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Beyond the Global Imaginary: Decoding BBC Radio 3's *Late Junction*

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Figure 3;
Figure 4.

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Prologue: Consuming Globalism

I. Giraffe: 'Global food, world music'

It's early evening and I'm grabbing a meal at 'Giraffe', one of several restaurants huddled under London's Royal Festival Hall.[1] Giraffes have been springing up all around town lately, and some have even jumped the perimeter fence of the M25, but this one, slotted in a smart new arcade of retail outlets beneath the capital's South Bank arts centre (see Fig. 1), is perfectly located for pre-concert eating. 1

Fig. 1: *Giraffe, South Bank Centre, London*

Apart from the food, there's plenty for cultural scrutineers to dine out on. 'Global

Food … World Music …' is the neon promise over the entrance; and inside the experience is served up in a multi-sensory extravaganza of the heterogeneous. The music (fortunately not the food) is canned, but enjoyable enough. At the moment they're playing what sounds like Buena Vista Social Club, but the specifics don't really matter. It's the genre that generates the ethnic ambience – generality at the level of not just Afro-Cuban music, but of 'world music'. Following a similar fuzzy logic, murals make a play of a range of racial representations (not generational ones, though: nearly everyone pictured is young – see Fig. 2a); and it doesn't matter that one of the images (Fig. 2b), a smiling guy with dreadlocks, isn't actually Bob Marley; it still does the job of signifying a happy global diversity that mirrors the music policy.

Fig. 2a: *Giraffe, South Bank Centre, London*

Fig. 2b: *Giraffe, South Bank Centre, London*

But it's with the 'global food' that the eclecticism really gets going. Perusing the menu, I'm torn between Vietnamese Yellow Chicken and Summer Squash Curry, Japanese Crisp Fried Tiger Prawns, or Tangy and Spiced Turkey Enchiladas. And what to have on the side? Wok-Fired Edamame; Hot Cheddar-Garlic Focaccia Bread; or Spicy Feta, Pumpkin, Spinach and Kalamata Olive Salad? Just what genre of food is this? As with the music, anything seems possible as long as it's a bit other (coming not from here), but not too alien; a bit vernacular (no high art music, no haute cuisine), but neither too brash nor too plain (no heavy metal, no muzak; most dishes mildly spiced). Again, the whole point seems to be to evoke a cosy global village that's everywhere and nowhere. Even the more homely Chopped Aberdeen Angus Steak Burger seems exotic when it joins its cosmopolitan companions, Mexican Grilled Chicken and Chorizo Burger, and 'Oz' Lamb Burger, in the global meta-place of the Giraffe concept. 2

I can't resist ruminating on the context of all this. The restaurant, its neighbouring retail units (also belonging to (multi-)national chains), the ethos of retailing itself and its very transience (maybe Giraffe will be history by the time you read these words): it all contrasts with the more highbrow aspirations of the arts complex above. I'm reminded of the high modernist ideals of the Royal Festival Hall's architects, Leslie Martin, Peter Moro and Robert Matthew, who designed the building to be the centrepiece of the Festival of Britain site in the early 1950s – a time of conscious postwar national renewal of the nation state. But the building's present makeover seems symptomatic of a now different historical moment that's reflected in event planning as well as architecture. The South Bank's programmers have also had to buck their ideas up with an analogous refurbishment of their concept of state-sponsored art: one responsive to more diversified markets of musical consumption. Looking through their current brochure of events, I survey a smorgasbord of Shiv Kumar Sharma, Shostakovich, Nitin Sawhney and much early 3

music – a kind of serious counterpart to what's going on in more playful vernacular terms downstairs in Giraffe.

II. *Late Junction*: 'An eclectic mix of music from across the globe'

Another evening, another slice of cultural heterogeneity. Back home in Newcastle I'm having an early night. The clock-radio's set to 'sleep', and I'm dozing off to BBC Radio 3's regular weeknight music show, *Late Junction*. I'm an intermittently loyal *LJ* listener – which status is probably not unrelated to my feelings towards the programme: a mixture of affection and perplexity. It certainly offers a relaxing way to see the day out: it describes itself on its website as '[a] laid-back, eclectic mix of music from across the globe'. To this strapline the programme makers have on occasions added: '…ranging from Mali to Bali, and from medieval chant to 21st-century electronica'.[2] With some justification: the show has a distinct world-music stream, but also treats the past as another place to plunder for its portrayal of the plurality of the contemporary musical world. So, for all its 'laid-back' qualities, the 'eclectic mix' often produces stylistic changes of gear that jolt you back out of slumber. A case in point: it's now about half-eleven and as a soft, ambient electronic piece – 'Coins and Crosses' by Ryan Teague – fades out, I'm startled by a segue across the centuries and a move up-tempo to Monteverdi's madrigal, 'Zefiro torna'. As much as by the music itself, my brain is momentarily kick-started back into activity by the questions I keep asking myself about *Late Junction*: Just what is this show about? What point is it trying to make with these juxtapositions? What kind of mindset assumes that you can unproblematically go from a Lassus motet to a contemporary arrangement of a Cretan lyra melody to a traditional Irish air with no explanation?[3] 4

Recalling my thoughts from my South Bank experience, I remind myself that *Late Junction* isn't an isolated case of this mentality. It taps into an attitude that's very much part of our times, reflected not only in the content of our arts programming, but also in the burgeoning range of musical genres offered for sale in record stores, and in the diversification of music-educational curricula. On the one hand, all this seems a sign of cultural health, and inclines me to feel positive about the fact that Radio 3 now includes programmes like *LJ* in its schedules. On the other hand, the questions that go with these growing tendencies towards pluralist cultural consumption (whether it be in musical or, as in the case of Giraffe, culinary terms) seem to be barely acknowledged let alone explored. Some more versions of those questions go through my mind: What does such cultural plurality actually mean? What do we make of it? What do we make with it? What 'we' do we make with it? 5

But lying in my bed at the end of a busy day, my attention to these questions starts to dilate. The will needed for linear thinking gives way to a random, surreal flow between Monteverdi and thoughts, ideas and images recollected from other parts of the day; and, on this occasion anyway, sleep wins out. 6

At other times, if I want to listen to *Late Junction* less somnolently, there's always the 'listen again' facility on the website, which archives broadcasts for a week. This possibility is of course another aspect of consumption in a postmodern digital era. This sometimes fosters more attentive listening than when I'm in bed, though sometimes, paradoxically, the reverse is the case. Often I listen to *LJ* over the net 7

in the daytime to take the drudge out of low-level chores like dealing with email. Usually I keep one ear open for anything particularly interesting, at which point the focus of my attention shifts. Like many of the people I've talked to about the programme, I use it as a way of discovering new music. And, also like them, I might order a CD or two of sounds I'm particularly taken with. Again there's a distinctly contemporary inflection to this associated act of consumption. Whereas a few years ago you would have had to have written in to the programme for details, waited a week or so for a reply, and sent off your order and cheque by snail mail, these days gratification is almost instant. The BBC obligingly posts the playlist for each programme on *LJ*'s website, complete with CD catalogue numbers, so, if you're on-line anyway, ordering with a credit card is usually only a few mouse clicks away. And since some retailers make it possible to upload music directly, gratification comes ever closer to being instant.

III. Everyday life, global consumption and political economy

8 What emboldens me to tell these personal tales of (post)modern-day cultural consumption is the recent turn in the sociology of music to the study of 'music in everyday life'. Such an approach entails, as Tia DeNora puts it in her eponymous study, 'an attendant shift from a concern with what music "means" (a question for music criticism and music appreciation) to a concern with what it "does" as a dynamic material of social existence'. It moves the focus of attention to the literally mundane (i.e. worldly) uses to which music is put in the lives of many kinds of people; and aims 'to arrive […] at a gallery of practices in and through which people mobilize music for the doing, being and feeling that is social existence'.[4] This approach, then, has an ethnographic dimension that takes seriously not only people's everyday encounters with, and deployments of, music (imbibing it as background music in a restaurant, using it to fall asleep to, listening to it as part of quest for new experiences, and so on) but also what they say about it as individuals.

9 In *Music in Everyday Life*, DeNora is careful to negotiate a position – rather than merely reify an opposition – between what she terms the 'grand' and 'little' traditions of music sociology.[5] Her epitome of the former is (no surprise here) Theodor W. Adorno, whose virtue was to have 'conceive[d] of music as formative of social consciousness', but whose alleged weakness was to have 'provide[d] no machinery for viewing these matters as they actually take place'. I take this to imply that in Adorno's work the actual contingencies of individual musical encounters by empirically real people are glossed over in favour of more generalised grand-theoretical accounts of homologies between musical structures and social ones. By contrast, in her account of the 'little' tradition DeNora refers both to the 'art worlds' approach – in which sociologists 'aren't much interested in "decoding" artworks', but 'prefer to see those works as the result of what a lot of people have done jointly'[6] – and to 'the British tradition of cultural studies, ethnographically conceived' – whose emphasis is 'on what the appropriation of cultural materials achieves *in action*, what culture "does" for consumers within the contexts of their lives'.[7]

10 What's attractive about this 'little' tradition is its care for the anthropological. Proceeding from the premise that the relationship individuals have with their music is in some way meaningful *to them*, it accords respect and legitimacy to both the

relationship and the human beings concerned. However, while DeNora also remains sensitive to the claims of the 'grand', critical–theoretical tradition – evidenced by, among other things, the politicised tone of her ethnographic work – I wonder whether the relationship between it and the little one can be as quiescently handled as it is in her studies: that the little can act straightforwardly as a supplement or corrective to what the grand omits; that the former can gently displace niggling questions posed by the latter. There is a tension here, and indeed one that might be felt across the entire landscape of inquiry into contemporary cultural conditions.

11 For example, sitting in Giraffe, doing a bit of informal imaginary ethnography on the other diners, I speculate on what they're making of the cultural mêlée of music, menu and murals – what they're doing with it, what it's doing for them. Their experience is probably not so different from my own. For one thing, we're all here for leisure-time *enjoyment*. I can't deny that even though for me this visit is an upbeat to the main event of the evening, a concert of twentieth-century art music in the tradition of aesthetic autonomy, both nonetheless form integral parts of the *evening* – the evening as a planned sequence of experiences in which different kinds of pleasure play no small part (did Adorno relax over a meal out before moving on to a concert of Webern?). I also suspect that my fellow punters – among them seasoned postmodern consumers, no doubt – might be no less entertained by, and no less savvy about, the fantasmatic play of signs around them (even if they might not choose to describe it that way). And yet, there's a bigger cultural–political context to all this – the kind of thing that the 'grand' tradition makes its business – which presupposes a more troubling social reality behind the play of cultural appearances. For example, how many of the diners have twigged, and, if so, does it matter to them, that the demographics of the clientele – mostly metrosexual, middle-class, middle income, young to middle-aged, and white – hardly mirrors the heterogeneity of the cultural signifiers being consumed? Is this asymmetry not in some way an aspect of the problematic phenomenon of the global, to which the consumption of world music (those signifiers through which Giraffe sells itself) is also related?

12 The semiotically supersaturated experience of Giraffe (jangling combinations of signs coming in through multiple sensory channels) illustrates well Jean Baudrillard's point about the way we consume now, and about the commodity's metamorphosis from an exchange value to a sign-value.[8] Our desire is increasingly enflamed by our fantasmatic identification with enticingly manufactured worlds of imagery and signification. And while I can't claim any particular originality in drawing parallels between the consumption of food and the consumption of music – especially of ethnic food and ethnic music[9] – I trust my particular purpose in juxtaposing Giraffe and *Late Junction* is becoming clear. Both represent imaginings of a harmonious cultural plurality; both couch this in terms of globality; and in both cases sounds classified as 'world music' are integral to creating this imaginary. (I use the term *imaginary* here both in an informal sense and in a stronger theoretical sense influenced by the psychoanalytic writings of Jacques Lacan, to which I will turn later.)

13 Giraffe plays a pretty transparent game around its real economic *raison d'être*. Any doubt that this is a space ultimately devoted to retailing ought to be dispelled no

later than the point where the bill arrives – assuming one didn't notice the merchandising stand on the way in. But the more important question for this essay is whether a comparable discrepancy between cultural–semiotic superstructure and socio-economic base is going on in *Late Junction*. To many it would be a travesty to claim that the programme is as brashly implicated in capitalist processes as Giraffe. Whatever relation it might have to political economy would seem more mediated, more elliptical (and, in any case, I will later consider critical positions countering the economic-determinist model I am entertaining here). Nevertheless, the challenge is whether *LJ* amounts to anything other than more erudite fodder for essentially the same mores of cultural consumption as Giraffe. Part of my point is that both the restaurant chain and the radio programme have not coincidentally surfaced at a historical moment that has fostered a receptivity to cultural pluralism, and that has created a rich and complicated agenda around what is culturally other – an agenda that by no means precludes making the other an object of desire and enjoyment, and therefore also material for economic consumption.

Against this background it would be naïve to consider a term such as 'world music' as a neutral, merely descriptive, category. And the same would go for the epithet 'global', along with its cognates 'globalism' and 'globalisation'. These are non-innocent signifiers that give a particular, contemporary ideological delineation to the phenomena they signify, phenomena in fact implicated in a long history. In one sense there has always been music all over the world; always therefore the possibility of encountering music that is other to one's own – just as the trading of goods, the trafficking of ideas, the migration of peoples, the transmission and cross-fertilisation of cultural (and culinary) wares across the globe is probably as old as human culture itself (and is probably one way to define it). But what we have now – intimately related to the referent of what is currently termed *globalisation* – is a distinctly more graphic avatar of this process in which our collective cultural consciousness is being shaped by a major neoliberal intensification of market forces and the hyper-commodification of life. The ultimate goal and reach of such markets is indeed global, and with this comes a commensurable geographic extension of social relations involved in the production and consumption of commodities for and through those markets, commodities (including recordings of world music) that may themselves be suitably tailored and sanitised representations of the global. 14

With this discussion of political–economic conditions we seem to have reached the antipode to a music-in-everyday-life approach to the object of our study (we are clearly now in the vein of the 'grand' tradition). Yet these conditions *are* the backdrop of our everyday life, and there is the question of how we are to relate the two dimensions. Against such a backdrop, the following sales pitch for world music (taken from a 'listener's guide') seems almost transparently ideological: 15

> World music gives the […] listener a sense of freedom from the constraints of standardized Anglo-American pop, without the arid, over-intellectual pomposity of much 'progressive' music. World music is both entertaining and different. It takes the listener to a place where the world's various cultures meet happily and in the spirit of festival. It is a force for understanding and goodwill in an increasingly dark world.[10]

The ingenuousness of the notion of ‘a place where the world’s various cultures meet happily’ – given the growing imperilment to such a possibility under the socio-political realities of globalisation – barely needs spelling out. This is the same kind of imaginary place that Giraffe conjures up and entreats us to participate in as part of our experience of the everyday – though we might reconcile ourselves to the deception by treating it simply as a game. More worryingly, the last two sentences of the quotation might justifiably also be predicated of *Late Junction*, and, assuming the music it broadcasts has greater cultural significance for its listeners than a meal out, this possibility seems commensurably more problematic – all the more so in the light of reports that *LJ* was conceived as meeting the needs of ‘a hypothetical listener reclining in a bath, surrounded by scented candles, sipping a glass of Cabernet Sauvignon’.[11] Figured in such an everyday-life situation, *LJ* would seem to be doing little more than play its part in a scenario of pleasurable commodity consumption – thus providing plenty for the ‘grand’ tradition to go to town on. Much depends, then, on whether and how our experience of *LJ*, in this scenario or any other, can be deemed to reach beyond this commodity character.

