in 2008, has sought systematically to expose, investigate, document and theorize the use of music in connection with violence. One special focus of the group's research has been music in detention and in the context of human rights violations, with particular emphasis on music and torture.⁷⁻¹⁰ Researchers in several countries have also been conducting investigations into music in

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Nazi concentration camps, highlighting the widespread and systematic use of music as torture as well as music's role in disciplining prisoners on an everyday basis in the camps.¹¹⁻¹⁵

This volume consists of a selection of papers given at the March 2013 international conference 'Music in Detention', that took place at the University of Goettingen and was organized by the Research Group 'Music, Conflict and the State'. The conference explored the ways in which music has been used in detention camps, prison camps or prisons in diverse times and places. These case studies underscore music's damaging potential when used against people's will (and out of their control) as a means of punishment and/or humiliation. The use of music to harm has often been deployed within programmes and policies branded by the authorities as 're-education'; it has also been used in combination with other torture techniques such as isolation, stress positions, sleep, food and drink deprivation. Music's positive effect on detainees was also explored by a number of papers at the conference, including one in the present volume. The conference aimed, among other things, to bridge the existing gap between academic researchers in musicology and related disciplines, and clinical and legal experts working with torture survivors. Publishing a selection of essays in *Torture* is an important and timely step in this direction. In drawing the attention of experts to the geographical and historical continuities of music's use and abuse, we not only aim to forge collaborations and a fruitful exchange between groups of professionals, we also hope that this exchange will deepen our shared understanding of the extent to which music has been exploited to negative ends by regimes and make this knowledge more available in public discussions of and responses to contem-

porary incidents. More documentation of practices of music in detention, as well as its damaging effects and bodily and mental traces, will be crucial if the revised legal definitions of torture and relevant international law necessary to its prohibition are to be realized. We would therefore like to thank the Editor-in-Chief, Joost den Otter, and his editorial team for giving us the opportunity to reach out to those working in the field of rehabilitation and legal representation of survivors by publishing in *Torture*.

With one exception, all the papers presented here concentrate on the abuse of music in detention. M. J. Grant's opening article explores the question of which musical practices could constitute a violation of the right to freedom from torture and other forms of CID treatment, and reflects on attitudes to the use of music in torture, including in the human rights community. Drawing on illustrations by Dutch renaissance artists and legal sources, Marie Louise Herzfeld-Schild investigates different kinds of punishment that employed real or symbolic musical instruments in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period. Inna Klause's article investigates cultural 're-education' programmes in the Soviet Gulag. Focusing on officially organised musical life in the Gulag from the 1920s to the 1930s, Klause shows that although music-making and listening encouraged prisoners to an extent, it was also perceived by many to be a form of physical and psychological torture. Anna Papaeti's article examines the policy of 're-education' for left-wing political prisoners in Greece during the military Junta (1967–1974) as well as the civil-war (1946–1949) and post-civil-war era. Drawing on interviews with former detainees, Papaeti underlines the damaging effect of music and the need to understand its potential to degrade but also torture individuals. Áine Mangaoang investigates human-

rights violations with regard to the Dance Programme practiced in Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Centre (CPDRC) in the Philippines. She focuses on the dissemination on Youtube of the 'Philippine Prison Thriller' video, featuring the 1,500 unconvicted inmates dancing to Michael Jackson's song 'Thriller'. Mangaoang questions the programme's rehabilitation potential, and points out how it may distract the general public from the appalling conditions of the Filipino prison system.

Last but not least, Johann Buis' article discusses the positive effect that music held for detainees at South Africa's notorious prison Robben Island during Apartheid. Buis explores the use of song and dance by political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela. (This is the only case study in this issue in which music was used freely by political prisoners and was not imposed from above by prison authorities.) He suggests that music and dance formed an internal cultural grounding for the political prisoners which not only enabled their survival in prison, but was also instrumental in shaping public policy later on when Mandela chose forgiveness instead of retribution during his term as President.

This issue of Torture was at an advanced state of production when news of Mandela's death was announced on 5 December 2013, lending new resonance to this closing article. It thus serves as a tribute to one of the few world leaders who has placed human dignity and human rights at the very heart of their political agendas.

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