16 But there is more. The appearance of *Late Junction* (and its concomitant mission to embrace the global, through a selective representation of a musical totality) has been contemporaneous with increasing public awareness of another aspect of globalism, namely that of geopolitics post-9/11. One signal corollary of the so-called war on terror (a campaign that cannot be disentangled from the globalising interests of the neoliberal economic powers prosecuting it) has been to universalise a consciousness of geopolitics. It becomes ever harder to shut out this consciousness as we sip our Cabernet Sauvignon: cultural and economic transactions – acts of production and consumption – must in one way or another now negotiate with it. The notion of world music as ‘a force for understanding and goodwill in an increasingly dark world’ is one construction of the relationship between global culture and global politics. And for all its naiveté the sentiment suggests the important possibility that aesthetic culture might offer different ways to imagine global relations than those currently being enacted. Yet at the same time, it also raises a serious question about the *ethics* of enjoyment of what is culturally other, and indeed about what kinds of enjoyment are appropriate under the gravity of the contemporary situation. So if *Late Junction* represents one of several burgeoning forms of global consciousness, it is also representative in raising questions about the injunction to enjoy cultural plurality, including the question of whether cultural enjoyment can be ethically imagined as occupying a sphere separate from those of economic and geopolitical globalism and their vicissitudes.

17 By this point, which has extended well beyond the scope of an introduction, I have rehearsed in outline much of the basic argument of this essay. What follows, then, is an investigation of *LJ* itself, that seeks to examine various facets of the programme against this background – to see whether there is indeed more to the show than meets the ear.

Approaches to *Late Junction*

IV. Theoretical perspectives

As the word 'decoding' in my title suggests, my premise (also reflected in everything I have said so far) is that beyond the manifest content of *Late Junction* there may be other, latent meanings that could be read out of it. If this is correct, then so too is the argument that *LJ* calls for a critique that is suitably *theorised*. Refuting the common-sense objection that this exceeds what is appropriate to an ordinary, everyday phenomenon such as a radio show, I would proffer the no less commonsensical observation that it is only through such alternative critical registers that we can disclose the wider cultural and political significance beyond the ordinary everydayness that is common sense's creation. 18

One potentially productive theoretical strand is psychoanalytical. The Freudian notion of *LJ* as a kind of dream-work is suggested by the surrealism of its manifest content: sequences of sonic images whose logic is only sometimes explicable through the rational narratives of waking life – narratives based on, say, historical or cultural connections.[12] Pursuing this conceit a little further, one might speculate whether the programme doesn't have a kind of *unconscious*: a place of latent cultural knowledge whose repression is the work of ideology. What also prompts such an interpretation is *Late Junction*'s very inscrutability. For the programme makers provide little in the way of explicit factual statements about their own intentions. In this underdetermined state the rationale for *LJ*'s manifest content remains something of an enigma – a *void* into which we, the listeners, might project various kinds of *fantasy*. These terms, which are in fact more redolent of Lacanian (i.e. post-Freudian) than of Freudian psychoanalytic theory, trigger the thought that *LJ*'s inscrutability may only be an act of semblance, a suggestion of a deeper significance that may not 'actually' be there – at least not in the programme itself, or in the minds of the programme makers. We should therefore not be oblivious to the work of the community of listeners, who play their part in both constructing and filling the programme's voided meaning. Which might be to say that *LJ*'s unconscious is in the public domain. 19

If the issue of meaning is at the heart of this enquiry, then semiology suggests itself as a further theoretical strand. So far, we have identified both programme makers and listeners as sources (however problematic) of the show's meaning; to these two terms we might now add a third: the programme itself, as a material phenomenon or object that can be analysed for traces of the agency of the other two. On the face of it, then, this might suggest a semiological framework along the lines of Jean-Jacques Nattiez's *tripartition*.[13] Under this scheme, well known to music theorists, meaning is understood as distributed across three levels: *poietic* (emanating from the point of creation or production); *esthesic* (emanating from the point of perception or reception); and *neutral* (emanating from the work or object itself, which is a trace of the other two levels, but may be a source of meanings not assumed *a priori* as belonging to either). Yet what's lacking from Nattiez's tripartition is any sense of the dynamics between its terms; any sense of attraction, anxiety, power or (to sum these up in a single notion) *desire*. This brings us back to psychoanalysis; or, more precisely, it suggests potential mileage in a convergence of psychoanalytically and semiologically inflected theory – which is very much the 20

realm occupied by Lacan's critical corpus. Overwriting Nattiez's tripartitional model with a kind of Lacanian transform will quickly generate a suggestive reading of the relationship between the players in *Late Junction*'s game.[14]

21 At Nattiez's esthesic level (the domain of the listener, the pole of reception), we might locate the Lacanian *subject*. For Lacan, the subject's sense of self is not taken as a given, but as something that is produced precisely through (among other things) his/her involvement with language – with what Lacan more broadly terms the *symbolic order*. On Lacan's view it is only by engaging with signifying systems (which, we might add, could include music) that we create our selves. But entering the symbolic order, becoming linguistic creatures, comes at a price. It renders subjects as divided, non-whole entities. This is because the very symbolising systems that enable me to know the world (and that generate the 'I' that does the knowing) simultaneously cut me off from the reality that is not identical with them (and simultaneously split me off from my pre-linguistic self) – all of which generates a sense of *lack*, from which comes desire. In Lacanian terms, a subject listening to *Late Junction* is a divided subject whose listening acts represent some kind of search for pleasure and fulfilment, and some way of finding him/herself in the symbolically constructed social and cultural world.

22 Further following Nattiez's scheme would situate the programme makers of *Late Junction* at the poietic level, the pole of creation. From the perspective of the Lacanian (listening) subject, this domain, the source of his/her objects of perception or aesthetic consumption, is that of some *other* – in fact not just any other, but what Lacan calls the *big Other*. To put it another way around, those involved in institutionally sanctioned acts of making, and hence identified as the authoring agents of culturally legitimated cultural forms, carry an authority that exceeds their everyday personhood and that aligns them with the symbolic order, and hence renders them representatives of some big Other. Hence, in the case of *LJ*, 'the programme makers' denotes not only a set of contingent individuals (actual presenters, production teams, managers etc.) but also a function within a larger order – concretely, an order of programme making within the BBC; more abstractly, an order of meaning making (that is, a signifying or symbolic order) legitimated under the banner of a significant authority (or even an authorising signifier), in this case a national organisation.

23 But what distinguishes the BBC from a state broadcasting authority is that it doesn't demand we identify with it in these terms. Where identification does take place, this is perhaps diverted from the place of the big Other to that of the 'little other', Lacan's *objet petit a*: the object–cause of desire. And it is this domain that we might posit as the Lacanian counterpart of Nattiez's neutral level. In the latter's model this where we find the text (the musical work, the performance) in its material, quasi-objective form.[15] But in the Lacanian scheme, such objects are far from neutral: they are both the cause and the focus of desire. On Lacan's view, these may take many everyday forms, but their role for the subject is always the same: to fill an absence, to plug the gap that renders him/her incomplete, to cover the void of what cannot be rendered to him/her through language or other symbolising systems, and which is the price of admission into the symbolic order. Could it be, then, that each time we listen to a programme such as *Late Junction* we are responding to it as just such an object of desire? Could it be that its pleasures involve playing out

certain kinds of fantasy about our individual and our collective, social selves, so as to mask a gap in our individual and social being?

24 For Lacan such a void can never be filled: we are destined to repeat the cycle of fantasy and desire. However, the final stage of psychoanalysis involves 'traversing' such fantasies – recognising them for what they are, and thus divesting them of their hold over us. By analogy, then, a critical inquiry into *Late Junction* would involve identifying the nature and cause of our fantasmatic investment in its images of a pluralist musical world, so that we could see our way through to some revaluation of the programme and other cultural phenomena like it. This emphatically does not mean dismissing what makes such phenomena enjoyable, nor being oblivious to what might be genuinely enlightening in them. But it is to argue that, critically considered, they and our relationship with them might be re-cast to illuminate the wider cultural politics of our contemporary situation.

25 Readers might want to be reassured that the psychoanalytic tenor of the preceding paragraphs does not saturate this investigation as a whole. If *Late Junction* is operating on some less-than-tractable unconscious dimension, however construed, this forms one end of a continuum whose counterpole juts into the conscious daylight. Broadly (but not entirely) homologous with this, then, is a continuum from relatively empirical to more speculative approaches to *LJ*; and this is also consistent with the commitment, expounded earlier, to consider the show from both everyday-life and critical–theoretical perspectives. On a further continuum is a variety of *modalities of evidence* or materials for scrutiny. These include: (i) factual information about the programme (for even though this is scarce, it is not entirely absent, and certainly remains useful); (ii) analysis of the show itself (a kind of formalist approach); (iii) comparison with related cultural forms, which might include similar programmes issuing from the BBC as well as from other broadcasters, but might also extend to cultural forms of the heterogeneous other than radio shows; (iv) a range of quasi- or virtual-ethnographic data, found largely on the internet, and notably (but not exclusively) in the form of listeners' posts to *LJ*'s website. The order in which I have listed these modalities is broadly commensurate with the various passes I make at the particularities of the programme below; but I should make it clear that I don't intend to follow this or any of the other continua outlined here too schematically; instead they represent a framework to which the following discursive episodes can be related.

V. History, context, identity

26 *Late Junction* is very much a product of Roger Wright's term as Controller of BBC Radio 3. The programme was reportedly conceived by him around the time of his appointment (November 1998), in a move reflecting his then determination to achieve musical diversification and a wider listenership for the station.[16] Wright would be among the first to point out (as he has indeed needed to do to a number of detractors of his policies)[17] that this impulse has well-established precedents in the history of Radio 3: since the incorporation of jazz into its remit in the 1960s, the station has shown a commitment to genres other than those of the Western classical repertory that nonetheless remains its mainstay.[18] However, Wright's take on diversification has had a contemporary inflection in his desire to promote eclecticism within a single programme, and to develop within this, as well as across

Radio 3's broadcasting policy as a whole, the crucial ingredient of world music, explicitly branded as such (see section III, above). Fiona Talkington and Verity Sharp have been *Late Junction*'s principal presenters since its inception in 1999, and have had a largely free hand in selecting content to meet its pluralist brief.[19] They have tended to host the show by turn, usually alternating in fortnightly stints, with guest presenters occasionally standing in for a week or two at a time. It may well be that the period 2000 to early 2007 will come to be regarded as *LJ's* heyday: the time when it regularly went out on four nights a week (Mondays to Thursdays) in an extended slot from 10.15 to midnight. In its earlier days the show stopped at 11.30, and the subsequent extension appears related to its having reached audience figures of 300,000 not long after its launch. More recently, there have been signs that the programme's fortunes might have begun to (f)alter; and anxiety voiced at Wright's plans (reported in the press in late 2006 prior to implementation in February 2007) to reduce *LJ*'s presence on Radio 3 – not to mention to axe its sibling show, *Mixing It* (discussed further below) – might be seen as well founded.[20] At the time of writing, *LJ* broadcasts only three nights a week, and has been shifted an hour later in Radio 3's schedule. For many non-nocturnal listeners – myself included – this has meant pretty much the end of any regular relationship with the show.

As intimated above, *Late Junction* weaves a complicated enigma around its identity. From a listener's perspective, trying to get a fix on what genre of programme it represents feels like trying to identify the kind of food served in Giraffe. Genre identification seems to be part of the game (we *need* reference to genre in order to situate what we're hearing in a socio-cultural context, and so to locate its meaning); but so too is genre subversion or evasion. This is partly because *LJ* plays music that is itself generically ambiguous, and partly because the co-ordinates that map the programme's conditions of possibility – 'music […] from Mali to Bali, and from medieval chant to 21st-century electronica' – ambiguously extend along both geographic and historical axes. As such, it functions as a kind of open text, in which its generic identity becomes as much as anything a matter of listener inference (i.e. located in the esthesic domain, the sphere of consumption). Notwithstanding its world music strand, on some occasions one might think of *LJ* as a vehicle for promoting folk and traditional musics; while on others it seems more concerned with a species of soft contemporary music from both vernacular and art-music ends of the spectrum, or in a category itself defined by a postmodern deconstruction of such dualistic classifications. How, though (looking to the poietic domain, the sphere of production), has the BBC itself positioned *LJ*? **27**

On the one hand, all the signs are that the Corporation wants us to read the programme principally as a world music show. On the Radio 3 website it sits in the station's world music section alongside *World Routes* (a weekly magazine programme presented by Lucy Duran) and the Andy Kershaw show. That Kershaw's world music interests (and his strong predilection for African popular styles) have transplanted successfully to Radio 3 – he had his own show on Radio 1, the BBC's popular music station, between 1985 and 2000 and would deputise on the John Peel show, famous for its promotion of innovative rock bands – itself tells us just how far we've come since the days of the old Third Programme. To the extent that tracks from Mali, Zimbabwe or South Africa are likely to surface on *Late Junction*, the two shows justify their appearance under the same world music **28**

banner. Likewise, the occasional inclusion of field recordings on *LJ* suggests some overlap with the more ethnomusicologically orientated *World Routes*, though it has nothing of the latter's more extended exploration and discursive analysis of specific topics. *LJ*'s world music credentials are reinforced by its annual transmogrification into the BBC World Music Awards, a live televised event whose main presenters have been (again) Sharp and Talkington.

29 On the other hand, one of *LJ*'s closest cognates on the Radio 3 menu was *Mixing It*, classified, in its day, under Contemporary Music on the station's website. *MI* started up in the early 1990s[21], when it heralded an alternative take on contemporary music broadcasting to the then more usual 'classic' modernist content of programmes such as *Music in our Time*, which ran from 1966 to 1999,[22] eventually to be succeed by its Wright-era counterpart *Hear and Now*. *Mixing It* could in many ways be seen as a harbinger of developments in the Wright era – which makes Wright's decision to axe the show from February 2007 all the more puzzling.[23] Like *Late Junction*, *MI* was marked by a more promiscuous, pluralist attitude to genre, tending to juxtapose postmodernist forms of art music with left-field developments on the popular music scene (in its early days it showed, among other things, a responsiveness to the then emerging forms of dance and electronica, by exponents such as Kraftwerk and 808 State).

30 Despite overlaps between the two programmes, they have/had rather different styles. Gender has something to do with this. *Mixing It*'s longstanding presenters were men, and unlike Talkington and Sharp, Mark Russell and Robert Sandall co-hosted their show, providing banter, and sometimes disagreement, around the tracks. Their choice of music, however, was at the edgier, more avant garde end of the post-vernacular spectrum;[24] and while it would have been wrong to describe the programme as blokey, it gave a subtle legitimation of the notion of progressiveness and of music that in some way pushes the envelope or seeks an assertive presence on its own scene, in a way that resonates with discourses conventionally gendered as masculine. Patently, the pitfalls of essentialism need to be avoided here. In principle the only obstacles to women presenting *Mixing It* in the same style as Russell and Sandall would have been institutional ones. As it turns out in practice, however, the show that fell to women to deliver was *Late Junction*; and indeed these are women whose voices delineate a particular kind of femininity, to which the epithet 'demure' (with its associated connotations of class and race) would not be far off the mark. Because, then, two shows are sufficiently similar to draw attention to the contingencies of their differences, and, since medium and message are inseparable, perceptions of difference in content inevitably blur with perceptions of difference in presenter gender. Hence the fact that *LJ* is less concerned with pugnacious or hard-line soundworlds can get perceived as symptomatic of a particular construction of femininity.

31 Interestingly, both the (now former) *Mixing It* presenters have on occasions individually deputised for Talkington and Sharp, with a corresponding temporary change in *LJ*'s style and ethos. Messageboard posts registered this both positively and negatively – some post-ers happy about the change of content, others concerned about a drift too far in the direction of *Mixing It*. Saliently, one post says of Robert Sandall: '[i]t's funny – [b]ut I find it rather disconcerting to hear a man presenting Late Junction, especially a guy with such a patrician tone'.[25] Perhaps it

would not be wrong, then, to ally these perceptions of *LJ*'s usually more feminine ethos with its fluid attitude to genre, an attitude that seems unfazed by the blurring of boundaries between world, contemporary, classical, popular, early and traditional musics; an attitude concerned not with modernist hostility towards bourgeois norms, but with gently extending these through an ostensible inclusivity that alerts listeners to a world of music reaching beyond what they already know.

VI. Composition and poetics

32 Whatever generic intersection *Late Junction* represents, its main structuring (or maybe anti-structuring) principle is the *playlist* – a cultural form rooted in the history of popular music radio stations, but which has arguably come into its own in the digital age, characteristically as an organising device of the mp3-player. The playlist's essential unit is the *track*; indeed *LJ* would seem to reproduce the tendency inherent in iTunes (and similar sound library software for mp3 players and computer-stored music) to consider and consume music with, as it a were, a one-track mind. Playlists perform a double semantic action: on the one hand *atomisation*, which encourages us to consider all forms of music, regardless of genre, in discrete units; on the other hand *recontextualisation*, in which tracks acquire new meanings through being re-situated in a sequence with a more individualistic and maybe less explicit rationale. A Rameau keyboard sarabande has a certain kind of historical and generic intelligibility on a CD of Rameau keyboard suites; but what are to we make of it when, in the context, say, of an *LJ* playlist, it follows on from an unaccompanied Child ballad?[26]

33 Although there are moments when its playlists seem almost randomly assembled, *Late Junction* does in fact have a defining poetics (which nevertheless does not always preclude seemingly random assemblage); and without pushing a point too far, we might consider each evening's sequence of tracks as a kind of composition, determined (in Jakobsonian fashion) by the interaction of two axes or dimensions.[27] An *axis of selection* demarcates the permissible range of styles and genres (with actual selections probably in no small part contingently determined by the piles of CDs sent in by promoters and artists hoping for air play). Meanwhile, an *axis of combination* determines the linear sequence of the selected genres and tracks; it represents a set of constraints on, and possibilities for, what may follow what, and for how long; in other words, it determines the temporal flow of each show.

34 While there's no such thing as a typical *LJ* playlist, I will use the one from Tuesday 26 September 2006 as a case study (on this occasion the host was Verity Sharp), periodically supplementing this with reference to broadcast content from other nights from around the same period. Details are tabulated in Fig. 3, which gives track information directly downloaded from the *Late Junction* website, and, in adjacent columns, further factual data such as track durations, as well as more interpretive analysis. As already outlined, an important determinant in the process of track selection is genre, which functions as a kind of semiotic code at the point of reception; hence Fig. 3 includes attempted generic identifications for each track. I will talk in a moment about the related problematics of this exercise, but for now let us simply note that this reveals something of the sheer expansiveness of *LJ*'s horizons – encompassing on this night alone genres definable as folk, traditional,

world, ‘classical’, early music, film music, avant garde pop, electronica, ambient, country, bluegrass, prog rock and blues. On other nights we could equally expect to find jazz, postmodern contemporary, indie-pop, turntablism, anti-folk, post-punk … and so the list goes on. We could surmise that, like the menu at Giraffe, what is permissible is defined as much as anything in negative terms. Anything’s possible as long is it *isn’t* … what? A mainstream classic, maybe – whether this be the modernist mainstream, or the wider classic–romantic European canon; and usually not orchestral music either (potentially too loud). But then, just when these criteria seem to have been nailed down, they get subverted by the inclusion of a movement from, say, Stravinsky’s *Symphony of Psalms*,[28] or (as on our chosen evening) Schumann’s *Waldszenen*. It’s as if the only fixed criterion of selection is the criterion of subtly undermining any fixed criterion of selection. *LJ* keeps its territorial borders in a constant state of flux.

Criteria other than generic ones also operate. One of these is duration. *LJ* is a bit too classy to pander to the attention span of a three-minute culture. Fig. 3 shows that, for this night at least,[29] four is closer to the norm – both as mode and mean: some tracks make it to six minutes (tracks longer than this – Indian raags, for instance – might get the fade-out treatment), but shorter ones lasting a minute or two are sometimes thrown in for contrast. This last point reminds us that track length, as well as being a criterion for what gets selected, is also a determinant of the axis of combination, which is concerned to build a gently undulating but not too predictable periodicity of tracks. Similarly, tempo and dynamic level are conditions of both axes. As genre is a determinant of the ‘mix’ part of *LJ*’s ‘laid-back mix’, so these other parameters contribute to the adjectival part. Tracks tend to gravitate around mid-tempo, though are often slower, and dynamic levels usually avoid extremes. Again, though, the presenters will occasionally throw in a more energetic, up-tempo number to avoid too soporific a sequence – like the exuberant ‘Magic Step’ from Sam Prekop’s Thrill Jockey album, *Who’s Your New Professor?*, played near the end of the 26 September show. 35

A further crucial element of poetics and formal construction is the voice of the presenter (shown as shaded entries in Fig. 3). This has several functions, most obviously to provide information about tracks just heard or just coming up, and also to plug gigs, albums and websites related to music and artists. But in another sense what the presenters actually say is incidental to the very presence of their voices – which is perhaps just as well, given that Sharp and Talkington tend not to take us much beyond the CD liner-note or website information they (sometimes slightly falteringly) paraphrase[30] (never mind: lots of listeners *like* them and their non-patrician style; this is quite clear from the messageboard).[31] Disembodied, floating over the ether, reciprocating the mellowness of the tracks they usher in and out, these voices are an essential ingredient in the show’s feminine ethos. If they were absent – if, say, the playlists ran without commentary – we would have a different kind of programme.[32] 36

In addition to these semantic and semiotic functions, the presenter commentaries also serve a syntactic purpose. From the standpoint of selection, the presenters have to decide whether or not to insert commentary at each juncture between tracks. Sometimes they do; sometimes they don’t. From the standpoint of combination, this in turn impacts on the sequential rhythm of the evening, 37

enhancing and stemming the musical current, and providing moments of punctuation between sets of tracks. The ideal type, once the programme is under way, is probably three tracks followed by about a minute of commentary;[33] but, as ever, the presenters ring the changes to stop things becoming too predictable. Early in our case study example Sharp builds a sequence – admittedly exceptional – of six, arguably seven, items.[34] (The particular configuration of this syntax becomes a presenter fingerprint. On Thursday 14 September 2006, for example, when Robert Sandall was in the chair, the show took on a very different rhythm, with commentary following more or less every track – *Mixing It* style – in a sequence comprising almost exclusively male artists.)[35]

38 As significant as its presence is the *absence* of the presenter voice – again on semantic, syntactic and semiotic levels. I refer to those moments in the show when tracks are allowed to *segue* into one another. The segue is arguably one of *LJ*'s most characteristic devices, precisely because it is an option, and therefore acquires *markedness* – a status as something other than neutral – when it transpires. Semantically, the segue sends an unvoiced message that tends to lie at one of two extremes. Either it suggests coherence – a cultural or historical code that connects the tracks; or it suggests the opposite – a surreal code, resisting any obvious rational connection between tracks. An example of the coherent kind of segue from the 26 September show would be the passage from traditional music by the Imazighen (Berber desert people) to Moroccan singer Cherifa's performance of 'Ah-Ya Samra' (items 13–14 in Fig. 3). While the latter is patently in an 'orientalist' mode, complete with Western orchestral string backing, Cherifa nonetheless claims the Imazighen traditional singer Mohamed Rouicha, featured on the preceding track, as a key influence – a point made by Sharp after the segued tracks, and hence retroactively illuminating a connection that might otherwise have gone un-noted. An example of the surreal kind of segue is the seemingly unfathomable logic that takes us from Arto Lindsay's rendition of his song 'Delegada' (a bossa nova pastiche),[36] to the earlier-mentioned piece from Schumann's *Waldzenen* (now we see the extent of its recontextualisation), to a piece of film music in American Western genre by Enrico Morricone (items 3–5 in Fig. 3).

39 In such cases the segue generates a palpable lack: a pregnant absence between tracks, which is then retroactively construed as a syntactic operator that binds them into a syntagm whose synthetic logic nonetheless remains elusive. This tiny moment of silence replete with enigma appears as the presence of an unvoiced voice – a kind of spectral counterpart to the presenter's voice, and possibly a proxy for it. This is the semiotic aspect of the segue, and in my fantasy I hear this voice as the possessor of the 'secret' of *LJ*; the solution to its enigma; the knowledge that, could I descry it, would explain what the programme is really about. In Lacanian terms, this voice perhaps represents the 'subject supposed to know'; it also carries the weight and authority of the big Other (though, interestingly, in a feminised avatar). It elicits the question, *che vuoi?* – what do you want from me?[37] It makes me feel that I, like it, should know the answer to this enigma; and it generates a frisson of anxiety because I don't, because I can't respond to its demand. It is also where the rustle of ideology is audible.

VII. The impossible map of genres

With ideological antennae now raised, I want in this section and the next to make a further, more in-depth pass at how genre and segue respectively do their work in *Late Junction*. We might begin our analysis of the former by noting that genres ascribed to tracks in Fig. 3 should not be regarded as objective or 'etic' categories. Rather, they are 'emic' ones, that is, mediated by the understandings of those subjects who might use them; which means they don't escape being variously fuzzy, informal, contestable, or downright ideological.[38] For example, the opening track played on 26 September, James Yorkston performing 'Summer Song' from his 2006 album *The Year of the Leopard*, begins with a number of signifiers – solo vocals, simple guitar accompaniment, quiet foot-tapping in the background – that would not belie audience perceptions of him as a certain kind of folk singer; that is, less a singer of traditional folk music than a singer–songwriter in a more contemporary folk idiom. Yet, although associated by some with the category of 'nu-folk', Yorkston himself remains diffident about his folk credentials: '[w]hen I'm playing at what one may perceive to be new-folk events', he has said, 'I often tend to be the most traditional 'folk' act on the bill, which is pretty ironic, as I'm not really traditional in the slightest. But, who's to say I'm right? Not me, that's for sure. And that's my point. Folk means different things to different people.'[39] His comments are appropriate as perceptions both about genre (in their implication that genre is a communally negotiated process) and about his own performances, which indeed could also invite other stylistic or generic readings. To my ears, 'Summer Song' could equally be classified as a piece of indie-pop: Yorkston's close miked, upper tessitura, head-voice rendition of a repeated phrase over a simple guitar chord sequence comes close to the opening of 'The State that I Am In' from the 1996 Belle and Sebastian Album, *Tigermilk*.[40] And the songs follow on in similar ways too, with the introduction of fuller instrumental textures and backing vocals. 40

Here, then, we have an example of simultaneous under- and over-determination of genre: underdetermined in that the generic signifiers of 'Summer Song' are not unambiguously enough those of folk music to situate the performance unequivocally in that social and cultural space; overdetermined in that they belong to more than one genre, and thus set in play a relay along a chain of difference – a kind of 'genre drift'. Whereas in the milieu of Yorkston's own creative activity (the world of his other albums and of his stylistically significant others) these signifiers might be re-stabilised along a broadly folk axis, in the context of a *Late Junction* playlist they get drawn instead into a process of generic osmosis that leaches into yet a different space. For the next item on the playlist for the night is a track from *The Lemon of Pink*, an album by the experimental indie-pop duo, The Books (Paul de Jong and Nick Zammuto).[41] Commonalities between the two adjacent tracks include most notably the acoustic guitar sound, but The Books' deployment of studio technology is more involved than Yorkston's, including sampling techniques as well as guitar loops subjected to processes of repetition and systemic extension that lightly tend towards the soundworld of Steve Reich's *Electric Counterpoint*. The generic dream-work of *Late Junction*, then, sets up a world in which an experience close to folk music (Yorkston) is only a couple of degrees of separation (or displacement) away from that of postmodern art music. 41

42

‘World music’ involves a similarly idiosyncratic (and problematic) determination of a generic signifying chain. This is not just a matter for *LJ*, one might add. As noted earlier, the term (like its cognate one, ‘the global’), circulates widely in vernacular culture, and is no mere innocent signifier. It does not simply identify some pre-existent phenomenon but actually creates it in the very act of signification. Here, then, to pick up Žižek’s reading of Lacan, we see the signifier ‘world music’ acting as a nodal point (or ‘quilting point’ – *point de capiton* – in Lacanian parlance) that stabilises a floating array of other signifiers around it into a particular configuration of similarity and difference.[42] In common with actual and virtual record stores and the taxonomy of mp3-type playlists, *LJ* uses the term to delimit a number of phenomena and therefore unite them under a principle of equivalence of its own (ideological) making. Examples from 26 September would include a performance on oud by the Algerian artist Alla, and the aforementioned tracks by Moroccan performers Mohamed Rouicha and Cherifa (all three tracks – items 12–14 in Fig. 3 – appear in a coherent segue); as well as the rendition of the Kyrgyzstani song ‘Kyiylyp turam’ by Tengir-Too and Kenjegül Kubatova (item 18).[43] Examples from other nights would include: kora playing from Mali by Toumani Diabate; ‘Uwaume wa Bufuba’ by the Masasu Band from Zambia; an arrangement of a traditional Chinese piece, ‘Feeling in Autumn beside the Dressing Table’, performed by Zhan Yongming and Lin Shicheng on flute and pipa respectively; and ‘Roxelanin sesi’ (‘Roxelana's cry’) – an orientalist piece involving middle-Eastern instruments and Western orchestral strings from the Istanbul Oriental Ensemble.[44]

Matters are further complicated by the associated category, ‘traditional’, which sets further genre drift into play. Several of the above-mentioned world music tracks are designated as ‘trad.’ on *LJ*’s webpages (e.g. Mohamed Rouicha, Zhan Yongming and Lin Shicheng); and the category is also applied to tracks broadcast on other nights (e.g. to music from the Timbuktu region of Mali, or from Sudan; or to music from the Yanomami Indians of Roraima (Brazil)).[45] These examples, then, display apparent overlaps with ‘world music’, but to what extent do the two terms begin to pull apart from one another when ‘trad.’ is also applied to tracks by the American Bluegrass group The Cooked Jades (Fig. 3, item 8), as well as to assorted kinds of folk music from the place known to some as the British Isles (e.g. Fig. 3, items 9, 12, 13, 17)? Or when on other occasions ‘trad.’ is also applied to Blues performance (*Hesitation Blues*, by Dave van Ronk and the Red Onion Jazz Band, broadcast 27 September 2006)? Only a slight further extension of the World/traditional vector would bring us back to James Yorkston. And this seems many miles away from the other extreme of its ambit which would need to include, say, the high-art practices of Indian raags that not infrequently appear among *LJ*’s playlists. Given the aesthetic and socio-cultural range of the terrain created under this permissive signifying regime, it is hardly surprising that history can also become another place on the map, with Western classical music just another displacement away. 43

I had indeed thought to make a map of *Late Junction*’s global imaginary: to model with a diagram in two or more dimensions the virtual space of the world it represents through its pan-inclusiveness. But the coordinates of such a space would rely on axes so refracted, and extending into so many incompatible dimensions, as to make unfeasible any undistorted representation of the whole. For example, a putative axis for world music based on geographical distance would be 44

distorted by perceived exogeny (when musics closer to home might be heard as more exotic than those from distant places – Flamenco, say, as against bossa nova). Another axis for World music based on high art practices versus popular ones (Hariprasad Chaurasia, say, vs The Bhundu Boys) would also need simultaneously to project into different spaces to reflect closeness to their different Western counterparts. Similarly, an axis for traditional music might run parallel to (part of) that for world music, but then would get refracted when graphing other kinds of music (and it would be hard to know where to project this in relation to the high-art vs popular axis – is it in the same plane, or does it claim an independent one?). And yet a further axis – as yet unmentioned, and intersecting the spaces of all the others – would be needed to chart the degrees of technological mediation for each piece. For this is another subtle element in listening to *LJ*: in one sense, of course, all tracks are technologically mediated by dint of having been recorded and transmitted over the airwaves (or internet); but there is then a continuum on the musical production side ranging from the apparent absence of technology in, say, ethnographic-style field recordings, to its near total presence in electroacoustic tracks, with any number of degrees in between articulated by the sampling and mixing techniques employed in tracks extending across the entire art-music–popular music gamut.

Hence as soon as one begins to analyse the world set up in the *Late Junction* imaginary (that is, to represent or structure this imaginary through some form of symbolic ordering), it becomes evident that this is an *impossible* space. As we try to conceive of the distorted and refracted relationships implied by *LJ*'s conflicting generic co-ordinates, axes and vectors, the image that comes to mind is less that of an orderly map than one resembling the deconstructive ordering of space of Daniel Libeskind's architecture. But what are we to make of the fact that that some of this architect's most iconic buildings take such forms in order to express socio-historical trauma? Of his design for the Imperial War Museum North (Manchester, UK) Libeskind talks of 'the contemporary world shattered into fragments and reassembled as a fundamental emblem of conflict. These fragments, shards or traces of history, are in turn assembled on this site and projected beyond it.'[46] His pseudonym for The Jewish Museum Berlin, 'Between the Lines', refers to 'two lines of thinking, organization and relationship. One is a straight line, but broken into many fragments; the other is a tortuous line, but continuing indefinitely.'[47] 45

One might object, this is not how the world of *Late Junction* feels. Exactly. The world itself might feel that way, but *LJ*'s world doesn't. Whereas what *LJ*'s authors in reality have to choose from is many axes of selection, each tracing a different kind of music, context of practice and associated discursive community, in effect they choose as if these lay on a single, unified axis that smoothly mapped a single world. A critic in the 'grand' tradition might argue that the production of this discrepancy is precisely *LJ*'s ideological dream-work. Its imaginary might then be understood in the stronger, Lacanian sense, in which the imaginary order corresponds to the *mirror stage* of psychological development. Here the infant, identifying for the first time with its specular image, imagines itself as unified, and with this brings its ego into being.[48] But this imaginary order is a constructive deception. As Dylan Evans puts it, '[t]he principal illusions of the imaginary are those of wholeness, synthesis, autonomy, duality and, above all, similarity'.[49] The mirror which *LJ* holds up for us, then, reflects a similarly fictional image of a world, 46

and an ego in relation to it, that is whole, intact, synthesised. To imagine or represent a set of disjointed parts as a unified whole (as the child conceives of its body in the mirror stage) is, then, the work of ideology. That our pleasure in *Late Junction* might also be accompanied by sensations of mild (or acute) perplexity is perhaps a symptom of a subliminal awareness of its illusory work; and this becomes acute when one attempts to represent its implied world symbolically – e.g. through the spatial metaphors I have sought to mobilise above.

One reason why *Late Junction* chooses not to provide much in the way of textual statements about itself may be that it simply *cannot* provide such symbolisations of its own work. If my own speculative attempt to do so here fails, then perhaps what this failure points to is, in Lacanian parlance, the Real. This is the register of psychological experience that eludes symbolisation. What cannot be symbolised in this particular instance is the totality of generic relations and the totality of aesthetic, cultural and social worlds those genres body forth. This is because the individual spaces/places/worlds of those genres cannot be integrated into a single world; they are not compatible as a totality. Echoing a point of Žižek's, we might say that what is repressed from *Late Junction*'s consciousness of itself is the Real of social antagonism.[50] 47

VIII. 'Your 3'

The proof of the ideological pudding is in the segue-ing. The synchronic (quasi-spatial) equivalences of *LJ*'s imaginary *mappa mundi* rely on a corresponding diachronic (temporal) action that enlists the listener's complicity. With the sounds of the preceding track still ringing in our ears, we are encouraged to perform a little moment of synthesis between this and the quite probably culturally disjunct form now entering our consciousness. In this moment it is as if we are asked to apply a grammatical operator that in effect says 'this is the same kind of thing'. On the *LJ* website is an interactive section called 'Your 3', which is the closest the programme comes to an acknowledgement of these principles, in the process of inviting listeners to collaborate in them. Listeners are asked to concoct and submit 48

> a mini 3-track playlist which works as whole very much in the spirit of a Late Junction playlist. The listener should be taken on an *exciting yet smooth musical journey* so we are not looking for a straight list of your three favourite Late-Junction style tracks.
>
> The submission must contain 3 pieces or extracts of music, no more no less. Please list pieces in the order you wish them to be aired. Ideally *the 3 pieces should segue together*, i.e. where they run seamlessly together *without the need for presentation*.[51]

These guidelines confirm a number of points assumed in much of our discussion above: that there is such a phenomenon as 'a Late Junction playlist'; that there is such a thing as a 'Late-Junction style track'; and that what this is does not need to be specified, but can be assumed as part of the unconscious knowledge shared by a community of listeners. Also confirmed are the intended characteristics and function of the segue. It permits a 'smooth' and 'seamless' 'musical journey'

(across, let us remember, what might in reality be highly uneven, strongly differentiated generic and cultural terrain); and this journey can in some way be made explicable through the intra-musical terms of the sequence – 'i.e. […] without the need for presentation'.

Participants are also asked to provide 'a brief but enlightening synopsis as to why [they] have created this playlist. Why do the pieces work well together?' That only a small number of playlists win the prize of realisation on-air perhaps suggests that it's the joining in that matters most (and that acculturation might be an unacknowledged outcome of interactivity). For our purposes those playlists' contents and accompanying synopses represent valuable ethnographic data, showing the kind of narratives that listeners use to relate tracks in a way that they imagine is compliant with the programme's poetics. **49**

I focus here on playlists submitted in April 2006 – largely because at the time of writing this represents the most recently collated list, with a relatively decent sized sample of 16 posts (ordered here by date of submission). Fig. 4 extracts the rationales posted for each mini-playlist, though not, in the interests of space, the playlists themselves, which can be found on the website.[52] In this table I have preserved the text of the posts in raw unedited form (the significance of the italicised passages is explained in the following paragraph). To respect the authors' anonymity (they did not after all submit their thoughts knowing these would be used for ethnographic purposes) I have replaced their full names with initials.[53] I have, however, indicated their gender, since the demographics are revealing. Out of the 16 contributors 11 (possibly 12) are identifiable from their names as male, three as female (one remains unidentifiable either way, having supplied only a first initial). Perusing submissions for other months verifies that this significant preponderance of male contributors is entirely representative of the general trend. While we can't assume that this reflects the demographics of *LJ*'s listenership as a whole, it may well tell us who is most attracted to virtual communication – or at least to this particular kind of activity.[54] **50**

Fig. 4 subjects the contributors' synopses for their playlists to an informal discourse analysis. This involves applying various interpretants (listed at the head of the table) that highlight corresponding narrative codes operating within statements. 'Hits' are shown with a bullet point in the respective column, and the relevant triggers in the text are italicised; at the foot of the table the number of respondents for each interpretant is totalled. For example, the first column responds to statements that in some way articulate a sense of personal *identity* or *selfhood* – in the case of LZ identity through nationality; in the case of MS selfhood through embodiment in the music; in the case of GS the memory of a personally defining moment. In fact LZ represents a rare case of a 'Your 3' respondent connecting tracks in explicitly *cultural* (and possibly also historical) terms (column 2). Even so, this encoding is one that emphasises personal subjectivity. With more than a little nostalgia, LZ writes: 'I was born in [the] country [that] used to be Czechoslovakia and because I still feel as Czechoslovakian, I'd like to present something very Czechoslovakian.' Here, then, music becomes a means to construct a world as one would like to see it, or as one would like to see oneself in it (a notion adjacent to Lacan's concept of the ideal ego, associated with the imaginary order). **51**

Other respondents implicitly also recognise music as what DeNora terms ‘a technology of self’,[55] but in these cases mediated by an *extra-musical* narrative code (column 3). EL’s choices focus on music’s possibilities for sustaining certain figurations of love: ‘[t]hey are all pieces of music which beautifully describe the power of love which moves, forgives, possesses’. NS concocts a not dissimilar musical journey, though with a stronger beginning–middle–end structure that ‘crosses cultures and emotions’, from ‘despair’ and ‘unrequited passion’ to ‘the wondrous splendour of a new dawn’. As with some of the previous examples, this statement can be decoded in more than one way. It can also be interpreted as an *aesthetic / affective* utterance (column 4), into which category fall by far the largest number of statements. Twelve out of the 16 respondents either refer to subjective feelings engendered by the music or attribute aesthetic properties to it using epithets – for example, S: ‘[a]ll of the songs evoke strong emotional expressions […]. Weird and dark but beautiful’; JA: ‘from the heavenly and ethereal violin of the Messiaen hymn to the still beautiful but more earth-rooted fiddle playing of Aly Bain’; LH: ‘[t]hree highly evocative tracks, all with a rich positivity and beauty that is simultaneously intelligent and whimsical’. A small but interesting subset of these aesthetic codifications is identified in column 5, which pinpoints moments when contributors find a spiritual connection with or between their tracks (which again reflects a strand within *Late Junction*’s own programming). 52

On other occasions listeners relate their choices in more purely musical terms. This could be through reference to *stylistic* handling, as in column 6 (F chooses tracks which ‘show how traditional and new music can stand beside each other’; all of PE’s tracks ‘re-interpret and capture different aspects of Miles [Davis]’s musical output’; and AH similarly points to a likely shared ‘influence from the electric-era Miles Davis’). Or respondents might pinpoint specific musical features in *technical* terms, as in column 7 (F: ‘all the tracks are very rhythmic’; AH: ‘three polyrhythmically-rich works’), which may also include reference to technology as a common denominator in the compositional conception (UB: ‘[all] the tracks are studio renditions of live performances’). Uniquely, MT identifies a musical characteristic as establishing an *intertextual* connection between tracks (column 8): a folk tune cited in one functions as the second subject in another. 53

Other interpretants might of course have been applied to these texts, and for that matter the existing ones could have been differently ordered to provide alternative interpretations. So I do not want to feign methodological disinterest in this presentation of results. Nor would I want to disregard the imaginativeness of respondents’ narratives. Among other things, these demonstrate that it is possible to make interesting connections between seemingly disparate pieces of music from a variety of interpretive standpoints. But what remains noteworthy is that, whether it be in subjective–aesthetic terms or technical ones, listeners tend overwhelmingly to connect tracks through those tracks’ phenomenal appearance as free-floating, quasi-autonomous particulars. Only rarely are tracks related on the basis of cultural or historical delineations. 54

IX. *Late Junction* and the commodity form

A *Late Junction* segue is a kind of abracadabra moment, when a musical object can be magically substituted with another incommensurable with it – or where time and space can be collapsed under the spell of some other interpretant that is often kept secret (the presenters generally exempt themselves from the requirement made of 'Your 3' contributors to provide a synopsis for their selections). One wonders, doesn't this kind of magical transaction bear an uncanny resemblance to that performed by another, ubiquitous cultural phenomenon: the commodity? Such speculation implies raising the stakes of the preceding critical account; it would be to hypothesise that the fantasmatic elements in the alloy of *LJ*'s pleasures in some way relate to the structure of the political economy in which the programme's production and consumption take place. And this would mean that, once again, a 'grand' critical metanarrative (e.g. some form of Marxism) casts its shadow over whatever ethnographic stories we might tell (in the mode of the 'little' tradition) of the individual acts of enjoyment by particular humans, among them those who tell of this in their internet posts. Paradoxically, though, if we wanted to reassure ourselves that *LJ* represents something more than the culinary experience of Giraffe translated into radio format, this is a gauntlet that would need to be run. In other words, we might apply the hypothesis as much in the interests of refutation as corroboration. This would show us how the programme fared under such a critique; but also how the critique fared following the encounter with the programme. 55

There is a subtle but crucial distinction to be drawn, however, between these concerns and *LJ*'s indirect relationship to actual economic transactions – the fact that the air time it gives to CDs sent in to the show by hopeful artists, or its announcement of upcoming gigs that feature them, represents a kind of soft plugging; or the fact that the purchase of CDs, regardless of the show's intentions, is one of the resulting behaviours of listeners. Given that many of the recordings issue from small independent labels representing artists working outside the commercial mainstream, this all seems, reasonably enough, to give support to musicians seeking to make a living, and to be congruent with the BBC's mission as a public service broadcaster. Rather, the (Marxian) question is whether the kinds of listening and attitudes towards consumption and cultural plurality that *LJ* encourages don't reproduce the *logic* of commodities: whether the former is only possible because of what the latter makes thinkable; whether, then, we are talking about a more insidious construction of consciousness. 56

What *Late Junction* and the commodity have in common is this: they both enact a process of exchange around some principle of equivalence that mysteriously renders incommensurable things commensurable. We should remember that for Marx the possibility of such a process is a result of socio-economic developments whose character is historical. Aristotle, he tells us, had trouble with the principle of commensurability of goods. For the ancient Greek philosopher, 'it is impossible that such unlike things [as beds and a house] can be commensurable'. What Aristotle lacks here, Marx says, is 'any concept of value'[56] – that is, *exchange value*. And the reason he didn't have it is that the basic principle of equivalence that supports 57

the exchange of commodities – equality of labour – was absent from a society founded on slavery. The socio-economic relationships of that day, then, made the exchange of incommensurable objects unthinkable; they were not commodities as such.

58 Under modern capitalist relations of production, however, such exchange is eminently thinkable; and this gives pause to wonder who is living in the stranger world. When the Berber desert singer, Mohamed Rouicha, sings his song 'Di lwaqt u-nebdu nagh ma yekat u-dfel' in the here and now, it may have an immediate, aesthetic and cultural *use value*, executed for the satisfaction of himself and his audience, affirming, perhaps, a certain cultural identity – the very things that ethnography would be concerned to foreground. However, when his performance is recorded and sold on a commercial market it becomes an *exchange value*; and everything changes. Assuming the performer was remunerated for his performance,[57] this would enable him to exchange his (now commodified) labour for whatever other commodity his buying power extended to – e.g. clothes, food, technology, services. Similarly, the remuneration I gain from my own professional labour, which includes writing essays such as this, causes such a product (now commodified) to be implicated in exchange – for, say, a recording of music by Berber desert people, or my lunch tomorrow, or (submitted in the context of the UK higher education establishment's Research Assessment Exercise – an example *par excellence* of the ever-deepening commoditisation of all intellectual labour within our current polity) financial resource for one's university (one hopes). In all cases, incommensurable phenomena are rendered exchangeable – this much labour enables me to purchase, x, y, z amounts of commodities produced with some equivalent amount of labour expended by whoever was involved in making them.

59 Another property of the commodity is that I may never know, either in principle or in practice, those people whose labour was expended in whatever it is I choose to buy in the process of such exchange. This is the classic Marxist critique of the *fetishism of commodities*. Mohamed Rouicha performing for his desert kinsfolk is enmeshed in an immediate, dare one say, real, relational network with those present. But when in the situation of the free market I choose to purchase a CD of his performance (as opposed to say, a CD of someone else's music, or some different product altogether), this relationship becomes imaginary, mediated in fact by a dense web of impersonal economic transactions. In my fantasy I may imagine human contact is being made; but my immediate relationship is in fact to the recording itself, to the CD, which appears to me as some autonomous object, the route by which it got here (the relationship of artist to producer to manufacturer to distributor to retailer to consumer) being decidedly opaque, or at least (for everyday purposes) of secondary significance. As Marx wrote of commodity fetishism, what we now have is 'a definite social relation between men, that assumes, in their eyes, the fantastic form of a relation between things'.[58]

60 *Late Junction* is full of such fantasmatic relationships, as we have very clearly seen – relationships between often incommensurable soundworlds whose values are equated in relational processes of selection and combination. Conceivably, lurking beneath all this, there may be a latent, repressed, unconscious sense of a tangle of relationships between the different cultures and histories of the individuals who

have produced these tracks, and of the societies from which they hail – a sense of unequal relations of power, hegemony, colonialism, based on class, race, gender and the rest of it. But the *manifest* relationships articulated by *LJ* (and that are part of its perplexing charm) assume precisely the 'fantastic form of a relation between things' – as witnessed by the narratives of *LJ* listeners able to relate incommensurable musical tracks on the basis of the equivalent emotional or aesthetic or performative labour they require.

Classical Marxist wisdom would have it, then, that the structure of political economy, based on the commodity and the processes associated with it, conditions social consciousness. Under this conception it would come as no surprise that – as experts in everyday encounters of consumption mediated by the form of the commodity, its exchange, and the fantasmatic relationships attendant upon these – we are able slickly to apply the same mindset to the plural goods offered up nightly on *Late Junction*. But would Marxist critics be right in asserting such a connection? Before considering possible countercritiques, we need to make another turn of the screw. For if the era of the commodity can be equated with the rise of modern economies and modernist culture, under what transformation of social relationships does the commodity do its work in postmodern culture? And how might this be seen as reproduced in such cultural forms as *Late Junction*? 61

X. *Late Junction* and the BBC in a world of flexible accumulation

Key critics – among them David Harvey, whose work I discuss below – have argued that postmodernism is a correlate of economic conditions dominated by *post-Fordist* relations of production and the *flexible accumulation* of capital. These conditions, whose rise can be traced to roughly the last three decades of the twentieth century, have touched the lives of many if not most of us. At an earlier historical stage, i.e. under Fordism, assembly-line processes of mass production centralised sizeable quantities of labour on large industrial sites with hierarchical structures of management. Labour relations required a significant measure of stability (albeit on the employer's terms): regular work patterns and a regular wage, partly to ensure stability of production, but also to furnish employees with (just) enough time and money to consume the goods produced within this system of capital accumulation. Flexible accumulation could be seen as simultaneously a radical intensification of the capitalist accumulative drive (a progression to the phase of *late capitalism*) and an unlocking (or dis-integration)[59] of its constituent elements. As Harvey puts it in *The Condition of Postmodernity*: '*[f]lexible accumulation* [...] is marked by a direct confrontation with the rigidities of Fordism. It rests on flexibility with respect to labour processes, labour markets, products, and patterns of consumption.'[60] 62

This is the world with which we are becoming increasingly familiar: the world of sub-contracting, outsourcing, labour mobility, flexible working hours and 'portfolio' careers (non-superannuated of course, hence creating further markets for private pension and investment schemes). Not without trauma, we have witnessed the injection of these ideas into the very institutional DNA of organisations central to our social self-understanding, crucial to, so to speak, the national imaginary. In the UK these include organisations such as the National Health Service and the BBC, whose radical transformations have included the loss of ownership of its means of 63

production under Private Finance Initiatives, and a shift to purchasing services externally rather than generating them through in-house resources. It would be a reasonable assumption that a programme such as *Late Junction* has (to a greater or lesser extent) to work within these relations of production.

64 Harvey's critique of postmodernism in fact does something more subtle than argue for a simple historical superseding of Fordist modernity by flexible-accumulative postmodernity. He presents the tendencies inherent in both paradigms as an array of oppositions that fluidly and dynamically interpenetrate one another: '[w]ithin this matrix of internal relations, there is never one fixed configuration', he writes, 'but a swaying back and forth between centralization and decentralization, between authority and deconstruction, between hierarchy and anarchy, between permanence and flexibility, between the detail and the social division of labour'.[61] Again, something of these oscillatory dynamics could be seen in the fortunes of the BBC. Following the post-Fordist extremes experienced by the BBC under John Birt, Greg Dyke made some significant reparative gestures in recentralising creative power within the organisation (i.e. putting it back in the hands of internal programme producers). Yet at the same time, he was also associated with driving the BBC's embrace of digital broadcasting, with its resulting proliferation and diversification of channels and radio stations, and attendant move towards flexible, decentred viewing and listening habits.[62]

65 Yet, within this complex totality, the tendency towards post-Fordist flexibility remains significant, as anyone trying to negotiate with their bank through a call centre on the other side of the world will know (while you wait on hold, you can indulge in nostalgia for the old Fordist days, when you might have had a face-to-face conversation with a 'real' person – maybe even the same one you saw the last time – in a building dedicated to the whole banking process, rather than just one decentred aspect of it). The internet is a yet more abstract avatar, a further dis-incarnation, of this process, based on related communications technology, enabling, among other things, the purchase of it seems just about anything, from just about anywhere in the world. Yet the transaction proceeds in a kind of no-place, with human contact now spirited away even at the point of sale. Here we see something of the true economic meaning of globalisation. Although these forms of transaction might heighten an awareness of our global interconnectedness, the nature of those connections seems to be ever more virtualised – distilled into informational 'spirit' whose circulation is coterminous with the flow of capital.

66 Such changes, it may be argued, condition the phenomenology of our social world. They shift our attitudes to – and arguably introduce subtle new strains of alienation into – our relationship with our labour, our others, our institutions, our nation, our world, and (at the other extreme) our selves. Marxist critics would claim that they also impact upon the production and consumption of cultural goods. For Harvey, one major corollary of flexible accumulation is what he calls 'time–space compression':

> Spaces of very different worlds seem to collapse upon each other, much as the world's commodities are assembled in the supermarket and all manner of sub-cultures get juxtaposed in the contemporary city. Disruptive spatiality triumphs over the coherence of perspective and narrative in postmodern

> fiction, in exactly the same way that imported beers coexist with local brews, local employment collapses under the weight of foreign competition, and all the divergent spaces of the world are assembled nightly as a collage of images upon the television screen.[63]

And not only there: *Late Junction*, with its nightly mixes of global sounds, with its collapsing of the geographical and the historical, performs in radiophonic terms a comparable compression and collapsing of space and time. The argument in the critical–theoretical tradition would be not only that this enacts a distortion of geographical and historical reality, but also that, in their consistency with the conditions of the socio-economic order, such representations reconcile and limit us to those conditions. Harvey invokes Pierre Bourdieu's thesis that

> we each of us possess powers of regulated improvisation … 'whose limits are set by the historically situated conditions' of their production; the 'conditioned and conditional freedom' this secures 'is as remote from the creation of unpredictable novelty as it is from simple mechanical reproduction of the initial conditionings'. It is […] through mechanisms of this sort that every established order tends to produce 'the naturalization of its own arbitrariness' expressed in the 'sense of limits' and the 'sense of reality' which in turn form the basis for an 'ineradicable adherence to the established order'. The reproduction of the social and symbolic order through the exploration of difference and 'otherness' is all too evident in the climate of postmodernism.[64]

If, following Harvey, one wanted to assert that *Late Junction*'s improvised explorations of cultural difference and otherness were responsible in the end for only reproducing the existing order, and naturalising its own contingent image of reality, one might also be reasonably expected to account for what the mechanism of reproduction actually was. How can symbolic forms such as this radio programme be seen to condition us into behaviour that reinforces a social order conditioned by an economy based on capitalism? Perhaps better than positing a crude, reflectionist model of economic determinism would be to ask: What kind of subjects does a show like *LJ* construct us as? (Or to mix terms from Althusser, Lacan and Žižek: what kind of subjects are we supposed to be when we respond to the programme's interpellation, its hailing, of us? Into what ideological determination of the symbolic network are we stitched when we respond positively to that hail?) And thence, what behaviours, what attitudes, are presupposed by that subjectivity? One response might be that our enjoyment of the show consists not just in the musical experiences it offers, but in its constructing for us an image of our selves as sophisticated, open-minded listeners, awake to contemporary musical developments, and therefore responsive to other social trends. But if this represents a kind of liberalism, we should bear in mind the corollary that liberalism in its political form is also predicated on the freedom of the individual to consume on the open market according to his or her personal desires. *LJ* listeners could indeed be seen as exemplary post-industrial, niche-market consumers. To put this in Lacanian terms: the kind of subject *LJ* encourages us to become is one that is flattered by its relationship with the liberal image of itself it sees in the programme's mirror. This is our ideal ego: it expresses the kind of relationship we think we have

(or could have) with our cultural others – while imbibing that metaphorical (or actual) glass of Cabernet Sauvignon.

XI. Counter-critiques

68 Harvey's approach falls firmly within the 'grand' Marxian critical tradition, and is unflinchingly based on the metanarrative of *economic determinism* ('if there is a meta-theory', he says, 'then why should we not deploy it?').[65] Placing *Late Junction* under the scrutiny of (or adjacent to) such a metanarrative has suggested that it might operate on levels other than those the programme claims for itself (inexplicit as these largely are), and indeed in ways that belie its untroubled image of itself and its world. Yet while these critical perceptions are as important as Harvey's analysis of postmodernism is trenchant, we may hesitate to characterise *LJ* as completely reducible to the terms of this interrogation. And indeed, one possible avenue of mitigation may lie in scrutinising the terms of the critique itself.

69 Meaghan Morris, for one, offers a deeply ambivalent reading of Harvey's *The Condition of Postmodernity*: ambivalent especially about a 'narration, epic yet meticulous in describing the intricate moves of capital, [but] profoundly reductive in impulse'. Her objection is both to Harvey's adoption of the metanarrative of economic determinism, and to the agon in whose name this is deployed: 'a battle between Marxism and postmodernism'.[66] She voices 'frustration at the immense *waste* attending the persistence of […] "the gigantic pincer of the dialectic" in blockbuster narratives of postmodernity. Global problems are posed with a sense of urgency verging on moral panic, but then existing practical experiments in dealing with these on a plausible scale are dismissed for the usual vices ("relativism", "defeatism"), reclassified as what they contest ("postmodernism"), or altogether ignored.'[67] The specific bodies of work that Harvey stands accused of marginalising are those of feminism and postcolonialism, whose traditions have not precluded alignment with postmodernism. Morris's point is that these discourses would have offered Harvey a valuable diversification of intellectual resources with which to explore postmodernity, and might have led him to less totalising conclusions that spurned a reductive metatheory: 'feminist enquiry […] does not accept the *possibility* of a transcendent space from which to subordinate different projects to a unifying logic that would derive its authority from *one* (political economy).'[68]

70 It would be overly digressive here to explore the alternative critical corpus to which Morris points. But we might take to heart something of the spirit of her argument and see how this might engender a re-reading of *Late Junction*. It is perhaps appropriate that Morris's account highlights the significance of feminist discourse, given that we have observed that *LJ* bears subtle determinations of gender. As we have noted, the programme is hardly explicitly or radically feminist in its stance. That said, we might bear in mind that it does set up an other space – to one side of more 'progressively' orientated programmes like *Mixing It*; and it may be that, by analogy, we should be open to interpretive models that are similarly decentred.

71 Coming from just such a space is Anahid Kassabian's essay, 'Would You Like Some World Music with Your Latte? Starbucks, Putumayo, and Distributed Tourism'.[69] This investigates the subjectivities of listening to world music as

marketed on CD labels such as Hear Music (retailed in association with Starbucks coffee shops) and Putumayo (developed as an offshoot of the eponymous 'ethnic' clothing company). The retailing context partly resonates with my own ruminations on dining out in Giraffe; and Kassabian's reflections on world-music listening are also potentially germane to *Late Junction* (though note the change of associated beverage). In her inquiry too there's a hint of auto-ethnography that to a degree overlaps with investigations of music in everyday life found in the work of DeNora (both have interests in music in retail spaces).[70] Kassabian's is a personal piece, making its point in a way that is (I take it, deliberately) the very opposite of grand metatheory. Indeed its significance lies in introducing a dislocation between critical and what I would call *post-critical* mentalities. For she acknowledges the political sensitivities and the many critiques from ethnomusicologists attaching to the production, distribution and consumption of world music; as well as similarly recognising world music's potential for promoting the understanding of different cultures. But none of this, she asserts, specifically addresses questions of listener subjectivity – such as: 'How are listeners located in the world by world music? What psychic movements are set into play?'[71]

This, then, points to a kind of phenomenology of world-music listening. In brief, Kassabian argues for an idiosyncratic category of *distributed listening*, associated with the practice of a knowing, postmodern, *distributed tourism*:

> Sitting in my office, listening to Putumayo CDs, I am a distributed tourist. I move from space to space without changing places. I occupy conflicting spaces – my car and Tatarstan, New Jersey and Newfoundland – with the fluidity of electrons. My location at any given moment is only a statistical probability, nothing more. My tourism is immediate and constant, iterative and only partially predictable.[72]

She extends this quantum metaphor, which, significantly, foregrounds the question of space:

> if I am a dense node in a lumpy network, I am *in fact* both here and there at once. Not non-space-based, but entangled. This is, I think, the brilliance of Putumayo. [Nicola] Heindel's cover art work, their A & R, their engineering, and their choice of track order all guide you through an apparent naïveté and recognizability to a sense of being 't/here'.[73]

Unlike Harvey in his negative critique of space–time compression, Kassabian here puts a positive spin on the collapsing of space. For her this connection of disparate spaces need not, it seems, be an ideological or illusory perception, but may represent an imaginative and sophisticated act of postmodern consumption, infused by the world of quantum space–time: 'One must hear the "authentic" music of "there", produced by local musicians; one must hear it "here"; and one must hear the difference between the two spaces in order to be able to occupy both simultaneously and be "t/here".'[74] Kassabian might, then, bespeak not only her own listening experience but also, by proxy, that of listeners to *Late Junction*, who embrace the many new soundworlds made available through late-capitalist

relations of production with similar enthusiasm.

73 It remains moot, however, whether such an approach can unproblematically opt out of engaging with an associated critique of those relations of production that have brought the music to us. At a telling moment in her essay Kassabian notes the 'sad but unsurprising irony' that Putumayo and Starbucks are using world music in a 'contemporary gift and coffee shop retail landscape […] at a time when coffee growers around the world cannot feed their families'. Questions to do with these retailers' economic structures and practices are fascinating, she admits, but the subject matter here is 'the realm of subjectivities that the Hear Music and Putumayo CDs might summon in their listeners'.[75] Knowing Kassabian's commitment to emancipatory politics, I regret that she passes over this intense dichotomy. For one thing (echoing a point I made at the end of the previous section about listener interpellation), it may be that the realm of subjectivities constructed in these encounters is exactly that of the niche-market liberal consumer, located squarely in the world of 'economic structures and practices'. Kassabian tantalisingly ends her essay by urging us 'to accept […] the fact that commodification and pleasure have competing political potentials in each act of listening':[76] we surely need to consider how this tension is to be played out.

74 One message we may infer from this account is that, even within a listening experience explicitly associated with the world of retailing, it may be possible to construct alternative subjectivities for ourselves that don't necessarily boil down to the terms of the commodity relation itself. There is something vitally important in this possibility – that in (post)modern societies there could be tranches of consciousness and praxis that elude or resist commodification, and maybe not only in the private sphere. In his lengthy and detailed essay, 'Gift and Commodity', John Frow explores such possibilities.[77] On the one hand, Frow does not underestimate the force of capitalism's relentless drive to convert all use values to the commodity form (his account treats recent examples such as the sale by living individuals of their own body parts for transplantation, the patenting of nature under the developments of biotechnology, and fraught debates around intellectual property rights). On the other hand, this only makes more pressing his search for 'counter-examples of processes of *de*commodification'.[78] A key conceit in his account is that suggested by its title. He points out that a common imagining of the other of the commodity, of something this would be like if we could escape its claims, is the *gift*. And this binary opposition of gift to commodity usually goes hand in hand with that between traditional organic and modern industrial societies. But, Frow argues, this is 'a form of mythical thinking in which the moment of rupture is endlessly repeated'. And similarly

> the concepts of gift and commodity seem to partake of each another: the gift to be structured […] according to forms of calculation and interest that in some sense resemble those of a market economy, and commodities in turn to be constantly endowed with non-commodity meanings as they move within the moral economy of everyday life.[79]

Frow surveys a number of substantial accounts that demonstrate that the gift, like the commodity, is involved in a process of exchange – moreover, one that implies

often complicated and unspoken ties and obligations on the recipient. Complementing this, he examines ideas such as Margaret Radin's notion of *market inalienability*, and work by Arjun Appadurai and Igor Kopytoff that portrays the possibility of a flux between commodified and de-commodified status.[80]

Such accounts are salutary in suggesting that commodification processes may not be an absolute, and hence in giving the lie to totalising models of economic determinism – which is nevertheless not to say that the impulse for thinking outside or beyond the logic of commodities may not be at least in part engendered by a dialectical relationship to their dominating order. Many cultural forms, not least those given airplay on *Late Junction*, occupy an ambiguous status, both commodified and de- or anti-commodifying, containing both commodified and decommodified moments; and the same might go for their manner of circulation. For example, perhaps *LJ* with its nightly playlist format, continues to bear some of the qualities of the playlist's counterpart in the analogue era: the compilation tape. Another form of the culturally heterogeneous, this was a physical object whose raw material, the cassette tape, was relatively cheap, but whose transformation into an individualistic miscellany of tracks recorded from vinyl or CD required some time and labour, taking at least as long for an individual to assemble as the real-time duration of the selected tracks (unlike the nearly instant, drag-and-drop manner of building an mp3 playlist). As such, compilation tapes represented meaningful gifts (a common mode of their circulation): personalised, embodying thoughtfulness and effort, and only partly commodified. *LJ*'s playlists retain something of this quality of the gift. Researching and compiling them is the presenters' key task, requiring time and care. And perhaps this helps foster an imagined community of listeners (which the website messageboard further cultivates) as the recipients of an offering from them to *us*. Unlike a compilation tape, however, there is a separation between the information – the playlist itself – and the recorded sounds, which are removed from the website after seven days, leaving only the informational husk. Yet if this is a gift with a half-life, it is one that is perpetually renewed, with streamable sounds from more recent broadcasts taking their place. 75

That these musical materials are available free in the public domain is due to the larger institutional infrastructure of the BBC and the particular complex of social and economic relationships within which it operates. And these too are representative of a major area of quasi-decommodified public service. Both the 'quasi' and 'decommodified' aspects should be stressed (and with this Frow's point about the mediation of gift and commodity). Largely funded through a centrally administered television licence fee, the Corporation is unquestionably implicated in the national economy: its broadcast products are the result of exchange – the exchange of licence payers' money, largely accrued in payment for their own labour. Yet this exchange is highly mediated, and in the process significantly decommodified, through a collectivising (indeed socialising) process in which individuals do not simply pay for what they view. Instead their aggregate contributions fund the corporation as a whole and supply it with substantial resources to fund programme making that is not principally related to the requirements of the market. 76

Nonetheless, the BBC has historically had to perform a delicate negotiating act: on the one hand mandated to produce programmes of quality and originality, precisely 77

because freed from the exigencies of the market; on the other hand needing to be responsive to audience ratings and to maintain its market share against its commercial competitors, in order to justify its claims on licence payers' money. Related to this, it has also historically experienced similar tensions in its relationship with successive governments. Funded by, yet formally independent from, the state, and frequently critical of the governing regime, the corporation has always experienced anxiety over its autonomy and its future, especially whenever its charter comes up for renewal.[81]

78 Evolving in the historical tides of these countervailing dynamics, the BBC might be seen as a paradigmatic example of the kind of structure Frow and others have in mind when they contemplate the possibilities of decommodification. The telos of the BBC's situation is not certain. It may be that the organisation's public service ethos and its associated sense of social collectivity will not survive in any recognisable form under the vicissitudes of flexible postmodernism. For example, if internet streaming of television programmes were to become the norm, there might be an ineluctable pressure to move to a pay-per-view system that would shift programme making into a much more direct relationship with markets. Or it may be that, under this or other scenarios, the corporation's ambiguous relationship to capital and governance will mean compromises to its autonomy and creative integrity.

79 But there is another suggestive possibility latent in these relationships. It could be that the BBC embodies a *national imaginary* that represents a model of the nation state which in turn contains potential for social transformation. All these terms call for commentary, not least the transformative imperative, without which the others could not realise their emancipatory potential. For example, the kind of nation state imagined here (one not completely unconnected with historical reality) is not one that promotes nationalism or statism, but rather one that fosters representational and discursive mechanisms that make it possible to envision and foster a cohesive, radically democratic society, and to relate communities within it (which might be something like socialism). If the national element in this gives cause for hesitancy (because it might easily shade into an uglier, racially configured version we have rightly come to distrust), it is perhaps worth contemplating the potential value of the nation state in the light of those other terms of postmodernist geopolitics: localism and globalism. This, then, would be a nation state that nurtured what was humanising in both these other dimensions, but that did not overlook the fact that the latter term in particular is often associated with a voracious multinational neoliberalism. While those forces still threaten, it may be that the nation state represents a crucial level of polity – more effective in magnitude than the local – with which to counter what is inimical in global geopolitics, and through which to foster a fruitful and functional society.

80 Given the earlier critique of *Late Junction*'s global imaginary, one might also ask whether the same critique might apply to the BBC's national imaginary. This is certainly arguable, but so is the point that the imaginary nonetheless remains a part of our psychic lives, and that we should arguably not disavow it. The question might be: How can we use it, How can we work through it and its attendant fantasies, to get to what is real (or Real – depending on how Žižekian we might want to be)? Which is to say that these images, like the larger social imaginary that

organisations such as the BBC construct, could contain the basis for articulating a different, future order. Transformation would lie in registering not only the images themselves, but also their inadequacy (precisely their imagistic quality). Grasping this lack could be a crucial stimulus to further thought, debate and action within various kinds of democratic participation. (Indeed, it is as a contribution, however modest, to such debates that an essay such as this is intended.) But what is also clear is that the potential for promoting and responding to such debate might already be present in cultural inventions such as the BBC. Another non-pessimistic point here is that such alternative imaginings are possible because our minds are not limited to what is. This may be because of some apprehension of something absent, of what is *not* (an apprehension of the Real, Lacan might say). But this is also fuelled by an apprehension of what has been and what might have been – that is, by a sense of history and loss; and I would not be the first to argue that such nostalgia represents a potent oppositional resource in our current historical *mentalité*. It is precisely because many of us have experienced in our everyday lives what is positive about such organisations as the NHS, the BBC and state education, that we can project transformed imaginings of these into the future (hence 'grand' and 'little' traditions come together). That recent governments have placed the emancipatory social potential in these organisations in second place to the unbridling of neoliberal commodity processes could come to represent a tragic set of missed opportunities. But perhaps what these explorations of critiques and countercritiques of the relation between individual subjects, cultural consumption and political economy have begun to indicate is that the future is not entirely a foregone conclusion.

Epilogue: Contemplating Geopolitics

XII. 'My 3'

A conclusion is what cannot be reached here. I have not been able to bring the contradictory panoply of musical enjoyment offered on *Late Junction* (in part a proxy for what's on offer in culture at large) and the heterogeneity of possible valid critical perspectives on it to resolution; the purities are mixed. If this uncomfortable position were authentic, then perhaps the best way to end would be to reinstate the tension. So I return to the particularities of *Late Junction*, to mix this with a little more auto-ethnography, to ponder again music as consumed in everyday life and the question of its commensurability with a critical analysis of the politics of the lifeworld. I want to consider three *Late Junction* moments – a kind of 'My 3' to complement the programme's game of 'Your 3'. My three examples don't constitute a playlist as such, however (though they have certainly played on my mind). They represent separate encounters with the programme – separate episodes of listening, and reflections on them. But together they do form a narrative that sums up and works through some of the main concerns of this inquiry. 81

First, a tale of bourgeois outrage in the living room. *LJ* is playing over the radio at low volume. I'm using it here to provide background music while I catch up on some academic reading (so this is quite definitely non-structural listening). Fiona Talkington has set tonight's show rolling with a sequence of waltzes performed by folk music collective Waterson:Carthy.[82] The tunes rollick along, the playing on 82

fiddle and melodeon is rhythmically tight and jaunty, and the irrepressible jollity of dancing is the air. It's all delightful stuff; and with this thought I realise that the music's now edged itself into the foreground of my consciousness, drawing my attention away from the article I'm reading. Looking back to this, I suddenly grasp the obscenity of the juxtaposition.

83 My reading matter is a recent piece in *New Left Review* by the radical political collective, RETORT, entitled 'All Quiet on the Eastern Front'. It's a no-holds-barred critique of the current state of geopolitics, written in the early days of Israel's invasion of Lebanon in July 2006. The authors target not only the US's 'knee-jerk endorsement of the new round of Israeli terror', but also the war in Iraq, Guantanamo Bay, the complicity of the UK in the US's imperialist projects, the potential for 'many more Iraqs in the making', and, more generally, the 'determinant force' of capitalism behind the whole scene.[83] The tone is unremittingly grim, no doubt intended to keep readers mindful of what's going on out there; but the rhetoric also involves establishing connections between geographic, historical and economic factors. For example:

> beyond the hardened borders of the American homeland a new geography of state terror is emerging. Its way stations are Afghanistan, Poland and Romania, its background a planetary gulag of black sites serviced by the apparatus of 'rendition'. (Dredged from the history of American slavery, the term denotes the forced return of 'fugitives from labour' to the plantatations of the South.) […] The territory of the nation-state has always been more or less inconvenient to capital, which routinely relies on enclaves and entrepôts, offshoring and outsourcing. Now the 'torture haven' has joined the tax shelter and *maquiladora* in the cartography of free enterprise.[84]

84 What does the enjoyment offered by *Late Junction* have to do with any of this? The question can be intoned to sound as either accusation or riposte, and therein lies the dilemma. In one voice: what is *LJ* doing promoting fiddling on the global village green (and what are we doing joining in) while the world is consumed in a terrifying conflagration of ideologies fuelled by Western neoliberal politics? In another: these represent two different ranges of experience, so why assume they should be related? After all, isn't *LJ*'s concern with making global mixes, not geopolitical critiques? (I had better quickly add that the former argument is not directed at folk music *per se*, or at Waterson:Carthy in particular, whose appearance in this juxtaposition was a matter of contingency, and whose credentials, like those of many other folk practitioners, are robust when it comes to direct political engagement.)[85] The question boils down to whether we should connect or compartmentalise our global cultural and political imaginings. What's perplexing about *Late Junction* is that on the one hand – and to its credit – it actually encourages us to make connections between the apparently disparate, yet on the other hand it stops short of realising any disparity between the harmoniousness of its own global imaginary and the momentously conflicted world of geopolitics. (If *LJ*'s imaginary in fact represented a radically utopian counter-image to the empirical world, one might still have expected the latter to be invoked, in a spirit of dialectics or irony, for example.) Again the counterargument might be that this isn't a job for *Late Junction* or Radio 3; that, as far as the BBC is concerned, that role

belongs to its current affairs programmes. But one definition of ethics might be as a willingness to connect that which, in the interests of not disturbing a more convenient imagining of the way things are, has been left unconnected; to make unconsciously repressed connections conscious.

85 One is reminded of Žižek's point, that in Donald Rumsfeld's infamous Iraqi war speech of 2003 about 'known knowns', 'known unknowns' and 'unknown unknowns' the one permutation Rumsfeld conveniently omitted was 'unknown knowns' – that is, what is actually known, but disavowed.[86] It used to be the case that one didn't disparage art whose practitioners – through the manner in which they actually formed their creative materials – would compel their audiences to confront disavowed dimensions of knowledge or experience. Such art belongs to a now unfashionable modernist aesthetic – unfashionable and perhaps unviable if the assimilation of classic modernist musical works into the 'laid-back' ethos of a *Late Junction* playlist is anything to go by (Webern, Ligeti and Bartók are periodic, well-behaved visitors). Yet occasionally *LJ* will feature a track that doesn't assimilate to the programme's norms, and suggests that the possibility of a new music with cultural–critical force is not yet dead. My second example of potent *LJ* encounters was just such an occasion.

86 Tracks from Scott Walker's 2006 album, *The Drift* were broadcast on three *LJ* shows shortly before its official release.[87] Those instances showed graphically that, by making it new, Walker has created sonic images sufficiently disturbing to disinter a consciousness of the geopolitical sphere submerged beneath quotidian Western life. Postmodernists might have a claim on the album too, since it occupies a space between vernacular and high culture that postmodernism likes to see as its own. Walker began his musical career as a singer in the pop band, The Walker Brothers; his subsequent solo career involved a series of albums of increasing aesthetic seriousness (among them *Scott 4* and *Tilt*); and following a ten-year gestation period *The Drift* demonstrates a radically different way of insisting 'The sun ain't gonna shine any more'. Popular and art music styles here converge on what is these days their common ground, the sound studio; and it becomes genuinely impossible to say to which sphere the album belongs. But not irrelevant to try: the particular stylistic configuration of both/and and/or either/or embodies an acute existential tension,[88] different than the relaxed interstitial or crossover condition of many pomo products that are staple *LJ* fare. To be sure, Walker uses allusive sampling and quotation techniques, but beyond their connotative work, these retain historical weight and represent a subjectivised investment in expressive power. For example, 'Jesse', the track on which I focus here (and which received an encore, as it were, on a second night on *LJ*), includes fleeting references on baritone electric guitar to a riff from 'Jailhouse Rock'. The allusion to Elvis is one thing, but the studio treatment imbues the gesture with a remote, eerie resonance; and the sound does not prevail against the background of dissonant clusters for low orchestral strings, sullenly modulating through their dark spectrum. These and other string textures reminiscent of Krzysztof Penderecki belong historically to an expressionist palette; elsewhere in the track and throughout the album we hear harmonies redolent of a post-tonal expressionism from earlier in the twentieth century. These sounds transform and are transformed by sounds and compositional devices from popular music, by sounds generated electronically, and by samples of actuality.

87 Notwithstanding the painstaking attention given to the instrumental and electronic mix, *The Drift* is first and foremost an album of songs. Walker's vocals are tight-throated and anxious; his lyrics obscure; phrases short – coagulated symbolic parcels, translating into compact melodic figures, permutations of few notes, not tunes as such. 'Jesse' opens: 'Nose holes / caked / in black cocaine // *Pow! Pow!* // No one / holds / a match / to your / skin'. 'September Song' is the subtitle, and this is one of the few tracks for which Walker provides any explanatory commentary (though it remains moot whether he is intentionally alluding to the eponymous song by Kurt Weill and Maxwell Anderson with his subtitle). If this is a threnody around the events of 11 September 2001, the treatment is elliptical.[89] 'Jesse' refers to Jessie Garon Presley, Elvis's stillborn twin brother, to whom, the text's epigraph tells us, the latter would talk 'in times of loneliness and despair'. A lost twin could be a metaphor for the perished twin towers, but the lyrics don't spell it out. The tower pictured in the refrain is geographically displaced, a projected symptom of social neglect and decay: 'Famine is / a tall / tall / tower // a building / left / in the / night // Jesse / are you / listening? // It casts / its ruins / in shadows / under Memphis / moonlight / Jesse / are you / listening?'[90]

88 Throughout *The Drift* recognisable (or near-recognisable) things – historical events, bits of music reminiscent of other times and places, the voice of Donald Duck strangling words stolen from Bugs Bunny, the menacing anonymity of footsteps on the pavement, the blows of a hammer, the slamming of punches into haunches of meat – work actuality into a semantic labyrinth that captures the unrepresentable Real of what we might know of now. In songs like 'Jesse' the arrangement of sonic elements configures a virtual space that, like an art installation, feeds the imagination by being unlike the empirical world yet mutely related to it. The absence here of any actual visual dimension[91] makes for an all the more sinister evocation of the kind of baleful place that deep down you know about as part of political and psychological reality but put out of your mind. Its literary counterparts might be Room 101 of Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or the unspeakable dungeon of Poe's *The Pit and the Pendulum*, but the effect is less immediate than the frisson of a dystopian future or a gothic past. The songs create a sense of claustrophobia and nausea; they evoke scenarios without explicitly identifying them. We may or may not allow these imaginings to summon up equivalents in the present empirical world – scenes of intimidation, 'rendition' or terror – and to signal the political and historical conditions that requisition such spaces as their theatre.

89 Even as I piece together this description I'm reminded how hearing 'Jesse' on *Late Junction* seemed at the time to take one to a place not usually on the programme's map (metaphorically a kind of 'rendition'). To all intents and purposes this was a standard piece of plugging for a forthcoming album, but that moment burst the boundaries of *LJ*'s poetic norms, radically displacing the tracks around it. Paradoxes unfold. Not the least lies in the fact that this 'laid-back' programme can claim of such a visceral, deadly serious work: you heard it here first. And if in rupturing *LJ*'s aesthetic container the event exposed the limits of the programme, the experience was nonetheless all the more powerful for happening there rather than in the more edgy context of, say, *Mixing It*. Inevitably I bought the CD, and more bemusing than the paradox of purchasing a product that, complete with designer packaging, doesn't shirk on commodified production values, is the fact

that subsequently I haven't played it much. Why is this? Not because I've lost enthusiasm for the music. The answer lies, I suspect, in the music's sheer gravity, which exceeds not only the parameters (or perimeters) of *Late Junction* but also the domestic scale of the spaces where one normally plays recorded music. Listening to the album assumes an *event* of a magnitude unrealisable in one's living room. Perhaps it's possible to identify a suitable place one might go to with one's iPod. It could also be that listening combined with some other interpretatively productive activity – such as writing about the music, as here – could legitimately constitute such an event.

Given the grimness of the description above, one might also wonder about the perversity of enjoying such music. Yet the enjoyment is real, and in more than the commonsensical meaning of the term. For this is enjoyment beyond the pleasure principle – what Lacan calls *jouissance*, as opposed to *plaisir* (this last the more usual register of *Late Junction*). The album's oftentimes disturbing soundworld is a symptom of what is occluded from – or by – everyday representation – arguably the kind of occlusion that it suits our political rulers to maintain. Enjoyment comes, then, from an empathic alignment with the music's refusal to disavow the obscene underside of contemporary cultural reality. **90**

But there's another paradox here, for this enjoyment involves an element of vicariousness that compromises its virtue. The music may indeed do that rare thing of truthfully internalising unpalatable aspects of the empirical, historically enmeshed world, translating this into something aesthetically contemplatable. Yet while this may help keep denizens of relatively secure places mindful of those (apparently external) historical forces, one can only speculate about such music's value to those less well protected. The modernist aesthetics of *The Drift* reproduces a romantic sublime, specifically in its dynamic form, in which the beholder vicariously enjoys being terrified from a situation of safety. Yet for those on the front line of terror, or dealing daily with its fallout, experiencing the sublime may not be high on their wish list. For example (emblematic to the point of cliché, but pertinent for all that), what music would an inhabitant of Baghdad make or listen to in the current crisis to hold themselves together? What would an ethnography of music in everyday life look like for people whose quotidian existence includes situations decidedly more hazardous than an aerobics class or a visit to a shopping mall? The ethnography would need not to ignore 'soldier rap' like 4th25's *Live from Iraq*, and statements from the group's members such as: 'rapping keeps you focused. If you're sittin' on a gun and you're tired, waiting for a sniper to come at you, you just start thinking up a rap and your fear goes away. It's motivation, you get an adrenaline rush from it.'[92] But it's regrettable that to date most of the available material for such a study is told from the standpoint of the belligerents (however much one might empathise with the situation of individuals called on to service political objectives not necessarily of their own choosing). It would be intriguing to experience a version of George Gittoes' film *Soundtrack to War*[93] from the perspective of Iraqi civilians. One can only speculate whether those individuals might opt for styles of music that were self-reparative in a different way – music whose emotional tenor contrasted with and compensated for, rather than internalised and spat back at, the noise of belligerence.[94] Maybe this would be music ostensibly unrelated to conflict, of local rather than geopolitical significance, recalling better times past in the face of a nightmarish present and an uncertain **91**

future, maybe even beautiful rather than sublime, offering palliative *plaisir* rather than cathartic *jouissance*; perhaps something in a comparable register to Waterson:McCarthy waltzing.

Where does this leave us? On the one hand, the power of Walker's music is not achieved outside a discourse of aesthetic judgement that involves testing the content itself against a criterion of social truthfulness. The music speaks to us (well, to those who find it persuasive) because a consciousness of the profoundly negative aspects of the external socio-political world is perceived as having been internalised into the very formation of its materials. This of course is the kind of relationship between music and society, and a way of talking about it, valorised by the 'grand' tradition of a critical sociology of music. On the other hand, music that in itself might not pass aesthetic muster under such a critical discourse may be of greater use to the individuals that value it anyway, as something to hold up against inimical external circumstances, and as a means of keeping their selves intact. This is the kind of appropriation valorised by sociologists of music working in the anthropological 'little' tradition. DeNora is surely right to warn against reifying the relationship of these traditions into an opposition. But then how should we construe the relationship between two different ways of understanding music, the one privileging a set of aesthetic values more inherent in some cultures than others, the other recognising a potentially infinite variety of musical forms for what they productively enable individuals within a culture to be and do (the latter an ostensibly more congenial model for negotiating cultural plurality)? **92**

We could see these epistemologies as complementary, but that risks a commonsensical 'horses for courses' attitude that would relativise and devalue what was distinctive about each epistemology, and lead to a situation in which any music or musical practice could one way or the other be held to be as valuable as any other (which would resemble the implicit principle of equivalence we've seen operating in *LJ*). My agon with these different approaches and with the divergent cultural values represented by *Late Junction*'s musical eclecticism leads me to think that if both paradigms are necessary neither is adequate for understanding the implications of musical and cultural pluralism. Nicholas Cook may be right to suggest 'we're all ethnomusicologists now',[95] but maybe not without also assuming a paradigm shift within ethnomusicology that also involved thinking 'we're all critical theorists now' (a shift that in some quarters has begun to happen). But this doesn't mean that a synthesis is the answer either – not least because of possible fundamental incompatibilities between these approaches. So, in addition to implying 'both/and' this tension also suggests 'neither/nor'. And it is perhaps in the dynamics of both 'both/and' and 'neither/nor' that the as yet uncharted territory of a contemporary radical musicology is to be found. **93**

Perhaps what remains intriguing about *Late Junction* is that it points towards that territory even if it's equivocal about making the journey itself. It certainly fulfils the neither/nor criterion. Despite its global claims, it can barely be said to operate on ethnomusicological lines (*World Routes* comes closer). And despite its brushes with the more avant garde end of the contemporary musical spectrum, it can't be said to be strongly driven by a critical–aesthetic outlook either (*Mixing It* came closer). If this maps out a space defined by neither of these approaches, and hence needing to be defined by something *else*, the ground would still need **94**

fertilising by both. Glimpses of what this might mean are indeed provided by those exceptional moments on the programme like its broadcasting of tracks from *The Drift* – which on further reflection might also work on an 'everyday life' level too. For Walker's music could be said not merely to offer something for aesthetic appreciation, but also something *useable*: it helps people who relate to it to articulate and sustain a self opposed to prevailing hegemonies.

95 A further glimpse of *LJ* transcending itself is suggested by the last of my three examples, featuring music simultaneously congruent and incongruent with the programme's normal terms of reference: congruent in that it could be comfortably filed under *LJ*'s regular generic categories (in this case 'trad.' or world music); incongruent in that enjoying it in the same way as a regular '*Late Junction* track' would be another brush with obscenity. The music on this occasion came from the CD *Negro Prison Blues and Songs* recorded by Alan Lomax at the Mississippi and Louisiana State Penitentiaries. As with *The Drift*, one sensed after hearing it a real issue over how a path back to the usual laid-back register of *LJ* could credibly be made – another revealing rift in the fabric of the programme. Three tracks were featured on the same night: 'Murder's Home', 'No More, My Lawd', and 'Black Woman',[96] this last segue-ing (coherently) from Johnny Cash's rendition of 'Cocaine Blues' recorded in his concert at Folsom Prison. As with *The Drift*, I was moved to buy the CD of the Lomax recordings; again I find it hard to find an appropriate occasion to play it (and again, writing about it here arguably provides one).

96 It would be perilously easily to fall into liberal sentimentality over this recording. The singing is emotionally direct, there are some truly accomplished performances, and one can only speculate on the quality of the justice involved in the incarceration of the people we hear. (In fact Lomax shrewdly includes a short interview clip in which one inmate tells 'How I got into the penitentiary', and which precludes glib judgements either way.) The worksong tracks played on *Late Junction* have a haunting solemnity, and would seem to exemplify the kind of possibility music might hold for sustaining the self under adversity that was surmised in discussion around the previous example. In a song like 'Black Woman' heavy hammer blows – the sounds of the prison workers' tools – are the only accompaniment to the singing. This is simultaneously a musical and non-musical accompaniment. Downbeat in every sense, the mallet blows sound as both an index of hard labour and an element of the music. If they're an aural translation of the force of the law on the bodies of the prisoners, the singers resiliently claim its rhythm for their song and in the process resist subjugation to law's authority. But the very sonic materiality of the blows resolutely ties the singing back to the occasion. The blows won't entirely assimilate to the singing, not even as a sedimented part of the musical material; and it's perhaps this fact above all others that forestalls hearing the music as an artefact, as something that can be universalised. It chains the singers into *this* context; but this also makes the singing *theirs* only – definitely not for appropriation by sippers of Cabernet Sauvignon. Lomax's sleeve note tells us that the prisoners were working on state cotton plantations, engaged in the same activity as non-imprisoned black labourers on the other side of the fence. It would not be fanciful to understand their common situation here – seen by some as a form of internal colonisation – as part of the *longue durée* of the same geopolitics that continues to operate in our own times. Such are the flights of thought that can

be released from these kinds of musical encounter, making a political turn that eclipses and destabilises pleasures of a more culinary kind. Potentially. Only connect.

Notes

[1] Earlier versions of this paper were presented at research fora at Newcastle University, the University of Leeds and Anglia Ruskin University, and at the 2007 conference of the British Forum for Ethnomusicology. I'm grateful for the many helpful comments I received on those occasions. Feedback from anonymous *Radical Musicology* referees has also been valuable.

[2] http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/latejunction/ (11 January 2007).

[3] The Teague and Monteverdi pieces were broadcast on Tuesday 26 September 2006 in a programme discussed at greater length below (section VI); track details can be found in Fig. 3. The other tracks mentioned here were broadcast on Wednesday 3 May 2006; details as follows: Orlando Lassus, 'Vide Homo', on Lassus*: Lamentationes Jeremiæ Prophetæ*, performed by Collegium Regale, cond. Stephen Cleobury (CD, Signum, SIGCD 076, 2006), Track 13; Trad., arr. Ross Daly, 'Pervane', on Ross Daly*, An-Ki* (CD, Oriente Musik, RIEN CD 03, 2003), Track 4; James Kelly, 'An Paistin Fionn', on James Kelly, *Melodic Journeys* (CD, James Kelly Music, JKM 0147, 2004), Track 3.

[4] Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 49.

[5] *Ibid*. 1–7.

[6] Howard S. Becker, 'Ethnomusicology and Sociology: A Letter to Charles Seeger', *Ethnomusicology* Vol. 33 (Spring–Summer 1989), 275–85: 282; quoted in DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 4.

[7] DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 5, 6.

[8] See the discussion of Baudrillard by Don Slater, in the latter's *Consumer Culture and Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997), 145–7. Baudrillard had linked consumption and semiology as early as 1968 in *The System of Objects* (anthologised in Baudrillard, *Selected Writings*, ed. Mark Poster, revised edn (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), 13–31; see for example p. 24: 'Consumption, in so far as it is meaningful, is *a systematic act of the manipulation of signs*').

[9] Timothy D. Taylor, for example, begins the introduction to his *Global Pop: World Music, World Markets* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997) with just such a trope (p. xv). Anahid Kassabian does it with coffee – as discussed below in section XI.

[10] Peter Spencer, *World Beat: A Listener's Guide to Contemporary World Music on CD* (Pennington, NJ: A Cappella Books, 1992), 2–3; quoted in Taylor, *Global Pop*, 19.

[11] The scenario is attributed to Roger Wright, Controller of BBC Radio 3, by Jonathan Duffy in his article, 'Reaching a Musical Crossroads at the Late Junction', *The Listener*, 28 January 2000, http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/the_listener/story17.stm (28 September 2007).

[12] The surrealist connections are suggestive. There are not only those between surrealism and psychoanalysis (for example Breton's connections with Freud), and, related to these, surrealism's fascination with the imagery and (il)logic of dreams and the unconscious, but also those between surrealism and ethnography. Thomas Clifford's essay 'On Ethnographic Surrealism' (in *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1988), 117–51) traces a particularly fascinating account of the intertwined histories of French ethnography and surrealism between the first and second world wars, while seeing the significance of this investigation as not being restricted to that conjuncture (118). Clifford makes the salient comment (145–6) that the 'attitudes [of anthropological humanism and ethnographic surrealism] presuppose each other; both are elements within a complex process that generates cultural meanings, definitions of self and other. This process – a permanent ironic play of similarity and difference, the familiar and the strange, the here and the elsewhere – is […] characteristic of global modernity.' Something of this description seems relevant to the experience of listening to *Late Junction*. One might even say that its surrealist aspect points to a latent radicalism. The issue, explored below, is to what extent this potential is compromised by other aspects of *LJ*'s make-up that keep it confined to a mentality of liberalism (in both an epistemological and economic sense).

[13] Nattiez in turn borrows this model from Jean Molino. See, for example, Nattiez, *Fondements d'une sémiologie de la musique* (Paris: Union générale d'édition, 1975); Molino, 'Musical Fact and the Semiology of Music', trans. J. A. Underwood, *Music Analysis* Vol. 9, No. 2 (July 1990), 113–56.

[14] I do not intend to offer an introduction to Lacanian theory here (nor am I the person to give it), but instead a sketch of a few key terms to provide some orientation for what follows (which is in any case by no means exclusively or comprehensively Lacanian in its tenor). Useful introductory accounts can be found in Dylan Evans, *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, repr. edn (Hove

and New York: Brunner Routledge 2001); and Bruce Fink, *The Lacanian Subject: Between Language and Jouissance* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995).

[15] In the following (see section VI, below) I conjecturally treat an evening's broadcast of *Late Junction* as a kind of composition or work.

[16] See http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/biographies/biogs/controllers/rogerwright.shtml (12 October 2007); also Duffy, 'Reaching a Musical Crossroads'.

[17] Including such reactionary groups as the so-called Friends of Radio 3, whose name and website design cunningly suggest an official connection with the station (which is presumably what necessitates a disclaimer to the contrary on the homepage), but which is in fact a pressure group of obviously educated devotees of the Radio 3 of an earlier era. See http://www.for3.org/index.html (12 October 2007).

[18] See 'James Jolly Interviews Roger Wright, BBC Radio 3 Controller', *Gramophone* [n.d.], http://www.gramophone.co.uk/interviews_detail.asp?id=2671 (12 October 2007).

[19] See Sharp's comments in Vanessa Thorpe, 'Into Bed with Verity and Fiona', *The Guardian*, 23 June 2002, http://observer.guardian.co.uk/review/story/0,6903,742200,00.html (12 October 2007).

[20] See Charlotte Higgins, 'Don't Touch that Dial', and its companion piece by Ed Baxter, *The Guardian*, 9 November 2006, http://music.guardian.co.uk/classical/story/0,,1943024,00.html, (28 September 2007); also Paul Donovan, 'Radio Waves: Changing Tune', *The Sunday Times,* 5 November 2006, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2101-2432145.html (28 September 2007).

At the time of writing, it is probably too early to tell whether this rescheduling is indicative of new initiatives that recast and continue the earlier Wright project, or of a degree of capitulation to conservative forces within the Radio 3 listenership, such as the 'Friends of Radio 3' (see n. 16, above), who would seem to casually equate the promotion of world music genres with 'dumbing down'.

[21] The earliest broadcast of *Mixing It* listed in the BBC's online programme catalogue was on 29 October 1990. See http://open.bbc.co.uk/catalogue/infax/series/MIXING+IT (28 September 2007). A response to an enquiry to the BBC gives the date of the earliest broadcast slightly earlier: 1 October 1990 (Iain Chambers, personal communication, 12 January 2007).

[22] These dates are again based on incomplete data given in the BBC's online programme catalogue (see http://open.bbc.co.uk/catalogue/infax/series/MUSIC+IN+OUR+TIME (28 September 2007). The catalogue does not claim to have comprehensive listings for all programmes; see http://open.bbc.co.uk/catalogueta/2005/11/about_this_prototype.html (28 September 2007).

[23] The final broadcast of *Mixing It* went out on Friday 9 February 2007. Mark Russell's account of the show's axing was posted the following day at http://web.mac.com/mjrussell2/iWeb/Site/Mixing%20It.html (28 September 2007).

[24] The term 'post-vernacular music' has been coined by my colleague Bennett Hogg. It refers to musical genres of vernacular or popular origins that have developed their own experimental practices, tending in the process to deconstruct boundaries between 'high' and 'low' cultures. For more information see http://www.cetl4musicne.ac.uk/, following links through 'Projects' and 'Post-vernacular Musics' (18 October 2007).

[25] Prior to the Wrightean re-structuring of February 2007, *LJ* had its own messageboard; it now shares one with other programmes under Radio 3's World Music heading. The post quoted here came from 'Chimechild' (13 September 2006, message 25 of a thread entitled, 'Rob Sandall for next fortnight'), and is archived at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/mbradio3/F2620070?thread=3421205&skip=20&show=20 (28 September 2007).

[26] As happened on *Late Junction* on Monday 18 September 2006.

[27] Cf. Roman Jakobson, 'Linguistics and Poetics', anthologised in *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*, ed. David Lodge, 1st edn (London and New York: Longman, 1988), 32–57. Jakobson famously asserts that the projection of the axis of selection into the axis of combination is what determines poetic function.

The notion of an evening's heterogeneous broadcasting as a whole greater than the sum of its parts has an echo in Raymond Williams' analysis of an evening's television viewing as a 'flow', which 'override[s] particular programme units'. See Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1974); quotation from p. 93.

[28] As selected by Fiona Talkington on *LJ*, Tuesday 10 October 2006 (11.14 pm).

[29] Again, these boundaries are liable to subversion; at other times there may well be a preponderance of significantly longer tracks.

[30] Cf. Sharp, Wed. 19 October 2006: '*De* [sic] *Pacem Domine* by Arvo Pärt; that's the kind of music that he does so well. "Notes placed in position like stones in a Zen garden": so it says in the notes here, and I'd go along with that.'

[31] See n. 23, above. *Late Junction*'s messageboard is archived at http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/mbradio3/F2620070 (12 October 2007).

[32] In this respect *LJ* displays a significant difference from the uninterrupted medley of classical movements that characterised Radio 3's onetime early-evening drive time show, *Homeward Bound* – a weekday staple in the 1970s. (I'm grateful to Julian Rushton for reminding me about this programme.)

[33] See the discussion in section VIII, below, of *LJ*'s interactive 'Your3' feature.

[34] These are items 3–8 in Fig. 3, in which the final item, as represented in the website data, is in fact two tracks from the album *The Unfortunate Rake*, Vol. 2.

[35] It has to be said, however, that the line-up on Sharp's show on Sept. 26 still has a preponderance of male artists, though not to the same extent. Nevertheless, either because of the particular qualities of the tracks selected, or because of the mediation by the female narrating vocal presence, this seems a less obvious characteristic.

[36] Lindsay is in fact a native of the US; his protean career includes a period on New York's 'no-wave' scene in the later 1970s. See http://www.artolindsay.com/ (12 October 2007).

[37] See Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London and New York: Verso, 1989), Chapter 3.

[38] The labels assigned variously reflect statements by the artists themselves and third parties, together with inferences of my own. The challenge of genre identification is at times considerable, not least given the proliferation of genres and sub-genres within popular music in particular. The entry 'Category: Music Genres' in *Wikipedia*, in which c. 400 genres are listed, makes this last point quite graphically (see for example http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Category:Music_genres&from=A (12 October 2007). In this case at least, the collaborative format of *Wikipedia* makes reference to it entirely appropriate, given that genre involves by definition a process of ongoing collective negotiation. Occasionally in Fig. 3, when no label (or no single label) seems obviously appropriate I have manufactured a term or used an informal one (e.g. 'pop experimental' or 'art/pop'), which seems to me to be admissible on similar dialogical grounds.

[39] Significantly this interview appears on the website of 'The Unbroken Circle', which defines itself as 'primarily a folk website'. See http://www.theunbrokencircle.co.uk/artist_profile_JamesYorkston.htm (12 October 2007).

[40] CD, Jeepster Recordings, JPRCD007, 1999 [1996].

[41] CD, Tomlab, TOM32, 2003.

[42] See, for example, Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, 88. I make a related point about the determination of the still more generic signifier 'music' in my article 'Elvis and Darmstadt. Or: Twentieth-Century Music and the Politics of Cultural Pluralism', *twentieth-century music* Vol. 4, No. 1 (March, 2007), 3–45: 20–30.

[43] Information for this last is supplemented from the Smithsonian Folkways recording website: at http://www.folkways.si.edu/search/AlbumDetails.aspx?ID=3115# (12 October 2007).

[44] Full details of these tracks and their dates and times of broadcast on *LJ* are as follows: Toumani Diabate, 'Jarabi', *Kaira* (CD, Hannibal, HNCD1338, 1988) (broadcast 27 September 2006); Masasu Band, on Various Artists, 'Uwaume wa Bufuba', *Golden Afrique* Vol. 3 (2CD, Network, 495115, 2006), Disc 2, Track 11 (broadcast 25 September 2006); Zhan Yongming and Lin Shicheng, 'Feeling in Autumn beside the Dressing Table', on Various Artists, *Meditations on China* (CD, Gumbo, CD033, 2006), Track 3 (broadcast 27 September 2006); Burhan Öcal and the Istanbul Oriental Ensemble, 'Roxelanin Sesi', *Grand Bazaar* (CD, Network, 495114, 2006), Track 8 (broadcast 25 September 2006).

[45] These are references to, respectively: Tartit (a Tuareg band from the Timbuktu region), 'Achachore I Chachare Akale', *Abacabok* (CD, Crammed, CRAW34P, 2006), Track 5 (broadcast 27 September 2006); Women singers of Sudan, dir. Salma Al Assal, 'Ennaya', *Women Singers of Sudan* (CD, Arc Music, EUCD1945, 2005), Track 4 (Broadcast 3 October 2006); Marlui Miranda / Yanomami Indians of Roraima, 'Awina/Ijain Je E'', *Ihu: Todos Os Sons* (CD, Act, 50052, 1996), Track 5 (broadcast 17 October 2006).

[46] Daniel Libeskind, 'Imperial War Museum', http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/projects/show-all/imperial-war-museum-north/ (12 October 2007).

[47] Ibid. 'The Jewish Museum Berlin: Between the Lines', http://www.daniel-libeskind.com/projects/show-all/jewish-museum-berlin/ (12 October 2007).
[48] 'This jubilant assumption of his specular image by the child at the *infans* stage … would seem to exhibit in an exemplary situation the symbolic matrix in which the *I* [ego] is precipitated in a primordial form' (Jacques Lacan, 'The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the *I* as Revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience', in *Écrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan, repr. edn (London and New York: Routledge 2001), 1–8: 2.
[49] Dylan Evans, 'Imaginary (Imaginaire)', in *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, 82–4: 82.
[50] See, for example, Žižek, 'The Spectre of Ideology', in *Mapping Ideology*, ed. Slavoj Žižek (London and New York: Verso, 1994), 1–33: 26.
[51] http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/latejunction/your3/guidelines.shtml (12 October 2007); my emphases.
[52] http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/latejunction/your3/april2006.shtml (12 October 2007). 'Your 3' shows signs of having been slightly haphazardly maintained, with April's entries duplicated in the May and July sections (and only one additional entry, in the latter), and June's entries omitted altogether.
[53] This anonymity can only be relative, however, while the relevant webpages remain archived.
[54] The demographics for *Late Junction*'s general messageboard would be harder to profile, since here many post-ers write under non-gendered aliases. What comes across strongly instead – at least on an informal reading of the kinds of idiolect circulating there – is (unsurprisingly) an apparent preponderance of younger contributors. The internet-ese of regulars such as King Kennytone (e.g. '"Why Late Junktion"??? dig? It's so goddam VAGUE. What's it all about?': http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/mbradio3/F2620070?thread=3542732 (12 October 2007)) may not be exactly typical, but as an extreme it suggests that Radio 3 may not have been completely unsuccessful in diversifying its listener base – probably just the kind of thing that exercises the 'Friends of Radio 3'. However, in the days when Radio 3's messageboards included one for Classical Music and one for *Late Junction*, posts to the former outnumbered those to the latter by a factor of roughly one hundred (for example, in February 2007, c. 142, 000 posts as compared with c. 1500) – a fact which implies that Radio 3's more conservative listeners might still sleep soundly in their beds.
[55] See DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, Chapter 3.
[56] Karl Marx, *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, ed. Frederick Engels, repr. edn (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1971), Vol. 1, 28, 29.
[57] Not a necessary assumption – cf. Steven Feld's account of the economic iniquities around the commercial exploitation of world music in his article 'The Poetics and Politics of Pygmy Pop', in Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (eds.), *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000), 254–79.
[58] Marx, *Capital*, Vol. 1, 43. As Richard Middleton points out (see his *Voicing the Popular: On the Subjects of Popular Music* (New York and London: Routledge, 2006), 16, 250 n. 27), 'fantastic' is a mistranslation of Marx's term 'phantasmagorisch'. The phantasmagoric subsequently features as a critical concept in the writings of Benjamin and of Adorno. And, with equal critical intent, Žižek deploys the term 'fantasmatic' (as I do in this article), which invokes Lacan's account of the subject's specular investment in fantasy.
[59] Scott Lash and John Urry have used the term 'disorganised capitalism' in relation to postmodern culture. See their *The End of Organized Capitalism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).
[60] David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge MA and Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), 147.
[61] *Ibid*. 339–40.
[62] See Georgina Born, *Uncertain Vision: Birt, Dyke and the Reinvention of the BBC*, repr. edn (London: Vintage 2005), 458–9, 467–70, 486–91.
[63] *Ibid*. 301–2.
[64] *Ibid*. 345. Harvey refers here to Bourdieu's concept of the *habitus*, and quotes from Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 95.
[65] Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 337.
[66] Meaghan Morris, 'The Man in the Mirror: David Harvey's "Condition" of Postmodernity', in *Cultural Theory and Cultural Change*, ed. Mike Featherstone (London: Sage, 1992), 253–79: 255.
[67] *Ibid*. 271–2. '[T]he gigantic pincer of the dialectic' is a quotation from Ian Hunter, 'Setting limits to Culture', *New Formations* Vol. 4, 103–23 (no page reference given by Morris).
[68] Morris, 'The Man in the Mirror', 273.
[69] *twentieth-century music* Vol. 1, No. 2 (September 2004), 209–23.

[70] See DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life*, 131–50.
[71] See Kassabian, 'Would You Like Some World Music?', 214–17 (final quotation in this paragraph from p. 217).
[72] *Ibid*. 218.
[73] *Ibid*. 219.
[74] *Ibid*. 221.
[75] *Ibid*. 213.
[76] *Ibid*. 222.
[77] In Frow, *Time and Commodity Culture: Essays in Cultural Theory and Postmodernity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 102–217.
[78] *Ibid*. 135.
[79] *Ibid*. 102.
[80] Margaret Radin, 'Market-Inalienability', *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 100, No. 8 (June 1987), 1849–1937; Arjun Appadurai, 'Introduction: Commodities and the Politics of Value', in Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 3–63; Igor Kopytoff, 'The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process', in Appadurai (ed.), *The Social Life of Things*, 64–91 – referenced by Frow on pp. 148, 143, 144.
[81] See Born, *Uncertain Vision*, 31, 461.
[82] Waterson:Carthy, 'Sheffield Waltz / Waltz Clog / The Wounded Hussar', *Broken Ground* (CD, Topic, TSCD 509), Track 3.
[83] *New Left Review*, No. 41 (2nd Series), 88–91: 90, 89, 91.
[84] *Ibid*. 90.
[85] For example, Martin McCarthy's involvement in the Aldermaston marches (see notes to *Broken Ground*: http://www.watersoncarthy.com/index.php?module=Album&func=detail&id=2 (12 October 2007)), and the interventions of Ewan McColl and Peggy Seeger.
[86] Žižek, 'What Rumsfeld Doesn't Know That He Knows about Abu Graihb', http://www.lacan.com/zizekrumsfeld.htm (2004) (12 October 2007).
[87] Scott Walker, *The Drift* (CD, 4AD, CAD 2603, 2006). Tracks were broadcast on *Late Junction* as follows: 'Clara' and 'Jesse' (Tracks 2 and 3) on 27 April 2006; 'Jesse' on 2 May 2006; 'The Escape' (Track 9) on 3 May 2006.
[88] I can't claim any originality for this wordplay, only for transplanting it into this new context. It comes from a discussion by James McFarlane of modernism's irreconcilable modes of reconciling contradictions: see McFarlane, 'The Mind of Modernism', in Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane (eds.), *Modernism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), 71–93 (see esp. pp. 87–8). I adapt this conceit further below.
[89] Walker discusses the track in an interview with Rob Young for *The Wire* magazine in May 2006. See http://www.thewire.co.uk/web/unpublished/scott_walker.html (12 October 2007).
[90] Lyrics transcribed from liner notes; also available on the album's website: http://www.the-drift.net/ (12 October 2007). Single slashes denote breaks between lines; double slashes breaks between stanzas.
[91] There are congruencies, though, with the visual design concept of the album and its website, dominated by black, against which the text and other images struggle for visibility in faintly perceptible hues. This is perhaps reminiscent of a notion from Adorno: 'Grayness could not fill us with despair if our minds did not harbor the concept of different colors, scattered traces of which are not absent from the negative whole' (Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton, repr. edn (London: Routledge, 1996), 377–8).
[92] The words of Spc. Javorn Drummond, reported in *Newsweek*, 13 June 2005, http://www.newsweek.com/id/50076 (17 November 2007). Clips from *Live from Iraq* can be heard at http://cdbaby.com/cd/4th25 (12 October 2007). The onetime fulsome website of 4th25 (pronounced 'fourth quarter') at http://www.4th25.com/ (12 February 2007) is no longer extant; but see http://www.myspace.com/4th25 and http://www.4th25.org/ (12 October 2007) for a glimpse of the group's subsequent activities. For BBC 1Xtra's radio documentary on 4th25 see http://www.bbc.co.uk/1xtra/tx/documentaries/live_from_iraq.shtml (12 October 2007).
[93] See http://www.soundtracktowar.com.au/ (12 October 2007). I'm indebted to Ronda Sewald for drawing my attention to this documentary; and also for her salutary note that for ethnomusicologists (I would add, for all kinds of commentators on music) 'it's easy to think that music is primarily used within processes of healing, creation, and community building. At least in relation to war, music has a long history as a powerful tool used in interrogations, psychological warfare, and inspiring soldiers to perform incredible acts of violence' (personal communication, 25 January 2007). For further

accounts of this phenomenon, see Suzanne G. Cusick, 'Music as Torture / Music as Weapon', *Trans: Revista Transcultural de Música / Transcultural Music Review Vol.* 10 (December 2006), http://www.sibetrans.com/trans/trans10/cusick_eng.htm (12 October 2007); and Moustafa Bayoumi, 'Disco Inferno', *The Nation*, 26 December 2005, http://www.thenation.com/doc/20051226/bayoumi (12 October 2007) (my thanks to Goffredo Plastino for these leads).

[94] Reported moves by Iraqi religious leaders to suppress music for theocratic reasons add a further complication to this picture. See articles referenced on the Freemuse website (http://www.freemuse.org/sw9404.asp (12 October 2007)); also 'Singing "the Devil's Music" Will Get You Killed', *IRIN,* 23 November 2006, http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=61962 (12 October 2007); and Dean Kuipers, 'The Day Iraq's Music Died', *LA CityBeat*, 12 July 2006, http://www.alternet.org/waroniraq/38600/ (12 October 2007).

[95] Nicholas Cook, 'We Are All Ethnomusicologists Now', in *Musicology and Globalization: Proceedings of the International Congress in Shizuoka 2002*, ed. Musicological Society of Japan (Tokyo, Musicological Society of Japan, 2004), 52–5.

[96] Inmates of the Mississippi and Louisiana State Penitentiaries, *Negro Prison Blues and Songs* (CD, Legacy International, CD 326, 1994), Tracks 1, 2 and 4; played on *Late Junction* on 23 October 2006.

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